Teacher Strategy in Improving Vocabulary Mastery Ability Through Letter Card Media

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ABSTRACT

Learning in early childhood receives attention so that children's abilities do not progress, one of which is language learning. This research analyzes teachers' strategies for improving vocabulary mastery through letter cards. This qualitative research uses research subjects, namely 3 teachers and children aged 4-5 years, with 25 children. The data collection methods used in this research were observation techniques and interviews with teachers as primary data sources. The analysis technique used in this research is a qualitative descriptive analysis technique referring to the opinions of Miles and Huberman, with three activities: qualitative data analysis, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The results of the research show that the use of letter card media is known to have several contributions to the learning process, one of which is that the use of letter cards can be a medium for letter recognition. Letter cards are also effective for helping children recognize, remember, and understand alphabet letters. Implementing letter card media in early childhood education significantly impacts language development. It can improve vocabulary mastery and practice reading and writing skills by observing the letter cards and children trying to imitate them. The research concludes that letter card media can improve vocabulary mastery abilities in young children.

1. INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education plays an important role in early childhood development from the start because children are experiencing a process of rapid growth and development in this period, which is very important in preparing children for higher school. Early childhood education basically aims to provide aspects of child development including physical, intellectual, social emotional and language development (Alam & Lestari, 2020; Hartati, 2021). In practice, education in Indonesia starts from early childhood to
tertiary level. Early childhood education usually starts from early childhood education institutions. Education obtained at the early childhood level is education that is indicated to stimulate and help educate children to develop various potentials both physical and psychological which include moral and religious values and social emotional, cognitive, language, physical or motoric, artistic independence (Apriyanti, 2019; Satriana et al., 2021). Advances in science and technology enable educators to convey knowledge and information to young children efficiently in the classroom. To create a conducive learning environment where young children can learn actively, teachers and the people they consider must be developed as more creative and imaginative facilitators (Abdurrosyid, 2019). A creative teacher will be able to utilize the abilities of each child he teaches. By starting to create lots of interactive media, to make it interesting for children so they don't get bored quickly in learning (Ilhami et al., 2019; Syamsiyah & Diana, 2022).

However, in reality in the field, early childhood education has not been implemented optimally. Based on the results of observations, there are several lessons in early childhood that receive attention so that children's abilities do not progress, one of which is language learning. Early childhood children cannot understand learning if the teacher does not choose the right learning strategy, therefore it is necessary to stimulate them through learning activities while playing. However, in reality found in preschool Pertiwi, early childhood learning has not been implemented optimally. Based on the results of research observations in Timpik Village, researchers conducted research on preschool Pertiwi, there are some children who have difficulty distinguishing between the letters bd and pq. In general, the language skills of young children are still very minimal and not in accordance with the developmental tasks they should be assigned. In communicating, they tend to be less adaptive, less able to convey their feelings or emotions in a good and correct way, and still experience various difficulties in pronunciation, in pronouncing letters into vocabulary. Observations on preschool Pertiwi, which was carried out by researchers, was by using existing learning media which is rarely done by teaching staff to improve children's vocabulary mastery, namely by using letter cards as a learning medium. Basically early childhood is the golden age or often called the golden age. Children need the right stimulus to stimulate optimal growth and development in the future, firstly formal education for early childhood, the curriculum taught must be fun and appropriate to the child's level of development (Nasser et al., 2021; Susantini & Kristiantari, 2021). The curriculum at PAUD Pertiwi focuses on developing children's talents, motor skills, social and emotional abilities. However, due to developments over time, a curriculum for recognizing letters and numbers has been created. At the educational level teachers are needed who are competent, patient and creative so that children do not get bored while learning (Jampel & Sudatha, 2018). The teacher was sued for making learning media fun and creative.

The solution to overcome this problem is by using learning media. Learning media are all types of communication tools used to communicate information from sources to students in a planned way to create a conducive learning environment and enable the completion of the learning process in an efficient and successful manner (Wahyundari & Handayani, 2021). Learning media is a message delivery technology that can be used for objective learning. The benefits of media will increasingly be felt by the teaching and learning process (Saputra et al., 2022). The use of media is expected to have a positive impact, such as developing a more conducive learning process, providing feedback in the teaching and learning process, and achieving the best results. One example of media that is effective in introducing letters within the framework of teaching early childhood children to write and read is letter card media. One of the tools known to educators as letter cards uses paper, in the form of squares or rectangles, long, thick which have been written or stamped with certain symbols or letters of the alphabet. Card media is the main component in the learning process, and is a mainstay teaching tool for teaching staff. Apart from being a cheap and simple card medium, it also encourages children's involvement so that it can help teaching staff to achieve their educational goals. Children learn to recognize patterns in language, such as the sounds of letters and words. This can help them understand the concept of phonemes (language sounds) and basic concepts in language. Then the use of letter card media can improve children's speaking and thinking skills, letter card media can be used to stimulate conversation and creative thinking. When children learn new words, they also learn how to combine them in sentences and stories. This helps them develop better speaking and thinking skills.

You can use letter card media motivating children, using letter cards in the form of interactive activities can increase children's motivation to recognize, remember and understand letters. The implementation of letter card media in early childhood education has significant positive implications for their scientific development. This helps children build a strong foundation for further learning in various scientific fields during their growth and development. Previous research findings state that letter card media is very useful for learning because it can make it easier for children to understand the lessons being taught. Letter cards are a medium that can improve children's mastery of Indonesian vocabulary. Through the medium of letter cards, teachers can help build vocabulary, awareness and develop children's letter
recognition (Hoerudin, 2023). The use of visual media and alphabet cards can help children at Rainbow Naibonat PAUD Kupang Regency be able to read (Amseke et al., 2022). The novelty in the research is the discovery of other benefits from using card media, namely that researchers not only make letter cards which can help children’s language development, but researchers also make cards which contain numbers and can be used as a counting aid for children. This research aims to increase vocabulary mastery of young children. As well as explaining how the use of card media can improve children's reading skills. The aim of this research is to analyze teachers' strategies for improving vocabulary mastery skills through letter cards. It is hoped that the existence of card media can stimulate children's cognitive abilities. Those who are involved in activities using letter cards often experience better cognitive stimulation.

2. METHOD

This research uses descriptive qualitative research techniques, using observation and interview data collection methods. For this research, the subjects taken were teachers and students in Kindergarten A class aged 4-5 years at PAUD Pertiwi. Researchers use structured observation using observation guidelines, in other words, qualitative research looks at everything as it exists in the natural background by trying to understand and interpret events based on social significance (Wardani et al., 2013). The data source in the research refers to primary data, there are 3 teachers who teach Kindergarten A children aged 4-5 years with a total of 25 children and secondary data which refers to the RPPM and RPPH at PAUD Pertiwi. The analysis technique used in this research is a qualitative descriptive analysis technique which uses data from observations and interviews, as well as journal articles that have been carried out by previous research. The data analysis technique was carried out by referring to the opinions of Miles and Huberman, with three activities, namely qualitative data analysis, data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. Data validity in this research uses source triangulation. Data source triangulation is exploring the truth of certain information through various methods and sources of data acquisition. The interview instrument grid related to teacher strategies in improving vocabulary skills through letter cards is presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Strategy in Using Letter Card Media</td>
<td>Teacher knowledge regarding letter card media</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use of letter card media</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact of Using Letter Card Media</td>
<td>Children's vocabulary increases through letter cards</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Children can arrange letters</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Students' attitudes during learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disadvantages of Using Letter Card Media</td>
<td>shortcomings in the application of letter card media</td>
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3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Early childhood education plays an important role in the learning process. Early childhood has special learning methods that are different from adult learning. In fact, education provided for early childhood prioritizes children playing while learning. Early childhood has special learning methods that are undoubtedly different from adult learning. Children do not yet realize that the activities they do while playing are a learning process. Learning using letter cards is an example of the application of learning while playing. Technological advances are periodically accompanied by changes in learning media. Learning demands and needs also influence what learning media are developed. A number of experts categorize various types of media, such as Bretz who divides media into three categories, namely media that can be seen (video), heard (audio), and moving media. Additionally, visual media is divided into three categories: verbal symbols, graphic images, and visual images. Letter cards themselves, which are included in the form of visual image media, are one of the teacher’s strategies for improving vocabulary mastery skills. Respondents’ teacher strategies in using letter card media are presented in Table 2.

Table 1. The Research Instrument Grid

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Table 2. Table of Teacher Respondents' Strategies in Using Letter Card Media

Based on the results of interviews, 3 teachers stated that before using letter card media as learning media, they use blackboards and letter posters as media.
Learning at levels early childhood it needs to be implemented through the playing while learning method, so that children don’t feel bored and also so that children can process the learning material optimally. Letter cards are an effective medium for introductory letter activities for young children. Letter card media is very useful for learning because it can make it easier for children to understand the lessons taught by the teacher. Apart from that, letter cards are also a learning media facility that is environmentally friendly and easy to find or make. Preschool one of them is Pertiwi, which applies the learning while playing method (agency learning while playing). Using letter card media in the learning process requires planning and adaptation to student needs. Teachers must be flexible in their approach, in this research there are several strategic steps for teachers to improve vocabulary mastery through letter cards. First, select the appropriate letter card. Teachers need to choose letter cards that suit the child’s development level and needs. Letter cards should include letters that are relevant to the lesson at that time. Second, material preparation. Teachers must prepare learning materials using letter cards. This includes planning activities or games to use with the letter cards. The material is in accordance with the RPPH that has been created by teachers at PAUD Pertiwi.

Introduction to letter cards, Teachers need to start by introducing letter cards to children. This may include recognition of letter shapes, letter sounds, or both, depending on the learning objectives. Use of visuals and auditory, during the learning process with letter cards, teachers must utilize visual and auditory elements. Showing letter cards while saying the sounds clearly and repeatedly will help students associate letters with their sounds. Games and activities, teachers can integrate games and activities that involve letter cards, such as matching letters, stringing words together, or playing letter bingo games that have been carried out at PAUD Pertiwi. Group or pair interaction, the teacher encourages children to interact in small groups or pairs using letter cards with the aim of increasing children’s participation and collaboration in the learning process. Individual support, teachers provide individual support to children who need it, such as children who still lack focus in the learning process and children who experience speech delay. Some children may need more help than others in understanding letters and sounds. Evaluation of progress: Teachers need to regularly evaluate students’ progress in understanding letters and their reading abilities. This can be done through small tests, or individual conversations. Creativity and imagination, teachers stimulate children’s creativity by inviting them to use letter cards to create stories or new words. This will help children involve their imagination in the learning process. With the teacher’s strategy in the classroom learning process, it can help children improve their vocabulary mastery through letter cards and increase children’s enthusiasm in the learning process. The children’s activities with the teacher in using letter card media are presented in Figure 1 and Figure 2.
This institution applies letter card media in early reading learning specifically for pronouncing letters into vocabulary. This was proven after researchers made observations on students preschool Pertawi aged 4-5 years and interviewed by the teacher preschool Pertawi that the application of letter card media has a positive impact on children's reading development, especially in pronouncing letters into vocabulary. Results of interviews with teachers preschool Pertawi which was processed using data validity techniques, namely through source triangulation, is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Table of Respondents on the Impact of Using Letter Card Media

| Based on the results of interviews, 3 teachers stated that they used letter cards as a medium learning has not been found to have any negative impacts. |

Before implementing letter cards as a learning medium, children had difficulty memorizing and distinguishing letters. Especially the letters bd and pq in children aged 4-5 years. This of course hinders the learning process of early childhood in the classroom. Letter card media is made using simple tools and materials, including waste paper that is still suitable for use, scissors and markers. Teachers found shortcomings in using letter card media in learning activities, one of which was that the media was easily damaged if exposed to water. Apart from that, there is also a positive impact in using letter cards as a learning medium, one of the positive impacts is PAUD students Mother Earthable to recognize letters and be able to process vocabulary well. This is based on the results of researchers' interviews with teachers preschool Pertawi after implementing letter card media as a learning medium. The results of interviews with teachers are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Table of Respondents' Shortcomings in Using Letter Card Media

| Based on the results of interviews, 3 teachers stated that there were shortcomings in using this media. One of them is that the media is easily damaged if it comes into contact with water. In this case the teacher has a strategy to maximize media production, by laminating the media so that it is not damaged if exposed to water. |

Based on the results of interviews and observations, children's ability to recognize letters through the letter card media used has increased. This shows that the use of letter card media has a positive impact on the development of children's ability to recognize letters. Apart from that, several changes were also found during the learning period using letter card media, including children appearing more enthusiastic.
in the learning process, because the method used was appropriate to their age and early childhood education patterns. Then the child looks very curious and enthusiastic about the learning media used. Children's interest in learning and completing assignments is influenced by teaching strategies and how the child's play space is designed. Letter cards are certainly very useful in their use as learning media for early childhood children at Pertiwi PAUD. If you look at the shape of the letter card, it falls into the category of graphic media or two-dimensional media, namely media that has length and width and is specifically used to convey educational messages. This media can be used to express facts through the use of words, numbers, and symbols or symbols. Based on the results of data analysis, it shows that letter card media influences the development of the ability to recognize number symbols in kindergarten children. The impact of using letter card media on early childhood preschool Mother Nature is very influential on the development of early reading skills and vocabulary mastery.

Discussion

Early childhood education plays an important role in the learning process. Early childhood has a special way of learning that is different from adult learning. Education carried out in early childhood prioritizes children playing while learning (Alwi & Aulia, 2023; Yasbiati et al., 2017). Early childhood has a special way of learning that is undoubtedly different from adult learning. Children do not realize that the activities they do while playing are part of the learning process. Learning using letter cards is an example of applying the learning while playing method. Additionally, visual media is divided into three categories: verbal symbols, graphic images, and visual images (Laaser & Toloza, 2017; Puspitasari & Murda, 2018; Rizki Tiara, 2020). There are four roles of learning media especially visual media among the functions of attention, emotion, cognition, and behavioral compensation. Graphic media or animated LCDs can attract the attention of pupils and students, letter cards are graphic media in the form of pictures of letters that can attract the attention of young children in the learning process. The teacher's strategy for improving vocabulary mastery skills in early childhood uses the play while learning and learning while playing methods. Using letter cards as a learning medium can increase children’s interest in mastering vocabulary. Learning with letter cards is considered effective, the application of playing methods assisted by letter card media can improve reading skills (Havisa et al., 2021; Muawwanah & Supena, 2021). Using letter card media can improve the ability to recognize the alphabet in children aged 4-5 years (Rahmawati & Puspitasari, 2022). This shows that the use of letter card media itself has a positive impact on the development of children's ability to recognize the alphabet. Apart from that, several changes were also found during the learning period using letter card media, including students appearing more enthusiastic in the learning process, because the method used was appropriate to their age and early childhood education patterns. Then the students looked very curious and enthusiastic about the learning media used. Children's interest in learning and completing assignments is influenced by teaching strategies and how the child’s play space is designed. Learning at the early childhood level needs to be carried out through the playing while learning method, so that children do not feel bored and also so that children can process learning material optimally (Antariani et al., 2021; Durtam, 2022).

Letter cards are an effective medium for recognizing letters in early childhood. Letter card media is very useful for learning because it can make it easier for children to understand the lessons taught by the teacher. Apart from that, letter cards are also a learning media that is environmentally friendly and easy to find or make. PAUD Pertiwi is one of the institutions that carries out learning while playing. This institution applies letter card media in early reading learning, especially for pronouncing letters into vocabulary. This was proven after researchers made observations on early childhood Pertiwi students aged 4-5 years and interviewed teachers at preschool Pertiwi that the application of letter card media has a positive impact on children’s reading development, especially in pronouncing letters into vocabulary. Previously, when letter card media was applied as a learning tool, students experienced difficulty in memorizing and differentiating the letters bd, pq, especially for children aged 4-5 years. This certainly hinders the learning process of early childhood in the classroom. There are four roles of learning media especially visual media namely the function of attention, emotion, cognition and compensatory behavior (Rahmawati & Puspitasari, 2022).

Media as a tool in the learning process is a reality that cannot be denied because the presence of media can help the teacher's task in conveying messages from the learning material given by the teacher to students (Abdullah, 2017). Letter cards are a medium that can provide instructions and stimulation to children to help them remember everything related to the visuals on the cards (Amseke et al., 2022; Fauziddin & Fikriya, 2020). In addition, letter cards can improve a child's cognitive abilities and help him remember information better. There is an increase in early reading abilities in children aged 4-5 years using letter card media (Ayuni & Setiawati, 2019; Susantini & Kristiantari, 2021). The more interesting the media used, the better the impact on children's development, this is in accordance with the concept of learning in early childhood, one of which is playing while learning and learning while playing as well as learning that is
interesting and fun. This further strengthens that the use of interesting media in early childhood learning will have a beneficial effect on the growth of children's skills (Azhima et al., 2021; Susantini & Kristiantari, 2021). To increase the efficiency of the media used, learning techniques and play environments must be linked to the use of learning media. Letter cards used in the learning process have one positive stimulus that helps children's growth and development, namely by providing learning materials that can help children understand the information provided by the teacher by using appropriate learning resources. Letter cards provide advantages such as being easy to carry everywhere, practical, easy to make. Apart from that, letter cards are a very useful medium because teachers and children can make them together. Children often recognize visuals more easily than words, which is one sign that visual representations can provide efficient memory encoding. To overcome the obstacles in the learning process that have been mentioned and help children improve their learning outcomes by using letter card media. The use of letter card media can create a more innovative learning atmosphere for children's ability to recognize letters (Fauziddin & Fikriya, 2020; Putri Wangi & Gede Angung, 2021).

The letter card media developed in this research has met the practicality criteria in its use for teaching and learning. The letter card media developed at PAUD Pertiwi can be said to be practical and can be used to help students improve their skills in learning languages. Letter card media has received excellent qualifications and can be applied based on the following factors, letter cards, especially in real form, can stimulate students' interest in learning (Hartati, 2021). An interesting learning environment is a positive motivation for student development. With the help of appropriate learning materials, children are helped to understand the material presented by the teacher. Letter cards are of course very useful in their use as learning media for early childhood in PAUD Pertiwi, and if you look at the shape of the letter cards, they fall into the category of graphic media or two-dimensional media, namely media that has length and width and is specifically for conveying educational messages. This media can be used to express facts through the use of words, numbers and symbols. This finding is strengthened by previous research findings stated that the use of learning media in the form of letter cards shows an increase in the reading abilities of class 1 students (Firdaus, 2019). Learning letter cards can improve children's ability to recognize letters, so this activity can be carried out in other PAUD institutions (Adi Putra et al., 2018; Fidlyanti, 2020; Utami et al., 2021). The implementation of early childhood learning must be in accordance with the provisions that children must learn while playing, so that introducing letters to children is done through games that can make children more enthusiastic. Then schools and teachers must provide at least learning media that supports children in learning, such as letter cards and other things that attract children's interest in learning. The implications of this research can stimulate children's vocabulary mastery abilities. Those who are involved in activities using letter cards often experience better stimulation of children's vocabulary mastery abilities.

4. CONCLUSION

Use of letter card media on early childhood preschool Mother Nature is very influential on the development of early reading skills and vocabulary mastery. Teacher strategies for improving vocabulary mastery of young children through the use of letter cards as a medium. In this case, teachers can improve vocabulary mastery with the strategy of learning while playing, and playing while learning. The very high enthusiasm of children in the classroom supports the teacher in the learning process. Apart from that, the practicality of using letter card media in this research has positive implications that can be seen, namely teachers help children recognize, remember and practice vocabulary mastery skills as well as reading and writing for early childhood.

5. REFERENCES


