

Puppet Media in Improving Early Children's Speaking Abilities

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ABSTRACT

It is very important to encourage the development of speech from an early age, because it is one of the most essential aspects of development. This research was conducted at Putroe Nahrishah Kindergarten, Lhokseumawe City, this is because researchers found problems in group B children that children's speaking skills have not developed, this can be proven that children do not have the confidence to communicate, are quiet, less active, rarely express ideas and lack of interaction between teachers and children during the learning process. This study aims to improve the speaking ability of children aged five to six years through the application of puppet media. This study was conducted on 10 students consisting of six boys and four girls. This study is a classroom action research conducted in two cycles using observation sheets and documentation. The results of the study from cycle I showed that the percentage for Developing As Expected and Developing Very Well was 60%, while in cycle II there was an increase in the percentage value of Developing As Expected and Developing Very Well which was 80%, this proves that puppet media is able to improve children's speaking skills. The implications of this study are expected to be a reference in developing various aspects of early childhood abilities.

INTRODUCTION

Language is an important part of people's daily lives as it helps them interact with each other. Humans need language to speak, listen, read, and write as well as establish and expand their relationships with others. Speaking is part of language skills in addition to listening, reading and writing (Ita et al., 2020). Of the four basic language skills that children must master, speaking skills are the most important skills (Fitri et al., 2022). Language and speaking development need to be developed from an early age. Children's speaking ability is based on their ability to hear because they can speak well and fluently if they have no hearing problems. Children who are fluent in speaking can communicate their ideas and ask questions (Mudiyah & Watini, 2021). According to Otto (2015) Verbal communication occurs through speaking where children can communicate or speak effectively.

Children are unique individuals with untapped potential that needs to be developed (Novitasari, 2022). Children aged five to six have a strong desire to speak because they can express their opinions, feelings and needs. Children's speaking ability will improve as they grow and develop. According to Elya et al., (2019) explained that speaking potential has three stages, namely word pronunciation, vocabulary formation, and sentence formation. Children's speaking ability is the result of habituation from the environment and imitation where children learn to speak through sound systems, grammar, and vocabulary that they often hear at home (Alam & Lestari, 2019). In addition to family members, speaking can be done by talking with teachers or peers at school and other adults. So, with relationships and interactions like this can develop children's speaking skills.

Speaking is a form of communication to convey feelings or desires (Pangestuti, 2016). Through speaking, children can improve their language development, increasing vocabulary in preparation for the writing, reading and listening stages (Ruiyat et al., 2019). Children in the early period prefer to learn new words and like challenges. Improving children's speaking skills can be done by creating conditions that allow them to speak and be heard through speaking methods such as storytelling, role-playing, singing, playing together, travelling, and asking questions.

Based on the results of observations at Putroe Nahrisyah Kindergarten, Lhokseumawe City in group B, it was found that children's speaking skills were still not developed. This can be seen from some children's lack of confidence in communicating, children look quiet and less active, lack of communication between children and teachers during the learning process, and children's inability to express ideas. This is because the learning carried out such as the learning methods used are less interesting, less varied media, where teachers often use image media made on the blackboard so that children are less excited. Based on these findings, the authors conducted classroom action research aimed at improving the speaking ability of early childhood at Putroe Nahrisyah Kindergarten, Lhokseumawe City through puppet media.

It is highly recommended to use learning media to improve learning, especially improving children's speaking ability. Applying the right learning media can motivate interest in learning so that children are more eager to follow the learning steps. One of them is puppet media, or hand puppets, which can be used easily by inserting hands into the puppet and moving its hands, mouth and head. The application of puppets can develop speaking skills, improve memory, and train children's concentration (Sriyanti & Putri, 2023). Based on this explanation, researchers try to improve the speaking ability of children aged five to six years by using puppet media.

Marwah (2022) explains that puppet media is one of the arts that children love. This media is also favoured by many teenagers and adults. Many are interested in puppet media because it is designed based on its shape. In this study, puppet media is a puppet used to improve the speaking ability of children aged five to six years. Hand puppets or better known as puppet media are media that imitate humans, animals, or plants that are played by hand. Cahyani et al., (2022) media puppets are tools made from pieces of flannel and others that are used as learning media so that they can be played with various characters.

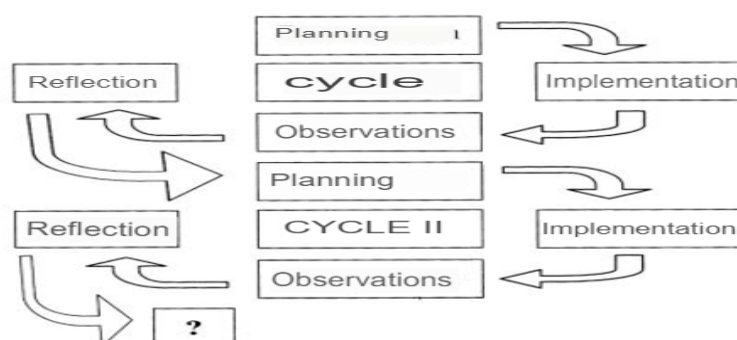
Hand puppets are named because they are moved through human hands. Puppet media is usually used as a storytelling method that aims to attract children's attention in the learning process. The use of puppet media in children's learning can motivate and focus attention and interact with each other so that educators can use puppet media to develop cognitive and improvise with movements according to the rhythm of music, stories or poetry besides that educators can also use puppet media in play while learning activities aimed at stimulating creativity and communication skills (Yanac-Leon et al., 2021). Because this media is close to the child's environment, so puppets can be used as props to tell stories to them. Suyadi (2017) stated that because children are used to playing with puppets, puppet media is very favoured by children, and children often see puppets in everyday life to be used as toys. From this explanation, it can be concluded that puppet media is an artificial object made of cloth with various shapes such as people, animals, plants, or objects that can be played with hands as if they resemble human movements. This media also resembles a living object that can be used as a tool in learning activities and can help children's speech development.

Puppet media can be classified into five types, namely; 1) Finger puppets, which can be played with fingers, 2) Hand puppets, which can be played with both hands, 3) stick puppets, which are similar to stick puppets where sticks are connected to the hands and body of the puppet, 4) glued puppets, which can be made of soft wood materials such as walnut, kapok, and others. The puppet is moved by a rope that connects the head, arms, and legs with a rope according to the character's will, 5) Wayang kulit is a puppet played to represent the characters in the story. Meanwhile, according to F u a t e t a l . , (2 0 2 3) that the type of puppet that can be used as a learning medium is a hanging puppet, which is a technique that can play puppets and ropes tied to certain materials such as wood, sticks, and others. By considering

the explanation of the types of hand puppets above, it can be concluded that many puppet media can be used as learning media to support the learning process and objectives so that the learning atmosphere will be more interactive. In addition, learning activities will also be more fun and able to attract and direct children's attention during the learning process. Therefore, the application of puppet media in learning activities will improve children's speaking skills and make learning more fun.

METHODS

This article falls into the category of classroom action research, which is a type of research intended to improve learning in the classroom. Classroom action research is a two-sided activity for teachers, namely as teachers and researchers (Sanjaya, 2016). This research is also a research method used to develop the quality of learning in the classroom. Therefore, classroom action research is research conducted by educators with the aim of improving the quality of learning in the classroom (Pandiangan, 2019). Planning, action, observation, and reflection are the four elements of classroom action research. The cycle model in this research is the Arikunto (2021) which is as follows;



Bagan 1. Suharsimi Arikunto's classroom action research model

The implementation of the research begins with the first stage, namely planning. Planning begins with making lesson plans, preparing stories based on themes, preparing puppet media that match the story, preparing child observation sheets. The second stage is the implementation stage in which the researcher tells the story using puppet media in accordance with the story being read. The third stage is the observation of the improvement of children's speaking after being stimulated through the use of puppet media in storytelling activities. The last stage, reflection, in which the researcher and the collaborator team review the success rate of the implementation of the learning process

This study involved ten kindergarten B students aged five to six years at Putroe Nahrisyah Kindergarten in Lhokseumawe City, consisting of six boys and four girls. Children's ability to communicate through puppet media was measured through observation sheets.

Table 1. Rubric for Observation of Children's Speaking Ability

NO	Indicators of Children's Speaking Ability
1	Children are able to express their feelings after storytelling activities.
2	Children are able to repeat complex sentences
3	Children are able to ask questions about story content that was listened
4	Children are able to answer questions about the story
5	Children are able to mention the vocabulary that was listened
6	Children are able to express ideas to others
7	Children are able to mention colours and characters of puppet media was used.
8	Children are able to continue part of the story

In this study, asterisk criteria were used to measure children's speaking ability, namely Developing Very Well (BSB), Developing As Expected (BSH), Starting to Develop (MB), and Not Developing (BB). The observation results were calculated using the percentage formula from Paizaluddin (2013) which is shown as follows;

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100$$

P = Percentage

F = Frequency of success

N = Number of samples

Table 2: Criteria for the Success of Children's Speaking Ability

No.	Interval	Category
1	Developing Very Well (BSB)	★★★★
2	Developing as expected (BSH)	★★★
3	Starting to develop (MB)	★★
4	Underdeveloped (BB)	★

The success criteria for improving children's speaking ability will be measured based on the number of BSH and BSB successes using a percentage score, as for the assessment criteria as follows;

Table 3. Criteria for the Success of Children's Speaking Ability

Criteria	Description
BB	If the children's evaluation results are at the BSH and BSB stages 1-2 times
MB	If the children's evaluation results are at the BSH and BSB stages 3-4 times
BSH	If the children's evaluation results are at the BSH and BSB stages 5-6 times
BSB	If the children's evaluation results are at the BSH and BSB stages 7-8 times

RESULTS

Cycle I

According to the results of the evaluation of cycle I conducted by researchers on improving children's speaking skills through puppet media in class B Putroe Nahrisyah Kindergarten, Lhokseumawe City is as follows;

Table 4. Cycle I Observation Results

NO	Child Ability	BB	MB	BSH	BSB
1	Children are able to express their feelings after storytelling activities.	-	2	4	4
2	Children are able to repeat complex sentences	2	6	1	1
3	Children are able to ask questions about story content that was listened	-	1	7	2
4	Children are able to answer questions about the story	1	1	2	6
5	Children are able to mention the vocabulary that was listened	1	3	3	3
6	Children are able to express ideas to others	-	3	6	1
7	Children are able to mention colours and characters of puppet media was used.	-	2	3	5
8	Children are able to continue part of the story	2	2	6	-

Following the table above, it can be explained that for the first observation item, there were four children in the BSB and BSH categories, respectively, and two children were in the MB category. In the second assessment item, one child has reached BSB and BSH, six children are at the MB stage, and two children are in the BB category. In the third assessment item, two children had achieved BSB, seven children reached the BSH stage, and one child was at the MB stage. In the fourth assessment item, there were six children at the BSB stage, two children at the BSH stage, and one child in the MB and BB categories. While in the fifth assessment item, there were three children in the MB, BSH and BSB categories, respectively, and one child was still at the initial stage, namely BB. In the sixth assessment item, one child was already in the BSB position, six children were BSH, and two children were in the MB category. Furthermore, in the seventh assessment item, five children have obtained the BSB category, three children have reached the BSH stage and three children are at the MB stage. Next, for the eighth item, six children obtained the BSH category, two children were at the MB stage and two children were in the BB category.

The following table shows the results of the cycle I assessment of the improvement of children's speaking ability through puppet media;

Table 5. Frequency of Children Achieving BSH and BSB Abilities

NO	Sample	Ability BSH and BSB
1	Sample 1	4
2	Sample 2	6
3	Sample 3	8
4	Sample 4	4
5	Sample 5	6
6	Sample 6	3
7	Sample 7	7
8	Sample 8	7
9	Sample 9	2
10	Sample 10	8

From the table above, the percentage results can be analysed based on the achievement of children's success that has been obtained as follows;

Table 6. Percentage of Research Success in Cycle 1.

Criteria	F	(%)
BB	1	10
MB	3	30
BSH	2	20
BSB	4	40
Total	10	100%

The data above shows that children have reached BSH and BSB abilities as many as six children or 60%, MB three children or 30% and one person or 10% are still at the BB stage. because it has not reached the level of child completeness of 75-80%, therefore, research needs to be carried out in the next cycle.

Cycle II

Table 7. Cycle II Observation Results

NO	Child Ability	BB	MB	BSH	BSB
1	Children are able to express their feelings after storytelling activities.	-	-	1	9
2	Children are able to repeat complex sentences	-	6	2	2
3	Children are able to ask questions about story content that was listened	-	-	3	7
4	Children are able to answer questions about the story	-	-	3	7
5	Children are able to mention the vocabulary that was listened	-	3	2	5
6	Children are able to express ideas to others	-	3	4	3
7	Children are able to mention colours and characters of puppet media was used.	-	1	3	6
8	Children are able to continue part of the story	1	3	4	2

Based on the data above, it can be seen that the improvement in children's speaking ability after the implementation of cycle II is that in the first assessment nine children have reached the BSB stage and one child obtained BSH. In the second item, two children each have reached BSB and BSH, and six children are at the MB stage. In the third and fourth assessment items, seven children reached BSB and three children reached BSH. Whereas in the fifth assessment item, five children were at the BSB level, two children were at the BSH position and three children were at the MB stage. In the sixth assessment item, three children each were at the BSB and MB positions while the BSH position was achieved by four children. In the seventh assessment item, six children were in the BSB position, three children were BSH and one child was at the MB stage. As for the last item, two children have obtained the BSB category, the BSH stage is obtained by four children, and three children at the MB level, and one child is at the BB stage.

The results of the evaluation of children's speaking ability through puppet media in cycle II are as follows:

Table 8. Frequency of Children Achieving BSH and BSB Abilities

NO	Sample	Ability BSH and BSB
1	Sample 1	6
2	Sample 2	7
3	Sample 3	8
4	Sample 4	4
5	Sample 5	7
6	Sample 6	4
7	Sample 7	8
8	Sample 8	7
9	Sample 9	5
10	Sample 10	8

According to the table above, the results of the second cycle evaluation related to improving children's speaking ability will be described in percentage form as follows;

Table 9. Percentage of Research Success in Cycle II.

Criteria	F	(%)
BB	-	-
MB	2	20
BSH	2	20
BSB	6	60
Total	10	100%

The table above shows that eight children have reached the BSH & BSB level, which is 80%. Meanwhile, the MB criteria had two children or 20% and no children at the BB stage. From the results of Cycle II research, it shows a very large increase, namely the success rate of children reaching 80%. From the results of these percentages, this research has been completed in 2 cycles. This is in accordance with the opinion of Dymyati (2013) the level of completeness and success of children is 75%-80%. The results of research on cycle I and cycle II show that the use of puppet media can improve children's speaking skills.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research that has been analysed above, it can be described in one discussion that the application of puppet media in early childhood learning has shown that children are more dominant in achieving the category of developing as expected in the fourth assessment item, namely the child is able to answer questions about the story listened to by six children, while for the seventh item has five children able to mention the characters and characters in the puppet media displayed. while in the first assessment, four children were able to express feelings after storytelling activities through puppet media. As for other assessment items, they are still below average.

While in the second cycle has shown an increase in children's speaking ability. This can be proven that nine children have been able to express feelings after storytelling activities through the application of puppet media, seven children are able to ask about the content of the story they are listening to, seven children are able to

answer questions about the story they are listening to, five children are able to mention vocabulary, and six children are able to mention colours, characters, characters on the puppet media displayed. So this proves that there has been an increase in speaking ability in the category of developing as expected and developing very well.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted in two cycles, which the results of this study have shown an increase of 60% in the first cycle and 80% in the second cycle for the Developing As Expected (BSH) and Developing Very Well (BSB) categories. The puppet media applied in this study are fish, birds, frogs, rabbits, and turtles, which are displayed through storytelling activities. Puppet media with animal characters are very favoured and able to attract children's attention. However, teacher expertise is also needed in conducting storytelling activities as well as the teacher's ability to manage learning.

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