



Improving kindergarten students' reading ability using fantasy shadow puppet

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Article History

Submitted: April 12, 2023

Accepted: July 7, 2023

Published: July 13, 2023

DOI: 10.26555/jecce.v6i1.7949

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Abstract

This Classroom Action Research aims to improve students' low reading skills. Improving reading skills will promote brain development and imagination, develop language and emotions, and strengthen relationships. Through Fantasy Shadow Puppet, students will be more interested and motivated to learn to read. To obtain the desired research results, a quantitative approach with two cycles was used. Each of the cycles covered four competencies, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. Data was obtained by observing 20 students of Group B at TKM NU 262 AL KAMAL SIDOARJO using observation sheets. The results of the study showed a very significant increase in the students' reading ability up to 37.63% after learning using Fantasy Shadow Puppets. With Fantasy Shadow Puppets students can ask questions, guess which, then find answers (language development reactions) to the storylines they hear, the span of attention to stories becomes longer because students concentrate on stories, and are able to organize their own abilities because children learn from amazing experiences so that they will build confidence in what is conveyed.

Keywords: Early Childhood; Fantasy Shadow Puppet; Language Ability; Reading Ability; Teaching Media.

INTRODUCTION

The learning period at an early age is the right time to form language skills, which include listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. According to experts, this period is even the most appropriate time to lay the foundations for the development of many things besides language skills, namely physical, social-emotional abilities, self-concept, moral art, and religious values (Agus, 2012; Slamet, 2008). This is what underlies the importance of the quality of learning language skills at the kindergarten and early childhood education levels to be able to support children's language development.

Learning reading skills, more specifically, promotes brain development and imagination, develops language and emotions, and strengthens relationships. In other words, children who are learning to read are also developing their brain, imagination, language, and emotions at the same time. Therefore, lack of reading skills will hinder children in communicating, especially the decreased achievement of children's language development

(Hayati & Manawar, 2014; Setyaningsih, 2022).

TKM NU 262 AL KAMAL SIDOARJO, where this study was conducted, found that the average language ability of the students was low, especially in reading ability. This is especially for Group B students at TKM NU 262 AL KAMAL SIDOARJO. There were only 6 out of 20 students who are able to read fluently. Teacher-centered learning and a lack of variety in learning activities are believed to be the cause of students' low reading skills. This is as stated by Partami (2021) and Widyawati (2022) about the importance of a variety of activities in the success of early childhood learning. Besides that, Fahitah (2021), Juhaeti (2022), and Setyaningsih (2022) say that teacher-centered learning tends to make students passive so that it does not produce maximum learning for students (Hayati & Munawar, 2014; Suhartatik, 2013; Bambang, 2008; Dhieni, 2014).

From this observation, we as researchers, one of whom is a teacher in Group B at the school, used Fantasy Shadow Puppets as a learning medium to improve the reading skills of Group B students at the Kindergarten. Shadow puppet according to Tofani (2013) can be used as an information medium because of its communicative appearance. In addition, he added that besides being useful for information-based learning media, the use of shadow puppet as a learning medium provides an opportunity for students to get to know and approach the community because shadow puppet is one of the works of art and culture of the Indonesian people which should be introduced to students from an early age.

The Fantasy Shadow Puppet has been widely used to improve children's reading ability. Hayati & Manawar (2014) found the effectiveness of using Fantasy Shadow Puppet to improve kindergarten students' reading ability. Amelia et. al. (2017) also found that Fantasy Shadow Puppet effectively improved children's reading ability. Moreover, Hermawan & Saddhono (2017) and Nuraini et. al. (2022) found that not only is Fantasy Shadow Puppet able to improve reading ability, It can also strengthen students' value of character.

The Fantasy Shadow Puppet that the previous researchers use tends to focus only on the letter to be taught. Meanwhile, as its novelty, this study used Fantasy Shadow Puppet made of leather which is different from the shadow puppet that is known so far. Specially designed with an attractive appearance for children and given unique writings as identification on the media are expected to be the main attraction for students in learning. This will ultimately foster students' enthusiasm for learning, especially in reading so as to improve their ability to read.

METHOD

This type of research is Classroom Action Research. In this case, the researcher was collaborating with a teacher in the class where this research takes place. This study analyzes a small group of students regarding their improvement in reading ability which is known to be very low. This research specifically aims to improve their reading ability by using Fantasy Shadow Puppet learning media. Two cycles were conducted. Each cycle covered four competencies, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection.

This research involved Group B students of TKM NU 262 AL KAMAL SIDOARJO. They numbered 20 children. They will take part in learning as usual, because the instructors who will practice with Fantasy Shadow Puppet media in this study are their teachers who teach every day. What is different is that this media is a new thing for them so it is hoped that it can improve their reading skills at the end of this research cycle.

The source of data in this research is the result of the evaluation of students' reading ability by the researcher. Therefore, the data of this study are students' scores in reading which are evaluated based on loudness, accuracy in intonation, and fluency in reading. The analysis technique used in this research is descriptive statistical analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyze quantitative data. Quantitative data in this study is in the form of students' reading scores. In descriptive statistics, ways of presenting data will be presented with ordinary tables and frequency distributions, line and bar graphs, pie charts, pictograms, group explanations through mode, mean, and variations through ranges and standard deviations (Sugiyono, 2015).

Instruments for assessing reading ability have been developed. Of the many reading ability assessment instruments, the appropriate instrument for assessing early childhood reading ability is the instrument adapted from Darmawan (2017). The instrument that will be used to collect data in this study is the grading rubric developed from that rubric.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cycle I

Planning

This planning activity was carried out on January 7 2023 at TK Muslimat NU 262 Al Kamal. On this occasion, the researcher discussed with the school principal and class teacher, especially the things that would be carried out in the implementation of cycle I activities. The things that were discussed included: (1) the researcher equated perceptions with the school

principal and class teacher regarding the research that would be carried out. carried out, (2) the researcher proposes the use of fantasy shadow puppet media for learning to increase children's language development, (3) the researcher proposes a learning plan in the form of SBP (Development Midwife Unit) and the teacher agrees, (4) the researcher proposes observation as the main instrument for assessing increased language development, (5) determine the schedule for the implementation of the action. At the time of the discussion it was agreed that the researcher was the implementer of the action and the principal and observatory teacher. The time allocation for each meeting is 30 minutes. The actions in the first cycle will be carried out in 3 meetings. Where the first meeting is on Monday, January 9, 2023, the second meeting is on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, and the third meeting is Friday, January 13, 2023.

In general, the learning process in cycle I was aimed to provide new experiences to children so that students do not feel bored participating in the learning. There are several things planned in cycle I as shown in Tabel 1.

Table 1. Activities Plan

No.	Activities Plan
1.	Researchers first prepare the media to be used, namely fantasy shadow puppet
2.	The researcher conditioned or set the class to be a big circle
3.	The researcher opens the lesson by greeting, praying and singing the good morning song
4.	Researchers consume the rules that must be obeyed during the activity
5.	The researcher mentions the fantasy shadow puppet characters
6.	The closing activity is in the form of reviewing/reiterating the activities that have been carried out
7.	The researcher closed the lesson with the song "Good Afternoon"

Action Implementation

As previously planned, the action in cycle I begins on January 9, 2023. This learning lasts for 30 minutes, namely 07.30 - 08.00 and is inside and outside the Muslimat NU 262 Al Kamal Kindergarten class. At the first meeting the researcher entered into group B, namely the class where the children studied. The researcher opened the activity with enthusiastic applause and then prayed, greeted and sang the song "Assalamu'alaikum". The description of the activities carried out by the children and researchers is as follows:

Table 2. Activities Implementation

No.	Activities Implementation
1.	View a video of making fantasy puppets
2.	The child draws a fantasy puppet pattern
3.	Children color fantasy puppet pictures
4.	Children cut patterns / pictures of fantasy puppets
5.	The child combines the parts of the fantasy puppet

After giving an explanation in class, the researcher, who was accompanied by the school principal and class teacher, conditioned the children's seats to become a large circle where the researcher was the center of the circle. This aims to create a safe and comfortable learning atmosphere and to establish unhindered multi-directional communication so that the child can see the picture as a whole. As an opening the researcher who acted as the teacher opened the activity by greeting, praying and singing.

Then in this video viewing activity, the researcher gave freedom to the children to express their ideas. The children asked questions about the contents of the video, in this case one of the children's reactions, including "I like to see Upin on TV", some asked "This is Upin-Ipin, why don't you join?" It is at this time that children experience the process of developing their language, where children start guessing and then find answers to their questions. After watching the video, the children are divided into 4 groups with 4 densities. In each density, children carry out activities according to their respective densities, each density in add a few sentences that children can read. In this process, the researcher records the development of children's language as shown in the characteristics of children who can develop language while participating in activities.

The explanation above is the learning process in the first cycle of the first meeting. As planned, in outline the learning process as mentioned above. At each meeting the researchers and teachers agreed to provide variations so that the children would not feel bored and the class atmosphere would be more enjoyable. At the 2nd confident meeting, it was held on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, the researchers tried to vary the class atmosphere by carrying out activities outside the classroom or in the open nature. The children were very enthusiastic about participating in storytelling activities outside the classroom or in the open nature. The learning atmosphere became more conducive, children were more active in

answering questions from researchers, children's language development also increased from 12.65% or 2 children to 22.33% or 4 children.

For meeting 3 based on the agreement held on Friday, January 13th. The enthusiasm of the children in participating in the activities at this third meeting did not show a significant increase in language development. This can be seen from the increase in language development where at the second meeting it reached 22.33% or 6 children while at the third meeting it was 42.37% or 8 children.

Observation

Observations were made during learning activities, especially in the school principal's room. Observations were made to find out the increase in children's language development while participating in fantasy puppet making activities. Based on the observations made by the researchers, the following results were obtained: (1) at the first meeting the children still felt unfamiliar with the learning process using fantasy puppet media (2) at the second meeting the children were very enthusiastic about participating in learning using fantasy puppet media, (3) at the third meeting the children started to feel bored with the learning process due to the use of the same media, (4) the children's concentration on making fantasy puppets decreased because there was no motivation or rewards for children for language development, (5) there was a problem The increase in language development, namely before the research on children who showed an attitude of language development was only 12.65%, at the first meeting it reached 22.33% or 4 children, the second meeting reached 32.33% or 6 children, and the third meeting reached 42.37% or 8 children.

Analysis and Reflection

Based on the results of these observations, researchers and teachers conducted an analysis of the learning process and improving early childhood language development. This analysis was carried out by school principals, class teachers and researchers by discussing, evaluating the learning process that had been passed, and looking at existing deficiencies. In addition, school heads, teachers and researchers are also guided by the results of observations of increasing children's language development through observation guidelines. The results of the analysis show that: (1) there is a reaction showing boredom in children due to the use of media with the same title, (2) there is a decrease in concentration because there is no motivation and reward from researchers for language development, (3) there has been an increase in language development children's language when compared to not optimal and satisfying, it means that researchers and teachers need to improve the learning process, (4)

the development of the language of students in one class is still uneven, there are children who have more language development but some are also still low. From the results of this analysis researchers and teachers feel that the results of this study have not been maximized. Therefore researchers and teachers make plans for action in the next cycle.

Cycle II

Planning

The process of increasing children's language development through fantasy puppet which was carried out in cycle I was generally quite good, but not satisfactory. There are still children who pay less attention and the improvement in language development is also unsatisfactory. To overcome the deficiencies in cycle I, on Monday, January 14, 2023 the researchers planned actions in cycle II. Cycle II is planned to be held in 2 meetings, namely the first meeting on Tuesday 16 January 2023, and the second meeting on Wednesday 18 January 2023

After conducting discussions, finally the researchers, principals, and class teachers agreed on a number of things that should be done in improving language development through fantasy puppets. These things are: (1) the researcher maximizes action, namely interacting more with students, providing motivation and giving reinforcement in the form of rewards such as very good, (2) to overcome children's boredom with one type of fantasy puppet, (3) researchers provide additional allocations time so that children have plenty of time to explore. The planned sequence of actions applied to cycle II is as shown in Table 3:

Table 3. Activities Plan

No.	Activities Plan
1.	Researchers first prepare the media to be used, namely upi and ipin fantasy puppets
2.	Researchers condition or setting the class into a big circle.
3.	The researcher opens the lesson by greeting, praying and singing the good morning song.
4.	Researchers communicate the rules that must be obeyed during the activity.
5.	The researcher mentions the fantasy wayang characters
6.	The researcher starts the activity by observing the children's activities while participating in the activity and then records it in the observation guide.
7.	The closing activity is in the form of reviewing/repeating the contents of the illustrated story.
8.	The researcher closes the lesson with the song "Good Afternoon".

In general, the learning procedure in cycle II as mentioned above. Just like the learning process in cycle I, each meeting in cycle II is also given a little variation so that children do not experience boredom and the atmosphere is more fun motivation/rewards to children in order to develop their language.

Implementation

Based on the plans that have been made, the principal researchers and class teachers carry out in cycle II. Implementation of action 2 in cycle II begins on January 18 outside the Muslimat NU Al Kamal Kindergarten class. The learning lasts for 45 minutes, namely 07.30-08.15 and is carried out outside the classroom.

At the first meeting the researchers invited the children to go out into the open, namely the Muslimat Kindergarten school hall. The researcher opened the activity with a spirit of applause, then a prayer, greetings and a good morning song. Then do 4 activities with 4 densities as in cycle 1.

Children's enthusiasm increases when researchers use very good rewards, children are more and more actively involved in the learning process. The child's concentration on each activity is increasing, the child's vocabulary is increasing, the child's imagination is growing, the courage to say words/sentences is no longer waiting for the researcher's orders, the child's ability to tell stories is even more proficient. Children compete to get rewards from researchers.

Observation

Observation activities are carried out during learning activities in the principal's room. In cycle II, researchers and assisted by collaborators make observations on increasing language development and children's activeness in participating in learning. Observations were made to compare the improvement of children's language between cycle I and cycle II. As in cycle I, observations were focused on motivating children to dare to explore

Based on the results of observations made by researchers and teachers, the following results were obtained: (1) after being given activities using fantasy puppet media with upin and ipin characters, children became more enthusiastic in carrying out activities and expressing their language, (2) after being given motivation, children -children become more active in expressing their language without waiting for orders from researchers, (3) there is an increase in language development which is very satisfying in cycle II, namely in cycle I the third meeting of children's language development by 42.37% or 8 children while in cycle II the first

meeting by 55.65% or 11 children and at p the second meeting has reached 80.00% or 16 children

Analysis and Reflection

The process of implementing the action in cycle II was good. Weaknesses in cycle I can be resolved properly. This shows that the development of children's language through fantasy puppets is very good. This increase in language development can be seen from the achievement of the set indicators, such as an increase in children's language development which reached 80.00%, the children's enthusiasm increased and the children's attention and concentration in learning also improved. Researchers assisted by collaborators have succeeded in increasing children's language development as well as children's attention and concentration in the learning process.

As for one or two children who pay less attention to researchers, it is not a problem in the learning process, because we know that the characteristics, abilities and comprehension of students vary. Children's language development in group B Tk Muslimat NU 262 Al Kamal for the 2023/2024 academic year has increased by 80.00% or 16 out of 20 children (See Figure 1 below).

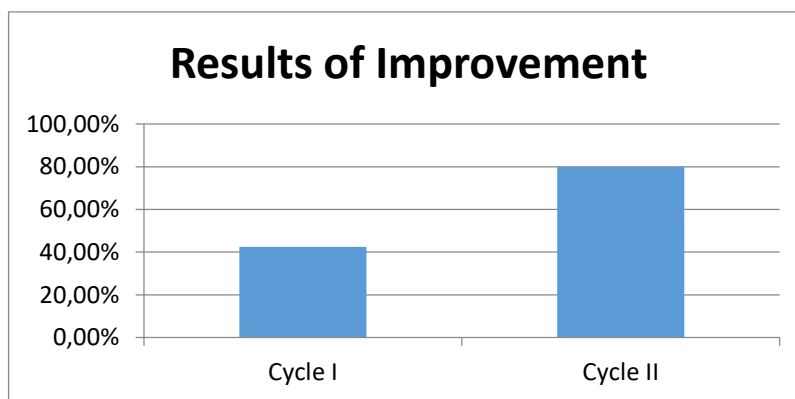


Figure 1. Result of Improvement

Before discussing the results, as for the process and results study in a manner whole can be seen in the Table 4:

Table 4. Enhancement Language Development

Aspect	Pre Cycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
Method	Tell a story	Tell a story	Tell a story
The medium used	Haven't used media yet	wayang media fantasy with figure cartoon	wayang media fantasy with figure cartoon

		upin	upin ipin
Indicator development Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaction development Language • range attention • Organizing / trust self • Vocabulary new • Development imagination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaction development Language • range attention • Organizing / trust self • Development imagination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaction development Language • range attention • Organizing / trust self • Vocabulary new • Development imagination
Learning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening • Core • Closing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening • Core • Closing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening • Core • Closing
Study time	30 minutes	30 minutes	30 minutes
Observation	The students were not too Interested, less concentrated, and had more chatting with Friend.	In the first meeting, the students were not familiar with learning given. In the second meeting, they were quite enthusiastic in learning but looked bored on the learning process.	The students were very enthusiastic in the learning process at the first meeting. In the second meeting, their enthusiasm was even better because the teacher gave them rewards.
Analysis and reflection		The students' enthusiasm decreased due to the use of the same medium.	The students' enthusiasm increased due to the rewards given by the teacher.
Development Language	12.65%	42.37%	80.00%

The table shows that the development of language before the action up to the second cycle showed an increase before the action 12.65%, the first cycle was 42.37%, the second cycle reached 80.00%. Based on the analysis conducted by researchers, this increase in language development is influenced by the media, namely Wayang Fantasy Puppet. Through making fantasy puppets children can ask questions, guess which then find answers (language development reactions) to the storylines they hear, children's attention span for stories becomes longer because children concentrate on stories, children are also able to organize

their own abilities because children learn from amazing experiences so that it will build confidence in what is conveyed. Apart from that, through stories, children acquire new vocabulary, children's imagination can develop and from their imagination it is the beginning of children associating ideas so that they will produce original works.

Apart from the method of giving time, another method is giving rewards such as very good which in this case is used to motivate children to remain active in the learning process. This supporting method also plays quite a role because through this method it can minimize the problems and boredom experienced by children.

The increase in language development in each cycle does not show stability. Where the percentage increase before the action up to cycle I reached 29.72% from cycle I to cycle II an increase of 37.63%. Here, it is known that before the action up to cycle I experienced a significant increase, this is because at the beginning of the meeting the children's interest was still very high, they were very enthusiastic and enthusiastic about new things that they had never gotten. As for the increase from cycle I to cycle II, it also experienced a significant increase, this was due to the provision of motivation during the implementation of cycle II. So that children are quite enthusiastic in participating in learning.

CONCLUSION

The students' reading skills improved after being taught using Fantasy Puppet. The results of the study showed a very significant increase in the students' reading ability up to 37.63% after learning using Fantasy Shadow Puppets. With Fantasy Shadow Puppets students can ask questions, guess which, then find answers (language development reactions) to the storylines they hear, the span of attention to stories becomes longer because students concentrate on stories, and are able to organize their own abilities because children learn from amazing experiences so that they will build confidence in what is conveyed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to thank Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember for supporting this research.

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