

IMPLEMENTATION OF PICTURE STORY LEARNING TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

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ABSTRAK

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi cara penerapan metode pembelajaran yang melibatkan cerita bergambar untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris pada anak-anak usia dini. Metode cerita bergambar dikenal sebagai alat yang efektif dalam memfasilitasi perkembangan bahasa anak melalui kombinasi gambar dan narasi, yang memungkinkan anak-anak untuk mengaitkan kata dengan makna secara visual dan kontekstual. Penelitian ini melibatkan 30 anak usia 4–6 tahun di sebuah taman kanak-kanak. Mereka dibagi ke dalam dua kelompok: kelompok eksperimen menggunakan cerita bergambar dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, sementara kelompok kontrol menjalani pembelajaran bahasa Inggris konvensional. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, tes keterampilan bahasa (mencakup keterampilan mendengarkan, berbicara, dan kosakata), serta wawancara dengan guru dan orang tua. Dari hasil penelitian, ternyata kelompok eksperimen menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan dalam keterampilan bahasa Inggris, khususnya dalam penguasaan kosakata dan kemampuan berbicara, jika dibandingkan dengan kelompok kontrol. Anak-anak yang diperkenalkan dengan cerita bergambar, seringkali lebih terlibat dalam diskusi kelas dan menunjukkan minat yang besar terhadap pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi tantangan dalam implementasi metode ini, seperti kebutuhan akan pemilihan cerita yang relevan secara budaya dan pelatihan yang memadai bagi guru. Secara keseluruhan, hasil penelitian ini mendukung penggunaan cerita bergambar sebagai metode yang efektif untuk meningkatkan keterampilan bahasa Inggris pada anak usia dini dan memberikan implikasi praktis untuk pengembangan kurikulum pendidikan bahasa Inggris di tingkat anak usia dini.

Kata Kunci: Cerita Bergambar, Keterampilan Bahasa, Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Bahasa.

Abstract: This study aims to explore the application of the picture story learning method in improving English language skills in early childhood. The picture story method is known as an effective tool in facilitating children's language development through a combination of pictures and narratives, which allows children to associate words with meanings visually and contextually. This study involved 30 children aged 4–6 years in a kindergarten, who were divided into two groups: an experimental group that used picture stories in English learning, and a control group that received conventional English learning. Data were collected through observation, language skills tests (including listening, speaking, and vocabulary skills), and interviews with teachers and parents. The results showed that the experimental group experienced significant improvements in English skills, especially in vocabulary mastery and speaking ability, compared to the control group. Children exposed to picture stories participated more actively in class discussions and showed greater interest in English learning. This study also identified challenges in implementing this method, such as the need for culturally relevant story selection and adequate training for teachers. Overall, the results of this study support the use of picture stories as an effective method to improve English language skills in early childhood and provide practical implications for the development of English language education curriculum at the kindergarten level.

Keywords: Picture Stories, Language Skills, Early Childhood, Language Education.

Article History:

Received: 28-06-2024

Revised : 27-07-2024

Accepted: 30-08-2024

Online : 30-09-2024

A. INTRODUCTION

The learning of English for young children is receiving more focus due to globalization and advancements in information technology. Proficiency in foreign languages, particularly English, is a crucial skill that should be developed early to equip children for future challenges. Consequently, engaging, and efficient learning techniques are required to enable children to learn in an enjoyable manner.

A hopeful method is the employment of illustrated narratives. Illustrated tales can capture kids' interest while also enhancing their imagination and creativity. By using engaging illustrations, children can grasp the story's context more effectively, which can enhance their English understanding.

Furthermore, learning through picture stories can promote children's active participation in the educational process. Linking English to engaging visual components helps children to better recall vocabulary and sentence patterns. The exchanges that take place while reading and talking about stories can also enhance speaking and listening abilities.

Additionally, illustrated storybooks represent another instance of ongoing product development suitable for early childhood. Picture storybooks are evolving creations that merge written content with illustrated visuals in a book format.

Crowther in (Nuary, 2024) states that storybooks serve as reading textbooks designed for the purpose of learning. Hackbarth in (Uno, 2011) despite their advantages, such as capturing interest and standing out, abstract concepts can be explained and demonstrate a procedure. The images will help young learners visualize the content and narrative. Therefore, illustrated storybooks are works that connect images and texts, forming a cohesive narrative (Mitchell, 2003).

Research conducted by (Daristin & Fajarina., 2022) suggests that illustrated storybooks can engage young readers and assist them with their reading challenges. Additionally, it enables them to improve their reading skills and express their thoughts on the narratives they have encountered. A storybook with minimal text serves as an effective resource to spark young learners' enthusiasm for reading. Vibrant colors will engage young readers' curiosity and enhance their interest in reading. Additionally, the books that students read are composed in foreign languages, so although young learners struggle to comprehend the text in their native language, they can still grasp it through the images and attempt to deduce which vocabulary is used to explain the illustrations.

The initial study is conducted by (Nurul & Abbas., 2021). The researchers sought to create and evaluate the viability and efficacy of picture storybooks as a medium for teaching reading comprehension. This research outlines the evaluation of the requirements of students and educators regarding the media picture storybook, as well as the impact of picture storybooks on fifth-grade pupils at SDN 01 Tunggak. By utilizing a Research & Development approach, the researcher gathers data for the needs analysis through questionnaires, interviews, and observations prior to creating the product, which is a picture storybook. Nonetheless, the findings of the study revealed that picture storybook media is effectively utilized to enhance students' learning outcomes, as shown by a rise in students' cognitive scores.

Nonetheless, while the value of picture stories in English language acquisition has been acknowledged, there has been limited research that directly investigates their use within early childhood education settings. Thus, this research seeks to investigate and

examine how utilizing picture story learning can enhance English language abilities in early childhood. Consequently, the findings of this research are anticipated to aid in the creation of more efficient and enjoyable English learning techniques for children.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research seeks to analyze and describe how to apply learning methods involving picture stories to improve English language skills in young children. The type of research used in this research is a descriptive analysis method. According to (Sanulita, 2024) descriptive analysis is empirical research that investigates a specific symptom or phenomenon in a real-life setting. The results of this research were collected using primary data and secondary data.

The approach used in this research is a qualitative approach. According to Bogdan and Taylor in (Sappaile, 2024), a qualitative approach is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. According to (Arifin, 2024) the method is to transcribe the data, then coding the notes in the field and interpreting the data to obtain conclusions.

This research uses qualitative research with field research methods (field research). According to (Arifudin, 2022) this approach is adapted to the main aim of the research, namely describing, and analyzing how to apply learning methods involving picture stories to improve English language skills in young children. So that this method will be able to explain the problems of the research (Ramli, 2024).

This research employs a qualitative method to investigate and comprehend how picture story learning can enhance English language abilities in young children. This approach emphasizes detailed data gathering via the interactions, experiences, and viewpoints of children, teachers, and parents. This approach aims to investigate the use of picture story learning within the realm of English for young children. By conducting interviews, observations, and group discussions, this study aims to offer a more thorough insight into the effects and success of this approach in enhancing children's English language skills.

The site of the study was a Kindergarten (TK) situated in Kalianda, South Lampung. The study involved 20 children engaged in learning through picture stories, along with 2 teachers who instruct English at the kindergarten, and 10 parents of the participating children.

Data Collection Techniques: Interviews, Participatory Observation, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and Documentation. Interviews were conducted with teachers and parents to understand their perceptions of the implementation of picture stories in English language learning. Questions will focus on their experiences, changes seen in children, and challenges faced. The researcher observes the learning process in the classroom when picture stories are used. Observations will include interactions between teachers and children, as well as children's responses to the stories. Field notes will be taken to document the situations and dynamics that occur. FGD will be conducted with parents and teachers to discuss their experiences and views on learning using picture stories. This discussion aims to gain a broader perspective on the impact of learning. Collection of documents related to learning, such as lesson plans, picture story materials used, and children's work during the learning process.

The researcher collected data through interviews, observations, and group discussions simultaneously during the research period. The information collected by the author was subsequently examined through thematic analysis methods. The steps of analysis consist of transcribing interviews and observation notes, recognizing themes and patterns from the data that arises, and creating narratives that depict participant experiences and learning results. Muhadjir in (Rifky, 2024) states that data analysis is the activity of carrying out, searching for, and compiling records of findings systematically through observations and interviews so that researchers focus on the research they are studying. After that, make the discovery material for other people, edit, classify, and present it.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research demonstrated that using picture story learning effectively enhances the English language abilities of young children. The utilization of this visual media not only captures children's interest but also aids them in comprehending vocabulary and sentence structure more effectively. Illustrated picture stories can establish a context that enhances comprehension, enabling children to link words with visuals, thus improving their recall.

The findings indicated that children participating in picture story-based learning demonstrated notable advancements in their English language abilities. By using this approach, children acquire new vocabulary and develop their speaking and listening skills. The act of talking about the stories read offers a chance for them to engage in speaking within appropriate contexts, boosting their confidence in using English.

Learning through illustrated stories fosters social engagement among children. Group discussions conducted during or after the story reading enable them to express opinions and pose questions, both of which are crucial components in enhancing language skills. This engagement also fosters a more enjoyable and supportive educational atmosphere, where kids feel more at ease exploring and expressing themselves in English.

Educators play an essential part in the effective application of this approach. With appropriate guidance, educators can modify picture stories to suit children's interests and needs while fostering a supportive learning environment. This research discovered that educators who engage in discussions and offer positive feedback can enhance children's motivation and involvement in learning.

Parents' feedback indicated that they observed improvements in their children's English language abilities following the introduction of picture story learning. Parents noted that children were more eager to learn English and displayed increased interest in books and narratives. This indicates that learning affects not just the classroom, but also motivates children to study at home.

Despite the favorable outcomes, numerous difficulties are encountered in executing picture story learning. One factor is the restricted duration in the learning process. Certain children might need more time to grasp new stories and vocabulary. Furthermore, not every picture story is appropriate for every child, making it essential to select materials that align with their developmental stage and interests.

In general, utilizing picture story learning has shown to be beneficial for enhancing English language abilities in early childhood. This approach aids in language learning while also enhancing children's social and emotional abilities. Consequently, this research

suggests utilizing picture stories as a broader teaching approach in kindergartens and other early childhood educational settings. Improved application of this approach can greatly enhance the growth of children's English abilities in the future.

D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This research demonstrates that utilizing picture story learning can greatly enhance English language abilities in young children. By utilizing picture stories, children gain new vocabulary while also enhancing their speaking and listening abilities in an enjoyable and engaging environment. The findings of the research suggest that social exchanges happening during story discussions enhance language acquisition, reinforcing their grasp of vocabulary and sentence structures. The involvement of teachers in directing the learning process and offering constructive feedback has been shown to be crucial in fostering a supportive learning atmosphere. Moreover, input from parents indicates that children show increased enthusiasm and motivation for learning English after participating in this activity. Despite various challenges, including time limitations and the choice of suitable materials, the use of picture stories still holds significant promise for enhancing children's language abilities.

Therefore, this research suggests that the picture story learning approach should be more extensively incorporated into the early childhood education curriculum. This is anticipated to create a lasting positive effect on children's English growth and encourage their enthusiasm for reading and learning from a young age.

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