



Identifying Language Learning Strategies for Children with Communication Disorder in New Normal Era

Totok Bintoro^{1*}, Fahrurrozi², Murni Winarsih³ 

^{1,2,3} Jakarta State University, Jakarta, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: tbintoro@unj.ac.id

Abstrak

Melatih kemampuan berbahasa bagi anak dengan gangguan komunikasi sangat membutuhkan strategi yang teruji secara optimal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali persepsi guru sekolah dasar inklusi terhadap penerapan strategi pembelajaran bahasa pada anak dengan gangguan komunikasi di era New Normal. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui survei terhadap 137 guru dan wawancara semi terstruktur dengan 24 guru sekolah dasar inklusi. Analisis data menggunakan survei kuantitatif dan analisis tematik data kualitatif. Hasil analisis ditemukan empat tema utama yaitu, strategi pembelajaran keterampilan menyimak, strategi pembelajaran keterampilan berbicara, strategi pembelajaran keterampilan membaca, dan strategi pembelajaran keterampilan menulis. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa strategi pembelajaran bahasa untuk anak dengan gangguan komunikasi sangat bervariasi mulai dari mendengarkan suara, mendengarkan berita, menulis dengan dikte, membaca gambar, mengapresiasi drama, bercerita, bernyanyi, dan masih banyak lagi. Namun, semua strategi pembelajaran keterampilan bahasa pada anak dengan gangguan komunikasi tidak akan berhasil tanpa keterlibatan guru, orang tua, dan masyarakat sekitar. Kita semua harus menyadari bahwa mengikuti tumbuh kembang anak adalah hal terpenting untuk mewujudkan tumbuh kembang anak yang optimal. Orang tua harus memiliki waktu yang berkualitas dan kemampuan untuk mendeteksi tumbuh kembang anak, terutama perkembangan bahasa dan komunikasi anak. Penelitian ini juga dapat menjadi acuan bagi peneliti selanjutnya untuk mengembangkan model pembelajaran yang sesuai untuk anak dengan gangguan komunikasi.

Kata kunci: Gangguan Komunikasi, Strategi Pembelajaran Bahasa, Sekolah Dasar Inklusif

Abstract

Practicing language skills for children with communication disorders is in dire need of optimally tested strategies. This study aims to explore the perceptions of inclusive primary school teachers on the implementation of language learning strategies for children with communication disorders in the New Normal era. Data was collected through a survey of 137 teachers and semi-structured interviews with 24 inclusive primary school teachers. Data analysis used quantitative surveys and thematic analysis of qualitative data. The results of the analysis found four main themes namely, listening skills learning strategies, speaking skills learning strategies, reading skills learning strategies, and writing skills learning strategies. The results of this study indicate that language learning strategies for children with communication disorders vary widely from listening to voices, listening news, writing by dictation, reading pictures, appreciating drama, telling stories, singing, and many more. However, all language skills learning strategies for children with communication disorders will not succeed without the involvement of teachers, parents, and the surrounding community. We all have to realize that following children's development is the most important thing to realize optimal child development. Parents must have quality time and the ability to detect children's growth and development, especially children's language and communication development. This research can also be a reference for future researchers to develop a learning model that is appropriate for children with communication disorders.

Keywords: Communication Disorder, Language Learning Strategies, Inclusive Elementary School

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language skills have a very important position. Without language, a person cannot communicate well orally or in writing in expressing ideas to others. Language skills cover four aspects, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Dewi et al., 2020; Supina, 2018). The four skills are interrelated and complement each other. Each language skill is closely related to the processes that underlie language because a person's language reflects his

thinking (L. M. Sadiku, 2015; Sharma & Puri, 2020; Supina, 2018). The more skilled a person is in language, the brighter and clearer his way of thinking will be. Referring to the curriculum, the purpose of studying the Indonesian language and literature is a program to develop knowledge, language skills, and positive attitudes toward the Indonesian language (Aziz, 2011; Nugrahanto & Zuchdi, 2019). The program is reflected in Indonesian language learning activities using competency standards consisting of two aspects, namely aspects of language and literature skills, each of which is divided into sub-aspects of listening or listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Aydoğan & Akbarov, 2014; Rao, 2019; Lorena Manaj Sadiku, 2015).

The process of improving learning in schools is determined by many things, one of which is the ability to speak spoken and written. Language has an important role in the intellectual, social, and emotional development of students and is a supporter of success in learning all fields of study. Language learning is expected to help students get to know themselves, their culture, and other people (Sandra & Kurniawati, 2020; Thompson & Rubenstein, 2014). In addition, Indonesian language lessons can help students' express ideas, and feelings, participate in society and discover and use their own analytical and imagination skills. In terms of learning Indonesian, the teacher plays an important role as a central agent for developing learning models in the classroom. Less varied and inappropriate learning models will not achieve the desired goals properly.

For children with communication disorders, their language skills are not the same as children in general. To have high language skills, children with communication disorders must practice hard so that they can stimulate their language skills. This is because communication disorders are disorders with the inability of individuals to send, receive, and process information. Communication disorders related to problems with input can impair an individual's ability to receive messages (Hasanah, 2021; Kirk et al., 2009; Rudd et al., 2007; Wankoff & Cairns, 2009). Difficulties in processing information can lead the child to misunderstand or interpret messages. In some cases, processing difficulties affect children's ability to understand the nonliteral meaning of words, so children lose the nuances of communication. The executive function also oversees and monitors communication, and if there is a problem with attendance, communication will be difficult. The emotional context of communication can also contribute to an individual's inability to send, receive, or understand messages. When children experience communication disorders, it is very difficult to socialize with friends, so children are easily distrusted, and more anxious. Failure to interpret context or setting appropriately can also lead to problems with communication and pragmatics of language use.

Previous researches state that language disorder is a disorder of understanding and/or the use of spoken, written, or other symbol systems. This disorder may involve (1) language form (phonology, morphology, syntax), (2) language content (semantics), and/or (3) language function in communication (pragmatics) in any combination (Fitriyani et al., 2019; Kuder, 2003; Kuşdemir & Bulut, 2018). Language disorders are defined as deviations (or discrepancies) from typical development and/or proper use of language. Moreover other previous research also state it is important- want to identify language disorders as early as possible because these disorders can cause serious problems in learning and socialization. Children who have problems with language production (expressive language) may be reluctant to participate in activities that require the use of language (Hamson Z, 2019; Srivastava et al., 2017). They may use more mature language measures than their peers. They may also have difficulty relating personal experiences or retelling stories.

Language disorders can vary from mild (e.g., problems using word endings but are easily understood by others) to severe (e.g., extreme difficulty understanding what others are saying or being understood by others). Often children with language and communication

disorders have problems with problems that may be caused by their language difficulties (Kuder, 2003; Smieskova, 2017). They may have difficulty interacting with their friends. They may be shy and reluctant to approach other people. Other children may ignore them or, worse, reject their friendship efforts. Some children with language and communication disorders have difficulty with cognitive function. They may have problems organizing information to remember, maybe less attentive than their peers, and may be generally slower to respond. Sometimes children with language and communication difficulties exhibit behavioral problems. These problems may be the result of their frustration with communication or may be the result of other people's responses to their difficulties. Some children with language and communication disorders have physical disabilities that cause or exacerbate their difficulties. For example, children with cleft palate often have difficulty with articulation, and children with mild (Riden et al., 2018; Titarenko & Little, 2017).

The way to identify communication disorders is by looking at the language obtained in the context of the initial conversation between the mother (caregiver and child). A neonate also has a limited set of behaviors that will help him start communicating. Newborns communicate inadvertently before birth, usually with kicks expressing discomfort from the mother's position. The state of the baby influences the mother's behavior. A mother or caregiver learns the right time to play with the newborn thereby providing communication to the baby. The subtlety of the signal and the responsiveness of the baby to the caregiver strengthen further communication. For example, if the status of the newborn is hungry or cold, the baby will give a communication signal to cry (Kuder, 2003; Schachter et al., 2016).

Based on the description above, researchers are interested in discussing more deeply related to language learning strategies for children with communication disorders. This research seems to show different things from the previous one, the research subjects are elementary school students who have communication disorders and the research method uses qualitative description as well as the sample population in the Rawamangun area whose background is certainly different in terms of socio-economic and emotional with previous research. In addition, this study aims to describe the implementation of language learning strategies to be applied to children with communication disorders. Thus, it can be assumed that this research is important to study so that it can be used as a scientific reference for educational practitioners involved.

2. METHOD

This research is a qualitative study with the type of case study. In this study, language learning strategies in children with communication disorders will be explored more deeply by involving a variety of information to obtain valid findings. The literature search was carried out to enrich the input and insight of researchers on the language skills of children with communication disorders. In this case, the language learning strategy is focused on 3 themes, namely listening learning strategies, speaking learning strategies, reading learning strategies, and writing learning strategies that can be applied to children with communication disorders. Data collection was carried out in stages, through online surveys and then semi-structured interviews to obtain more in-depth data (Braun et al., 2021; Dağhan & Akkoyunlu, 2014).

The participants in this study were 137 teachers at inclusive primary schools spread across DKI Jakarta. Given the physical distancing policy during this pandemic, a purposive sampling technique was used by distributing online questionnaires using Google Forms. Descriptive data on demographic characteristics including gender, length of teaching experience, educational background, and teacher education level are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant's Characteristic

	Frequency	%
Gender		
Female	87	63.50
Male	50	36.50
Working years as a teacher		
1-5 years	68	49.64
5-10 years	20	14.60
10-15 years	49	35.77
Educational background		
Primary teacher education	113	82.48
Special education	24	17.52
Level of education		
Bachelor's	128	93.43
Master's	9	6.57
Others	-	-

Data collection was carried out in two stages (Creswell, 2017; Crozier et al., 1994).. The first step was carried out by surveying 137 inclusive elementary school teachers in the DKI Jakarta area as respondents. The survey consists of 10 questions in the form of short answers, using Google Forms. The questions are prepared based on the literature relevant to the research objectives, which include aspects of language skills. After the survey data was collected, a transcript of the results of each respondent was made, and the initial code was generated. The second stage of the collection was conducted using semi-structured open-ended questions with 24 of the 137 inclusive primary school teachers who responded to the survey. Researchers made interview guidelines based on the initial code from the first stage data.

Data analysis followed the thematic analysis steps outlined. After the themes are analyzed, the integration of these themes is made into the form of a thematic map (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maxwell & Reybold, 2015). This thematic map shows the organization of concepts according to various levels, and potential interactions between concepts are then developed. The analysis team then went over all the code and its categorization, as well as possible integrations between the codes so that the code could be streamlined. This inductive technique allows the identification of themes that participants provide in response to research questions. Research theme findings are show in Figure 1.

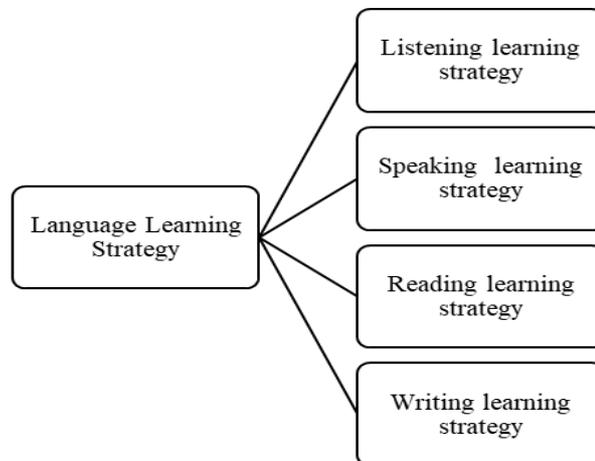


Figure 1. Research Theme Findings

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Listening Learning Strategy Survey

In this survey, it was found evidence that teachers practice listening skills of children with communication disorders using a variety of methods, as show in [Figure 2](#).

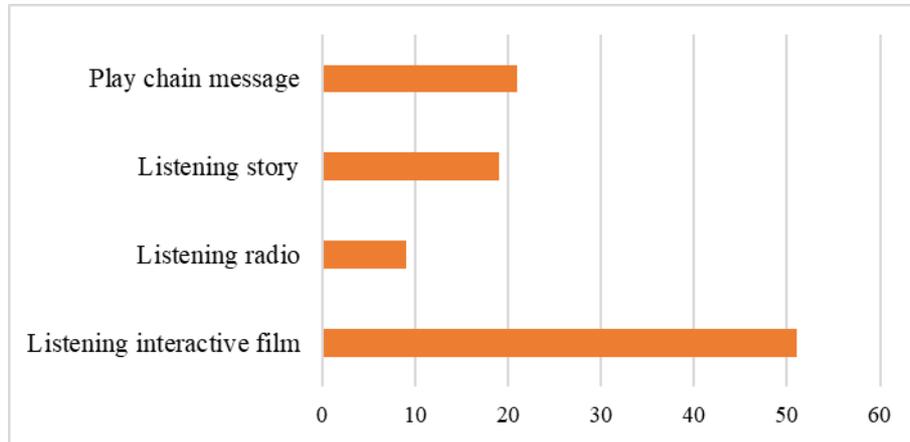


Figure 2. Listening Learning Strategy Survey Score

[Figure 2](#) above shows the percentage of categories of listening learning strategies that are often used in learning activities (n=137). As many as 51% of teachers use interactive movie listening strategy which is the majority of strategies compared to other strategies. As many as 21% of teachers use the strategy of playing chain messages. This is followed by the use of story listening strategies by 19% and 9% of teachers choosing radio listening strategies.

Speaking Learning Strategy Survey

In this survey, it was found evidence that the strategies for practicing speaking skills in children with communication disorders are as follows. As show in [Figure 3](#).

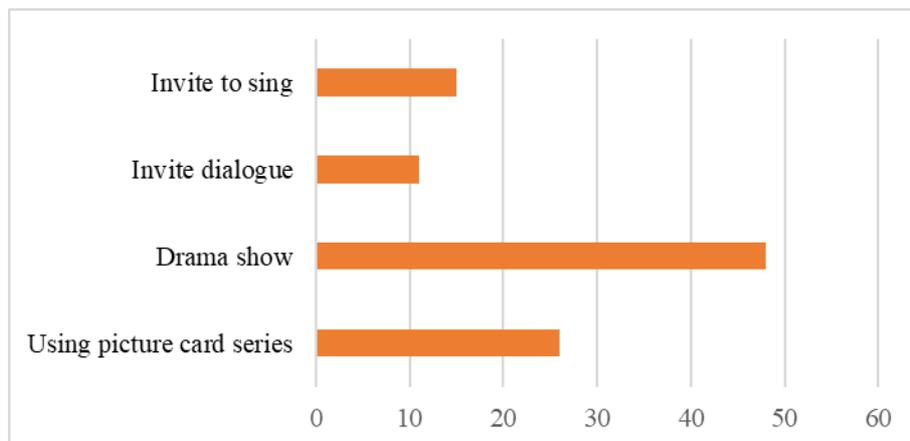


Figure 3. Speaking Learning Strategy Survey Score

Based on [Figure 3](#) shows the percentage of categories of speaking learning strategies that are often used in learning activities (n=137). As many as 48% of teachers use drama performance strategies which are the majority of strategies compared to other strategies. As

many as 26% of teachers use the strategy of using serial picture cards. Followed by the use of singing strategies by 15% and 11% of teachers chose the strategy of inviting dialogue.

Reading Learning Strategy Survey

In this survey, it was found evidence that the strategies to train reading skills in children with communication disorders are as show in Figure 4.

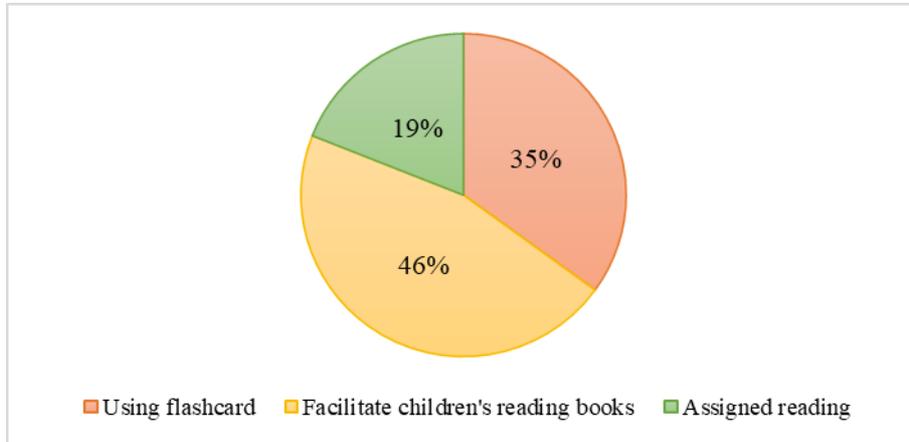


Figure 4. Reading Learning Strategy Survey Score

Based on Figure 4 above shows the percentage of categories of reading learning strategies that are often used in learning activities (n=137). As many as 46% of teachers facilitate children's reading books to practice reading skills. As many as 35% of teachers use a strategy using flashcards. Followed by the use of strategies assigned reading assignments by 19%.

Writing Learning Strategy Survey

In this survey, evidence was found that the strategies for practicing writing skills in children with communication disorders are as show in Figure 5.

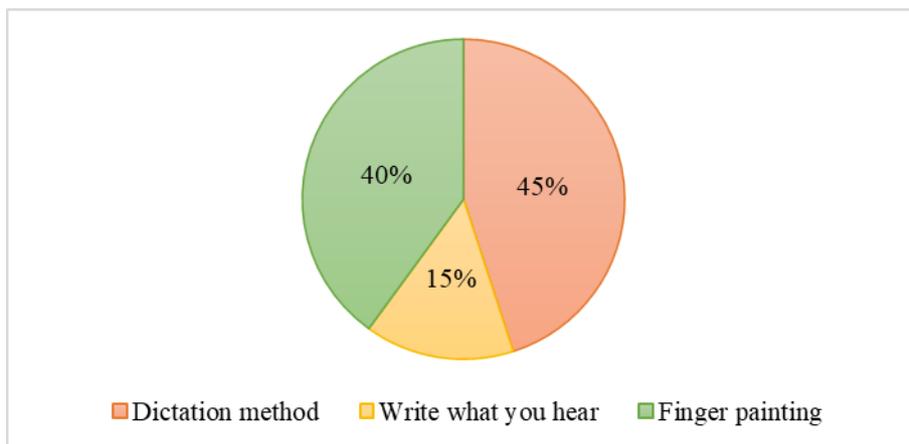


Figure 5. Writing Learning Strategy Survey Score

Based on Figure 5 above shows the percentage of categories of listening learning strategies that are often used in learning activities (n=137). As many as 45% of teachers practice writing skills using the dictation method. As many as 35% of teachers use the strategy of writing what they hear. Followed by the use of a fingerpainting strategy of 15%.

Interview Results

Learning Listening Skills

Listening skill is a form of receptive language skill. Especially in terms of listening, a teacher must innovate in learning so that students do not tend to be bored following listening lessons. Listening is the first step in the language learning process. Listening is also a skill that humans first learn and master. Concerning this listening skill, students must be able to remember, relate and interpret a series of facts that are heard or read (Riga Zahara, 2018; Zulkaida et al., 2005). Base on teacher's opinion most of teachers use various methods to stimulate listening skills for their students who have communication barriers. The reason is almost the same which is to find a method that is efficient and fun for them.

Learning Speaking Skills

Every student has the opportunity to have high speaking skills. Speaking skills are acquired through supportive learning activities and the surrounding environment. Speaking skills do not always focus on making speeches, hosting events, or telling stories. Speaking skills will gradually develop through simple communication that students make with their environment (Karunia et al., 2019; Käsper et al., 2018). Therefore, the student learning environment must support it. The role of the teacher here is very important to create a comfortable learning environment and support the learning process. As for this study, many teachers use serial image media to practice speaking skills in children with communication disorders. Base on the interview found that the teacher invites more students with this communication disorder to an activity that contains many elements of speaking. This is done so that they are confident and dare to speak up and are not afraid to be wrong. Meanwhile, if the pronunciation is wrong, it can be directly trained by the teacher.

Reading Skills Learning

Reading skills are basic skills that are very important for human life. Reading skills as a means to capture the news in writing. Reading skills are considered receptive language skills. It is called receptive because using reading someone will get new information, knowledge, knowledge, and experiences. Reading skills are also important for children with communication disorders. They need extensive knowledge and information. As teachers, we must facilitate them and the search for knowledge and insights that are beneficial to their lives. There are several ways that teachers can stimulate the reading skills of children with communication disorders, Base on interview result found that most teachers stated that how to train children's reading skills could be stimulated by facilitating children's reading books or could also use flashcards.

Learning Writing Skills

Writing is not just an activity of copying written forms or the skill of moving writing instruments on written media, but how a writer visualizes or expresses what he sees, hears, and thinks into written symbols. Writing is also a transfer of thoughts and feelings in the form of language symbols. Writing is a multisensory activity which is a combination of seeing, hearing, touching, and feeling activities that writing readiness needs to be instilled from an early age, so that later if there is a delay or deficiency in one aspect of writing skills, the handling will be known early (Aprinawati, 2017; Walet, 2011). Several teachers describe how to train writing skills for children with communication disorders most of the teachers stated that each child with a communication disorder has different difficulties in learning to write. The strategies used include the dictation method, getting children used to holding writing instruments correctly, writing in the air, rewriting what they hear, and much more.

Discussion

Language skills are needed for all individuals. This is because language skills are a model for developing students' intellectual, social, and character abilities. Language is the most important tool for communication. To be able to communicate well, four language skills must be trained in students. The more often you practice, the more fluent students will be and the better their communication will be. Therefore, students must improve their four language skills through language learning. Language learning in schools is intended to improve communication skills and good and correct language skills. One of the supporting aspects to improve good and correct communication and language skills is to master a lot of vocabulary. The more words the students master, the smoother and better the communication and language used. Vocabulary is an important part that cannot be separated from the learning process (Knauf, 2018; Noor et al., 2016).

With the same understanding of words, teachers and students can interact and communicate fluently in the teaching and learning process in class, but if students' understanding of words is lacking, what happens is, on the contrary, the teaching and learning process will be hampered and learning materials will not be well received by students. Mastery and understanding of vocabulary in language learning absolutely must be improved so that the teaching and learning process can run smoothly and students can develop language skills and skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Meanwhile, previous research explains that the quality of a person's language skills depends on the quantity and quality of the vocabulary they have, the more likely they are to be skilled in the language (Ismiyati & Saputri, 2020; Mardiana & Hidayat, 2019).

In terms of listening learning strategies, the teacher trains them more by using the interactive film listening method. Through interactive film media, students' imagination will be involved and can stimulate their reasoning power so that they can improve their listening skills. Listening skills are a complex skill process possessed by children with communication disorders. It is in line with previous research that state teachers need to invite students with communication disorders to engage in memorizing activities such as listening to voices, news, instructions, announcements, language sounds, song cassettes, explanations, reports, speeches, and announcements so that they are accustomed to responding and appreciating what they hear (Wahyuni et al., 2019).

As for the strategies for learning speaking skills, teachers mostly use flashcards and picture series for children with communication disorders. Children with this barrier are easily distracted by their concentration so they need media that are colorful and attract the brand's interest to be observed (Ashman & Snow, 2019; Irjananta, 2018). In the strategy of learning reading skills, the teacher more often gives them the freedom to read the books they like. Therefore, teachers usually create mini-libraries or reading corners in their classrooms. In the strategy of learning writing skills, the teacher stated that every child with communication disorders has different difficulties in learning to write. The strategies used include the dictation method, getting children used to holding writing instruments correctly, writing in the air, rewriting what they hear, and much more (Dinehart, 2015; Huy, 2015).

All language skills learning strategies for children with communication disorders will not succeed without the involvement of teachers, parents, and the surrounding community. This is because their communication is very dependent on the language vocabulary they have acquired during their lives. Children who cannot develop language skills may have difficulties with vocabulary mastery, auditory memory, mastery differences, simple task problems, and the ability to follow sequences. Language difficulties like this are often grouped into children with special needs (special education), namely children with communication disorders. Understanding typical language development patterns are critical

to understanding when and how problems with language can manifest themselves (Elmahallawi & Gabr, 2021; Lisa et al., 2019; Torres et al., 2020).

Thus, all learning activities that are implemented cannot be separated from the role of teachers, parents, and the surrounding community. Teachers serve as facilitators, mentors, and educators who are obliged to stimulate the language skills possessed by children at school, while parents play a role in training them to be proficient in the language at home. The surrounding community is also important in influencing children's language. We all must realize that following children's development is the most important thing to realize optimal child growth and development and parents have quality time and the ability to detect children's growth and development, especially children's language development (Dunst et al., 2014; Fox et al., 2002; Patrikakou, 2016).

These studies recommend for teachers, parents, and the community must play an active role in stimulating children's language skills. A supportive community environment will affect children's language vocabulary more broadly. Parents also need to guide and facilitate children's learning while teachers must be creative and innovative in creating fun language learning for students. Thus, this study can provide an overview of teachers' perceptions of language learning strategies for children with communication disorders in this new normal era. This research can be a reference and input for teachers in training language skills for children with communication disorders. In addition, this research still has many limitations, especially in research scope, it is hoped that further research will be able to deepen the scope of this research so that it is wider and deeper.

4. CONCLUSION

Learning language skills in children with communication disorders varies greatly on the methods, media, and strategies. In listening skills, the teacher trains them more by using the interactive film listening method. Through interactive films, students' imaginations will be involved and can stimulate their reasoning power so that they can improve their listening skills. In speaking skills learning strategies, teachers mostly use flashcards and picture series for children with communication disorders. Children with this barrier are easily distracted by their concentration so they need media that are colorful and attract the brand's interest to be observed. In addition, teachers also like to hold drama performances to practice their language skills. As for training the reading skills of children with communication disorders, teachers often give them the freedom to read the books they like, for example by providing picture story books, novels, encyclopedias, and other interesting children's reading materials. As for practicing writing skills, the strategies used by the teacher include the dictation method, getting children used to holding writing instruments properly, writing in the air, rewriting what they hear, and many more.

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