

Improving Writing Skills In Early Children

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Article History: Received, 25-08-2024 Accepted, 09-10-2024 Published, 07-12-2024	<i>Writing skills in early childhood are a crucial foundation for supporting success in education and literacy development. However, many young children face challenges in developing these skills due to a lack of proper stimulation and appropriate learning approaches. This study aims to enhance writing skills in early childhood by preparing them to meet future literacy demands. The research method used is qualitative with a literature review approach. Data were obtained through documentation from relevant books, articles, and journals. The findings indicate that children's writing development progresses through specific stages, starting from scribbling to recognizing letters and understanding spelling. Factors such as fine motor coordination, visual perception, and environmental support play significant roles in this process. Furthermore, reading and writing are mutually reinforcing, with writing often serving as the foundation of literacy skills. The use of contextual educational media, such as alphabet puppets, can significantly improve early reading and writing abilities. This study highlights the importance of the role of parents and teachers in providing developmentally appropriate stimulation to support children's writing skills.</i>
Keywords: <i>Language; Writing Skills; Early Childhood</i>	

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is a child who has just been born until the age of 6 years. This age is a very crucial age for the formation of a child's character and personality as well as their intellectual abilities (Yuliani, N, S. 2014). Meanwhile, according to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), early childhood is children in the age range 0-8 years. Early childhood is an age group that experiences an extraordinary process of improvement that occurs at the same time as the golden age. This age is the right time to understand how to stimulate children's growth well. Children's current mental health and development will have a big impact on their future. This means that this age is a good time to learn to understand each child well, according to Slamet in (Aisya and Amelia 2022).

Early childhood is someone who grows and develops rapidly for later life. Yuliani in (Juniarti and Nurlaeni 2017) during this period, children experience rapid growth and development from various points of view in the development of human life. Children are also a sensitive period because it is the first time that children learn about their surroundings. Early

childhood is a group that is in the process of growth and development (Wijana D Widarmi, 2013).

The aspect of child development is the main goal of education for early childhood, because it can be developed through early childhood education learning. Different aspects of development include language, where during language development children can express different reactions to various stimulation the child receives. According to Yahja (Budiman et al., 2023), language is a communication tool that includes various forms, such as writing, speech, gestures and facial expressions. Meanwhile, according to Santrock (Budiman et al., 2023), language is a form of communication, both oral and written, which is based on a system of symbols. Language consists of words that can be used according to rules to form sentences properly and correctly.

Language development has 4 (four) aspects, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing (Istiqoh, N. 2021). Writing is an important process as a milestone in the learning process at a later age. Aspects of early childhood development, namely fine motor development, one of which is writing activities (Chairunnisa, 2020). Fine motor skills that emphasize hand muscle coordination or hand flexibility are skills such as writing, because the ability to write requires fine motor skills that involve finger and eye coordination, such as drawing, cutting, throwing, throwing and catching balls, as well as playing games or objects (Riskayanti, 2021).

The ability to write is one of the basic skills that is important for children's development, especially at an early age. At this stage, children begin to understand the basic concepts of writing, which include the ability to write letters, words, sentences, and compose coherent stories. Writing not only functions as a communication tool, but also plays a role in children's cognitive, social and emotional development (Halliwell, 2018).

Writing in kindergarten according to the High Scope Child Observation Record, namely early writing or early writing. Early writing activities include children trying writing techniques using curves and lines as letters, imitating writing or imitating recognizable letters, writing their own names, writing several words or short phrases, writing varied phrases or sentences (Susanto, 2011, p. 91). This is in line with (Widyastuti, 2017, p. 112) which states that initial writing is more oriented towards mechanical abilities. Children are trained to be able to write (similar to painting or drawing) these symbols to make them meaningful.

Writing from an early age is an important process as a milestone in the learning process at a later age. Writing lessons given to early childhood are not learning to write in general, such as stringing words together. However, learning to write is adjusted to the stages of development. In Minister of Education and Culture Regulation no. 137 of 2014 concerning National Early Childhood Education Standards, namely Child Development Achievement Level Standards (STTPA) in the language development of children aged 4-5 years, the scope of early literacy is as follows; recognize symbols, recognize the sounds of animals/objects around them, make meaningful doodles and imitate (write and pronounce) the letters A-Z (Muthiah et al, 2020). The ability to write in early childhood begins with the way a child holds a pencil to scribble, but as they develop, children will concentrate their fingers to write better (Dhieni Dalam Chairunnisa, C., & Masyhuri, A. A. 2019).

Based on research by Aisy, A. R., & Adzani, H. N. (2019) entitled Development of Writing Skills in Children Aged 4-5 Years at Primagama Kindergarten, shows the problem that writing skills are not the main focus in Early Childhood Education (PAUD). As a result, many young children do not have adequate basic writing skills when they enter the next level of education. This problem shows the importance of improving writing skills in early childhood (AUD) as an

integral part of their education. Writing skills are not only related to fine motor skills, such as holding a pencil and forming letters, but also involve cognitive and emotional aspects, such as letter recognition, vocabulary development, and confidence in expressing through writing.

This research aims to improve writing skills in early childhood. This is important to prepare children to face the demands of learning at a higher level of education, as well as supporting literacy development from an early age.

METHOD

The research method used in this research is a qualitative method using a library research approach. Research data is obtained using documentation from relevant data documents, research results such as books, articles, journals that have references in accordance with the research. The sources for this research were obtained from various sources such as books and research journals. Therefore, this article covers the general process. Data analysis techniques are the techniques used in this research, which focus attention and select what is needed to present data and draw conclusions (Hasiana and Wirastania 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The experimental group was given learning using the learning method *outbound* such as marble relays, clog races and balloon races which are participated in by each student and given learning using conventional methods such as telling or giving direct examples of how to use each activity carried out.

CONCLUSION

1. Writing Readiness In Early Children

Writing is an ongoing activity so learning needs to be done continuously since kindergarten. This is based on the idea that writing is the basis for learning to write at the next level. Writing is not obtained naturally but through a teaching and learning process. To be able to write letters as symbols of sound, students must practice starting from how to hold a writing utensil. Children's language skills grow and develop due to the influence of those around them, who are of course closest to their mother, father and siblings. The development and growth of this language is slow and fast.

Writing ability generally starts from the development of speaking, then followed by the development of writing. Nurbaini quotes Vygotsky's (2020) opinion that there are three stages of a child's speech development which are closely related to the development of a child's thinking, namely the external, egocentric and internal stages. Furthermore, a child's speaking ability is closely related to his writing ability, this is because a child is said to have the ability to speak well.

Rofi'uddin and Zuhdi (2002) argue that beginning writing focuses on writing letters, writing words, using simple sentences, and punctuation (capital letters, periods, commas, and question marks). According to Gerde, Bingham, and Pandergast (2010), early writing ability is focused on the formation of letter recognition. The teacher acts as a supporter and offers various media for writing letters (for example pencils, word cards to write) and discusses the shapes of the letters to be written.

Children aged 4 to 6 years can rewrite the letters they see, write several short words, and can write their first name. Supported by Hurlock's opinion summarizes the developmental tasks of children aged 4 to 6 years to learn the physical skills needed for common play and

develop basic skills for reading, writing and arithmetic. Children aged 4 to 6 years have the ability to button clothes, build a tower 11 blocks high, draw something that is meaningful to the child and can be recognized by others, use finger movements during finger games, trace block pictures and write several letters, write first names, color with lines, hold a pencil correctly between the thumb and two fingers, draw people with nose hair, trace rectangles and triangles, cut simple shapes.

2. Stages Of Early Children's Writing Skills

The stages of children's writing development according to quote 6 include, according by Papalia (2008;346): a. Scribble Stage; at this stage, children begin to make signs using their writing tools. They begin to learn about written language and how to do it. Children make random (irregular) scribbles, the scribbles are often combined as if the scribbles never leave the paper. Parents and teachers at the writing out stage should provide. b. Linear repetitive stage: the next stage in writing development is the linear repetition stage. At this stage, children trace horizontal (horizontal) or perpendicular lines. In this stage, children think that a word referring to something big has a longer string than a word referring to something small. c. Random Letter Stage: at this stage, children learn about various acceptable forms of writing and use them to be able to repeat various words and sentences. Children produce lines containing messages that have no connection to the sounds of various words. d. Naming Letters; most children are usually very interested in the letters that form their own names. e. Name Writing Stage: At this stage, children begin to establish the relationship between writing and sound. The beginning of this stage is often described as writing names because children write names and sounds simultaneously. For example, they write "you" with "u". Children enjoy writing their own short names using examples they see in large or small letters. They begin to present various words with a graphic form that reflexively shows what they hear. The increasing development of children's vocabulary mastery and their ability to communicate with other people will have an impact on the development of their cognitive functions. The ability to communicate something such as the name of an object, person or animal using a large and regular vocabulary will reflect the child's ability to think about it. f. Stage of Copying Words and Finding Spelling: in the environment children like to copy words on posters on the wall or from their own word bags. Children aged 5-6 years are already using initial consonants.

3. Beginning Reading-Writing Skills

All of these components must be provided meaningfully and usefully so that children are able to read and write (Kostelnik, et. al., 2007: 296). Papalia supports the connection between these languages in developing early reading and writing skills. "Fathers who often tell stories and then children talk about various things they see around them, contribute to the emergence of literacy" (Papalia, 2008: 346).

Children's ability to read and write begins with the ability to listen and speak well and is done continuously. Three important aspects you must know about reading and writing (Seefeldt & Barbara, 2008: 321-323), namely:

- a. reading and writing is the development of reading and writing skills as well as creative and analytical actions in producing and understanding texts;
- b. literacy development begins long before children begin formal instruction in reading;
- c. Learning to read and write is important for children's success at school

Early reading and writing can be said to be an element that is the basis, foundation, or provision for children to achieve good reading and writing skills. Beginning reading and writing

includes eye and hand coordination, fine motor skills, the ability to identify symbols (letters), the ability to organize symbols, the ability to make doodles or write symbols, and understand the meaning of symbols (Musfiroh, 2009: 65). Literacy means the ability to read, write, speak and listen (Morrison, 2012: 260). This is in line with the opinion of Ferreiro and Teberosky "early reading and writing abilities are closely related to a person's language development, namely receiving (hearing, reading) and expressing (speaking, writing)" (Sudono, 2007: 12). Children express themselves in various ways, which are closely related to the expectations of their environment or respond to the environment prepared for them.

CONCLUSION

Writing is one of the language skills. Language skills include four components, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Of the four components, there is one component that must be trained continuously, namely writing ability. Of course, this ability will not come by itself, by training fine motor skills first, by training the small muscles in the fingers, hands and arms such as folding, rolling, cutting, coloring and drawing. Quantitatively, there is an increase in children's initial reading and writing abilities in each cycle as a result of the use of contextual alphabet puppet media. Quantitative data on changes in each cycle was carried out using the average percentage of children's initial reading and writing improvement.

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