

Media Big Book Alphabet Recognition in Early Childhood

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ABSTRACT

Students at kindergarten can learn the alphabet through a Big Book-based lesson. It helps them master the alphabet. The goals of this research are to (1) determine the extent to which Big Book media are being used to teach the alphabet in kindergarten, (2) examine the ways in which teachers are using Big Book media to teach the alphabet, and (3) draw conclusions about the implications of utilising Big Book media to teach students to recognise individual letters. Because kindergarteners often struggle to recognise and recall the alphabet, teachers often resort to Big Book media. To aid children's memorisation and speed with letter recognition, the Big Book includes a section devoted to the alphabet. Qualitative methods of description were used in this investigation. Observation, interviews, and thorough documentation are the backbone of the data collection process. The three phases of data analysis are reducing data, presenting data, and making conclusions. The study's findings suggest that (1) Big Book media improves children's letter recognition when compared to other media. (2) In this kindergarten, teachers use Big Book media for teaching letter recognition since it is more engaging and straightforward for young students. Three implications of Big Book media, which is used as a medium to teach kids the alphabet in kindergarten, based on markers of progress towards quicker and easier letter recognition.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is a small human being who has skills that must be improved. Children have certain characteristics that are different from adults; they have an active, dynamic, enthusiastic nature

and curiosity about what they see, hear, feel, and are always active in exploring and learning many things. Children who are selfish, have natural attractiveness, socialize, are unique, have a lot of imagination, have a short curiosity, and in the early future is the most appropriate time to study and learn. The age of children aged 0-6 years is referred to as the age of exploring or the age of curiosity, this term is applied to them because children in this phase children want to know the state of the environment, how how they feel and how children can become in that part of the environment. Early age is a child aged 0-6 years. This age has rights that are needed for growth and development (Anggraeni, 2017).

Children before school can catch a variety of things that are very much extraordinary. When children are young, children capture more information in the form of new things, and what is captured will be more too. But if a learning atmosphere is created that makes it fun for children, then children can grasp the material quickly, but it is not easy for teachers or parents to create a learning atmosphere that can attract children's interest even though they have used auxiliary books, such as letter cards, big books, story books and so on. (Indriyani & Sihite, 2015).

So far, parents and teachers are very difficulties in attracting children's learning interest, especially in the field of alphabet recognition, children often think that knowing letters is easy, but actually very difficult to recognise letters at an early age, but teachers have many ways to stimulate children by singing ABCD songs with various lyrics, besides that teachers also invite children to communicate using the letters of the alphabet so that children get used to remembering what is stimulated by teachers at school. The most important phase in the development of speech and language in humans is in the first three years of life, which is when human thinking develops and the process of reaching adulthood. Fluency in speech and language in humans will process well and smoothly when in an environment full of voices and images and in communicating with others and listening when others speak or speak (Wardhana, 2013).

Many studies suggest that there is such a thing as a "critical period" in the process of developing speech and language possessed by infants and children. Febrina Suci Hati, Prasetya Lestari in their research entitled "The Effect of Stimulation on the Development of Children Aged 12-36 Months in Sedayu District, Bantul" found that the provision of stimulation will be effective if it pays attention to the needs of children according to their developmental stages, especially if done in the critical period (golden period), namely in the third trimester of pregnancy to the first two years of a child's life or known as the first 1000 days of life (Sedayu, n.d.). In the article "The Effectiveness of Implementing Infant Gymnastics on Improving Baby Development," Sugi Purwanti says that childhood is both the "golden age" and the most important time for development (Bayi, 2014). Riska Destiana et al.'s study, "The Ability of Mothers to Stimulate the Development of Infants Aged 3-6 Months in the Working Area of the Puhjarak Health Centre, Kediri Regency," said that ages 3-6 months are part of the first 1000 days of life. It is a very important time when a child's brain starts to grow (Cetak & Online, 2017). Maimunah says in her paper "The Effectiveness of the Implementation of Infant Gymnastics on Improving Infant Development in Medan Krio Village, Sunggal District" that childhood is both a beautiful age and a crucial time for development (Flora et al., 2017). Ervin Nurul Affrida wrote in a journal called "Maternal Strategies with Multiple Roles in Shaping the Independence of Pre-School Children" that pre-schoolers are also in a crucial age because their brains are still developing and they are able to learn new things and respond to new stimuli (Affrida, 2017). Some experts also say that babies and children have a vital period from birth until they are about five years old. During this time, the baby's brain is best able to learn words. If children aren't exposed to language, it will be harder for them to learn their own language. Because of this, teachers and parents should learn or give language to children from a young age and not leave them alone (Islam & Usia, 2020).

From some of the research above, it can be concluded that a teacher and parents are important in training children's language skills from an early age because, at that age, children will easily capture maximum information. A teacher and parents, if they educate incorrectly or are late in training children in introducing language, will have a destructive impact on a child. One alternative language recognition learning model so that children are easier to practice language skills is to use big book

media that contains several alphabets so as to help children easily recognize letters while accelerating language skills. With language development of language children will be easier to think and can also express their thoughts to communicate with others in sequence. Children as young as four or five can begin to learn the alphabet by copying the teacher's handwriting on the board or in a notebook as she models the letters A through Z, as well as by recognising and responding to symbols and the sounds of animals and other objects in their environment (Usman & Yuniar, 2019). With the expectation that it will pique the interest of young learners, the Big Book is used to introduce them to the alphabet.

2. METHODS

The authors took a descriptive qualitative method in this investigation. For in-depth, all-encompassing analysis of social circumstances, researchers often use a problem formulation called "qualitative descriptive." However, the qualitative approach is also a method of research that yields descriptive information in the form of interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. This research so investigates the phenomenon of young children learning the alphabet from picture books. Students take part in this study. The study was carried out in the Kembang District of the Jepara Regency at the TA Pendem 02 Kindergarten. Observation and interviews were used to compile the data. The researchers made their observations by visiting classrooms. Teachers and parent volunteers were interviewed by the study's authors. The time period covering September–December was used for data collecting.

The process of data analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is carried out by focusing on data obtained from observations and interviews. The data that has been collected is simplified to determine its suitability with the needs of the research problem. Then the data that has been analyzed and the results of data analysis are presented in a descriptive form. Furthermore, researchers draw conclusions as answers to research problems. The validity of the research data in this study was checked using Lincoln and Guba's theory, which includes four steps: 1) the credibility stage is carried out by examining and re-examining the data obtained and interpreting it according to the research problem. 2) Transferability stage through relevance in the context of theory and the results of previous studies. 3) Interpretation and research recommendations are part of the reliability phase. 4) Confirmability relates to proving that the data and interpretation of the findings are not a figment of the asker's imagination, but originate from data.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following are the results of the research that are in accordance with the research objectives as follows:

3.1 Language Development

Language is a communication material possessed by humans since birth. Mastery of the first language is obtained from the language that is heard every day, namely the mother tongue. Language is basically a sound symbol that humans use to work and socialise with friends (Suardi et al., 2019). The language that children acquire will be developed as a means of learning language skills. In this case, it can be carried out and developed in various ways. Several ways to develop language are not always the same, but there is a common problem that is experienced by almost every child, that is, the child has a first language, namely the language of the mother, now it is the first language that can develop a second language, namely the language they get from their environment (Zubaidah, 2004).

A language is a medium through which people may connect with one another and share ideas and information. Humans need to have language abilities from a young age since communication is essential to their survival. Some variables can encourage or discourage a child's linguistic growth, depending on his age. This has long-lasting effects on the person's future ownership. At the age of one, children begin to babble or be called by their incoherent speech, marking the beginning of the language development stage of childhood. With the passage of time and exposure to a rich environment, a child's vocabulary will grow and their command of the English language will improve. The four skills of

listening, talking, writing, and reading are just few of the many that contribute to a well-rounded linguistic education. The development of a child's hearing begins in the womb, and from that time on, the youngster actively seeks out "good and correct words or sentences" (Talango, 2020).

Language is language, a medium of communication-based on words and grammar, assert linguists Papalia Olds and Feldman. Hulit and Howard define language as "an innate expression or ability of human beings." From (Ahmad Rudiyanto, 2018). According to Papalia and Feldman, language is a means of communication that is built on chains of words. To the contrary, Hulit and Howard argue that children are born with the ability to communicate in a variety of languages. "A means of liaison or communication between other individuals who express thoughts, feelings, and desires." (Badudu, 2014).

Language development in children is efficient based on language rules and ethics. Early childhood is very appropriate for developing all its potential. If this ability is not familiarised and developed as early as possible the golden period of developing children's talents and abilities does not develop optimally. (Pascalian Hadi Pradana dan Febrina Gerhni, 2019). Children who have developed the capacity to express themselves verbally are able to do things like respond to more complex questions, identify sets of pictures that share a common sound, compose simple sentences, share their ideas with others, continue at least some of the stories they've heard, and demonstrate an understanding of the book's themes and concepts. The verbal and nonverbal interactions of children in the same classroom, through activities like role play, can foster the development of linguistic elements. Abilities in understanding and using language, whether orally or in writing.

There are three primary linguistic abilities: competence, fluency, and comprehension. Young ones between the ages of 5 and 6 who are fluent in English. The ability to answer increasingly difficult questions, to refer to sets of pictures that share a sound, to communicate verbally, to have a vocabulary, to speak and write simple phrases, to have more words with which to express thoughts to others, and to constantly hear are all indicators of a child's ability to express language. Some examples of stories and concepts learned from literature. Pronunciation of familiar alphabetic symbols, recognition of the first letter's pronunciation, understanding of the relationship between pronunciation and letter form, and the capacity to write one's own name are all indicators of a certain amount of literacy development (Dewi, 2017).

The researcher also dug up information about language development with MT as the teacher in kindergarten TA Pendem 02 saying: "Language development is indeed very important for children because kindergarten age is the second language after the mother tongue therefore, it is the main concern for us as the bearer of trust for the family". Based on the interview results, it can be concluded that language development at the age of kindergarten children should indeed be a special concern for a teacher and parent for their child's development. This is in line with the theory that the level children aged 4-5 years will reach in their language development can be acquired by acquiring language, conveying language, and literacy. The level obtained in language development is that children are expected: able to listen to others speak, understand command sentences, understand the story being told, then recognize the difference in words and meanings. (Pangastuti & Hanum, 2017).

3.2 The Development of Letter Recognition

There are six aspects of development that must be considered by early childhood, one of which is the development of language aspects. Language aspects must be prepared and developed to deal with the upcoming level of education, namely the ability to know letters. The ability to know letters is the ability to know that looks simple but is very important (Triana et al., 2020). The researcher also conducted an interview with one of the teachers named RH who said that: "Teachers here have to be extra in introducing letters to children, indeed a tough challenge for us as early childhood teachers is to introduce letters one by one so here we use several methods in introducing letters to children, one of which is with big book media so that children more easily understand or distinguish letters by letter". Teaching young children who have not yet started school how to read can be challenging. It is recommended that parents and instructors introduce letters to children at an early age because children spend much of their time merely playing. There would be no written language without letters. Having a teacher who can help them learn a new

language is a life-changing experience for a child. Children in their early years need to learn to recognise letters since they are fascinated by the words and writings they encounter in various media (Jalil, 2019). Most kids would rather be playing than studying. Children's play is a technique for implementing learning activities. The active use of media in traditional schools is severely constrained, and as a result, children's education can only make do with what's already out there, such as teaching themselves to recognise letters through stories and recording their own voices as they do so (Chrystanti, 2015). The teacher uses a story-telling approach to introduce the letters; this approach works well with content that can be told orally and given in its entirety, such as letter recognition (Hemah et al., 2018).

According to the Big Dictionary Indonesian the meaning of letters is "A script mark in the writing system that is an alphabetic member that represents the sound of the language". Letters are secondary symbols of the language. For children, the presence of letters has meaning only if they are necessary in language life. Children need to recognise letters because they are interested in reading store names, street names, warning signs, brands, short picture stories, etc. Children also need to recognise letters because they are interested in writing self-identification, jotting down things they like, etc. Therefore, writing and reading materials must start from the interests and needs of the child.

Early childhood education is something that gives children excitement, direction, care, and learning that can give them skills and abilities. Early childhood education is a type of schooling that focuses on helping children grow and develop physically, mentally, creatively, emotionally, and spiritually. When parents give their young children an early childhood education, they are preparing them to be more mature as they grow up. There are now a lot of kindergartens that give good, high-quality education to help these kids improve their skills and talents (Elok Siti Muflikha, n.d.). The goal of early childhood education is to provide young children with the cognitive and social competencies necessary for success in later life. A style of education known as "early childhood education" is devoted to helping kids get a head start on maturing physically, mentally, creatively, emotionally, and spiritually. Parents' investment in their children's early education prepares them for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. These children's gifts and talents can now be nurtured and developed thanks to the extensive and high-quality education offered at today's kindergartens.

First, literacy is a basic ability in children in reading and writing in the recognition of vowels and consonants. Literacy is one of the language skills. The most important thing to introduce characters to children is to introduce pictures written with letters. Recognizing early literacy means the ability to recognize vowels and consonants as basic skills that children must master to read and write. (Nurjanah et al., 2019). Words need other words to make sense. Words consist of a string of letters. The series of statements contains actual words. Put sentences into their proper context. Context is everything when it comes to learning. Therefore, the educator cannot rely on contextualisation or texting while introducing the letter A, for instance. Teachers can focus on the first letter of the word chicken by having students say things like, "the word chicken begins with the letter A" in contexts where the topic is familiar, such as during discussions of chickens as pets. All the letters can be introduced to kids from this point on as visual identifiers. The Elok Siti Muflikha Report (n.d.). In the above review, the point is that recognising letters is very important for children and teaching with a fun method is also very much needed by children because of the nature of children learning while playing. So that children are able to learn the language as a whole and can learn what is taught or expected. (Jalil, 2019)

According to researchers Coral Seefeldt and Barbara A. Wasik, letter recognition is the ability to translate written letter symbols into audible language sounds. That's why teaching a young child to read is really teaching them to read symbols and signs, the defining features of any script. Moreover, the Dafa publishing team in the journal claims that there are many correct procedures for teaching children to recognise letters, such as: introducing different lines, displaying geometric patterns, articulating good words, articulating the shape of the letters of the alphabet, determining the correct pronunciation of letters of the alphabet, sorting letters of the alphabet, recognising vowels. The aforementioned display is meant to instill educational values in young viewers by introducing them to the concept of letter shapes in line and having them point, pronounce, and sequence these new letters

(Chairilisyah, Davq, Adisty, Astrid, 2021). Media can be interpreted as a communication tool between teachers and students for the continuity of effective learning, media is a variety of tools used by teachers to stimulate students. Media can stimulate students in the learning process that takes place while learning is everything that can channel messages, stimulate thoughts and feelings and provide the right information for students. (Restian & Maslikah, 2019)

In learning media is always used, now the author uses Big Book media where teachers use big book media to stimulate children in recognising letters of the alphabet properly and correctly so that children do not have difficulty in learning to recognise letters of the alphabet. Big Book is a reading book that has size, writing, big picture, big book media is a form of intermediary that contains several materials and has characteristics that are different from other learning books (Djaga et al., 2020).

Hariyanto revealed that recognising letters from an early age are very good for children's development, especially in language development, because it can help prepare children for easy reading. While the benefits of introducing letters to children, children can recognise letters more easily and recognise sounds is very easy and very helpful in the learning process to the next level (Islam & Usia, 2020). In teaching letters is not easy because the world in children only plays, but it is not wrong if teachers introduce letters from an early age. Letters are a secondary need in children's language, in kindergarten institutions the most important thing is the way of teaching through the process of socialisation with children, and the way of teaching is very easy and children do not feel burdened (Jalil, 2019).

Using the Big Book as a resource, students at TK TA Pendem 02 are taught to identify letters. Early language and cognitive development are intertwined with letter recognition, making it a crucial skill to cultivate at home and in the classroom. There is strong evidence that early exposure to letter recognition instruction improves cognitive abilities throughout childhood. This includes both letter recognition speed and memory retention. Recognising letters is a skill that children need to master not just at school with the help of their teachers, but also at home with the help of their parents. Mrs. SR has mentioned that the goal of TK TA Pendem 02 is to prepare students for success in elementary school and beyond by helping them become familiar with written language. An interview with Mrs. SR, a teacher in Class A, suggests that educators at TK TA Pendem 02 consistently give students useful information and advice. Remembering that children need to follow learning every day and that teachers need to teach letter recognition every day are the two most crucial aspects of learning to recognise letters.

Learning to recognise letters of the alphabet in TK TA Pendem 02 is carried out with habituation that is carried out repeatedly every day. During the learning process, a safe and comfortable atmosphere needs to be raised in the classroom so that children concentrate on their teaching. Early childhood needs many opportunities to practice alphabet recognition in a comfortable and accepting learning situation. This stimulation can be done through daily activities while playing, for example, by asking children to do guessing activities of the alphabet. In achieving the goal of recognising letters of the alphabet, the interaction carried out by teachers and parents will also affect the development and ability of children in the future. As an educator, of course, WE can provide facilities for children so they can explore themselves while doing activities.

Learning to recognise letters of the alphabet through Big Book media is learning that requires children to understand quickly by using these media, the right method is applied to early childhood education, because childhood is a time that is easily influenced and easy to follow what is taught to him.

In applying learning to recognise letters and numbers, education in TK TA Pendem 02 has a very important role in providing educational services. The implementation in learning to recognise letters and numbers through habituation methods in TK TA Pendem 02 includes:

a. Preparatory stage

In the application of learning to recognise letters and numbers through picture book media, namely with careful preparation, with careful preparation will make it easier for educators and early childhood to carry out these activities. At the preparation stage there are several educators

that educators need to pay attention to, including: formulating the objectives of learning to recognise letters and numbers, determining learning that is interesting for their students. Based on an interview conducted with one of the teachers at TK TA Pendem 02, namely with Ibu Hikmatin said that: *"Teachers who teach at TK TA Pendem 02 must have careful preparation in carrying out learning at school, especially learning to recognise letters and numbers, one of which is in preparing learning by preparing RPPH which has been designed in detail by teachers with the goals to be achieved in a lesson"*.

b. Implementation stage

In addition to the preparation stage to apply habituation in learning to recognise letters and numbers, the next stage is the implementation stage, at the implementation stage, early childhood plays an active role in carrying out activities that have been carefully designed by educators.

c. Evaluation Phase

After going through the preparation and implementation stage, of course, there is a stage called the evaluation stage, in this evaluation stage it is carried out to see whether the activities carried out are successful or not, whether there is a need for repetition of activities to achieve unfulfilled child development achievements. The results of the interview with Ibu Roihah as a class A teacher said: *"If the preparation and implementation of activities have not met the goals to be achieved, then there is a repetition of activities because not all children immediately understand in one study or do activities. However, thank God for every learning activity, children immediately understand and are quick to remember the letters of the alphabet."*

The results of an interview with HK as a class teacher at TK TA Pendem 02 on the importance of the evaluation stage carried out by: *"Evaluation of various activities needs to be done because with the evaluation we know the development of children in learning in various activities, especially in recognising letters of the alphabet."* Based on the results of the interview above, it can be concluded that the evaluation of each activity carried out in learning with the habituation method is carried out to determine the extent of child development, if the child still does not understand and requires repetition, it will be repeated on different days with the same activity and of course, still follow the learning tools that have been carefully prepared. In the explanation above, it can be concluded that in the implementation of recognising letters of the alphabet, namely by habituating to repeat with picture book media. The use of picture book media is effectively used as a learning medium to recognise letters of the alphabet.

Introducing letters of the alphabet with big book media there are various ways, namely teachers explain carefully in using Big Book media so that children know and understand in using the media so that children are able to recognise the letters of the alphabet easily and not get bored. Furthermore, by Providing examples of how the learning flow using Big Book media, one of which is by using the guessing method, teachers exemplify to their students the flow of learning using Big Book media. After that, the teacher called the children one by one to answer the teacher's questions. The teacher calls and names the children one by one when the teacher points to those in the Big Book.



Figure 1. Introduction of Media Big book to children



Figure 2. Practising saying the letter or alphabet



Figure 3. The Big Book used in kindergarten

This study is evident in classrooms where teachers use question-and-answer sessions with their students. The teachers offer questions tailored to each student, as evidenced by observable data, interviews, and written records.

4. CONCLUSION

Findings from a study of children's letter recognition with Big Book media in TK TA Pendem 02 indicate that this method yields significant improvements in children's letter recognition and their ability to grasp abstract concepts like transitional stages and symbols. Teachers are more likely to utilise Big Book media when teaching young children to recognise letters of the alphabet since this media is more engaging and straightforward when children learn the alphabet. This study provides useful information, notably that kids may use Big Book books as a resource for learning the alphabet, and that this knowledge can be put to use when kids engage in question-and-answer activities with their peers. Teachers and parents both agree that it is crucial for students to learn the alphabet and other letters of the alphabet, and that teachers should play an active role in presenting letters through Big Book media. The use of Big Book media to supplement children's classroom activities cannot be overstated in the field of early childhood education. It's a straightforward and useful resource for educators looking to introduce the alphabet to their classes. Several case studies show that teaching with Big Book media is simple and that most parents can provide their children with the same education that they get at school. The optimal development of all indicators of linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of children's speaking skills requires future researchers to employ better and more appealing alternative media.

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