



IMPROVING CHILDREN'S VOCABULARY THROUGH STORYTELLING

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Abstract

: Vocabulary, as one of the most important parts of language, can be improved through many ways, including through storytelling. This study aims to reveal the effectiveness of storytelling in increasing vocabulary of children. Seven children with the age of 9-16 years old at Wahyu Ilahi orphanage participated in this research. This study used quantitative and experimental methods conducted using a scientific approach by giving a pre-test and post-test. The number of questions was 10 numbers related to children's stories that became material in storytelling, that is "The Story of The Little Red Hen" by Mary Mapes Dodge. For data analysis, the results of the pre and post-test were compared in order to see the improvement of children's knowledge in relation to vocabulary in the story from the t-test given. The results showed that storytelling is effective in improving children's vocabulary. It can be seen from the average presentation of the correct answer from pre-test to post-test is increasing from 46% to 76%.

Keywords: *Children's Literature; Storytelling; Vocabulary Learning, Orphanage*

Abstrak

Kosakata, sebagai salah satu bagian terpenting dalam bahasa, dapat ditingkatkan melalui berbagai cara, termasuk melalui mendongeng. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui efektivitas mendongeng dalam meningkatkan kosakata anak. Tujuh anak dengan usia 9-16 tahun di Panti Asuhan Wahyu Ilahi berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif dan eksperimen yang dilakukan dengan pendekatan ilmiah dengan memberikan pre-test dan post-test. Jumlah soal sebanyak 10 nomor yang berkaitan dengan cerita anak yang menjadi materi dalam storytelling, yaitu "The Story of The Little Red Hen" karya Mary Mapes Dodge. Untuk analisis data, hasil pre-test dan post-test

dibandingkan untuk melihat peningkatan pengetahuan anak terkait kosakata dalam cerita dari t-test yang diberikan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mendongeng efektif dalam meningkatkan kosakata anak. Hal ini dapat dilihat dari rata-rata presentasi jawaban benar dari pre-test ke post-test yang meningkat dari 46% menjadi 76%.

Kata Kunci: Sastra Anak, Mendongeng, Pembelajaran Kosakata, Panti Asuhan

A. INTRODUCTION

The development of spoken language is one of the most impressive achievements of children that occurs during the first 5 years of life (Genishi, 1988 in Isbell et al., 2004). Children aged 4 until 10 years often have an enormous vocabulary of thousands of complex spoken language words that they understand from the environment and then represent in the sentences they use at age 5. Early childhood classrooms are the perfect place to enrich early childhood language, children tend to capture more new vocabulary from what they hear both in the school environment and in the home environment. One of the many ways that teachers and parents train children's listening and comprehension skills is by reading storybooks. Reading storybooks is one of the most widely studied ways, many studies have shown that children make significant progress in a variety of areas through shared experiences in storybooks. Reading stories benefits children in two ways, by providing them with language and literacy skills. So we can conclude from how reading storybooks for children can not only increase children's vocabulary but also be able to improve literacy skills that are used for everyday life.

Through story reading, children can increase their vocabulary knowledge, from the stories they read their vocabulary increases. Langan, (1997:451 in Farizwati, 2016) says that a good vocabulary is an important part of effective communication. A large vocabulary can make a better speaker, listener, reader, and writer. Storytelling "fosters cultural awareness and offers values and beliefs. It stimulates children's curiosity and encourages them to learn more about the world" (Georgiou & Verdugo, 2010 in Maasumeh, 2014). Stories are a suitable tool to aid the learning process. In addition, learners can progress gradually in the construction and reconstruction of their own knowledge. Children are better able to understand stories even if they do not know the meaning of any of the words used in the story because they (children) can use the predictive power of text and listening to help them guess the meaning, they also use the storyteller's gestures, posture, and intonation to process and understand the meaning of the story being told.

This research is also supported by previous research. One of them is a research conducted by Farizawati (Farizwati, 2016) under the title "Using Storytelling for Teaching Vocabulary" This research focuses on the use of Storytelling Technique in teaching vocabulary to young learners, students in Grade Five at SDN I Peukan Pidie, Sigli. The experimental group students sat in a group, listened and discussed the story, and retold the story in their group. In the discussion, the students acquired new vocabulary from the story. After that, they

had to retell the story in their own words. The learning materials were "My Hobby, Are You Hungry, Parts of the Body and a Monster". Lina Lafta Jassim (2019) under the title " A Literature Review on the Impact of Games on Learning English Vocabulary to Children" in this paper focuses on the positive as well as negative impacts of using digital games in the vocabulary learning process for children. Although there are negative aspects of digital games, these games have benefits in learners' learning process, especially, when they are used in wrong way. By reviewing the literature, this study has proposed that teachers must pay attention to the time and materials during designing or select the game. Though games have also disadvantages on the vocabulary learning process, using them can help children to acquire their lesson with entertainment. In using games, children are able to remember all the vocabulary without difficulty. Games are used not only for making children successful in EFL classes but more importantly, for motivating them and increasing the cooperation among them.

From the first study, the similarity is the storytelling technique in teaching vocabulary for young learners, students in fifth grade through groups are read a story and later they have to retell the story using their own words. While the second study used games as learning media to improve vocabulary although it has some negative impacts from this media. While this study will examine vocabulary development in children in the same way, namely reading children's stories in the form of fables in the form of "The Little Red Han" and how children capture new vocabulary in the story, here researchers also use pre-test and post-test methods to determine the effectiveness of storytelling to increase children's vocabulary, especially at the age of 7 to 12 years old at the Wahyu Ilahi orphanage. Joyce, (2011 in Maasumeh, 2014) investigated the impact of song picture books on children's vocabulary acquisition in kindergarten. She found that song picture books had a positive impact on improving students' vocabulary acquisition in kindergarten.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Second language acquisition is the process by which individuals acquire a new language after their first language has already been established. This process can be complex and multifaceted, as learners bring with them previous knowledge and experiences from their native language and culture (Asif & Zhiyong, 2020). In the realm of second language acquisition, vocabulary acquisition plays a crucial role in the overall language learning process (Barcroft, 2004). Research has shown that vocabulary acquisition is not only important for communication and overall language proficiency, but it also impacts learners' understanding of grammar and their perceptions of the language's relative importance (Oxford & Scarcella, 1994).

Vocabulary acquisition is universally acknowledged as a critical aspect of second language learning. Lewis and Nation emphasize the significance of vocabulary mastery, stating that without sufficient vocabulary knowledge, learners will struggle to effectively listen, speak, read, write, and translate in the target language (Barcroft, 2004).

Numerous researchers have highlighted the central role of vocabulary acquisition in language learning. Schmitt argues that lexical knowledge is crucial for communicative competence and the acquisition of a second language (Barcroft, 2004). Read also emphasizes the importance of vocabulary learning, stating that words are the basic building blocks of language and form the units of meaning from which larger structures are formed, such as sentences, paragraphs, and whole texts. In line with these views, Decarrico states that vocabulary acquisition is central to language acquisition in general, whether it is a first, second, or foreign language. ## Vocabulary Acquisition through Storytelling In the context of second language acquisition, storytelling is considered as an effective and engaging approach to vocabulary acquisition. Research suggests that storytelling provides a meaningful and contextualized way for learners to encounter new vocabulary, as stories can create an immersive and memorable learning experience.

Research has shown that storytelling can be an effective tool for vocabulary acquisition in second language learning (İnal & Cakir, 2014). Using storytelling as a method for vocabulary acquisition allows learners to engage with language in a meaningful and contextualized way. By connecting vocabulary to a narrative or a story, learners are more likely to remember and internalize new words. Additionally, storytelling provides opportunities for listening and reading comprehension, as well as speaking and writing practice (Morsali, 2016).

C. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is an educational program on improving children's vocabulary through storytelling. This activity is none other than to measure and improve children's vocabulary by using quantitative and experimental methods carried out with a scientific approach by using two sets of variables, the first set as a constant, and the other set as a measure of the difference between the two sets. This is reinforced by the opinion of Fathoni (2000: 160 in Qistina Syahidah, 2012) that the experimental method is a research method for studying the influence of certain variables on other variables, through trials under special conditions that are deliberately created.

The target of this activity is the children of Wahyu Ilahi Orphanage. The implementation time was Thursday, December 7, 2023, at Wahyu Ilahi Orphanage, Romangpolong Village, Somba Opu District, Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi. The tools used are whiteboards and drawing tools. As well as several instruments used in the form of tests and documentation.

The target population of this activity is 7 children aged 9 to 16 years old. Five of them were boys, and the other two were girls. The first step taken by the researcher was to give a pre-test to the children with a total of 10 questions, and the time given was 15 minutes. After the researcher got the first test results from the pre-test, the researcher told the children's book, "The Story of The Little Red Hen" (Dodge, 1895) with the aim of correcting and improving the pronunciation or writing of each word contained in the t-test question. Furthermore, after telling the story of the children's book by Mary Mapes Dodge, the researcher asked the

children verbally again about the vocabulary they got from the story and how to pronounce and write the vocabulary in question. After conducting the pre-test and telling the story, the children reviewed what they had learned. The researcher then conducted the post-test with the same number of 10 numbers and the same questions as in the pre-test, with the time we gave them for 15 minutes. After conducting a series of procedures above, the researcher analyzed the data obtained quantitatively using experimental procedures to answer the researcher's questions using data from the pre-test and post-test. The indicator of success in this study is the increase in vocabulary and the mention of children who follow the provision of vocabulary improvement education through storytelling media.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data below (Table 1) show the characteristic of respondent in service learning.

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents at Wahyu Ilahi orphanage

Variable	n	%
Age (Year)	1	14%
- 16	1	14%
- 15	1	14%
- 14	1	14%
- 13	1	14%
- 12	1	14%
- 10	1	14%
- 9	1	14%
Total		100%
Gender		
- Boy	5	71%
- Girl	2	29%
Total	7	100%

This research was conducted at Wahyu Ilahi Orphanage. In this study, there were 10 participants who participated in the service process, but only 7 people fulfilled the criteria for this study. Where the criteria specified that participants must take the pre-test and post-test that have been prepared by the researcher. There were 2 participants who did not take the pre-test and 1 participant who did not take the post-test. So the total number of participants was 7 people. The average respondent is aged 9–16 years. This consists of 5 boys and 2 girls, by taking one sample from each age.

The statistical data (Table 2) show the comparison of pre-test and post-test.

Table 2. Pre and Post Test frequency distribution of vocabulary knowledge improvement through story telling The Little Red Hen

No	Question	Pre-Test				Post-Test			
		Correct		Wrong		Correct		Wrong	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Ayam in English Chicken	2	29%	5	71%	5	71%	2	29%
2	Babi in English Pig	4	57%	3	43%	7	100%	0	0%
3	Anjing in English Dog	4	57%	3	43%	6	86%	1	14%
4	Sapi in English Cow	2	29%	5	71%	5	71%	2	29%
5	Bunga in English Flower	4	57%	3	43%	5	71%	2	29%
6	Rumah in English House	2	29%	5	71%	3	43%	4	57%
7	Roti In English Bread	3	43%	4	57%	3	43%	4	57%
8	Matahari in English Sun	4	57%	3	43%	7	100%	0	0%
9	Air in English Water	3	43%	4	57%	6	86%	1	14%
10	Buku in English Book	4	57%	3	43%	6	86%	1	14%

Source: Primery data 2023

Overall, there was an increase in the pre-test and post-test. The most significant increase was seen in questions number two and numbers eight (Table 2). In the pre-test, only four people answered correctly on both questions. Whereas in the post-test, all participants managed to answer these questions correctly. Furthermore, the lowest increase was in question number seven, where in this question there was no improvement at all. In the pre-test, there were three people who answered the question correctly, and so did the post-test. Not much different from question number seven, question number six only got one increase, whereas in the pre-test there were two people who answered correctly, while in the post-test only three people answered correctly.

The increase in vocabulary is influenced by the children's own understanding, along with their memory of the writing of each vocabulary. While the average child who has the lowest improvement knows the mention of the word in the test, they still cannot remember the correct spelling of the word. Also in the pre-test, it was found that most children answered that the English of rumah was home, but after we gave an explanation of the difference between home and house, the children began to understand. At the time of the post-test, it had progressed

even though there were still many mistakes in writing.

Table 3. Average Pre and Post Test frequency distribution of vocabulary knowledge improvement through story telling The Little Red Hen

No.	Question	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
		n	%	n	%
1	Ayam in English Chicken	2	29%	5	71%
2	Babi in English Pig	4	57%	7	100%
3	Anjing in English Dog	4	57%	6	86%
4	Sapi in English Cow	2	29%	5	71%
5	Bunga in English Flower	4	57%	5	71%
6	Rumah in English House	2	29%	3	43%
7	Roti In English Bread	3	43%	3	43%
8	Matahari in English Sun	4	57%	7	100%
9	Air in English Water	3	43%	6	86%
10	Buku in English Book	4	57%	6	86%
Average			46%		76%

By the vocabulary test shows that storytelling is effective in increasing vocabulary in children. By giving them a pre-test and post-test of some vocabulary in the form of pictures that they had to write in English. The results show that after being given the storytelling, the children improved in their vocabulary in the post-test (see table 2). Where the average presentation of the correct answer from pre-test to post-test is increasing from 46% to 76%. This indicates that storytelling is effective to improve children's vocabulary.

The result of this study is relevant with previous study by Hassan Soleimani and Mahkameh Akbari (2013) which found that the use of children's stories to develop vocabulary in preschool students is very effective and positively received by children. Also research conducted by Rusiana and Nuraeningsih (2016), they focus on the use of TPRS in improving the students' vocabulary using two stories. The stories were Crocodile Tears and The Very Hungry Caterpillar. The result of this study finds that the use of TPRS can improve the students' vocabulary mastery. Pramudana Ihsan and Annisa Tiara Syafitri (2021) who focus on the implementation of anime for children's vocabulary mastery by their father's storytelling found that storytelling using animated cartoon can improve children's vocabulary.

Although researchers have done their best to complete this research, there are still many limitations that exist in this study. One of them is the limited number of samples of children researchers took at the Wahyu Ilahi orphanage. By using more samples from orphanages or kindergartens or preschools, different results may be obtained. Another limitation is related to the duration of the service learning that the researchers conducted, which was only one meeting, so the lack of time from the instruction may lead to other results.

E. CONCLUSION

There are many ways to improve children's ability to recognize, remember, and memorize vocabulary, especially in English. One of them is by reading or telling stories to them, and of course, by choosing children's stories that are appropriate for their age. After the process of telling stories to them, the researcher found an increase in the children's vocabulary knowledge. This can be seen from the results of the post-test, where in questions two and seven, which have perfect scores with a total of seven points, this point is seen from the number of students who answer the question correctly. Also the average presentation of the correct answer from pre-test to post-test is increasing from 46% to 76%. So it can be concluded that the results of this study show that storytelling is effective for increasing children's vocabulary.

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APPENDIX 1

Pre and post-test attachments (this questionnaire is printed twice with the same respondents or students)

VOCABULARY TEST

Name:

Age :

1. Hi! What do you call me?



Answer:.....

2. Hi! Do you know my name?



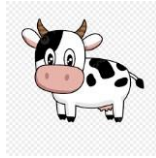
Answer:.....

3. Do you know my name?



Answer:.....

4. Hello, I forget my name, can you tell me?



Answer:.....

5.



Hello, I'm

6.



What picture is it?

Answer:.....

7.



Hello, do you guys like me a lot?

8. Answer:.....



I am your sunshine.

Answer:.....

9.



You guys needs me so much.

Answer:.....

10.



Read me for some knowledge.

answer:.....

Corect answer 1 point, incorrect answer 0 point

APPENDIX 2

Pre and post test result

PRE-TEST

Name	M/F	Old	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
MD	M	15	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
AD	M	14	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
HF	M	9	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TM	M	13	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
FH	M	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AK	F	16	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
AY	F	10	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

POST-TEST

Name	M/F	Old	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
MD	M	15	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
AD	M	14	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
HF	M	9	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
TM	M	13	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
FH	M	12	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
AK	F	16	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
AY	F	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0