

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH THE MEDIA OF PAPER PUPPETS BASED ON FABLES**

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### **Abstract**

This research aims to stimulate early childhood speaking skills through the use of paper puppet media based on fabled fairy tales. The subjects of this study are teachers, and students aged 5-6 years of KB Al-Adawiyah Tembilahan. The research method uses a qualitative approach with observation, interview, and documentation data collection techniques. The results of the study show that the use of paper puppets based on fables can stimulate speaking skills. Children are very enthusiastic about learning and pay attention to what the teacher is saying, can speak in simple words in their entirety, enjoy listening and retelling simple stories in order and easy to understand, understand the form of questions by using what, why, and how, can use prepositions: inside, outside, above, below, on the side, can participate in a conversation and do not dominate to always want to be heard. This is proven through the participation of children in retelling the stories conveyed as well as their ability to express ideas and emotions and actively participate in learning with the guidance of teachers. This study suggests that the media applied should be more varied as a way to stimulate early childhood speaking skills.

Keywords: Speaking skills, paper puppets, fabled fairy tales.

### **INTRODUCTION**

At an early age, all potentials and aspects of child development can be developed optimally. One of the important aspects that needs to be developed is language development, which helps the growth and readiness of children to enter further education. Language development is one of the important stages in a child's development, because language is the main factor that allows children to communicate with their environment. According to (Fatimah and Mahmuddin 2021) Language is an important element that plays a major role in the intellectual, social, and emotional development of students, as well as a supporting factor for success in studying various fields of science. In addition, language serves as a tool to communicate with others and is a symbol that encompasses inventiveness as well as a system of norms.

The development of speaking skills is one of the important aspects that supports children's overall communication skills. Speaking skills affect a child's ability to express feelings, thoughts, and interact with the surrounding environment. The importance of this speaking skill requires an effective learning method to optimize children's speaking skills from an early age. One of the interesting methods to apply is the use of fable-based wayang paper media, because this media combines elements of stories and visuals that are easily accepted by children. (Vira and Andalas 2022)

Speaking skills are a communication process that is carried out by pronouncing language sounds to convey intentions so that they can be understood by others. In order for communication to be understood easily, the words spoken must be clear and fluent. Children are considered to have improved speaking skills if they can pronounce language sounds correctly, pronounce syllables clearly, have enough vocabulary to communicate, and be able to use sentences well in verbal communication. Aspects of language development in early childhood include listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (Elya, Nadiroh, and Nurani 2019). In this case, the author focuses on developing speaking skills. Speaking is a tool to convey feelings or intentions to others. Speaking skills are basic abilities that are essential for interacting and communicating with the environment. By having a wide vocabulary, children can speak clearly and fluently.

Speaking involves three interrelated processes, namely learning to pronounce words, enriching vocabulary, and forming sentences. The development of speaking skills not only depends on the active role of teachers, but also requires the active involvement of children in learning. Speaking skills will improve if the child directly experiences the process. Therefore, methods that require children to be actively involved are essential for developing children's speaking skills. (Elya et al. 2019)

As one of the components of language development, early childhood speaking skills are a very important aspect to pay attention to. "Being able to speak" is important for early childhood, but optimizing the development of speaking skills will be a more important task. This is because all children who are

born normally, sooner or later will definitely be able to speak on their own. The thing that must be underlined is the case where there are still many children who are slow to be able to speak, have difficulty in conveying something in their own language, or other similar cases. (Nurkholifah and Wiyani 2020)

The initial condition of speaking skills for 5-6 year old children at KB Al-Adawiyah Tembilahan some children have not been able to express their opinions well. This can be seen during the learning process, where the child who is asked does not answer questions from the teacher and when appointed to tell a story in front of his friends, he is often reluctant and embarrassed. In line with the initial interview conducted with Karinda Dwi Thalia's mother, she stated, there are some children who have not been able to express their opinions simply when asked by the teacher, have not been able to repeat more complex sentences, have not had much vocabulary, and sometimes some children do not understand some of the commands given by the teacher.

The use of paper puppets based on fables is expected to attract children's attention and encourage them to actively speak, both in the form of retelling and expressing their opinions. Fable fairy tales contain characters and situations that are often interesting to children, so the use of paper puppets as a learning medium is believed to facilitate children's direct involvement in speaking activities. KB Al-Adawiyah in Tembilahan uses paper puppet media based on Dongen fables as an effort to stimulate students' speaking skills.

Children at this age need a creative and interactive approach so that they can be actively involved in learning. One approach that has proven effective is the use of learning media that is fun and in accordance with children's interests. Paper puppets based on fabled fairy tales, as a visual and interactive medium, provide opportunities for children to not only listen to the story, but also to interact with the characters in the story. In each story, children are invited to express their feelings, imitate voices, and develop language skills through dialogue shown in fabled stories. (Eliza 2017)

Fable fairy tales told through the medium of paper puppets have several advantages compared to other media. First, fables contain animal characters who are described as having human traits. These animal characters usually behave and talk like humans, thus attracting children's interest and making it easier for them to understand the storyline. Second, fable stories contain a simple but profound moral message, which makes it easier for children to take lessons from the story. By conveying moral messages indirectly, children can learn positive values without feeling formally taught. This supports the concept of early childhood learning that prioritizes learning through experience and activity. In line with what Handayani, Chamalah, and Setiana stated in (Idawati, Windarsih, and Atika t.t.) A fable fairy tale is a story that depicts the daily life of humans through animal characters, similar to real life, although the story is imaginative and not a story that actually happened. The most important thing in fable fairy tales is that there are always character values contained in each story.

In addition, through the media of paper puppets, children have the freedom to express different characters, which can increase their confidence in speaking. They can try different speaking styles, voice intonation, and facial expressions when playing characters in the story. This is very important in the development of speaking skills, as children can practice both verbal and non-verbal communication. Teachers can take advantage of this opportunity to provide guidance in proper language use, word pronunciation, and voice intonation. In this way, the learning of speaking skills is not only theoretical, but also applicable and practical. (Laily 2015).

In the learning process, the use of interesting and interactive media such as paper puppets is very important to increase children's motivation to learn. Children tend to like activities that involve interesting stories and characters, so fable fairy tales are one of the effective ways to teach speaking skills. With paper puppets, children can not only listen to the story, but also interact directly with the characters in the fairy tale. They can play certain characters, retell the storyline, and express their opinions about the stories they hear. Thus, this activity not only

develops speaking skills, but also improves children's critical thinking and empathy skills.

The Play Group (KB) is one of the early childhood education units (PAUD) with the criteria of students aged 2.5-6 years who strive to provide stimulation to children so that their growth and development increase optimally. Language development is contained in the curriculum and is one of the aspects in the indicators of achievement in the learning process, more specifically, in the indicators of language achievement (Wiyani 2016).

KB Al-Adawiyah in Tembilahan City realizes the importance of speaking skills for the development of students. As an educational institution, KB Al-Adawiyah strives to use various innovative learning media, one of which is the use of paper puppets based on fabled fairy tales. In line with the learning objectives at KB Al-Adawiyah, this study aims to analyze children's speaking skills through the media of paper puppets based on fabled fairy tales. It is hoped that this research can contribute to creative and innovative learning and media use, as well as provide insight for teachers in choosing the right learning media for early childhood.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research is included in the category of qualitative research. Sugiyono stated that the qualitative research method is a method based on the philosophy of postpositivism, the qualitative research method is used for research that focuses on the natural condition of the object. In addition, it uses data collection techniques with triangularization (combined), inductive or qualitative analysis. The results obtained from using qualitative research itself are emphasizing the meaning of generalizations (Sugiono 2015). The selection of the qualitative approach is because the research uses the natural background as a direct data source, and the data analysis is inductive and descriptive, or in writing.

The data collection techniques used in this study are interviews, observations, and documentation. The data validity testing technique used by the

researcher uses a triangulation technique that uses a technique to check the validity of the data triangulation type of source and technique. Because in the interview process, the researcher asked some of the same questions to different sources by comparing the opinions of the two and using research techniques through observation, interviews and documentation.

The researcher tried to explain that early childhood speaking skills can be stimulated through the media of paper puppets based on fables in KB Al-Adawiyah Tembilihan. The subjects of this study include teachers, and students aged 5-6 years who are 17 children at KB Al-Adawiyah Tembilihan.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

According to Chomsky, children have an innate ability to learn a language called a *Language Acquisition Device* (LAD). By facilitating children through stories and dialogues in paper puppet games, they naturally develop language structures and understand the grammar used in those dialogues. This activity provides an opportunity for children to develop more complex sentence structures through learning that is natural and in accordance with their developmental stages (Chomsky 2022). According to Kurniawan, in (Hudhana and Fadhilah 2019) language development is related to children's ability to use language codes to convey ideas and feelings. Language intelligence includes: 1) The ability to process words when communicating, 2) Mastery of the right and diverse vocabulary, 3) The ability to convey ideas, ideas, and feelings.

Speaking skills are an integral part of language development in early childhood, which includes the ability to articulate sounds, be able to speak in simple words of 4 to 5 words, enjoy listening and retelling simple stories in order and easy to understand, understand the form of questions by using what, why, and how, can use prepositions: inside, outside, above, below, on the side, being able to participate in a conversation does not dominate to always want to be heard.

Puppet media can help students to understand the concept of abstract stories. The form of puppets that resemble fairy tale characters makes it easier for students to get to know the characters and roles of each character in the story. In addition, the use of puppets also makes it easier for students to understand the content of the fairy tales conveyed. There are several advantages in using puppets as a learning medium, namely: 1) Improving skills in listening to fairy tales, 2) Efficient in terms of time, place, cost, and preparation, 3) Being able to develop students' imagination and activities in a fun atmosphere, 4) Using the right symbols and directly conveying messages or ideas ethically, 5) Wayang is well received because it is part of the nation's culture, 6) This media is easy to make, cheap, and practical, 7) The shape is unique and attractive, 8) It is easy to use, 9) It can hone teachers' creativity (Mukodas and Mubarock 2020).

The use of this media has a strong foundation, namely a play-by-learning approach that is in accordance with the characteristics of early childhood development. Fable fairy tales, which generally tell stories with animal characters that have human traits and characters, are easy for children to understand and interest them. This media is expected to be able to increase children's courage and ability to speak and help them express themselves (Dewi 2022). In addition, paper puppets have several advantages compared to other puppets. This puppet can be made by yourself, the process of making and using it is quite easy, and it is safe because it is made of paper. By using paper puppets, the stories conveyed become more interesting. This puppet is made according to the characters in the story. In addition, playing paper puppets can also help develop children's fine motor skills, because the way to play it is similar to other puppets, namely by moving parts that have been equipped with wood or driving ropes (Saparahayuningsih 2016).

Playing paper puppets with fables involves several stages that include tool preparation, story introduction, and game execution. The first step is to prepare a paper puppet that matches the characters in the fabled fairy tale. These puppets are usually made from thick paper that are drawn to resemble the animal characters in the story. Each puppet is equipped with a handle to make it easier for children to

move it (Arifudin et al. 2021). In this study, the fable dongen used by the teacher is the story of "caterpillars that want to fly".

Based on the results of observations made at the preparation stage for the use of fable fairy tale-based paper puppet media, the teacher has provided media to be used such as images of caterpillars, birds, butterflies, scissors, glue, skewers, cardboard. Furthermore, teachers and students work together to create media according to the characters to be used. Such as cutting, gluing, pasting pictures of caterpillars, and so on. With this activity, it can provide basic knowledge to early childhood about the characteristics of caterpillars, butterflies, and birds physically which will be told in a planned fairy tale.

In line with what was said by Mrs. Karinda Dwi Thalia, before using fable fables-based paper puppet media, teachers as facilitators have prepared tools and materials that will be used to make fable fables-based paper puppet media. Furthermore, the teacher guides students to make paper puppet media based on fabled fairy tales in accordance with the planned fabled fairy tales.

The theory of learning through visualization also emphasizes the importance of using visually appealing media for early childhood. Children at this age are more interested and faster to understand information through images and concrete objects compared to abstract concepts. Fable fairy tale-based paper puppets provide a concrete visual experience, where children can see the characters and storylines directly, making it easier for them to understand and remember. Through this medium, children also learn to focus attention, which is the basis for the development of their concentration (F Halamury 2022).

The next step is the introduction of the story. The teacher introduces the storyline and characters, in the story to the students. In this stage, children are invited to observe and recognize the role of each character in the story. Teachers can use voice intonation and facial expressions to attract children's attention. The introduction of this story aims to create an atmosphere in which they can develop more optimally. The fable fables-based paper puppet media used is about



caterpillars who want to fly. With two roles, namely the caterpillar named Uli and the bird named Boni. With the following storyline:

### "The Caterpillar Who Wants to Fly"

In a shady garden, a small caterpillar named Uli lives. Uli really likes to see beautiful butterflies flying from flower to flower. "Ah, how beautiful it is to be able to fly like them," Uli muttered to himself. One day, Uli meets a bird named Boni. "Boni, why can you fly so high?" asked Uli. Boni smiled, "Because I have strong wings, Uli. My wings help me fly anywhere." Uli was sad to hear it. "I would love to be able to fly like you, Boni," she said in a low voice. Boni approached Uli and said, "Uli, every living thing has its own strengths. You may not be able to fly right now, but you can do a lot of other great things. For example, you can crawl quickly, you can turn into a beautiful cocoon, and someday you will become a beautiful butterfly." Uli fell silent, thinking of Boni's words. Since then, Uli has been diligent in crawling around the garden. He observes the colorful flowers, smells their fragrant scents, and makes friends with small insects. Finally, the long-awaited moment arrived. Uli managed to transform into a beautiful cocoon. He rests in the cocoon for some time, until one day he comes out as a beautiful butterfly. Uli was very happy to be able to fly. It flies from flower to flower, enjoying the beauty of nature. He also did not forget to thank Boni for giving him encouragement.

Based on the results of observations made in the implementation of learning using fable fairy tale-based paper puppet media went well, students were very enthusiastic to listen to the stories conveyed because the teacher told fairy tales interestingly using the fable media of caterpillars, birds, and butterflies that had been prepared in advance, the character of the characters was conveyed very clearly, the language style used was appropriate and simple and easy to understand by students, using voice intonation that is pleasant to hear so that it can help students remember the information conveyed and appropriate facial expressions when conveying the message of the story.

In line with what Mrs. Karinda Dwi Talia said, the use of fable-based paper puppet media as a prop makes it very easy for teachers to convey the stories read, because with the fable-based paper puppet media, students are very enthusiastic in listening and paying attention to what is conveyed by the teacher. The use of media makes it very easy for children to understand the storyline.

Fable fairy tales have an organized story structure, consisting of introduction, conflict, and resolution. This makes it easier for children to understand and retell the story. By conveying fabled fairy tales, children are also invited to develop logical thinking skills and speaking skills through dialogue contained in stories (Eliza 2017).

The next step, After the introduction of the story, the children began to play the paper puppets according to the storyline that had been told and explained earlier. Based on the results of the observations made, in this process the child can imitate dialogue, can speak by expressing a few simple words, enjoys listening and retelling simple stories in order and interacts with other characters. This activity not only develops speaking skills, but also trains children's courage to appear in front of the class. Stimulating students' speaking skills. The implementation of learning using paper puppet media based on fabled fairy tales is not only carried out in the classroom, sometimes it can be done in the school yard to create a fun and not boring atmosphere. According to Essa, in (Shofa 2014) stories are very interesting activities. Stories can be told by teachers, children, or both. Story telling can use various media such as flannel boards, puppets or puppets, play dough, or come from storybooks. Children tend to be interested in various methods of storytelling.

Students can play characters from fables fairy tales. This activity encourages them to talk and interact with each other, while also improving their speaking skills. Students work in groups to tell parts of the story to their friends. This trains students' listening and speaking skills in turn (Siregar et al. 2022). Therefore, the media of paper puppetry through fable fairy tales is very beneficial for children, teachers and schools. In addition, story-based learning through paper puppets also triggers the development of children's imagination. Children can

imagine different scenarios and characters in the story, which then motivates them to speak and convey their thoughts about the storyline. When children express stories in their own way, they develop creativity and critical thinking skills, both of which are important parts of effective communication.

Piaget's constructivist theory also emphasizes that early childhood learns actively by building knowledge through direct interaction with its environment. According to Piaget, early childhood is in the pre-operational stage, where they are more responsive to visual stimuli and role plays. The use of paper puppets in speaking learning is a form of constructive learning that facilitates direct learning experiences for children. By seeing, holding, and playing puppets, children can enrich their cognitive and social experiences, as well as build speaking skills that are essential in social interactions (Huitth and Hammel 2003).

Furthermore, the teacher invites students to retell the storyline using the paper puppet characters that have been played. This activity helps strengthen their understanding of the content of the story and the moral message contained in it. Teachers use the question and answer method to the fairy tales that have been told. So in this case, based on the results of observations made by researchers when using fable-based paper puppet media, students are very enthusiastic about learning, enjoy listening and retelling simple stories of Uli Boni in order, answering more complex questions asked by teachers, understanding the form of questions by using what, why, and how, Can use prepositions as in the Outside, for example, can participate in a conversation and not dominate to always want to be heard. Fable fairy tale-based learning through paper puppets is not only entertaining, but also educating children thoroughly. From here, the teacher can find out the speech progress of each child after the lesson is carried out.

According to Dhineni, Nurbiana, et al. (Fatimah and Mahmuddin 2021) the purpose of storytelling for early childhood is so that children can listen carefully to what is being conveyed, answer questions, and tell and re-express what has been heard and told. This helps children to understand the wisdom of the story, which over time will be remembered, noticed, applied, and told back to

others. As stated by Jerome S. Bruner, "Language has a great influence on the development of children's thinking".

The fables used in learning are also related to narrative theory, which states that humans tend to understand the world through stories. Speaking skills are considered to be the result of narrative understanding, where children learn about story structures, plots, and characters. Through fabled fairy tales, children gain an understanding of the sequence of events in stories, conflicts, and resolutions. Thus, when children retell stories they have heard, they not only learn to speak, but also develop an understanding of the structure of stories that are fundamental in narrative communication.

Story-based learning through paper puppets "Caterpillars that want to fly" also triggers the development of children's imagination. Children can imagine different scenarios and characters in the story, which then motivates them to speak and convey their thoughts about the storyline. When children express stories in their own way, they develop creativity and critical thinking skills, both of which are important parts of effective communication. And children can take ibrah from the stories conveyed, namely about patience and the process that must be taken from caterpillars to butterflies.

Fable fairy tales are a form of story that is known to contain moral values and have characters that are easy for children to understand. Fable fairy tales are effective in early childhood learning because the stories are simple, meaningful, and involve characters that children can imitate. Fables also allow children to understand good and bad concepts through storylines that are relevant to their daily experiences. When listening to or retelling fabled fairy tales, children learn to express their ideas and opinions, so that indirectly their speaking skills are honed (Vira and Andalas 2022)

Through the media of paper puppets, children have the freedom to express different characters, which can increase their confidence in speaking. They can try different speaking styles, voice intonation, and facial expressions when playing characters in the story. This is very important in the development of speaking

skills, as children can practice both verbal and non-verbal communication. Teachers can take advantage of this opportunity to provide guidance in proper language use, word pronunciation, and voice intonation. In this way, the learning of speaking skills is not only theoretical, but also applicable and practical (Hasanah 2023).

Fable fairy tales contain animal characters who are described as having human traits. These animal characters usually behave and talk like humans, thus attracting children's interest and making it easier for them to understand the storyline. Second, fable stories contain a simple but profound moral message, which makes it easier for children to take lessons from the story. By conveying moral messages indirectly, children can learn positive values without feeling formally taught. This supports the concept of early childhood learning that prioritizes learning through experience and activities (Purnama, 2021).

Moral values education is very important to teach children, because it is related to the way they behave in society so as not to violate existing norms and not harm themselves. Today, moral deviations are common, and children are often involved in such acts, which indicates that they are poorly educated about moral values. By studying moral values in fabel, researchers can find positive teachings that are important to spread, so that moral education through literary works remains known and becomes a driver for the creation of literary works that teach morals to their readers. Fables are very close to the world of children, because in addition to containing moral values, the stories also contain elements of humor that make children not easily bored of hearing or reading fables (Vira and Andalas 2022).

In addition, the use of fable fairy tale-based paper puppet media allows children to engage in immersive role-playing, where they can play characters in stories with a variety of expressions and voices. This gives them the freedom to explore their verbal and non-verbal abilities, which directly improves their speaking skills. In addition, this role-playing also supports children's social-emotional development by allowing them to practice interacting in a broader

social context. Thus, this method not only encourages speaking skills, but also supports social development that is important for children at an early age (Rahayu 2023). This study suggests the use of more varied media in learning, so that it can stimulate children's speaking skills and also to stimulate early childhood skills in the process of development.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research conducted by researchers when using paper puppet media based on fables, students are very enthusiastic in learning and pay attention to what the teacher says, students can speak in simple words with 4 to 5 complete words, enjoy listening and telling stories. back to a simple story with a sequence and easy to understand, students understand the form of questions using what, why, and how, students can use prepositions: inside, outside, above, below, beside, students can participate in a conversation and not dominate to always want to be heard.

The teacher also prepared paper puppet media very well and attracted students' interest. Such as caterpillars, birds and butterflies with accents and the use of attractive colors, as well as a clear way of telling the story, using simple language so that it is easy for students to understand, using voice intonations that attract students' attention. The application of paper puppet media based on fable fairy tales also has its own benefits, namely, apart from the interesting story and colorful appearance, the fable fairy tale contains moral values of patience which are suitable for learning by young children, apart from that, with the fable fairy tales in Learning can also help teachers in instilling self-confidence in students, especially in the aspect of speaking, and it will also be more meaningful if children are given the opportunity to know and be actively involved in learning with teacher guidance'.

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