



Improving Student's Speaking Skill in the Kindergarten By Using Picture Story

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Abstract. Action research was conducted to determine whether speaking ability was improving among Mardisiwi Islamic Students in Surakarta by using picture stories. 15 students participated as the study's subject. This study was conducted over the course of two cycles and four sessions. Planning, action, analysis, and reflection were the four steps that it went through. The information related to picture stories' use in teaching and learning as well as the students' oral communication skills. The research's data were gathered through documentation, observation, and interviews. They were gathered using two cycles, each of which had two meetings. The effectiveness of the students' Mardisiwi Islamic kindergarten speaking is determined by the outcomes of the acts that were done in Cycles I and II. Based on the outcomes of the measures taken in Cycles I and II, the Mardisiwi Islamic Kindergarten children's speaking abilities increased. The data showed that just 40% of students were Developing as Expected (DAE) before the action's implementation, but that number increased to 73.3% and 86.6% in Cycles I and II, respectively. According to the findings of this study, children at Mardisiwi Islamic Kindergarten in Surakarta, Indonesia, were better able to understand language learning due to the usage of picture story media.

Keywords: action research · children's speaking skill · picture story

1 Introduction

A child's first level of formal education when they begin school is called early childhood education. The Ministry of Education and Culture's Regulation No. 146 of 2014. According to Education and Cultural Ministry, it is stated that Early Childhood Education in Indonesia is a developmental endeavor targeted at children from birth to the age of 6 (six). In order to help the children grow physically and spiritually and prepare them for further study, this endeavor is carried out by offering educational stimulation. This early stage of life, sometimes known as the "golden age," is crucial for the development of the brain, intelligence, personality, memory, and other development factors (Musfiroh, 2008). The child's brain absorbs new knowledge during this time quite easily. To

offer new knowledge or vocabulary to children in this situation, proper learning is necessary. Learning properly can be regarded from a variety of angles, including resources, methods, models, and mediums.

Media is a form of mediation that is used by humans to communicate or disseminate idea, thought, or opinion to allow such an idea, thought or opinion can reach the intended recipient (Arsyad, 2014). There are many advantages of media. Those are it takes advantage of the brain's ability to make connections between verbal and visual representations of content, leading to a deeper understanding, which in turn supports the transfer of learning to other situations. The use of interesting learning media can increase the children's interest and desire, arouse creativity, and stimulate for learning (Chioran, 2016). The selection and the use of appropriate media will assist the educators in delivering the learning materials to the students. In the production of educational learning media resources for ethnic minorities, cultural and local ways of life should be highly considered (Wilang). The development of media which can be used for the teaching-learning process can take the form of visual-based media such as signs, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, audio-based media such as audio podcasts, radio broadcasts, internet radio, voicemail, and audio visual-based media such as web streaming, video conferencing and live broadcast services. Among those media, visual-based media can be easily obtained, searched, and made by educators. Good visual development requires an environment that enriches visual stimulation (Schunk, 2012). Emoji, for example, is one form of visual media that is good to use. As Jennifer (2018) stated Emoji were also used as a visual research method for eliciting young children's (aged three to five years) understandings and experiences of well-being. Good visual media is one of the important things that is commonly used in teaching and learning at school.

Learning to read and write is very important at school. It is believed that the early years of schooling, from the age of a baby to 8 years, is a very important period for the development of literacy (Soendari & Wismiarti, 2010). One of the developments in literacy is the development of language. The development of language in early childhood is characterized by the ability of children to listen and produce sounds that are heard and then become the language that is issued through words. Musfiroh (2008) said that language development depends on the context of cell maturity, environmental support, and environmental education. Musfiroh stated that the most important condition in language development is good hearing to capture different types of speech and the ability to be able to feel the other person's emotional tone. Children must understand this process, try to imitate and then try to express their desires and feelings. At their age, the average child had saved more than 14,000 words (Suyadi, 2010). Even they can make questions, negative sentences, single sentences, compound sentences, and other forms of sentences (Suyanto, 2005). Furthermore, Astuti & Habibah (2015) argued that based on second language acquisition theory, the earlier a child learns a foreign language, the faster he masters the language. This is because children have long memory that is better than adults. Besides, children do not have psychological stress in learning languages.

The observation in the Mardisiwi Islamic Kindergarten showed that many children had not developed optimally in their speaking skills. This occurred because the teachers mostly used blackboards in language learning. Language learning includes vocabulary

introduction or word reiteration without using any games or other attractive media. So, this problem should be solved. The limitation of the existing learning media in the kindergarten made the students less joyful in their learning. Instead of using visual media, teachers relied much on the use of the blackboard and student worksheets. Actually, by using a blackboard the instructor can write and explain the subject matter effectively and efficiently. But apparently, the blackboard also has weaknesses. Some of these weaknesses are 1) The teacher feels uneasy when using a blackboard because he does not have good and beautiful writing and drawing skills; 2) Many textbooks can be owned by the learner, instead of recording the lesson from the blackboard; 3) Demonstrations and illustrations often cannot be captured clearly, difficult to see and possibly not understood, because the teacher stands in front. 4) Lime dust, can cause lung disorders, cramps, skin, and breathing (Sartikahinata, 2013). Meanwhile, the student's worksheet also has advantages. Those are the student worksheets often used at school which can be the independent learning media for students, do not use electricity, and are practical and affordable prices. However, this worksheet has several weaknesses. Some of the weaknesses are that the questions contained in the worksheets of children tend to be monotonous, the worksheet issued by publishers tend to be less compatible with the concept being taught, print media only emphasizes more on cognitive subjects, rarely emphasizes on emotions and attitudes (Alan, 2013). Even they never used picture story media which was in fact simple for language learning. Teachers sometimes only used visual media that were less attractive to the children so that they did not stimulate the children's language ability. They handled the class every day and they were not the English teachers. Actually, learning can also be done by considering the surrounding environment (Sojung et.al, 2015). In addition, even in developing language, the cohesiveness between teacher and student can be implemented together. The importance of teacher and student engagement was in the role of meaningful input (Hilal, 2018). Hence, the researcher conducted visual media by using strip stories.

The picture strip story is an adaptation of the scramble sentence type exercise in which each student memorizes one sentence of a story for which the proper sequence is not known. Freemans (2000) said that many teaching-learning activities can be done with picture-strip stories. One of them is by giving a small group a strip story. A student in one group will show the first picture to the other person in the group and ask him to predict what the second picture is like. This technique is chosen to help students in exploring their ideas toward a certain strip of the story. Some researchers proved that there was a relationship between strip stories and vocabulary improvement. Kayi (2006) found that by using this strip of story, the students have the chance to speak up. They can describe the picture in the strip story and use the vocabulary related to the strip. They can figure out what they believe in and where they stand on issues. Furthermore, Merc (2013) considered the effects of comic strips on the reading comprehension of Turkish EFL learners. In his study, students read the texts given and wrote what they remembered about the text on a separate answer sheet. The results of the quantitative analyses show that all students with a comic strip effect, regardless of proficiency and text level, performed better than the ones without the comic strips. In addition, Liu (2004) in his article talked about the role of comic strips on ESL learners' reading comprehension. He has two different students' levels of proficiency (low & high) with and without a comic strip.

This study suggests that the reading comprehension of low-level students was greatly facilitated when the comic strip repeated the information presented in the text. The other researchers, Ahmadi, Sadighi, and Gorjian (2017) said that there was a significant difference between the experimental group and control group whilst, experimental group learners almost outperformed the control group learners which conveys watching stories' comic photos can affect incidental vocabulary learning remarkably. However, According to Vernon and Donald (1980) using picture strip stories in teaching has advantages and disadvantages. Some advantages of using picture strip stories in teaching-learning processes are that 1) They are inexpensive and widely available; 2) They provide common experiences for an entire group; 3) The visual details make it possible to study the subject clearly; 4) They offer a stimulus to further study because research shows that visual evidence is a powerful tool; 5) They help to focus attention and to develop critical judgment; 6) They are easily manipulated. Besides these advantages, some disadvantages of picture strip stories when used in teaching and learning speaking are set out below (Vernon & Donald, 1980): 1) Students pay more attention to the picture than to the material to be learned; 2) It takes time and money to provide attractive pictures; 3) Small, unclear pictures may cause problems in the teaching-learning process since the students may misunderstand the pictures; 4) The classroom can become noisy when the students all work in groups at once.

Based on the aforesaid background of the introduction, the research question was that "Is the picture story able to improve the children's speaking skills at Mardisiwi Islamic Kindergarten in Surakarta?" Thus, the research objective to be achieved was to find out whether using the picture story media is able to improve the children's speaking skills at Mardisiwi Islamic Kindergarten in Surakarta.

2 Method

This research used Classroom Action Research (CAR). This study was conducted by the teachers in their own classrooms through self-reflection with the aim of improving the quality of the learning process in the classroom (Daryanto, 2011). The design of CAR was in the form of four cycles (Dantes, 2012). One cycle consisted of four phases, namely the planning phase, the implementation/action, the observation, and the reflection phase.

This research was conducted at the Mardisiwi Islamic Kindergarten. This was because the researchers saw that problems arose in the kindergarten and it was because the Principal of the kindergarten allow the researcher to study in it. The location of kindergarten was in Surakarta, Indonesia. This research was conducted for the students of level B, 5–6 years. The total number was 15 students. They belong to level B.

The data of this study were primary data. The researcher took the data from the field directly. The data were concerned with improving children's speaking skills through visual media and they were taken through pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was conducted in the early research before the researchers handled the cycle of teaching. Meanwhile, a post-test was given after the teaching, at the end of the cycle.

The method of data collection was a way of research to get the data in accordance with the actual situation. The data collection techniques in this study used several methods, including observation, interview, and documentation.

As Daryanto (2011) claimed, observation is the recording of an object focused on certain behaviors. Meanwhile, Sanjaya (2016) said that observation is a technique of collecting data by observing every ongoing event and recording it. By using observation, the data were observed and examined. The observation sheets on the development of language skills, observation sheets of the learning process through PICTURE STORY media, and field notes were used to record all events that were heard and seen during the observation.

Darmadi (2011) mentioned that the interview technique was carried out by the researcher, face-to-face with the respondent or the subject under study and asking something that had been planned for the respondent. The results of the interview were recorded as important information in the study. An interview was conducted at Mardisiwi Islamic with the teachers and children.

One of the documents used in this study was the field note. Komariah and Satori (2014) indicated that a field note is a complete form of field data records obtained from field notebooks, recordings from tape recorders, photo shots, or video recordings. In this study, field notes were written notes. They were collected as soon as possible after learning. They were the material of visual media that attract students, the actions of researchers who were under control, the carelessness of researchers, the actions of students who were less attention to researchers, inappropriate use of media, certain student behaviors that interfere with the learning situation, and events that occur outside of planning.

This classroom action research was conducted in two cycles, each cycle consisted of two meetings. In each cycle, the process consisted of four stages, namely planning, implementation, analysis, and reflection. The first cycle was carried out as the initial step to improve the learning process in the children's speaking skills using picture story media. The second cycle was conducted to repair the weaknesses and defects that occurred in the first cycle and to maximize the achievement of the target.

The first cycle of the activity using media was the conversation activity. In this cycle, the researcher used the writings and pictures in the pieces of paper, reiterating the reading of writings and distinguishing the voices they heard, reiterating 4–5 word sequences, as well as playing to look for groups in accordance with the word sequence order from pieces of paper that contain writings and pictures, telling about the pictures with proper sequence and clear language, as well as connecting and mentioning simple writings with pictorial symbols during the learning activity by using picture story media. The students looked happy by using picture story media when the learning was going on.

In the second cycle, a significant improvement occurred with the increase in experience and the new information obtained. The second cycle of activity used the picture story media was not much different from those of the first cycle. They were conversation by using writings and pictures on the pieces of paper, reiterating the reading of writings and distinguishing the voices they heard, reiterating 4–5 word sequences, as well as playing to look for groups in accordance with the word sequence order from pieces of paper that contain writings and pictures, telling about the pictures with proper sequence and clear language, as well as connecting and mentioning simple writings with pictorial symbols during the learning activity by using the picture story media. In this activity, the children began actively reiterating the voices they heard from the teacher. Children

had begun more enthusiastic and paid attention to the teacher when using the picture story media. Children also began having the courage to express their opinion. After the activity was completed, the children told about the activity they had carried out during the learning process using picture story media.

3 Results and Discussion

The result and discussion of the research can be seen as follows. Table 1 shows that each child had different abilities and development. Some children were able to achieve beyond the target set by the researcher, but Student 13 and Student 14 were unable to achieve the target score. This was due to the child had not been able to focus her attention on the teacher and was still frequently assisted in completing the activities. Those two children were still confused and scared. In every learning implementation, the researchers always motivated the children to be confident and able to complete activities independently.

In Table 1 of the pre-cycle column, from 15 children in one class, 6 children were Developing As Expected (DAE) and 9 children were Start Developing (SD). In percentage, it was total of 40% of children were developing as expected. In cycle I, the researcher targeted the achievement indicator of at least 70% of children would be able to develop as expected. The result was that in one class, there were 11 children had got developing as expected (DAE), and 4 children had got started developing (SD). They were a total of 73.3%. In cycle II, the researcher targeted the achievement indicator of at least 80% of children would be developing as expected (DAE). The result was 4 children were developing very well (DVW), 9 children were developing as expected (DAE), and 2 children started developing (SD). Overall, it revealed at least 86.6% of children were developing as expected (DAE). The comparison of the achievement result of each cycle with the research achievement indicator can be seen in Table 2.

Based on Table 2, the achievement percentages from the cycle I and the cycle II increased by 13.3%. That is due to, in the cycle II, the learning process used picture story media more conductively, effectively, and efficiently. It can be seen that the children's speaking skill has developed optimally.

The aforesaid research results revealed that the children's speaking skill before having been subjected to action until subjected to the action cycle I had shown an improvement. This was due to the use of picture story media that were appropriate and in conformity with the early childhood learning process. Learning activities through picture

Table 1. Summary Recapitulation of Improvement of Children's Speaking Skill

Aspect	Pre cycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
The Percentage of achievement	40%	73,3%	86,6%
Of the development of children's Language skills in one class			
Indicators of research	-	70% of children	80% of children
Achievements		reach at least as Expected (BSH)	achieve at least expected (BSH)

Table 2. Comparison of the Total Score for Improving Children's Speaking Skill in Each Cycle

No.	Name	Development Score and Status		
		Pre-cycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
1.	Bintang	20	21	27
2.	Cinta	22	25	33
3.	Gita	22	25	33
4.	Arimbi	14	19	20
5.	Azizah	14	18	21
6.	Erlando	20	27	31
7.	Xania	20	22	33
8.	Zakaria	20	25	33
9.	Amarta	19	25	33
10.	Junia	18	26	32
11.	Yasmin	22	28	37
12.	Setyastuti	17	25	33
13.	Barak	23	25	38
14.	Hera	24	27	35
15.	Gumelar	28	26	37
<u>Percentage of achievement $\frac{\sum \text{BSH \& BSB}}{\sum \text{Children}} \times 100$</u>		40%	73,3%	86,6%
Researcher Indicator		-	70%	80%

story media refers to indicators that were divided into observation items that had been made by the researcher. In detail, the achievement of the observation item in each cycle could be seen in Table 3.

Table 3 reveals that the data showed the result of the observation of 15 children in one class. In 11 observation items, each cycle experienced improvement with the introduction of stimulus to allow the children's speaking skill develops optimally. The results of the pre-cycle 4 provided 4 observation items had achieved DAE, namely the children were able to, (1) reiterate the voices they heard, (2) reiterate 4–5 words sequences, (3) connect simple writings with pictorial symbols, and (4) connect and mention simple writings with pictorial symbols.

In cycle I, there were 8 observation items achieving DAE, namely the children are able to, (1) reiterate 4–5 word sequences, (2) tell about the pictures provided with proper sequence, (3) tell about the pictures provided with clear language, (4) tell about the pictures provided with proper sequence and with clear language, (5) connect simple

Table 3. The Comparison of the Achievement Results for Each Cycle with Research Achievement Indicators

Cycle	The Percentage of The Achievement for Every Cycle	The Percentage of the Achievement Indicators	The Percentage of the Achievement Indicators
I	73,3%	70%	Already reach
II	86,6%	80%	Already reach

writings with pictorial symbols, (6) mention simple writings with pictorial symbols, and (7) connect and mention simple writings with pictorial symbols.

In cycle II, there were 11 observation items achieving DAE. They were the children are able to (1) distinguish the voices they heard, (2) reiterate the voices they heard, (3) reiterate 4–5 word sequences, (4) understand 3–5 instructions in sequence correctly, (5) perform 3–5 sequential instructions correctly, (6) tell about the pictures provided with proper sequence, (7) tell about the pictures provided with clear language, (8) tell about the pictures provided with proper sequence and with clear language, (9) connect simple writings with pictorial symbols, (10) mention simple writings with pictorial symbols, and (11) connect and mention simple writings with pictorial symbols.

Based on the description above, learning by using picture story media could stimulate language ability so that the children's speaking skills could develop optimally. This supported the hypothesis which stated that the picture story media could improve the children's speaking skills. It could be said that the children's language ability improvement through picture story media at Mardisiwi Islamic Kindergarten Laweyan, Surakarta was declared successful.

4 Conclusions

This classroom action research, entitled "Reinforcing Children's Speaking Skill Using picture story Media" can draw the following conclusions: 1) The use of picture story media could improve the speaking skill of children in Mardisiwi Islamic Kindergarten Laweyan, Surakarta, 2) By using the picture story media, it makes easier for children to understand the language learning, and 3) The percentage of successes is achieved on the speaking skill improvement of children who achieve the developing as expected status and higher, namely the pre-cycle is 40%, the cycle I am 73.3%, and the cycle II is 86.6%. In conclusion, it is said that the picture story media is able to improve the children's speaking skills in Mardisiwi Islamic Kindergarten in Surakarta.

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