

Strategies and Approaches to Early Literacy Learning for Early Childhood

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Abstract

Language development in early childhood is greatly influenced by optimal early literacy stimulation from preschool age. Early literacy forms a crucial foundation for reading, writing, communication skills, and children's confidence. This study analyzes strategies and approaches in early literacy learning to enhance language skills at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang. It employs a qualitative case study method, with data gathered via observation, interviews, and documentation, validated through source triangulation. Analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model: data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. Results revealed that educators' early literacy strategies—playing, singing, and storytelling—effectively stimulate interest, enrich vocabulary, and familiarize children with letters, numbers, shapes, and colors in engaging ways. Applied approaches included behaviorism, cognitive, and social constructs, providing language stimulation while emphasizing social interactions with the environment. These complementary strategies and approaches foster active, creative, participatory learning environments, significantly advancing children's language development. Thus, the study confirms that early literacy success hinges on educators selecting strategies aligned with early childhood needs and developmental stages.

Keyword: early childhood literacy, learning strategies, language development, play-based learning, storytelling strategy

INTRODUCTION

Language development, particularly in the domain of early literacy among young children, represents a critical developmental milestone that requires systematic and age-appropriate stimulation from the earliest years of life. In the aspect of language development, especially regarding early literacy in early childhood, the ability to recognize early literacy is part of the aspect of children's language development that needs to be developed by providing optimal stimulation from an early age (Georgiou & Spanoudis, 2021; Mountford et al., 2022; Peristeri & Tsimpli, 2023; Rinaldi et al., 2021; Suriani & Syamsuddin, 2020). Language is a symbol used to communicate with the people around it (Febriyani et al., 2022). Early literacy serves not merely as a communication tool within familial, educational, and broader community contexts, but fundamentally shapes children's self-confidence and social adaptation capabilities. Because early literacy plays an important role in communicating in the family, school, and even community. Early literacy also has an impact on children's confidence. If the child has difficulty communicating, and the child will have difficulty adapting to his environment.

Early literacy for early childhood also continuously invites pros and cons, which makes parents and educators feel a dilemma regarding child development. Moreover, Dream.co.id revealed that the most frequent disorders that afflict children and are rarely

noticed by parents are *Developmental Language Disorder* is a language development disorder, and based on a survey conducted in a study in *Journal of Communication Disorders* by *European Co-operation in Science and Technology Action IS1406*, only 60 percent know or hear the term language developmental disorder *Developmental Language Disorder*, this means that awareness about the potential for language delay in children is still minimal, and there are also several surveys saying that about 5 to 10 percent of children in school experience language disorders, both spoken and written (Wulandari, 2023). Because early literacy for early childhood is used as an indicator in developing thinking and understanding skills, it can also make it easier for children to interact and communicate well with parents, peers or other people around them, and can develop the ability to believe in God and His creation.

According to Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 137 of 2014 concerning the National Standards for Early Childhood Education, article 10 reads "Early literacy, including understanding the relationship between the form and sound of letters, imitating the shape of letters, and understanding words and stories" (Dr. Muhammad Hasbi, 2020).

To support early literacy learning in Kindergarten (TK), a review of learning strategies and approaches is needed. The goal is to make it easier for educators to improve language development in early childhood, especially in kindergarten (kindergarten). Early literacy learning can be applied by stimulating, guiding, nurturing, and providing meaningful, safe, comfortable and fun play according to the child's developmental stage, so that children are able: 1) to speak positively and accurately based on the vocabulary they hear, 2) to convey and tell stories or readings they hear, 3) to listen, ask questions and answer questions in good language (PAUD jateng, 2016).

The strategy used is a play method or game that can improve children's ability in early literacy. Early literacy learning strategies that can be used are playing, singing, and storytelling strategies (Aisyah, 2023). In order for the implementation of early literacy learning strategies to run smoothly, there needs to be a learning approach. Because learning strategies and approaches are interrelated.

The approach to early literacy learning can be done in a simple way, namely utilizing the process of games and daily activities, so that it can facilitate the ongoing early literacy learning process in the environment and teachers act as agents of change aimed at students (Olim, 2010).

Theoretical frameworks for language and literacy instruction encompass diverse approaches, including the behaviorism Approach, Nativism Approach, Cognitive Approach, social interaction approach, goal-oriented approach, structural approach, communicative approach, pragmatic approach, Whole Language approach, and contextual teaching and learning (CTL) approaches (Yusuf Mualo, 2016). This present investigation focuses specifically on three foundational approaches—behaviorism, cognitive, and social interaction—which collectively inform strategic interventions for early literacy development.

Given the critical importance of early literacy for children's holistic development and the ongoing debates regarding optimal instructional practices, this study addresses a significant gap in understanding how specific strategies and approaches are implemented in authentic kindergarten settings. The research specifically examines Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang as a case study to provide empirical evidence regarding effective early literacy instruction. The findings will contribute to the broader knowledge base regarding developmentally appropriate literacy practices and offer practical guidance for early childhood educators seeking to enhance language development outcomes.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design utilizing a case study approach to provide in-depth examination of early literacy practices in a specific educational context. The focus of the research was directed toward understanding the learning strategies and approaches used by educators in facilitating and improving early childhood literacy development. The research site was purposively selected at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang, as the institutional setting for conducting the study. Multiple data collection techniques were implemented to ensure comprehensive data gathering, including: observation, interviews, and documentation, enabling the researcher to construct a comprehensive understanding of the learning practices that occurred. To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses d source triangulation technique, whereby data from various informants and methods were systematically compared to enhance credibility and trustworthiness of findings. Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman model which included three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

At the data reduction stage, the researcher carried out systematic simplification, selection, and classification of information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. This process aimed to identify and retain data that was directly relevant to the research focus, thereby facilitating description of the learning strategies and approaches used in enhancing children's early literacy skills. Furthermore, data presentation was conducted through systematic descriptive narratives to provide a comprehensive overview of the research findings. The organized data were arranged systematically to enable identification of patterns, themes, and relationships between categories. The final stage involved drawing conclusions, which constituted the essence of the research findings. Initial conclusions were treated as temporary and subject to modification if not supported by strong evidence at the next stage of data collection. However, if the data collected demonstrated consistency and validity, then the conclusions produced could be deemed credible. This iterative analytical process enabled the researcher to develop a complete understanding of the strategies and approaches to early literacy learning at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Early Literacy Learning Strategies to Overcome Children's Language Skills at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang

Early literacy learning strategies in early childhood are needed by educators, with the aim of overcoming children's language skills. The researcher found three early social learning strategies, including Play, Storytelling, and Singing Activity Strategies. The following are the results of the research description:

Strategies for Playing in Early Literacy Learning

Playing activities during early literacy can be used in learning about numbers through *puzzle* and congklak games. In addition, to introduce colors to children, it can be by playing jumping, engklek, or Magic box games. The results of observations at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang found that the implementation of playing in class A was through various games. Group A in PAUD is divided into three classes, including group A (Bilal bin Rabbah, Kholid bin Walid, and Salman Al Farisi). Each group has its own play strategy in early literacy learning.

Based on the results of observations carried out at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang which was carried out by observation by observing teachers in group A classes who were implementing early literacy learning. The results of observational evidence such as documentation in the form of photos of activities.

1) Group A (Salman Al Farisi)

Learning strategies used to overcome children's language skills. Play is a strategy in inviting children to group geometric shapes, as well as mention the colors. The play activity is also included in the aspect of early literacy in Ministerial Regulation No. 137 concerning the language development of children aged 4-5 years, in the section on knowing geometric shapes.

To make the data collection process easier, the researcher took data with the initial literacy indicators in this study, as follows:

- I. Able to classify images using the same sound prefix or suffix, for example pink-dark red.



Picture 1 Group A Activities (Salman Al farisi)

- II. Able to distinguish words with the same first syllable.

For example: Geometric shapes: semicircle-semicircle, circles, triangles, squares.
Color: red-red, blue-blue, pink-pink



Picture 2 Group A Activities (Salman Al farisi)

III. Able to understand basic words on pictures

In this indicator, it can be seen that the child is looking for geometry that matches his shape. For example: sticking and grouping geometry according to its shape.



Picture 3 Group A Activities (Salman Al farisi)

The initial literacy learning strategy used in group A (Salman Al farisi) was play, with aspects of introducing geometric shapes and colors. In this activity, as a teacher of class A (Salman Al farisi) invited children to group geometric shapes according to their shapes. To find out the child's language skills, this class teacher invites the child to mention the geometric shapes he or she groups and also the colors that have the same or different beginnings and endings. As for the early literacy learning indicators used in group A (Salman Al farisi) in overcoming children's language skills, there are three indicators used. It can be seen in the process of observation activities carried out.

Group A (Bilal Bin Rabbah)

In this group, the strategy of playing and singing is an early literacy learning strategy to improve language skills in children. Meanwhile, the learning strategy of this research

is included in the aspect of early literacy in Ministerial Regulation No. 137 concerning the language development of children aged 4-5 years, regarding making scribble that means imitating (writing and pronouncing the letters A-Z or numbers).

To overcome the language skills of early childhood in group A (Bilal bin Rabbah), the teacher of this class invites the children to play *loose parts*, making doodles that mean imitating (writing and pronouncing the number 7). In the observation study of group A (Bilal bin Rabbah), the researcher observed the learning process and also data collection with the guidelines of initial literacy indicators in this study. The following are indicators of early literacy learning strategies in children, including:

- I. Ability to distinguish letters by their first and last syllables, for example: 7 = T-U-J-U-H



Picture 4 Group A Activities (Bilal bin Rabbah)

- II. Able to understand basic words in pictures

In this indicator the children, begin to arrange *loose parts* of the seeds and buttons of the shirt, on paper written the symbol of the number 7 (seven)



Picture 5 Group A Activities (Bilal bin Rabbah)

There are two indicators of the early literacy learning strategy used in this group A class, namely the ability to distinguish letters from their first and last syllables and to be able to understand basic words in pictures.

Group A (Kholid Bin Walid)

Play activities are an early literacy learning strategy in overcoming language skills in early childhood. The early literacy learning strategy in this study is included in the

aspect of early literacy in Ministerial Regulation No. 137 concerning the language development of children aged 4-5 years, regarding recognizing symbols (numbers).

The teacher of this class invites children to play by sticking number cards on the board according to the number dice that are thrown. However, before sticking the number cards, children must first roll the dice. Then the child jumps on the circle pattern on the floor, so that he can stick to the number cards obtained

In this activity, the researcher only observed and took data with indicators that had been determined by this study. The appropriate indicator in this learning activity is points, being able to understand the basic words in the picture (mentioning and pasting the numbers obtained).



Picture 6 Group A Activities (Kholid bin Walid)

In this activity, children can express the numbers or numbers they get from the dice. So that play strategy plays a very important role, to improve language skills in early childhood, even though only one indicator is used.

Early literacy learning in group A with a play strategy can certainly improve children's language skills. This is supported by the implementation of interviews conducted with the Principal, Teacher I, Teacher II, and Teacher III. Based on the results of the interview conducted with the Principal, he said that,

"The strategy of playing in early literacy learning is familiar. Because they are used to playing strategies in kindergarten. Implementation of it during learning activities in kindergarten must be by playing. For example, learning numbers by playing puzzles, congklak, and others. Implementing play strategies, can train children to recognize colors by jumping or squatting. Do it by playing on a magic box or a color box, looking for a predetermined color" (Principal).

From the statement above, it is clear that it is very important to apply play strategies to early literacy learning. Because it makes it easier for children to express vocabulary or sentences through interaction with their peers. As well as for the implementation of this strategy by inviting children to play outside or indoors. The goal is for children to be able to express their creative ideas through games. Off-field games such as engklek and block games can foster students' creative ideas. Based on the results of the interview conducted with Teacher 1, it was found that.

"The strategy of playing in early literacy learning is familiar. The implementation of playing strategies is very important to me. The problem is that it can be used to invite children to play, and children can also interact with their friends. Implement a play strategy by inviting children to play outside or inside. If outside of playing

engklek, inside there is a block game, whatever it is so that you can make creative games" (Teacher I).

Children's world is play, learning activities can be done by playing. However, the games used when playing must contain education. So that the implementation of this strategy can be carried out by playing blocks in making houses. indirectly, children learn to recognize geometric shapes such as triangles, squares, and others, as well as statements from Teacher 2,

"The playing strategy in early literacy learning is familiar, with a play strategy. Every child in the world plays. So the learning strategy is by playing while learning. For example, if you want to play anything, there must be education. Implement a strategy of playing using blocks. For example, making a house, by itself the child knows geometric shapes, triangles, squares to become a house building" (Teacher II)

In addition to games to grow children's knowledge in geometry. Play activities that are carried out during early literacy learning can also be used to introduce colors such as the statement from Teacher III,

"Yes, the familiar strategy of playing in early literacy learning. In my opinion, the implementation is like yesterday introducing colors by playing. Implement it with its strategy in the way the children choose colors" (Teacher III)

Based on the interviews, the learning strategy that integrates play activities for early literacy is met with great enthusiasm in group A. This approach, particularly using geometric shapes and colors, is seen as an effective solution for developing language skills in early childhood, a view shared by both the school principal and the teachers. At this preschool, play-based strategies are intentionally designed to be both educational and integral to learning activities, aiming to foster tangible improvements in children's early literacy development.

Although the specific early literacy strategies employed vary across the different group A classes, each adapting to its own context, the play strategy emerges as the most dominant and consistently implemented method. This preference is rooted in the understanding that a child's world is fundamentally about play, making it a natural and engaging vehicle for learning. The review of the outcomes, guided by key literacy indicators—most prominently the ability to understand basic words in pictures—demonstrates that this play-based strategy effectively addresses and enhances the language capabilities of young children in the kindergarten.

Singing Strategies in Early Literacy Learning

That singing strategies in early literacy learning can sharpen children's memory. For example, getting to know the names of days, animals, and others. To apply it by inviting children to sing while clapping their hands.

Based on the results of observations made in group A at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang, singing activities were only carried out in Group A (Bilal Bin

Rabbah). The results of observations show that. Before the play begins. The teacher invites the children to sing to get to know the numbers 1 to 10. In this group, the strategy of playing and singing is an early literacy learning strategy to improve language skills in children. Meanwhile, the learning strategy of this research is included in the aspect of early literacy in Ministerial Regulation No. 137 concerning the language development of children aged 4-5 years, regarding making scribble that means imitating (writing and pronouncing the letters A-Z or numbers).

The researcher observed the learning process and also data collection with the guidelines of early literacy indicators in this study. The following are indicators of early literacy learning strategies in children, including:

- I. Ability to distinguish letters by their first and last syllables, for example: 7 = T-U-J-U-H



Picture 7 Group A Activities (Bilal bin Rabbah)

- II. Able to understand basic words in pictures

In this indicator the children, begin to arrange *loose parts* of the seeds and buttons of the shirt, on paper written the symbol of the number 7 (seven)



Picture 8 Group A Activities (Bilal bin Rabbah)

There are two indicators of the early literacy learning strategy used in this group A class, namely the ability to distinguish letters from their first and last syllables and to be able to understand basic words in pictures.

This is supported based on the results of interviews conducted with the Principal, Teacher I, Teacher II, and Teacher III. The results of the interview with the principal found that

"Familiar with the singing strategy in early literacy learning, the implementation is by introducing the names of the days, the names of animals while singing and

clapping their hands. Children will be easy to memorize with singing strategies. Carry out by inviting children to sing together" (Principal).

From the interview above, it was explained that the strategy of singing while clapping makes children able to recognize the day, names, and memorize things. In addition, singing also serves to train children's focus during early literacy learning, which can be done with a singing strategy that is accompanied by movements such as applauding, as stated below:

"Familiar with singing strategies in early literacy learning. The strategy is very important, it can make the child's focus to learn while playing by clapping his hands. Carry out the singing strategy by introducing numbers while clapping (Teacher I).

Based on the explanation above, it is explained that singing while clapping can increase children's focus and concentration before learning. Implementing singing strategies in early literacy learning can be done when introducing the names of the month, day, animal, and others. Because this strategy makes it easier for children to recite and memorize. As explained by Teacher II below:

"Familiar with singing strategies in early literacy learning. Implementation by introducing the names of the months by singing. Children will easily memorize. The strategy at the beginning is to learn early literacy by singing" (Teacher II).

Based on the results of the interview above, the initial learning strategy by singing can be used to introduce the names of the months so that children can easily memorize the vocabulary to be taught. In implementing strategies in this learning, it can also be done by inviting children to get to know various kinds of colors. As per the following statement:

"I am very familiar with the singing strategy in early literacy learning. Implementation by inviting children to get to know colors by singing. Carry it out by inviting children to sing so that children can easily memorize and recognize colors" (Teacher III).

Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted in group A, it can be concluded that singing strategies in early literacy learning are very familiar. So it is often used in initial activities before the core activities of early literacy learning. In implementing it, the principal and teachers of class A have their own way. In its implementation, the teachers of class A are more inclined to invite children to sing introducing the names of the moon, animals, colors, and numbers. This strategy can also have a positive impact, children become easy to understand and memorize early literacy learning.

Storytelling Strategies in Early Literacy Learning

Activities that are often carried out by children every day before doing the core activities of early literacy learning, are storytelling or storytelling activities using storybooks or hand puppets. In this activity, children express their ideas or problems from

the storybook read by their teachers. The following is photo evidence of the results of storytelling activities:



Picture 9 Storytelling Refraction Activity

Observations in group A reveal that storytelling is a key strategy in early literacy learning, implemented through various engaging media such as storybooks, hand puppets, and shared viewing of educational films. This activity is conducted every morning before core lessons, serving as a foundational program to enhance children's language development. Interviews with the Principal and teachers confirm that this approach is not only familiar but integral to the daily routine, often tailored to specific learning themes—like plants or colors—to make the content relevant and immersive for the children.

The educators emphasize the significant role of storytelling, as it actively stimulates imagination, expands vocabulary, broadens insights, and fosters crucial socialization skills among the children. For instance, a child might take a colored object and narrate a simple story about it, demonstrating how the strategy encourages them to articulate what they see and hear. This consistent application across various themes and media underscores its versatility and effectiveness as a pedagogical tool for building foundational language competencies.

Ultimately, while multiple early literacy strategies are employed and well-known to the staff, storytelling emerges as the most dominantly and consistently applied method. It is valued not merely as an introductory activity but as a core practice deliberately designed to enhance language acquisition. The strategy's structured implementation before main lessons specifically aims to nurture social interaction and provide a strong, engaging basis for the children's ongoing literacy development. To strengthen the results of the interview, namely by documenting the results of the interview in the form of photos. The following are photos of the results of the interview:



Picture 10 Interview of Al Irsyad Al Islamiyah Kindergarten Pemalang

Early Literacy Learning Approach Used to Develop Children's Language Skills

The role of the early literacy learning approach is very important. Because it can help teachers in implementing this learning strategy, and also the early literacy learning approach has the goal of developing language skills in children. This research uses three approaches, including the Behaviorism Approach, the Conjugal Approach, and the Social Approach.

Behaviorism Approach to Early Literacy Learning

Based on the results of observations carried out at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang, the behaviorism approach was carried out in class A which was divided into three groups, namely Group A (Salman Al Farisi), (Bilal Bin Rabbah), and (Khold Bin Walid).

Group A (Salman Al Farisi)



Picture 11 Group A Approach Activity (Salman Al Farisi)

The approach to learning early literacy in group A class uses a behaviorism approach. This activity is carried out after the child finishes carrying out the tasks given by the teacher. In this group, the class teacher gave a *love reward* made of paper that had been given clothes adhesive. So that later the *reward* will be pasted on the child's clothes. In this activity, children will choose *love* with their favorite color, and also the goal of using this approach so that children are excited, he said.

Group A (Bilal Bin Rabbah)



Picture 12 Group A Approach Activities (Bilal bin Rabbah)

The initial literacy learning approach used in group A uses behaviorism and cognitive approaches. The behaviorism approach is applied after the child finishes doing the assignment or order from the teacher, and he also gives *star rewards* to the child who has carried out the task until it is completed. It can be seen that children feel enthusiastic when they get a *star-shaped reward*, which is made of origami paper coated with shirt adhesive.

Group A (Kholid Bin Walid)



Figure 11 Group A Approach Activities (Kholid bin Walid)

The behaviorism and cognitive approach was used in early literacy learning activities in group A (Kholid bin Walid). In behaviorism activities, the class teacher gives *rewards* or awards in the form of stars to children who are able to carry out tasks until completion. With the reward, it aims to make children more enthusiastic and try to get the reward, he said. *The star rewards* in this class are made of paper and straws. The star is made of paper, while the straw is for the handle of the star. The children in this class feel happy to get a star reward, after completing the assignment orders from their teacher.

The results of the above observations are supported by interviews with the selected subjects. The following are the results of the interview instruments of the principal and teachers regarding the early literacy learning approach used in early childhood in this school:

That the behaviorist approach in learning is synonymous with rewarding students who are able to carry out tasks until completion. The purpose of giving awards is to encourage students to learn. And in early childhood education, the awards are identical in the form of stars and love, such as the following statement:

"Yes, the Behaviorism approach to learning early literacy is familiar. Its implementation rewards children who are enthusiastic about learning. Running it, for example, is like giving stars, rewards, and love" (Principal).

Awards will also be given to students who are able to complete instruction from their teacher, and this award will be given after the child finishes carrying out instruction. The award can be in the form of an emotion image, as stated below:

"Yes, the Behaviorism approach to learning early literacy is familiar. We give rewards to children who are able to complete anything instructed by their teachers.

To carry it out, we usually use emotion pictures, love pictures, star pictures and then give them to the children" (Class I Teacher).

That the Behaviorism approach to early literacy learning has an important role. Because it can increase children's enthusiasm in learning, and foster a sense of never giving up in carrying out the duties of the gurumya, this is strengthened from the following statement:

"Yes, the Behaviorism approach to learning early literacy is familiar. Implementation is very important, because it is a reward for children. Let the child be more enthusiastic and the point is to try to get the reward. Our approach to learning literacy early makes rewards such as stars, love and then given to children" (Class II Teacher).

Giving awards in the form of a smile or applause can be used as a symbol of the child's success in completing tasks or instructions until completion. This can be reinforced from the statement below:

"Yes, the Behaviorism approach to learning early literacy is familiar. By the way we give rewards. The approach I give rewards with stars, love, smile or applause so that the children are more enthusiastic in learning, especially with the way yesterday the children played the colors we gave the stars" (Teacher III).

The approach to learning early literacy in children is not unfamiliar to the principals and teachers of group A. In fact, this approach is a *trick* to arouse children's enthusiasm in learning early literacy. Although the three classes are different in implementing and implementing the behaviorism approach.

Cognitive Approach to Early Literacy Learning

Based on the results of observations conducted at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten Pemalang, the implementation of the cognitive approach was only carried out in 2 groups in class A, namely Group A (Bilal bin Rabbah) and Group A (Kholid bin Walid).

GROUP A (Bilal Bin Rabbah)



Picture 13 Group A Approach Activities (Bilal bin Rabbah)

The implementation of observation in group A (Bilal bin Rabbah) found that the initial literacy learning approach used in group A uses behaviorism and cognitive

approaches. In the cognitive approach, group A Bilal bin Rabbah introduced the number seven and invited children to write the number seven with *loose parts*. The goal is for children to understand and know the form of the number seven. In this approach, children flock to recite the number seven.

Group A (Kholid Bin Walid)



Picture 14 Group A Approach Activity (Kholid bin Walid)

The behaviorism and cognitive approach was used in early literacy learning activities in group A (Kholid bin Walid). As for the cognitive approach, the teacher instructs the child to name the number obtained from the dice and then invites the child to stick the number on the board.

The results of these observations were supported by interviews conducted with predetermined subjects. A cognitive approach in early literacy learning can train children to think critically. Early literacy learning activities with this approach can use the media of theme books or small balls. This can be reinforced from the statement below:

"Yes, the cognitive approach to early literacy learning is familiar. Train children to think critically cognitively, by being given activities with theme books. Carry out for example sorting small balls according to color" (Principal).

The implementation of early literacy learning with a cognitive approach is very important. So that children can understand the names and shapes of numbers or numbers from what they see. An example of this is by inviting children to count 1 to 10, while introducing the shape of each child, with loose parts, grains or pieces of paper. As stated below:

"Yes, the cognitive approach to early literacy learning is familiar. In my opinion, the implementation is very important, children must also know that learning is very important such as counting the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 to 7, so that they know what the number 7 is like. In order for children to achieve this achievement quickly, they can take a cognitive approach through such as making loose parts from grains or pieces of paper" (Teacher I).

Worksheets, *loose parts*, and dice can be used as a medium for learning early literacy with a cognitive approach. This approach can make it easier for children to overcome problems. One example of the application is that the teacher gives instructions to the child to take the color according to the instructions, then the children will flock to look for the color according to the instructions from the teacher. This can be reinforced from the statement below:

"Yes, the cognitive approach to early literacy learning is familiar. We can do it with different media such as loose parts, worksheets, dice. The approach is to make the child's activities to solve problems. For example, try to take red, blue, later children can take the colors we mentioned earlier" (Teacher II).

In addition, this approach to early literacy learning is very important. Because it hones children's thinking skills in solving the problems they face. It turns out that in the application of this cognitive approach to learning, it must be related to learning strategies to facilitate the initial literacy learning process, this can be strengthened from the following opinions:

"Yes, the cognitive approach to early literacy learning is familiar. Cognitive learning is very important, especially for children's thinking power. Implementation is so I invited the children, yesterday by getting to know the colors. Yes, implement the approach strategy in a way that children will choose colors according to the children" (Teacher III).

The implementation of a cognitive approach is very important, because it can help children's thinking, and to implement it, each teacher has its own media and ways to make it easier for children to recognize numbers and geometric shapes. Some implement it with loose *parts media*, number dice, and even colorful paper.

Social Approach to Early Literacy Learning

In this study, it was found that the social approach was carried out in each Group A (Salman Al Farisi), (Bilal Bin Rabbah), and (Kholid Bin Walid). It was observed that the social approach to early literacy learning can train children to socialize with their peers. Thus, it can emphasize the role of social interaction and the environment in the learning process. Group play activities, teamwork, and learning to share with others, examples of implementations to improve language development in children, can be strengthened from the following statements:

"Familiar, training children to socialize with fellow friends. Carry out learning to share with others, play in groups, and work in teams" (Principal).

Implementing early childhood literacy learning with a social approach, which can be applied with peers, will create a sense of mutual help or sharing. In carrying it out, teachers invite their students to play together or learn together, will avoid a picky attitude of friends, this can be strengthened by the following statement:

"Familiar. The implementation is with colleagues, helping each other, sharing with each other like that. We invite the child to play together, learn together, without having to choose friends" (Teacher I).

The social approach in this learning will occur because there are human resources consisting of peers and ustadzah, so social communication will be created without shyness or doubt. While in its implementation, it is by inviting children to discuss or collaborate, this can be strengthened from the following statements:

"Familiar, I think it's very important. In addition to the approach of the child, the child also has a bond with his ustadzah, his teacher so that he can click social communication without being shy or hesitant. Carrying out it invites discussion or conversation together, cooperation so that children can socialize" (Teacher II).

This social approach to learning, will occur when in group activities or teamwork, this can also be strengthened by the following statements:

"Familiar. In the way the children were together yesterday or in groups, the children chose according to the desired color. It can bring children closer or teach them to socialize. The implementation of the approach is in such a way that later the children with one group will take the color together according to their wishes. his approach introduces children to learn in groups or play together" (Teacher III).

With a social approach to early literacy learning, children are not shy to ask questions, and even this approach is often implemented in teamwork or group activities.

The behaviorism approach and the cognitive approach, which are used for early literacy learning in group A in PAUD. The behaviorism approach is more dominant, because by using the behaviorism approach, children are more eager to learn, and also their hearts feel happy when they successfully complete the assignment from the teacher to get rewards. Although the dominant behaviorism approach is more applied. However, there are also classes using a cognitive approach. The goal is to make it easier for children to overcome the problems they face. In addition, the social approach will be able to train children in socializing with the surrounding environment.

Discussion

Early Literacy Learning Strategies to Overcome Children's Language Skills

That literacy learning is to improve children's language development as a whole, including the ability to listen, speak, read, and write (D. R. Anggraini, 2022). The language development of children aged 5 to 6 years is as follows: Imitate 2 to 4 sequences of numbers and words, follow 2 to 3 commands at once, speak fluently, retell the story that has been told by the teacher, provide information about something, mention the names of objects, animals, and so on, tell the pictures that have been provided. (Sumardi, 2017), so the role of early literacy learning strategies is very important.

Bennett-Armistead, Duke, & Moses said playing language, reciting children's songs, singing songs, and engaging children in everyday conversations and reading books are all applications of early literacy learning (Literacy, 2006). In the early literacy learning activity, the storytelling strategy applied to group A in PAUD aims to recognize and understand various information, then communicate feelings and thoughts orally or using various media and build a conversation with vocabulary such as children can answer the teacher's questions regarding the information presented and children can ask questions. For example, telling stories with storybooks, recognizing the sounds of letters and assembling letters into words. Because early literacy can build potential readers who are interested in mastering spoken language, the written environment, the meaning of sounds, knowledge of the alphabet through singing, visual comprehension (e.g. pictures of

bicycles, cars, airplanes, etc.), the concept of printed materials (writings that children know, such as apples, balls, etc.), imitating reading, and imitating writing (Rusmini, 2021).

As for the play strategy in early childhood literacy learning, it aims to show basic thinking, critical, creative, and collaborative skills. For example, in balloon blowing games, mixing colors, and making group works in playing blocks. As well as playing activities are sought by stimulating, guiding, nurturing, and providing meaningful, safe, and fun games and in accordance with the child's developmental stage (Rusmini, 2021). In the play strategy pursued in any game, there must be education, is a statement from teacher II, saying that the play strategy in early literacy learning used hopes to contain educational games that can improve language development in children.

The response from all class A teachers in this school, said that the singing strategy makes it very easy for children to memorize the names of objects, letters of the alphabet, numbers, and others. Singing can increase vocabulary, which results from hearing and remembering vocabulary when singing, and also requires children to express or pronounce it, this is an important factor in children's growth and development, not only as a fun activity, but also as an effective means of learning (Fatimah et al., 2024).

The strategy of learning early literacy in early childhood, through play and singing activities is able to improve children's language development, as well as as the most important means of communication to learn and live in their environment, because the existence of language in humans makes it easier to convey messages to other humans, either in writing, oral, or in the form of certain symbols (R. Anggraini, 2023).

In overcoming language skills in early childhood in group A, using the strategy of play and storytelling activities in early learning accessibility. Even though they are familiar with singing strategies, because playing activities are able to create effective learning activities and also bring a happy mood.

Early Literacy Learning Approach Used to Develop Children's Language Skills

The learning process is inseparable from a learning approach so that the learning process can run well, fun, and more meaningfully (Hasan, 2017). Therefore, the early literacy learning approach is used to develop language in early childhood.

There is a statement from teacher I regarding the behaviorism approach in early literacy learning, that the teacher gives *Reward* to the child who is able to complete what is instructed by his teacher, as well as his reward in the form of pictures *Emotion, Love*, star then pity it on the child. By giving rewards to children, they are able to develop language. So that the Behaviorism approach is able to create a sense of enthusiasm for children in learning early literacy. Because of the familiarity of the behaviorism approach for teachers, this approach is always implemented in early literacy learning. Because in the ability of the senses can be transmitted to the central nerve which is the main point of the child's cognitive ability, namely the child understands language and can express ideas through language (Istiqomah, 2024). The cognitive approach is an option to develop children's language skills, in addition to using behavioral and social approaches.

However, there is a statement from teacher III saying that implementing the cognitive approach by recognizing colors, as well as implementing the approach strategy in a way that children will later choose colors according to their children. The understanding of cognitive approaches is that strategies and cognitive approaches must be interrelated, because to know the picture of children's development with speech and language delays (speech delays), seen from the cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects as well as the influence of their social-emotional behavior (Fitriyani et al., 2019). As for cognitive development, it is hoped that through the right learning media, stimulation and consistency will be directed in supporting children's development (Rohmah, 2025).

With the influence of social approaches on early literacy learning, the social approach is very familiar to all group A teachers in PAUD. So they responded that the social approach in early literacy learning can train children to socialize with their friends, and to implement it by inviting children to learn to share with others, play in groups, or work together with teams. The meaning of the following statement is that social approaches are very important to be used in early literacy learning because they can emphasize the role of social interaction in communicating with adults, peers, or family members. Group play or teamwork in this learning can improve vocabulary and hone speaking skills. Through social interaction, children become accustomed to listening to various voices, intonations, and speech patterns, which support the development of listening and comprehension skills and are able to compose sentences, convey ideas, and also develop clarity in speaking (Istiqomah, 2024).

Improving language development in children will be seen from how to overcome and develop abilities through early literacy learning. This will be a sign that the child's development has improved, which can be seen from the use of vocabulary when speaking. So it can be concluded that early literacy is a sign that children have been in the process of becoming literacy, not to become smart children. Early literacy is also the foundation for mastering reading and writing skills and counting which is fun, so this state of early literacy must be developed properly and not diverted by the mastery of conventional literacy which will tire children and cause negative experiences of reading and writing (Shaleh et al., 2022). Therefore, early literacy learning begins to be implemented from an early age, with learning strategies and approaches that are able to improve language development in children.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the strategies of playing, singing, and storytelling implemented with behaviorist, cognitive, and social approaches have proven effective in improving the language skills of early childhood at Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Kindergarten, Pematang. The combination of these strategies and approaches creates an active, fun, and participatory learning environment, thus not only stimulating children's interest but also enriching their vocabulary and communication skills. These results reinforce the importance of the teacher's role in selecting and implementing contextual learning methods that are appropriate to the child's developmental stage. For

further research, it is recommended to conduct experimental or quasi-experimental studies to test the comparative effectiveness of each strategy and approach, as well as explore their integration with digital technology or other innovative learning media in more diverse contexts, including in areas with different socio-cultural characteristics and resources.

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