

The Effect of Storytelling Activities on the Language Skills of 5-6 Year Old Children at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten, Bengkulu

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Abstract

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This study aims to determine the effect of storytelling activities on the language skills of children aged 5-6 years at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten Bengkulu. This study is a quantitative study with an experimental method. This study was conducted by giving treatment to children in the experimental class. The number of samples in this study was 10 children, with a sampling technique where the samples taken were samples that represented the existing population. Data collection techniques were carried out by observation, documentation and questionnaire statements. The existing questionnaire statement data were analyzed using the SPSS program. The existing data were tested with the Paired Sample T Test. The results of the study showed that there was an effect of storytelling activities on language skills in children aged 5-6 years, this was evidenced by the results of the Sig test value (2 tailed) $0.001 < 0.05$. Children's language skills increased after storytelling activities were carried out in the experimental class, while in the control class the increase was very minimal. This was evidenced by the mean value of the experimental class 74 while in the control class it was 43.6. This condition proves that the influence of children's language abilities increases when storytelling activities are given to children aged 5-6 years at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten, Bengkulu

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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is characterized by highly critical potential, as children at this age readily grasp what they see. Early childhood experiences rapid development that requires education to achieve maximum development. This age refers to the developmental period from birth to approximately 8 years of age (Pradana et al., 2024).

According to Basori, early childhood is the ideal time to provide children with various life concepts to prepare them for their future (Basori, 2024). During this period, children's basic physical, cognitive, social, language, and emotional development occurs rapidly (Oktarina et al., 2020). In Indonesia, children aged 4 years are considered preschoolers. During this period, language skills are rapidly developing and developing. These skills require specific skills. These skills include knowledge of objects or events, the ability to analyze all parts of language, the ability to form categories, the ability to learn to manipulate symbols, the ability to use language as a tool, the ability to understand and produce a sequence of actions,

and the willingness to communicate. While these skills can be achieved in adults, they are not yet fully developed in preschoolers (Bawono et al., 2024).

Therefore, understanding the elements of language development is crucial in the early childhood education (PAUD) learning process. Children need language development to communicate the knowledge they receive during the learning process. Children can express their intentions, aspirations, ideas, and feelings to others through language. Language is an inevitable part of everyday human life. Humans interact with one another through language. Humans must communicate and express their ideas in a language that others understand. Children who use language will mature and become individuals who can function in society.

According to Arlina in Pascalian, there are six developmental issues that must be addressed in children, particularly language development in children

According to Saputri & Friska (2022), their research states that the language and storytelling development of children aged 5-6 years is very low. This can be seen from the difficulty in answering simple questions from teachers and the low ability of students to convey ideas, resulting in students tending to be silent during school. In addition to being able to answer and ask questions, children at kindergarten age are also expected to be able to understand the conversation of their interlocutors. Being able to understand conversation is a basic skill for students to be able to adapt to the social environment (Zein & Puspita, 2021).

According to Suprihatin & Rosita (2018), the proficiency level of children aged 5-6 in their study at the integrated Kadasituru Christian Kindergarten is still very low. Generally, children aged 5-6 are already able to communicate verbally with their environment, as most children already have a vocabulary of 8,000 words at kindergarten age.

According to Hilmiah et al. (2024), their research reveals that children aged 5-6 are generally able to express words or speak fluently and clearly. However, some children still experience difficulties in language development, such as speaking fluently and pronouncing words correctly. If this is not addressed, children will experience persistent language delays as they grow older.

According to Saputri & Friska (2022), the problem is that children aged 5-6 are generally able to express words and speak fluently and clearly.

In their research, they found that language skills in Al-Mirah Early Childhood Education (PAUD) for children aged 5-6 years were still considered low. This was evident in the children's lack of responsiveness in answering teacher questions, their inability to differentiate between letters of the alphabet, and their lack of confidence and difficulty pronouncing words when telling stories.

According to Hikmah et al. (2024), their research revealed that initial observations at Nurul Ihsan Ilmi Kindergarten in Tembung showed that several children were still struggling with language development, particularly in the research class, namely children in class B aged 5-6 years. They lacked confidence and needed improvement. In this case, the children still had difficulty voicing their opinions and were shy about expressing their opinions.

feelings, and difficulty repeating simple sentences or telling stories in front of their peers.

According to (Shalihah et al., 2021), during their internship at Hasanuddin Kindergarten, the researchers observed that children's language skills were still not

well-developed in class B, where the dominant age group was 5-6 years old. Many children still experienced speech delays, were unable to use linguistic symbols to communicate, had hearing impairments, and had limited vocabulary.

According to (Sirjon & Yaung, 2021), in their research, the results of initial observations at Pelangi Kindergarten in Jayapura Regency related to children's language development in grades 5-6 were still very low. According to (Sulatin & Assyaidah, 2024), several studies conducted in West Java indicated that 30% of children experienced language development disorders in the 5-6 year age range.

Problems According to (Ifadah, 2022), in their research, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data showed that Indonesia ranked second worst out of 65 countries worldwide in 2012. This places a responsibility on educators to foster a love of reading in children.

Based on previous research, according to (Anisa et al., 2023), storytelling is an effective learning method for conveying moral messages to young children and can add new vocabulary to their language development. At their age, they have broad imaginations and tend to prefer fun learning methods, preventing them from getting bored quickly.

Based on previous research, according to (Shofwan, 2022), it was concluded that understanding children's language development is important because early childhood development goes through four stages: pre-linguistic, single words, two-word sentences, and short sentences. Previous research, according to (Engken Yeni, 2024),

It can be concluded that using big books as a medium using loose parts and storytelling methods can improve children's language skills over six sessions.

Previous research (Widasari & Cahyati, 2024) found that listening skills through storytelling can improve listening skills in children in Kober Nusa Indah, Sindangagung District, Kuningan Regency.

Previous research (Widasari & Cahyati, 2024) did not support the findings of previous studies that demonstrated the role of fairy tales in language skills and linguistic development in preschool children.

Previous research (Handayani, 2023) found that using puppet shows through storytelling activities significantly helps optimize all child developmental tasks, including moral values and children's imagination and creativity.

Previous research (Handayani, 2023) stated that fairy tales are folk prose stories that are considered not to have actually happened. The benefits of storytelling activities include: 1) fostering a proactive attitude, 2) strengthening the relationship between children and their parents. 3) increase knowledge, 4)

5) training concentration, 6) expanding vocabulary, 7) fostering interest in reading, 8) stimulating children's critical thinking, 9) stimulating children's imagination, fantasy, and creativity, and 10) providing lessons without appearing patronizing.

Several previous studies have concluded that improving children's language skills is crucial and will impact their future lives. Children's language skills are essential for communicating and socializing with others using language. Children with strong language skills will also experience positive language and other developmental milestones. Therefore, teachers need strategies and skills to develop

children's language skills by using engaging learning methods and media that effectively stimulate and encourage children's abilities.

Based on the research findings above, this study differs from previous studies because it focuses more on the influence of storytelling activities on the language skills of 5-6-year-old children, emphasizing linguistic aspects and communication development. While previous studies focused more on the moral values that can be instilled through storytelling, aiming to shape children's character and ethics in a religious education environment, this study differs from previous studies because this first study examined the influence of storytelling activities on the language skills of 5-6-year-old children at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten in Bengkulu. Previous studies used storytelling as a method to instill morals in early childhood at the At-Taqwa TPQ, Ar-Rohmah Mosque, Pracimantoro.

Based on the research findings above, this is certainly different from previous research because storytelling significantly impacts early childhood language skills. Through storytelling, children can absorb information, enrich their vocabulary, and improve their speaking and listening skills. This method also stimulates children's creativity and imagination, helping them understand stories and express their feelings better. Research shows that storytelling can improve children's language skills by up to 48.4%. Previous research has shown that early childhood language development progresses through four stages: pre-linguistic, single words, two-word sentences, and short sentences. Language is an important aspect of a child's life, involving cognitive, emotional, and social skills. Parents and teachers play a key role in stimulating children's language intelligence through regular interactions, storytelling, and shared reading activities.

In this case, the researcher observed a school in Bengkulu City, namely Bhakti Famili Kindergarten, where the researcher had previously conducted an internship. In this school, the researcher observed several children's language skills in the Mangga class. The children predominantly used the local language. This indicates that some children had poor language skills.

During these observations, the researcher observed how teachers chose engaging learning methods for the children, including the use of creative learning media and educational games that engaged children's interest in the learning process. The teacher used storytelling only in class A, which was predominantly for children aged 4

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used is quantitative research with an experimental approach. Experimental research is research conducted to determine the effect of providing a treatment or treatment to research subjects, so experimental research in education is a research activity that aims to assess the effect of a treatment/action/educational treatment on children's behavior or test hypotheses about the presence or absence of the effect of that action when compared to other actions. "The experimental model has a research design, in this study. The design used is a quasi-experiment. The definition of a quasi-experiment is research that is given the opportunity to examine treatments in society that are not placed intentionally, but occur naturally. So a quasi-experimental design is a type of research that has a control group and experiments are not selected randomly.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Data Description

This study aims to determine the effect of storytelling activities on the language development of 5-6 year old children at Bahakti Famili Kindergarten. The sample size for this study was 20 students. Based on the results of the study, the following scores were obtained:

Table 4.6 Pretest and Posttest Results of Bhakti Famili Kindergarten Students (Experimental Class)

Sample	Experimental Class	
	Pretest Score	Posttest Score
Irfan	665	771
Khalisa	556	776
Rara	557	778
Asyifa	558	887
Rizkiya	556	777
Pahra	662	778
Syabila	558	886
Arya	660	661
Gitra	336	440
Shareen	772	887

The pretest and posttest score data for students aged 5-6 years at the Bahakti Famili Kindergarten in Bengkulu City as an experimental class are listed in table 4.6 above.

Table 4.7 Pretest and Posttest Results of Bhakti Famili Kindergarten Students (Control Class)

Sam ple	Control Class	
	Pretest Score	Potest Score
Ale nia	50	51
Sen a	41	43
Abz a	46	47
Alif	31	32
Arsi	47	48
El	42	44

Habit	37	38
Radi	47	49
Tara	49	57
Gibran	46	48

ased on the calculation results, this study has pretest and posttest values for each class which can be seen in table 4.8 below:

Table 4.8 Description of Pretest-Posttest Values for Experimental Class and Control Class

Description	Experimental Class		Control Class	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Minimum Value	36	40	31	32
Maximum Value	72	87	50	57
Range	36	47	19	25
Average	58	74.1	43.6	45.7
Variance	84.22	206.77	35.16	48.46
Standard Deviation	9.18	14.38	5.93	6.96

Source: Research, 2025

The table above shows that the pretest scores of the experimental and control classes differed in their highest and lowest scores. This suggests that both experimental and control class students were superior. After treatment was given to the experimental class and the control class was not, both classes were given a posttest, resulting in a difference in results between the experimental and control classes. The experimental class had a 47-point increase in posttest scores, while the control class only experienced a 25-point increase. Therefore, it can be tentatively concluded that storytelling activities significantly influence language development in 5-6 year-old children at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten, Bengkulu City.

Discussion of Research Results

The results of this study indicate that storytelling activities given to children of Bhakti Famili Kindergarten Bengkulu aged 5-6 years resulted in a significant increase in language skills. This condition is evidenced by the sig. (2 tailed) value of 0.000. While the significance value requirement is 0.05. This means that the Sig. (2 tailed) value is smaller than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). In addition, the experimental

class that implemented storytelling activities for children aged 5-6 years achieved an average score of 74.1.

1. Based on the language development indicators conveyed by Permendikbud 137, namely, 1) Understanding several commands simultaneously, 2) repeating more complex sentences, 3) Understanding the rules in a game, 4) enjoying and appreciating reading, 5) answering more complex questions. 6) Mentioning groups of images that have the same sound, 7) communicating verbally, having vocabulary, and recognizing symbols to prepare for reading, writing, and counting, 8) Composing simple sentences in complete structures, 9) Having more words to express ideas to others, 10) Continuing part of a story or fairy tale that has been heard, 11) showing understanding of concepts in storybooks, 12) mentioning familiar symbols or letters, 13) recognizing the initial letters of the names of objects around them, 14) mentioning groups of images that have the same sound or letter, 15) understanding the relationship between sounds and letter shapes. The level of language development of children aged 5-6 years at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten, Bengkulu will be described into several groups based on Permendikbud 137 of 2014, which in these groups are part of the indicators used by researchers in this study, including: Memahami bahasa

The language development of children aged 5-6 years is a crucial aspect to consider. Children aged 5-6 years require stimulation to develop an understanding of the language used in everyday life. This study used storytelling as a method to elicit responses from children regarding the language skills of 5-6-year-olds at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten, Bengkulu.

This level of language comprehension consists of 1) understanding several commands simultaneously, 2) repeating more complex sentences, 3) understanding the rules of a game, and 4) enjoying and appreciating reading. Children who are assessed as being able to understand these four indicators are considered capable of understanding language or have achieved a level of language development after the storytelling activity. Berdasarkan penelitian yang telah dilakukan ini, anak usia 5-6 tahun di TK Bhakti Famili sudah dapat mengerti beberapa perintah yang diajukan secara bersamaan. Tidak hanya itu, anak juga dapat mengulangi kalimat kompleks yang diucapkan oleh guru. Dalam memahami isi dongeng yang dibacakan oleh guru, anak-anak sudah dapat menyimak dan mengerti dari aturan dari permainan yang ada di dalam cerita dongeng. Selain itu, ketika guru mencoba membacakan dongeng, anak-anak menunjukkan sikap antusias dan memperhatikan ketika dongeng dibacakan.

2. Expressing language

Children aged 5-6 are considered capable of expressing language in everyday life if they can answer more complex questions. These complex questions ask about the cause and effect of an event. In this case, the 5-6-year-old children at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten were able to answer complex questions about the content of the fairy tale presented by the researcher. Furthermore, they were able to name groups of pictures that had the same sound. Anak-anak yang telah mengikuti kegiatan mendongeng atau mendengar dongeng yang dibacakan oleh peneliti mampu menceritakan kembali dongeng kepada teman-teman dan guru dengan menggunakan bahasa sendiri. Hal ini dinilai bahwa anak usia 5-6 tahun di TK Bhakti Famili sudah mampu berkomunikasi secara lisan, memiliki, perbendaharaan

kata, serta menyusun kalimat sederhana dalam struktur lengkap. Kemampuan anak yang berani dan bisa menceritakan kembali cerita dongeng di hadapan orang-orang, maka anak sudah memiliki lebih banyak kata kata untuk mengekspresikan ide pada orang lain. Tidak hanya itu, anak-anak di TK Bhakti Famili juga sudah mampu melanjutkan sebagian cerita atau dongeng yang telah di perdengarkan dan juga sudah menunjukkan pemahaman konsep dalam buku cerita

3.Literacy

Based on the indicators for child language development outlined in Minister of Education and Culture Regulation 137, children can be said to have developed language skills, as assessed by literacy. Literacy refers to the ability to name familiar letter symbols, recognize the initial letters of names of objects around them, name groups of pictures that share the same sound or letter, and understand the relationship between sounds and letter shapes.

In a study of 5-6-year-old children at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten, children in the experimental class demonstrated understanding by recognizing familiar letter symbols and recognizing the initial letter sounds of objects. Furthermore, the children were also able to name groups of pictures that share the same sound or letter and understood the relationship between sounds and letter shapes.

Based on the observations described above, researchers concluded that 5- to 6-year-old children at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten, Bengkulu, achieved a high level of language comprehension, expression, and literacy. Based on the research results, children in the experimental class also had high language skills after carrying out storytelling activities.

Furthermore, the average posttest score for children who underwent storytelling activities (the experimental class) was 74.1, with an average pretest score of 58. Meanwhile, the average score for children who did not undergo storytelling activities and were only observed (the control class) was 45.7, with a pretest score of 43.6. This indicates a difference in the language skills of children in the experimental class compared to those in the control class. Therefore, the implementation of storytelling activities will be more effective in improving the language skills of children aged 5-6 at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten, Bengkulu.

Hasil penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa penerapan kegiatan Storytelling for children aged 5-6 years can improve their language skills. This is because storytelling activities can significantly influence language skills in children entering preschool (Iswinarti, 2016). Through storytelling activities, children can also learn to understand or listen to the content of stories and retell them, which can help increase their dialogue and enrich their vocabulary.

The results of the study conducted in the control class showed that children who did not receive storytelling activities tended to have lower language skills than those in the experimental class. This was demonstrated in a T-test, which yielded a mean score of 36.10 for the control class, compared to 74 for the experimental class. These results indicate that the class that received storytelling activities had a higher level of language skills than the class that only received storytelling.

Prior to the storytelling activities, Bhakti Famili Kindergarten conducted several activities to assess the language skills of its students. These activities included talking with the children, in which the teacher would discuss matters related to the activities or simply ask about their feelings. Furthermore, the teacher

encouraged the children to tell stories in their own language, which in turn encouraged them to express their opinions. Furthermore, the teacher also conducted singing activities and recited daily prayers to assess the children's language skills.

Based on this research, children in the experimental class experienced improved language skills through storytelling activities. This is because through storytelling activities, children can acquire new vocabulary that can be used in everyday life and also children can communicate and express themselves to others well. This is supported by Pebriana (2017) who explains that the storytelling method can improve children's language skills because through listening activities, children can directly absorb information received from the speaker. Therefore, it can be assessed that storytelling can develop language skills according to the child's developmental level.

The storytelling activities conducted in the experimental class also demonstrated that the children who participated in the storytelling activities were able to recognize the symbols, images, and sounds described in the stories. This demonstrates that children can quickly recognize and grasp the content of stories, which can help them discover new vocabulary, sentence structure, and language style. If children imitate or use correct and appropriate language, this will certainly be a good start for their language skills.

Through this research, it was evident that the children in the experimental class were enthusiastic about the storytelling activities. The enthusiasm displayed by the Bhakti Famili Kindergarten children can create a positive environment. The positive response from the children to the storytelling activities, the kindergarten teachers can routinely conduct these storytelling activities, which will ultimately create a language-rich environment. Through diverse fairy tales, both in terms of themes and language styles, children can expand their vocabulary, develop diverse sentence structures, and develop listening and speaking skills.

Research conducted by [] found that storytelling activities for early childhood help children discover new vocabulary, stimulate their imagination, and create a fun learning environment that prevents boredom. The storytelling activities aim to assess children's language skills, including their ability to understand and express opinions in everyday life.

This research aligns with research conducted by Istiroha and (Istiroha & Despiana, 2024), which found that storytelling activities significantly improve children's abilities. This includes increased confidence in interacting and answering simple questions about the story. Children are also able to describe objects or symbols within the story. This demonstrates that children are becoming more confident in expressing their opinions to teachers and peers.

Aptiningsari's (2021) research revealed that learning through storytelling provides ample opportunities for children to develop their language skills. Storytelling in early childhood allows children to acquire new vocabulary and develop listening skills. This storytelling method also engages children's attention, allowing them to focus on the story and follow the storyline, providing them with experiences through oral storytelling.

Similar research conducted by Apriliyana (2020) revealed that storytelling can optimize language skills in early childhood. Storytelling activities involving books, puppets, or toys can develop children's language e learning experiences that

convey a story through spoken language to children's skills through retelling simple stories or recounting their own experiences. This aligns with Moeslichatoen's (2004) opinion that storytelling is a way to provide.

In her research, Dewi (2021) stated that storytelling is closely related to children's communication and language skills. Through storytelling, children learn to speak in a fun way and expand their vocabulary and language skills. Furthermore, storytelling also trains children's comprehension skills when listening to stories and their memory when retelling stories they have heard.

Through several studies similar to this study that have been explained above, researchers concluded several things related to storytelling activities on the language skills of early childhood, including 1) storytelling activities carried out in early childhood can optimize children's language skills, 2) storytelling activities can train children's self-confidence when children retell fairy tales using simple language, 3) storytelling activities can help children find new vocabulary and help children stimulate their imagination.

Based on the results of this research and several similar studies, researchers believe that children who are stimulated by storytelling activities will respond with improved language skills. This language ability not only allows children to acquire new vocabulary, but also allows them to listen to stories and retell them in simple language.

Furthermore, this study also found that children in the control class experienced difficulty choosing words or sentences. This condition made them less confident in expressing themselves or their ideas. In contrast, children in the experimental class had an easier time choosing words or sentences to use when expressing ideas to peers or teachers. This proves that storytelling activities are very beneficial for children's language skills.

G. Research limitations

This study has limitations, including:

1. The small sample size or population limits the ability to generalize the findings to other child populations outside the context.
2. Limitations in measuring language ability levels: in this study, the researchers did not include instruments or methods that could measure language abilities, such as vocabulary, story comprehension, or expressive abilities.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that storytelling significantly contributes to early childhood language development. Storytelling not only helps you speak better, but also helps you become more confident when speaking. The differences in language abilities between the experimental and control groups demonstrate the significant influence that storytelling can have on 5-6 year-old children at Bhakti Famili Kindergarten in Bengkulu. Therefore, storytelling is a highly recommended method for encouraging superior language development in early childhood, especially in children aged 5-6 years, who at this age need to explore many things to support the growth of language skills.

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