



Implementation of the Language Skills Development in Online Learning in Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra Province

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Abstract

One aspect of early childhood development that must be stimulated from an early age is language skills. Language skills play an essential role for children in communication to convey messages to one another. However, at this time, the development of children's language skills is not optimally stimulated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in the learning process being carried out online. Previously, the learning process for early childhood was carried out face-to-face, but during this pandemic, learning is done online. It is influential on the growth and development of early childhood, especially children's language. Thus, this study aims to describe how the implementation of language skills development in online learning in Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, Bintang Bayu Sub-district, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra. The method used was descriptive analysis research, employing a qualitative approach, carried out at the Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten from April to June 2021. Based on the initial observations made at the Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, the researchers saw that many children had developed their language skills. The results of this study revealed that during the pandemic, the implementation of language skills development in online learning at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten continued as expected. Even though the learning process was carried out alternately online and offline, the teacher still stimulated the development of language skills well. The methods and media utilized by teachers varied so that children did not feel bored when carrying out learning activities during the pandemic.

Keywords:

Implementation, Development, Language Skills, COVID-19

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Abstrak

Salah satu aspek perkembangan anak usia dini yang mesti distimulasi semenjak dini ialah perkembangan kemampuan bahasa. Kemampuan bahasa berperan penting bagi anak. Komunikasi merupakan cara menyampaikan pesan antara satu sama lain. Pada saat ini perkembangan kemampuan bahasa anak tidak terstimulasi dengan optimal karena adanya wabah pandemi covid-19 yang mengakibatkan proses pembelajaran dilaksanakan secara daring. Proses pembelajaran untuk anak usia dini sebelumnya dilakukan secara tatap muka, tetapi pada masa pandemi saat ini pembelajaran dilakukan secara daring. Hal ini sangat berpengaruh kepada tumbuh kembang anak usia dini terutama bahasa anak. Tujuan penelitian ini ialah untuk menggambarkan bagaimana pelaksanaan pengembangan kemampuan bahasa dalam pembelajaran daring di Taman Kanak-Kanak Jelita Silau Dunia Kecamatan Bintang Bayu Kabupaten Serdang Bedagai Sumatera Utara. Metode yang dipakai ialah penelitian deskriptif analisis dengan memanfaatkan pendekatan kualitatif, penelitian ini dilaksanakan di taman kanak-kanak jelita silau dunia pada bulan April hingga Juni 2021. Berdasarkan observasi awal yang peneliti lakukan di TK Jelita Silau Dunia peneliti melihat bahwa anak-anak tersebut banyak yang sudah berkembang kemampuan bahasa anak. Hasil dari penelitian ini yaitu selama masa pandemi pelaksanaan pengembangan kemampuan bahasa dalam pembelajaran daring di Taman Kanak-Kanak Jelita Silau Dunia tetap berjalan sesuai harapan. Karena walaupun proses pembelajaran dilakukan secara bergantian daring dan luring guru tetap melakukan stimulasi pengembangan kemampuan bahasa dengan baik. Metode serta media yang dipakai guru pun bervariasi hingga anak tidak merasa jenuh ketika melakukan kegiatan pembelajaran selama masa pandemi.

Kata Kunci:

Pelaksanaan, Pengembangan, Kemampuan Bahasa, Covid-19

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INTRODUCTION

Early age is a very basic early period in the process of child development. At this time, children are called the golden age, where the growth and development of children go very rapidly. This statement is supported by Sujiono's (2013) opinion that every process grows and develops in various aspects of fast time at an early age, and the range of development of human life is being experienced. With this, children need to be stimulated in every aspect of child development.

Early childhood education basically includes all actions taken by educators and parents in developing aspects of child development. These include aspects of religious, moral, motor, language, social, emotional, cognitive, and artistic values. From all these developments, it is necessary to stimulate and provide appropriate services, both from schools and families, to bring children into quality human resources. Every day, children will interact with other people or their peers (Kemendikbud, 2015).

One aspect of child development that must run optimally is the language aspect. Language skills play a vital role for children. Language is a means of communication in everyday life, both verbally and non-verbally (Sumaryanti, 2017). Communication is a way of conveying messages between one another.

There are two categories of language skills: receptive and productive. Receptive language skills are applied to understand something conveyed through spoken and written language. It includes listening and reading activities. Meanwhile, productive language skills are applied to be conveyed through spoken or written language. It covers writing and speaking activities. Thus, here, the researchers focused on the children's speaking ability.

Fitriyani & Barokah (2021) stated that language development for early childhood has a goal so that children can communicate verbally with their environment. The child's environment in question is the environment around the child, including parents, peers, and adults. Early childhood language skills are acquired and learned by children naturally to adapt to themselves and their environment.

Thus, children can socialize, interact, and respond to others around them (Mulyasa, 2017).

Nevertheless, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, various government policies have been implemented to stop the spread of the virus in Indonesia. The government is trying to urge people to keep their distance and avoid crowds. In this case, education is one of the areas affected by the pandemic. With the government's appeal, the Ministry of Education also issued a policy by closing schools and changing the learning process into an online learning system. However, the learning process carried out during the pandemic is considered ineffective because online learning sometimes raises various problems, such as a difficult internet network. It is one of the barriers for children to communicate with other people.

Dhieni et al. (2005) explained that language is one of the fundamental factors that distinguish humans from other creatures because, through language, an individual has the main capital to interact with other individuals. The interaction aims to build social relationships that understand each other. Furthermore, Firyati, Haenilah, and Sasmiasi (2016) reiterated that language is crucial for humans, and early childhood is the most appropriate time to stimulate all children's language skills.

Previously, the learning process for early childhood was carried out face-to-face or in person, but during this pandemic, learning is done online. It is influential on the growth and development of early childhood, especially in the aspect of children's language, because language is a communication tool used by humans to interact with each other, both orally and in writing. Therefore, principals and teachers at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten have developed children's language skills even though the learning process was carried out online. The teacher made plans before carrying out activities, such as making semester programs, RPPM (Weekly Learning Implementation Plan), and RPPH (Daily Learning Implementation Plan). The teacher's active role in language development was also seen in the provision of the media used. Here, the teacher prepared the media that would be used according to the material to be delivered,

adjusting to the themes, subthemes, and indicators.

Based on observations made by researchers in several kindergartens, Kindergarten A located in Siahap Village, Bintang Bayu Sub-district, a place where researchers carried out educational field practice was still underdeveloped in developing children's language skills. Many children in Kindergarten A were still not interested in attending school because they did not dare talk to their friends and were only close to their parents. Then, the child did not want to do morning activities, such as conveying their feelings before school. Moreover, with the current conditions where the teaching and learning process was conducted online, children's language only developed with their parents or the home environment.

In Kindergarten B, children's language skills were still not developed. Children still had to be encouraged by the teacher at all times to express desires while at school. Then, the language of the kindergarten children where the researchers lived, namely TK C, was also still not developed because many children still could not interact and socialize with their peers. In fact, if a child's language development is problematic, it will impact other aspects of development, such as religious, moral, social, emotional, physical, motor, cognitive, and artistic values.

Based on the preliminary observations on January 12, 2021, at the Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, the researchers observed that many children in the Jelita Kindergarten were already able to socialize with their peers. Even more, children dared to ask things directly to the teacher and carried out learning and teaching activities before the class, such as reading prayers, singing, and telling their experiences, without being asked by the teacher, showing that children's language skills have developed well. Here, children were not only able to interact with their environment but also to master formal forms of language, such as children being able to speak in public and make speeches or read poetry.

In the learning process, the teacher gave children the opportunity to develop their abilities according to their stage of development. It can be said that educators

prepare children for learning experiences in a broad sense to stimulate the development of these potentials to the maximum, including the provision of linguistic experiences. The teacher also gave motivation to children to actively use various language features. Besides, the school received various awards for competitions, such as speech competitions, poetry, and others. Based on the explanation described above, the researchers are interested in conducting a study entitled Implementation of the Language Skills Development in Online Learning in Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra Province.

METHODS

Descriptive analysis research and a qualitative approach were used in this study, the results of which were in the form of speech, writing, and behavior of the people observed. This method aimed to gain a deep understanding of human and social problems and describe a fact or event that occurred in the field in real and without being made up.

This research was conducted at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, Bintang Bayu Sub-district, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra. The research class that the researchers used was class B1 with the teacher Mrs. Lis. Because the condition of the school is right on the side of a major road, the marching activities were not carried out according to the recommendations of the Serdang Bedagai Sub-district Education Office. It was so that they did not spend too long in school activities but still did not lag in learning activities. Then, the recommendation from the Education Office is that offline schools are only allowed three times a week. Thus, schools had a policy that the learning process was interspersed with online.

The researchers conducted research directly to schools and made observations regarding the development of language skills in online learning at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten. The implementation time of the research was April to June 2021. In the observation instrument, there were several activities observed to obtain data for research, including 1) Planning the implementation of language skills development, 2)

Implementation of language skills development in online learning, 3) Methods of implementing language skills development in online learning, 4) Media for language skills development in online learning, and 5) Evaluation of language skills development.

In the interview instrument, the questions that the researchers asked the informants to obtain the necessary information were given in accordance with the observations made to obtain the appropriate results: 1) How did you plan before implementing the language skills development? 2) Have the language skills development activities been guided by the themes, sub-themes, and indicators? 3) How was the implementation of the activities that you did? Were they in accordance with the plan or not? 4) What method did you use in developing children's language skills? 5) How was the media for the implementation of language skills development used? Was it interesting for children? 6) How did you evaluate the implementation of language skills development?

The research result instruments were then developed or analyzed, adjusting to the method used. In this case, qualitative and quantitative research have significant differences; for example, qualitative research uses an interview research instrument, while quantitative research utilizes a questionnaire instrument.

When carrying out the research, the researchers made observations from April 22 to June 18, 2021. In conducting the observations, the researchers were guided by the observation format made to obtain the appropriate data. Meanwhile, the interview was conducted on June 14 and 15, 2021, where the questions were asked according to the interview format that had also been made. Questions were then asked directly to the school principal and the teacher who taught. Through the answers given by the informants, the researchers obtained results to be analyzed added by the observation results attained.

Then, data analysis is an effort to find and systematically organize the recording of the results of observations, interviews, and others, to increase researchers' understanding regarding the topics being studied and as discoveries for others. In this study, the

researchers carried out data analysis, consisting of 1) data reduction, summarizing, sorting, and focusing on the important things, adjusting to the data that had been obtained. 2) Presenting the data was carried out in a brief description, charts, and related categories. 3) Conclusion is the final stage of a research period in the form of an answer to the formulation of the problem. In this regard, the researchers described the conclusions on the information obtained from the interview and observation results until the research data provided answers to the problems.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Early childhood education is given intentionally to children from birth to the age of six to stimulate all aspects of the child's growth and development. Each level of education has its meaning. The same is true of early childhood education. According to Law No. 20 of 2003 regarding the National Education System Article 1 paragraph 14, it can be understood that early childhood education is a coaching effort intended for children from birth to the age of six, carried out through stimulating education in children to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that they are prepared to enter further education (Depdikbud, 2003).

Sudarsana (2017) explained early childhood education (PAUD) as an education aimed at children, which have an essential role in their education. Through PAUD, children's energy can be channeled, and they can play through various physical activities, hand skills, or music. In addition, interpersonally or intrapersonally, they can interact.

Furthermore, the communication tool used by humans verbally and non-verbally is language. Yusuf (2016) conveyed that language is an innate ability that a person has based on biologically acquired initial knowledge. Besides, according to Rusniah (2017), language skills are one of the areas of developing basic abilities that teachers have prepared to improve children's abilities and creativity according to their developmental stages.

According to Darnis (2018), language skills are different from speaking skills. Language is a grammatical system that is

semantic (grammar and sentences), while speaking is an expression in the form of words; language is receptive (understood and accepted) and expressive (stated). Examples of receptive language are listening and reading, while expressive language is speaking and writing information to be communicated to others.

Hemah, Sayekti & Atikah (2018) asserted that language development is related to cognitive development, which means that intellectual factors greatly influence the development of language skills. At the time of the baby, the ability of the intellectual level is not yet developed and is still very simple.

Meanwhile, according to Lubis (2018), language is a sound sign system agreed to by certain community members to collaborate, communicate, and identify themselves. Thus, language is a means of communication between people in the form of symbols or sounds produced by human speech.

As a means of activity in relationships, language has a significant role in human life as an expression of what individuals think so that others understand.

Based on observations made by researchers from April 22 to June 18, 2021, the research results obtained were grouped and then analyzed. Also, based on the results of field notes from observations, interviews, and documentation, an analysis was carried out on the language skills development in online learning at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten. Furthermore, it can be stated that the development of children's language skills was optimally stimulated. It could be seen from field findings by researchers such as:

Planning The Implementation of Language Skills Development

At this stage in online learning at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, the researchers found that before teachers carried out learning activities, they first prepared plans so that later the planned goals could be achieved. The plans made by the teacher in developing children's language skills included semester programs, RPPM, and RPPH.



Figure 1. Teacher Activities in Designing RPPH

Implementation of Language Skills Development in Online Learning

The researchers found that the activities carried out by the teacher were related to the development of children's language skills. It can be seen in the activities on the day of distribution of report cards for children's learning in that semester. The teacher asked the children to speak in front of their friends and the guardians of the students at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, represented by one of the children.



Figure 2. Activities for Implementing Online Learning

Methods of Implementing Language Skills Development in Online Learning.

The methods used by teachers in developing language skills in online learning were storytelling, conversation, direct practice, habituation, observation, and assignment. The method most often employed by the teacher was direct practice. The methods utilized by the teacher were quite varied. It can be seen in

the teacher's activities using methods adapted to the activities. Teachers did not use only one method in children's language ability development activities.

Media for Language Skills Development in Online Learning.

The researchers observed that the use of the media by the teacher was in accordance with the design made. The media utilized by teachers varied; the teacher made some, and some were already provided by the school. The media employed by teachers in developing children's language skills were also interesting for children. It can be seen from the children who were very active during activities. Before the activity started, many children were already curious. No child did not want to participate in the activities designed by the teacher.



Figure 3. Learning Activities Utilizing Media

Evaluation of Language Skills Development

After implementing the language skills development in online learning at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, the teacher evaluated to determine the level of success of teachers and children in carrying out activities. The evaluation carried out by the teacher on the activities of developing language skills in online learning was by process assessment.

In the next stage, after finding the results through observation, interviews, and documentation, the researchers discussed the language skills development in online learning. The research results obtained were used to obtain the desired results, then linked to the relevance associated with the discussion. The results gained from observations, interviews, and documentation revealed that

the implementation of language skills development in online learning at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten had been well stimulated. Even due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools continued to carry out learning activities well. Thus, the children's language skills development continued to develop even though the learning process was interspersed online and offline. It is in accordance with the recommendation from the Serdang Bedagai Sub-district Education Office not to spend too long in school activities, but learning activities were also not left behind. The recommendation from the Education Office is that offline schools are only allowed three times a week. Thus, schools had a policy that the learning process was interspersed with online.

The teaching and learning process at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten was every Monday to Saturday from 07.30-10.00 WIB. The activity began with the children, who had arrived at school, being checked for body temperature and washed their hands by the teacher first. After that, at 08.00, the children entered their respective classes to carry out activities. Then, the teacher led the children to read a prayer before studying along with the parents. At 08.30 WIB, the children started doing activities that developed their language skills using the RPPH that the teacher had designed in advance. After that, at 09.30, the children took a break for 15 minutes, then the children went back into the classroom. Then, the teacher evaluated the activities that had just been carried out with the children. At 10:00, children could go home when their parents picked them up.

Meanwhile, the online learning process was via WhatsApp groups. School started at 07.30 as usual. In the beginning, the teacher greeted the children while waiting for all the children to stay in the group. Then, at 08.00 WIB, the teacher started the lesson by sending a video so that the children could see the teacher explaining the theme and sub-theme of the day. In the video, the teacher also explained what activities they would carry out, namely RPPH, on that day. At the end of the activity at 10.00, parents were asked by the teacher to invite their children to tell stories or talk about the activities that the children had just done. Therefore, even in online learning conditions,

children's language skills were still well stimulated.

By looking at the learning activities designed by the principal and teachers, it had been neatly arranged. Even in a pandemic, teachers still carried out a not boring learning process for children. Hence, the development of children's language skills continued to develop well because the learning activities carried out during the pandemic were in accordance with the learning plans designed by the teacher, only for a limited period.

CONCLUSION

From the research results carried out by researchers related to the implementation of developing language skills in online learning at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten, it can be concluded that the activities of developing children's language skills had been carried out well. In the language skill development activities carried out by the teacher, it can be seen from the children's ability to carry out various activities, such as looking for fire extinguishers, making a sequence of numbers, forming a radio picture, singing the picture of Indonesia Raya in a video, drawing scenery in the village, and telling the contents drawn.

The ability of children to carry out various activities was related to the teacher's role in designing plans, using methods, utilizing media, and evaluating. The implementation of language skills development activities in online learning at Jelita Silau Dunia Kindergarten can also be seen from the planning, implementation, and evaluation activities.

Since this research only had the scope of implementing language skills development in online learning in Kindergarten at Jelita Silau Dunia, it is hoped that further researchers will examine all aspects of child development.

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