Teacher's Efforts to Improve Reading Interest in 5-6 Years Old Children during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The research on teachers' efforts to increase interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated Early Childhood Education (PAUD) of Kartini was motivated by the exposure of UNESCO data which stated that Indonesia ranked second from the bottom in terms of world literacy, meaning that reading interest in Indonesia is very low. According to UNESCO data, the reading interest of the Indonesian people is very concerning, only 0.001%. This study aims to determine the efforts of teachers to increase interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at the Integrated PAUD of Kartini in Pontianak. The research method used was descriptive qualitative research methods with case study research. The study results in an effort by teachers to increase reading interest in children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at the Kartini Integrated PAUD Pontianak were carried out using various media methods and conducting appropriate learning evaluations to increase children's reading interest.

Keywords: Reading Interests, Methods, Media, Evaluation, COVID-19 Pandemic

INTRODUCTION

According to NICHD (National Institutes of Children and Human Development), early literacy is the ability of a child to read and write before the child can read and write. To become someone with a high interest in reading, it is necessary to properly develop literacy from an early age. The low interest in reading in Indonesia is reflected in several facts published by; UNESCO, which state that Indonesia is second from the bottom in terms of world literacy, meaning that reading interest is very low. UNESCO revealed that the reading interest data of the Indonesian people is very low, only 0.001%. It means that in 1000 people in Indonesia, only one person who are interested in reading. Meanwhile, according to the World's Most Literate Nations Ranked research conducted by Central Connecticut State University in March 2016, Indonesia was ranked 60th out of 61 countries regarding reading interest, below Thailand, which was ranked 59th, and above Botswana, which was at 61st rank.

From the data above, it can be said that reading interest in Indonesia is still far behind other countries, causing gaps. All parties must be concerned so that the development of reading interest in Indonesia is not far behind. Therefore, educators and parents need to work together as early as
possible to introduce books to children. To foster interest in reading from an early age, children will get used to reading activities.

Referring to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (2008), literacy can be concluded as the ability to read, write, and gain knowledge and skills in specific fields. Literacy is also referred to as a 21st-century ability, which is a priority for the community and early childhood in Indonesia to master six (6) basic literacy, namely: (1) language literacy; (2) numeracy literacy; (3) scientific literacy; (4) digital literacy; (5) financial literacy; (6) cultural literacy and citizenship (Hidayah, 2009 in Marmawi et al, 2020).

In Permendikbud No. 30 of 2017, Article 7 concerning technical guidelines for family involvement in the implementation of early childhood education mentions the forms of family involvement activities that can be programmed or can be carried out by every family, especially families who have complete PAUD children in accordance with the Permendikbud, which consists of four forms. Activities: (1) Growing children's character values in the family environment; (2) Motivating children's learning spirit; (3) Encouraging a literacy culture; (4) Facilitating children's needs.

The researcher can conclude the review above that reading literacy development for early childhood is also essential and needs to be done both by parents and teachers, as stated in the Permendikbud. Activities that are accustomed to being carried out at home can be followed up at school or vice versa so that children's reading literacy development can be carried out as optimally as possible.

Interest in reading is a desire that arises from within or a high tendency of the heart (passion) to read Siregar, (2004). This definition is in line with Darmono's opinion that reading interest is a tendency from within the soul that encourages someone to carry out reading activities. Darmono, (2001). Interest in reading grows from each person's personality, so self-awareness is needed to increase interest in reading.

Generally, the early reading development of children aged 5-6 years, according to Permendikbud 146 of 2014, has characteristics of children's language development. Language development is in improving children's early reading skills, including being able to pronounce more than 2600 words, children's sentences reaching six to eight words, understanding more than 20000 words, can communicate, explain simple words, can use connecting words, prepositions, and conjunctions, the scope of vocabulary expressed verbally for example color, shape, size, taste, smell, temperature, beauty, and speed, recognize many letters, can participate in a conversation, and can carry out self-expression, and to prepare for entering the school level which is believed to be elementary school.

METHOD

This research method uses descriptive qualitative research methods with case study research. In this case, the author will thoroughly reveal the situation to be studied. The subjects of this study were divided into two, namely primary subjects and secondary subjects, as follows: (1) Primary subjects: Class teachers for group B at Kindergarten B2 at Integrated PAUD of Kartini Jl. Sentarum Lake No. 75 Pontianak City consists of 1 person who will be interviewed regarding the Efforts to Increase reading interest in children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic, (2) Secondary Subject: Teacher companion for group B Kindergarten B2 at Integrated PAUD of Kartini Jl. Sentarum Lake No. 75 Pontianak City, totaling one person who will be interviewed regarding Efforts to Increase reading interest in children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The research location was the place where research activities were carried out. Determination of the research location aimed to simplify and clarify the object that is the target of the research. The location of this research is Integrated PAUD of Kartini Jl. Sentarum Lake No. 75 Bangkong River, Kec. Pontianak City, Pontianak City, West Kalimantan.

This study's techniques and data collection tools used observation techniques, interview techniques, and documentary techniques. Marshall's observation technique (in Sugiono, 2013) states that "through observation, the researcher learns about behavior and the meaning attached to that
behavior." Through observation, researchers learn about the behavior and meaning of the behavior in the field. Observations were made in the form of non-participants. In this observation, the researcher was not involved in the teacher's learning activities but only observed directly.

According to Esterberg (in Sugiono, 2013), "A meeting of two people to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic."

This interview is used as a data collection technique, the researcher as the interviewer will conduct direct interviews with the parties to be interviewed, namely the Kindergarten B2 teacher, to obtain information about efforts to improve the reading ability of children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The documents in this study are the kindergarten learning activity program at Integrated PAUD of Kartini, teacher data, child data, facilities and infrastructure data, daily activity plans, and photos of activities in increasing interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the pandemic. COVID-19.

The validity of the data checked using triangulation and member check. Triangulation is very important in research activities to obtain accurate data to test the credibility of data about efforts to increase interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini.

The member check aims to find out how far the data obtained is in accordance with what is provided by the data provider. As for what the researchers did in the member check implementation, namely to go to the field to check data about the teacher's efforts to increase interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic on resource persons or information providers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

The researcher describes the findings at the research location based on the focus of the research on "Teachers' Efforts to Increase Reading Interest for Children aged 5-6 Years at the Integrated PAUD of Kartini in Pontianak". The information data was obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. It is hoped that the research that has been done can provide an in-depth picture of how teachers can make efforts to increase reading interest in children aged 5-6 years. This research was conducted by researchers from August 24, 2021, to August 25, 2021, regarding the efforts of teachers to increase reading interest in children aged 5-6 years in Integrated PAUD of Kartini.

From the observations made, the following data were obtained:

1. Learning media used to increase interest in reading during the COVID-19 pandemic used at the Integrated PAUD of Kartini were PowerPoint media, children's worksheets. As for the number of media prepared by the teacher according to the number of children.

2. The learning methods used to increase interest in reading during the COVID-19 pandemic used at Integrated PAUD of Kartini were question and answer methods, singing, thematic activities, and games. While the duration of the time applied during the COVID-19 pandemic is different from before, during the COVID-19 pandemic, children enter from 07.30-09.30, so the duration of each activity is about 10-15 minutes.

3. Evaluation of learning used to increase interest in reading during the COVID-19 pandemic is used in Integrated PAUD of Kartini using reference documents as an evaluation assessment using documents from thematic books given to children and children's worksheets and observation during zoom activities, google meet, and in class, by using an evaluation instrument in the form of a checklist on the child's development scale.
The following is an explanation of interview data that researchers have carried out:

1. **Interview data related to learning media to increase children's reading interest**

   Learning media is a tool that conveys messages that are needed in early childhood learning because, at this time, children learn through real or concrete things. Because children have not been able to learn by using abstract media. As for the results of interviews conducted by researchers, it can be described that learning media to increase reading interest used by teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic is quite limited, but the use of learning media has varied, such as using power points, flashcards, pictures, songs, and short story videos. Many media used by teachers during learning increase children's interest in reading during the COVID-19 pandemic, namely by adjusting the number of children, meaning that if there are 18 children, the teacher will also prepare 18 media. As for the special criteria for choosing media, teachers do not have special criteria to determine or choose a media because, according to the teachers at the B2 group in Integrated PAUD of Kartini, during the COVID-19 pandemic, all media that support and are in accordance with the learning theme will be used as media, or a means of delivering messages to children.

2. **Interview data related to learning methods to increase children's reading interest**

   Educators use the learning method in carrying out learning activities for children to achieve certain competencies. The method used is an important thing in the learning process. The varied methods can prevent children from getting bored while participating in learning activities. As for the results of interviews conducted by researchers about learning methods to increase interest in reading for early childhood, it can be seen that the learning methods used in the B2 group in Integrated PAUD of Kartini during the COVID-19 pandemic used methods that were commonly used or commonly used during learning such as the approach method. Thematic learning, question and answer, singing, and thematic. In applying each learning method used every day, there is a period or duration so that each activity is carried out to the maximum. The children did not feel bored in each activity. The duration of each method was about 10-15 minutes, but if you use the alternate singing method, each child has about 3-5 minutes, so the duration of time used is more flexible.

3. **Interview data related to learning evaluation to increase children's reading interest**

   Evaluation is important to obtain information about each child's development to provide the right service for early childhood. The results of interviews conducted by researchers regarding the evaluation of the development of interest in early childhood reading related to the evaluation of the development of interest in early childhood reading carried out by teachers at Integrated PAUD of Kartini were through observation sheets made during zoom meet or face-to-face meetings, as well as thorough developmental scale checklist sheets.

4. **Interview data related to inhibiting factors and learning support factors to increase children's reading interest**

   From the results of interviews that the inhibiting factors in improving children's interest in reading during the COVID-19 pandemic are short learning times, slow data networks, the condition of children who are often bored so that online learning activities are not conducive. Meanwhile, the supporting factors in increasing children's interest in reading during the COVID-19 pandemic are the many who support online activities, media, and methods available on online platforms, such as YouTube and the internet. Obstacles do not only occur in the learning evaluation process and obstacles in increasing children's reading interest but also occur in determining the media and applying the methods used to increase children's reading interest during the COVID-19 pandemic. From the interview results, it can be concluded that determining the media is the limited media that can be used and the determination of the media so that children do not get bored with the use of the same media. Meanwhile, some teachers feel that there are no obstacles to applying the learning method. Still, there are also obstacles to applying the technique, namely that there are many learning methods that cannot be used in the learning process.

From the documentation data obtained are as follows:
Through a documentary study conducted by researchers, researchers obtained documentary data in photographs, documents in the form of learning implementation plans, and children's checklists.

Discussion
Based on the data that has been obtained and presented above, the researcher can provide a review in accordance with the general and specific problems as follows:

1. The teacher's efforts to increase interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at the Integrated PAUD of Kartini, Pontianak.

Teachers' efforts to increase interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at the Integrated PAUD of Kartini were carried out in the following ways:

   a. Choose a learning theme according to the child's needs and adjust the theme that has been determined in the school semester program.
   b. Choosing media to convey messages according to the needs and activities to be carried out.
   c. Determining learning methods that are in accordance with the developmental aspects that will be improved, namely increasing children's interest in reading.

It is in line with the research that has been carried out by Nur & Rasydah (2020) with the results of the research that has been carried out, namely efforts to increase children's reading interest can be made by choosing media and determining various methods that have succeeded in increasing most of the achievement indicators of children's reading ability aged 4-5 years.

2. Teachers' learning media to increase interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini.

The media that can increase children's reading interest are divided into several categories, namely visual media, audio media, exhibition media, audio-visual media, multimedia, and computer networks. The learning media used by teachers to increase interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic are as visual media in the form of pictures or picture cards containing pictures of animals with alphabet letters, audio such as alphabet songs or songs created by teachers to introduce letters according to themes. The second media was audio-visuals such as animated videos, multimedia such as short stories, or folk tales on Youtube, and computers networks such as PowerPoint contain pictures and words that describe pictures, and games such as matching numbers and letters or words and pictures.

The above is in line with Marmawi et al. (2020, p.89), stating that various learning media such as visual media, audio media, exhibition media, audio-visual media, multimedia, and computer networks can improve the language skills in early childhood. In preparing the media used by the teacher, the researcher found the uniqueness of the media in the form of visuals such as pictures, cards or flashcards, and game media during the COVID-19 pandemic, which the teacher prepared according to a large number of children because learning cannot be done in groups.

3. The learning method used by the teacher to increase interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini, using several methods such as the audio-lingual method, the question, and answer method, the speech method, and the method through the thematic approach.

   a. The audio-lingual method used to increase interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic used at Integrated PAUD of Kartini was singing. The teacher invites children to recognize the letters of the alphabet by singing by pointing at the child at random or alternately. Audio lingual method This method uses the Behavioristic principle proposed by B.F Skiner where language is a situation that is conditioned through stimulus and response to form new habits from a second language. This method emphasizes verbal communication to practice sentence patterns through imitation and remembering.

   b. The question and answer method applied at the Integrated PAUD of Kartini to increase children's interest in reading during the COVID-19 pandemic
In increasing reading interest for children aged 5-6 years during the pandemic also applied the question and answer method to increase interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini. During the learning process, the teacher also applied two forms of question and answer; spontaneous question and answer are usually done spontaneously without planning, such as the teacher asking whether the children have had breakfast or whether the tasks given at the zoom meeting have been done. While the question and answer are based on the subject, the teacher usually does a question and answer session at the lesson's opening. Usually, the teacher asks about the theme being discussed. For example, in the theme being discussed about spinach, the teacher will ask whether the children have ever eaten spinach. At the time of recalling, the teacher will ask what activities were carried out that day. The teacher will ask which activities the children like the most. This method can also be used as a child's focus when starting to not focus on the learning given.

It is in line with Lubis's (2018, p.18) opinion regarding two forms of question and answers method: (1) Spontaneous question and answers, namely question and answer activities, can be carried out spontaneously by teachers to students. Between students, or between a group of students that can be done in class or outside the class without being limited by topic or subject matter; (2) Questions and answers based on the subject matter, namely this question, and answer activity has usually been programmed by the teacher, in developing learning and developing all aspects of child development in the form of developing mathematics, social, emotion, religion, art, and science. In this question and answer activity, children can express themselves through facial expressions.

c. The speech method applied at Integrated PAUD of Kartini to increase interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic
The teacher usually does this speech method in a show-and-tell way. Usually, the teacher calls one child to tell a story about an object (for example, a picture of a cat in a book). After the child finishes speaking, the teacher will ask questions, and the teacher also encourages peers to ask questions. The speech method is an oration skill representing children's listening and speaking development. Teachers are encouraged to intentionally provide opportunities for conversation between children through connected discourse, open conversation, two-way communication, problem-solving, and tuning (Jacoby & Lesaux in Marmawi et al (2020).

4. Teachers' evaluation of learning to increase interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini.
Evaluation or assessment is carried out using indicators of developmental achievement, which are categorized based on the child's age. This study focused on the age level of 5-6 years. The evaluation carried out by the teacher to increase interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID 19 pandemic used an observation sheet with a checklist or rating scale approach, which was carried out when face-to-face was limited in-class and online activities that used zoom meet during this COVID-19 pandemic.
The evaluation of learning to increase reading interest in children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was carried out at Integrated PAUD of Kartini, was not written. Still, the evaluation was carried out only through observation during learning, as stated in the following interview results:

a. Evaluation of the use of learning media
The teacher's media evaluation was seen from every meeting, whether the child was interested. If the child were not interested in eating, the media used would be replaced or changed so that the children were interested, to look for media materials used by the teacher to search on the internet, youtube, and so on. Social media pages that support early childhood learning activities.
b. Evaluation of the use of learning methods
The evaluation of the learning method that is carried out is to see directly or observe when learning activities are in progress. Suppose most children's conditions are not conducive or
not interested when we apply the learning method. In that case, we can know that the method we are using is not successful, so to the next meeting, we can change the learning method we use. Or through observation activities during the application of the method used, if the method applied is too long, the duration of its application is reduced, if the child cannot participate in learning activities with that method, the method will be replaced with another method.

c. The evaluation is carried out in line with or in accordance with the Minister of Education and Culture Number 146 of 2014 concerning the 2013 curriculum for Early Childhood Education, known as indicators of developmental achievement, which are categorized based on the child's age. The categorization aims to monitor the development of children according to age and is used as a guide in making learning designs for the assessment or assessment process.

5. Barriers experienced by teachers in increasing interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini.

Meanwhile, the obstacles experienced by teachers at Integrated PAUD of Kartini in increasing interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic also experienced two factors, namely internal factors, and external factors as well as the obstacles experienced: a). Activities carried out are usually not carried out independently by children. b). Limitations of meeting children. c). Short learning time. d). The application of the prepared media is not optimal. e). Having trouble with the network while having an online meeting. f). Children get bored easily and often do not focus when taking online classes.

In line with Prasetyo (in Abu Bakar, 2014), two factors influence reading interest, namely internal and external factors. a). Internal factors are factors that come from within. Internal factors include a tendency to be lazy to read and busy with activities. b.) External factors are factors that come from outside the individual. External factors include inadequate facilities in the reading park, poor service provided, social status, environmental influences, on multimedia when looking for information.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the results of research that has been carried out and through the results obtained after data analysis was carried out, in general, it can be concluded that the teacher's efforts in increasing interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini by using media, methods, and appropriate and varied learning evaluations can increase children's interest in reading. In particular, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The media used by teachers in learning to increase interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini was quite diverse by utilizing several media such as pictures or picture cards with letters of the alphabet, audio such as songs, audio-visual such as animated videos, multimedia such as short stories on Youtube, and network computers such as PowerPoint, as well as through games such as matching numbers and letters.

2. The method used by the teacher in learning to increase interest in reading children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini ntianak. The method used by the teacher is a method that is commonly or commonly used, such as the question and answer method, the speech method, singing with a thematic approach.

3. The evaluation carried out by the teacher to increase interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini was by using an observation sheet with a checklist or rating scale.

4. Barriers experienced by teachers in increasing interest in reading for children aged 5-6 years during the COVID-19 pandemic at Integrated PAUD of Kartini because learning activities were carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers experienced obstacles in the form of
external barriers in the form of barriers that occurred from the environment and the environment. Internal in the form of obstacles that occur from within the child.

Suggestions
From the results of the study and the conclusions of this study, some suggestions are needed as follows:
1. For teachers, build a reading culture from an early age. Teachers should also use reading materials or other books besides theme books with parents as facilitators in providing reading materials during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. For institutional leaders, it is better to be able to build cooperation between teachers and parents to increase children's interest in reading, not only through learning and habituation carried out at school but also these activities can continue when children are at home monitored by parents, so that children's interest in reading will be maximized.
3. Future researchers can use other methods or other methods to increase children's reading interest. They can also use media and other learning methods to improve children's reading interest, which this study has not discussed.

REFERENCES