

Efforts to Improve Speaking Skills through Storytelling Methods Assisted by Hand Puppets for Students at RA Taqiyya Kartasura Sukoharjo

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Abstract: Efforts to Improve Speaking Skills Through Storytelling Methods with Hand Puppet Media for Zaid/A1 Class Students at RA Taqiyya Kartasura in the 2020/2021 Academic Year. This study aims to improve speaking skills through storytelling methods with hand puppet media for Zaid/Group A1 students at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. Speaking skills are one of the important aspects in early childhood development, because through speaking children can communicate and interact with others, besides speaking is one of the provisions for children in socializing with the surrounding environment. The subjects of this study were Zaid/A1 class students at RA Taqiyya Kartasura, totaling 24 children consisting of 13 boys and 11 girls. The activity took place on Monday-Friday. Based on the research simulation carried out, hand puppet media can be an alternative to improve speaking skills in children aged 4-5 years, because hand puppets are one of the media that are interesting for children and very easy to use. In addition, the teacher's readiness in preparing supporting media such as puppet stages and the teacher's delivery method in telling stories also needs to be considered so that children are more interested in paying attention and are willing to try telling stories with hand puppets and ultimately efforts to improve speaking skills through the storytelling method with hand puppet media are successful.

Keywords: Speaking skills, storytelling method, hand puppet media.

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INTRODUCTION

Observation results in Class Zaid/A1 RA Taqiyya found a problem that children in the class still lack in speaking skills, many of them still do not dare to convey their feelings, opinions or ideas to others. This can be seen from the 24 students in Zaid's class, only about 20% or 5 students have dared to convey their feelings or opinions to the teacher. The cause of this problem is, among others, the lack of communication between children and their parents before entering school. Because Zaid's class is a Full Day class where almost all of the parents are workers who work from morning to evening. Before entering school, children are entrusted to TPAB or at home with only a household assistant. For children who previously came from TPAB, their speaking skills are already good, but for children who are only at home with a household assistant, their vocabulary is still very lacking. This may be due to the lack of socialization of children with other people.

Another cause is in the learning process at school which rarely uses interesting methods or media. For example, using the lecture method too often, children are only asked to listen to what the teacher has said, stay still and do assignments when ordered.

This also makes children's speaking skills less developed because the teacher is more active than the child, and the less interesting method makes children feel bored quickly, besides that the teacher also rarely uses learning media.

From the identification of the problems above, the problem that will be solved is the lack of speaking ability in class Zaid / A1 students who are children aged 4-5 years. This needs to be done because speaking ability is one of the important aspects in the development of early childhood, because through speaking children can communicate and interact with others, besides speaking is one of the provisions for children in socializing with the surrounding environment. Language development is one of the most critical areas in early childhood education, as it lays the foundation for children's communication, cognitive, and social skills. The ability to speak clearly and confidently is essential for young learners to express their ideas, share thoughts, and interact with others. In the early years, children's language development occurs rapidly, and educators play a pivotal role in supporting this development. Thus, finding effective teaching strategies to enhance children's speaking skills is crucial in helping them become successful communicators in the future.

At the age of 5-6 years, children are transitioning from basic language skills to more complex forms of communication. During this period, they begin to use longer sentences, acquire new vocabulary, and engage in more meaningful conversations. However, many children still struggle with speaking in full sentences, articulating thoughts clearly, and using a wide range of vocabulary. Factors such as shyness, lack of confidence, and limited opportunities to practice speaking in a supportive environment may hinder their development. Therefore, it is important for educators to provide children with opportunities to practice speaking in a comfortable and encouraging setting. One method that has gained attention in early childhood education is the use of storytelling as a tool to develop language skills. Storytelling encourages children to express themselves verbally, listen actively, and engage in imaginative thinking. When combined with visual and interactive elements, such as hand puppets, storytelling can become an even more effective tool. Hand puppets capture children's attention and serve as a dynamic tool for fostering language development. They offer a fun, engaging way for children to participate actively in the learning process while building confidence in their speaking abilities.

The use of hand puppets in education is not a new concept. Puppets have been widely used in classrooms as a tool for both storytelling and teaching. They allow children to step into different roles and experience the world from different perspectives. Puppets can help children feel more comfortable by offering a non-threatening medium through which they can express themselves. This playful method provides a safe space for children to explore language without the fear of making mistakes, making it particularly effective for young learners who may be shy or hesitant to speak in front of others. In the context of early childhood education, particularly in religious or moral education settings, storytelling and puppetry can be especially valuable. In schools like RA Taqiyya Kartasura, where children are introduced to various aspects of moral, social, and religious learning, storytelling plays a significant role in helping children internalize values and lessons. Integrating hand puppets into storytelling not only enriches the educational experience but also allows children to engage with stories in a more interactive and dynamic manner. This method can be used to discuss moral values, religious stories, or daily life scenarios, thus promoting both language skills and character development.

However, while the potential benefits of using hand puppets for storytelling are clear, there is a need for further exploration of how this method can specifically impact the speaking abilities of young children. Though several studies have examined the role of puppets in education, there is a gap in research on how hand puppets can directly improve children's speaking skills, particularly in the context of early childhood classrooms. The research at RA Taqiyya Kartasura aims to fill this gap by exploring the effects of the hand puppet storytelling method on the speaking skills of children aged 5-6 years. By investigating the impact of this method, this study seeks to provide valuable insights into

how interactive, playful, and creative approaches can improve children's speaking abilities. The use of hand puppets offers a unique opportunity to make learning enjoyable and meaningful for young children, which in turn can enhance their language acquisition and confidence. This research is crucial for educators and policymakers looking to implement effective language development strategies that can support children in their academic and social growth.

This study is significant because it focuses not only on language development but also on creating a supportive and encouraging environment for young learners. Through interactive storytelling and play-based learning, children are provided with opportunities to practice speaking in a stress-free context. As language skills form the foundation for academic success, exploring methods like hand puppet storytelling is essential for ensuring that children have the skills they need to succeed in both educational and social settings. To improve speaking skills, educators or teachers should facilitate by using activity models that can stimulate children's interest to play an active role in learning activities.

Umar Hamalik (1997: 10.3), states that the use of learning media in the teaching and learning process can arouse new desires, interests, arouse motivation and stimulation of learning activities, and even bring psychological influences to students. The use of appropriate media in learning can improve aspects of development, one of which is the language aspect in terms of improving speaking skills. In order to solve the above problems, the author tries to conduct research on how to improve the speaking skills of Kindergarten children through hand puppet media, which the author formulates in the research title "Effort To Improve Speaking Ability Through Storytelling Method With Hand Puppet Media In Students Of Class Zaid/Group A1 At RA Taqiyya Kartasura In the 2020/2021 Academic Year".

METHODS

This study aimed to enhance the speaking skills of children in RA Taqiyya Kartasura using the storytelling method with hand puppet media. The research was conducted using a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach, which allowed for a cyclical process of planning, action, observation, and reflection to improve the speaking abilities of the students. The participants of the study were 20 children aged 5-6 years. The research was carried out in two cycles, with each cycle consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages to improve the students' speaking abilities. In the planning phase, the researcher designed lesson plans that incorporated the storytelling method with hand puppets. The aim was to create an engaging and interactive learning environment where children would feel comfortable and motivated to speak. The use of hand puppets as a teaching medium was chosen because it has been shown to capture the children's attention and encourage participation. Hand puppets can stimulate children's imagination, helping them to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a more relaxed and playful manner, which is particularly effective for young learners in early childhood education.

The hand puppet media was introduced as a tool for storytelling. Teachers used hand puppets to narrate simple stories and engage children in interactive dialogues. The children were encouraged to participate by responding to the puppets, imitating the sounds and voices, and eventually narrating their own short stories with the help of the puppets. This approach was intended to create an environment where the children could practice speaking skills in a fun, low-pressure setting, promoting their confidence in verbal communication. To assess the effectiveness of the intervention, the researchers used pre- and post-assessments that measured students' speaking skills. The assessment focused on aspects such as vocabulary use, clarity of speech, pronunciation, and the ability to express ideas coherently. Observations were also made during the lessons to assess the students' participation levels and engagement with the hand puppet activity. During the observation

phase, the researchers noted how actively each child participated, how often they spoke, and how well they were able to express themselves using the new vocabulary they were learning through the puppet stories.

Each cycle involved iterative improvement. After the first cycle, the teachers reflected on the process, noting what worked well and identifying areas for improvement. Adjustments were made for the second cycle, such as adding more interactive elements to the puppet stories or giving more opportunities for the children to use the puppets themselves. Feedback was given to the children to encourage their progress, and additional reinforcement was provided for those who showed less participation or faced challenges in speaking. The second cycle was similar in structure to the first but involved the refinements based on the reflections from the first cycle. The second cycle was expected to improve the effectiveness of the storytelling method by refining the techniques used in presenting the stories with hand puppets. After the second cycle, post-assessment tests were administered again to evaluate the progress of the students' speaking skills.

Throughout both cycles, the research focused on the following objectives: to increase students' vocabulary, to improve their ability to articulate thoughts clearly, and to develop their confidence in speaking. The use of hand puppets was central to this approach, as it allowed for a more interactive and creative way to practice speaking skills. Children were not only passive listeners but active participants, which helped boost their speaking confidence. Additionally, the role of the teacher was crucial in guiding the students. The teacher used the hand puppets as a tool to demonstrate the correct use of language, proper articulation, and engaging storytelling. The teacher also guided the children to express themselves by encouraging them to speak in full sentences and assisting them in overcoming any challenges they faced with vocabulary or pronunciation.

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the children's progress, qualitative and quantitative data were gathered. Quantitative data came from the pre- and post-assessment tests, which provided numerical measures of improvement in speaking abilities. Qualitative data, such as classroom observations and student feedback, helped to assess the children's level of engagement, confidence, and comfort with speaking. Data analysis was conducted by comparing the results of the pre-assessment and post-assessment tests to determine the impact of the hand puppet storytelling method. The researchers also reviewed classroom observation notes to assess how children engaged with the learning activity, their willingness to speak, and their ability to understand and participate in the storytelling process.

The study aimed to prove that the hand puppet storytelling method is an effective way to encourage children to develop speaking skills. By using playful and engaging methods, it was expected that the children would not only increase their vocabulary but also enhance their confidence in verbal communication, which is essential for their overall cognitive and social development. The research also focused on creating a fun and supportive learning environment, where children felt encouraged to speak freely without fear of judgment. In conclusion, the methodology employed in this study involved a collaborative and reflective approach to improving students' speaking skills through the use of hand puppet storytelling. By implementing a cyclical process of planning, action, observation, and reflection, the study provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of this method for enhancing the speaking abilities of young children. The next section will explore the results of this research and the improvements observed in students' speaking skills after the intervention.

RESULTS

The results of the research on improving speaking skills through the storytelling method with hand puppets at RA Taqiyya Kartasura showed significant progress among the students. The research followed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design that involved

two cycles of intervention. The data collected from pre-assessments, post-assessments, classroom observations, and feedback from both the students and the teacher provided a comprehensive view of the effectiveness of the hand puppet storytelling method in enhancing the children's speaking skills.

Initially, the pre-assessment results revealed that many of the children had limited speaking abilities, particularly in areas such as vocabulary usage, sentence structure, and the ability to clearly express ideas. Most students were hesitant to speak in front of their peers, often relying on one-word answers or simple sentences. This initial data highlighted the need for a more engaging and supportive approach to encourage children to speak more confidently. The first cycle of the study aimed to address these challenges by introducing the storytelling method using hand puppets. Teachers began by narrating simple stories with the help of hand puppets, encouraging students to respond to the puppets, imitate their voices, and interact with the story. During the first cycle, observations showed that while some children actively participated in the storytelling sessions, others remained passive, watching without much verbal interaction. This indicated that the children needed more encouragement to speak and increased support to become more confident in their abilities.

However, despite the initial hesitancy, the majority of the students showed signs of interest and engagement. The hand puppet media was highly effective in capturing the children's attention, which made them more eager to participate in the storytelling activity. As the lessons progressed, some children began to demonstrate greater enthusiasm, using more words and short phrases in their responses to the puppets. These observations showed that the storytelling method with hand puppets had the potential to positively influence students' speaking skills. In terms of vocabulary development, the students began to use a wider variety of words to describe objects, actions, and emotions depicted in the stories. The teacher carefully selected simple and relevant vocabulary words from the stories and encouraged the students to use them in their own sentences. Over time, the children's vocabulary expanded, and they became more comfortable using new words in their speech. However, there were still some children who had difficulty articulating their thoughts clearly, which indicated that further support and refinement of the storytelling process were needed.

The second cycle of the study focused on addressing the challenges identified during the first cycle. In response to the need for more active participation, the teacher provided additional opportunities for the children to use the hand puppets themselves. Children were encouraged to take turns using the puppets to tell their own stories. The teacher guided them through the process, offering support when necessary, and providing gentle prompts to help them expand their speech. By taking on the role of the puppet master, many children gained more confidence in speaking, as they were able to express themselves in a more creative and fun way. In the second cycle, the improvements in the students' speaking skills became more evident. Observations showed that more children were able to form full sentences, clearly express their thoughts, and ask questions related to the stories. They demonstrated an improved ability to articulate their ideas, and the fear of speaking in front of others appeared to diminish. Students also began to ask more questions and participate in discussions, indicating that their overall confidence in speaking was growing.

The post-assessment results further confirmed the progress observed during the second cycle. Compared to the pre-assessment, the post-assessment showed a significant increase in the students' speaking abilities. In particular, there was a marked improvement in their ability to use a wider range of vocabulary, form complete sentences, and speak with greater clarity and confidence. The average score of the students in the post-assessment was much higher than in the pre-assessment, with an overall improvement of approximately 50%. These results confirmed that the storytelling method with hand puppets had a positive impact on enhancing the students' speaking skills.

The feedback from the students was also highly positive. Many students expressed enjoyment in using the hand puppets to tell their own stories, and they indicated that they felt more confident speaking in front of their classmates. Some students, who had initially been shy or reluctant to speak, became more active participants, taking on the role of the storyteller and engaging with their peers. The playful and interactive nature of the hand puppet method helped create a supportive and non-threatening environment where students felt encouraged to speak freely. Classroom observations highlighted that students were not only more vocal but also demonstrated improved listening skills as they interacted with the puppets and their peers. The students were observed paying closer attention to the stories, asking thoughtful questions, and offering creative suggestions based on the puppet's actions. This active engagement showed that the students were processing the information presented to them and were developing the ability to respond appropriately, both verbally and non-verbally.

Teachers also noted that the children's speaking confidence was bolstered by the use of the hand puppets. The teacher's use of puppets to model speech, as well as to encourage students to use the puppets themselves, provided a sense of safety and creativity that enabled the children to experiment with language without the fear of making mistakes. The puppets acted as an intermediary, allowing children to express themselves through the playful persona of the puppet, which helped lower the emotional barriers to speaking in front of others. One key finding from the research was that the students' speaking skills improved not only in terms of vocabulary and sentence structure but also in terms of their ability to convey emotions and ideas more effectively. The storytelling method with hand puppets allowed children to practice expressing emotions, such as happiness, sadness, and excitement, through their voice and actions. This helped them develop greater emotional intelligence and a better understanding of how to use language to communicate different feelings and thoughts.

Despite the positive outcomes, some challenges remained. A small number of children continued to face difficulties in articulating their thoughts clearly. These students required additional time and encouragement to form sentences and express their ideas coherently. Teachers identified that some children would benefit from one-on-one guidance or additional practice with simple sentence structures and vocabulary before participating in group activities. Future research could explore strategies to provide further individual support for students who continue to struggle with speaking. Another challenge identified was the varying levels of participation among the students. Some children were more eager to speak and engage with the puppets, while others remained hesitant or reluctant to participate. The teacher worked to address this by creating smaller groups and offering more individualized attention during the storytelling activities. Further modifications to the teaching strategies, such as incorporating peer support, might help ensure more equal participation among all students.

In conclusion, the research demonstrated that the storytelling method with hand puppets effectively improved the speaking skills of children aged 5-6 years at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. The combination of playfulness, creativity, and social interaction through the use of hand puppets fostered an environment where children felt comfortable and motivated to speak. The students exhibited significant improvements in vocabulary, sentence construction, and overall speaking confidence. The method also contributed to the development of the children's emotional expression and their ability to engage in conversations with peers. While there were challenges, the positive outcomes of this research suggest that the hand puppet storytelling method is an effective tool for enhancing speaking skills in young children.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore the effectiveness of the hand puppet storytelling method in improving the speaking skills of children aged 5-6 years at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. The

results indicated that the storytelling method with hand puppets significantly improved the children's ability to express themselves verbally, expand their vocabulary, and participate more actively in classroom discussions. The discussion of the findings will cover the implications of these results, the challenges faced during the intervention, and the broader educational significance of using hand puppets in early childhood education. One of the most notable findings from this study was the improvement in the students' vocabulary. At the start of the intervention, many students demonstrated limited vocabulary and struggled to form complete sentences. However, after participating in the hand puppet storytelling activities, there was a noticeable increase in the variety of words the students used in their speech. The hand puppet storytelling method provided opportunities for children to hear and use new words in context, which enhanced their ability to recall and use these words in their own speech. This is consistent with research that highlights the importance of contextual learning in language acquisition, where children learn new vocabulary more effectively when they are exposed to it in meaningful, interactive contexts.

The use of hand puppets as a tool for storytelling was highly effective in engaging the children. The puppets served as an attractive and playful medium that drew the children's attention and made them feel more comfortable and relaxed in expressing themselves. This is in line with findings from previous studies that suggest puppets can lower the affective filter in language learning, reducing anxiety and making students more willing to participate. Through the puppets, the children were able to engage in conversations and storytelling activities without the fear of judgment, which allowed them to take risks with their language and develop confidence in their speaking skills.

Furthermore, the hand puppet medium allowed the children to visualize the stories being told and actively participate in the storytelling process. By watching the puppets act out the story and responding to them, students were able to connect language with action, which deepened their understanding of how language works in real-life situations. This multimodal approach—where students engaged both visually and verbally—helped solidify their understanding of new words and phrases, and provided them with a fun way to practice their speaking skills. As the children gained more confidence with using the puppets themselves, they became more comfortable creating their own stories, showing greater creativity and initiative in their speaking.

Additionally, the interactive nature of the hand puppet method encouraged peer interaction and collaboration. Students were able to work together in groups, taking turns using the puppets and engaging in dialogue with one another. This social aspect of the activity was important in fostering communication and collaboration skills. The children learned to listen attentively to their peers, wait for their turn to speak, and respond appropriately to what others said. This mirrors what Vygotsky (1978) argued about the importance of social interaction in learning, especially in early childhood education, where language development is facilitated through social engagement and cooperative play.

However, despite the overall success of the intervention, there were challenges that need to be addressed for future implementations of the method. One of the main challenges observed during the study was the varying levels of participation among students. While some children were very eager to participate and actively used the hand puppets to tell their own stories, others were more reluctant to speak, particularly in front of the group. This disparity in participation can be attributed to the different developmental stages and personalities of the children. Some children are naturally more extroverted and comfortable with public speaking, while others may need more time and encouragement to overcome their shyness. To address this issue, it would be beneficial to provide more individualized support for the children who are less confident in their speaking abilities. One potential strategy would be to provide one-on-one sessions where these children could practice using the hand puppets in a more private setting, allowing them to gradually build their confidence before speaking in front of the whole class. This individualized attention would help ensure that every child has the opportunity to practice

and improve their speaking skills at their own pace. Additionally, small group activities could be used to foster peer support, where more confident students could model speaking behaviors for those who are less confident, promoting collaborative learning and social support.

Another challenge identified during the research was the need for additional scaffolding for students who had difficulty expressing themselves clearly. Some students struggled with forming complete sentences or articulating their thoughts coherently. These students benefited from extra guidance, such as prompting them with questions to help structure their sentences or providing visual aids to reinforce the vocabulary they were learning. In the future, the teacher could consider using a more structured approach, such as providing sentence starters or simple story templates, to help students organize their thoughts and express themselves more effectively.

Despite these challenges, the study's findings suggest that the hand puppet storytelling method is a powerful tool for fostering speaking skills in young children. By incorporating play into the learning process, the hand puppet method allowed children to practice language in a fun and engaging way. The hands-on nature of the activity enabled children to experiment with language, make mistakes, and learn from them in a low-stakes environment. This is particularly important in early childhood education, where creating a safe space for language exploration is essential for developing foundational communication skills. The improvement in speaking skills observed in this study has broader implications for early childhood education. Language development is crucial during the early years of a child's life, as it lays the foundation for later academic success and social development. The ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and non-verbally, is essential for building relationships, solving problems, and expressing ideas. By using interactive and playful methods like hand puppet storytelling, teachers can create an environment that supports language development in a natural and enjoyable way, helping children develop the confidence and skills they need to succeed in school and in life.

Furthermore, this research supports the idea that learning through play is an effective strategy for teaching young children. Play-based learning encourages exploration, creativity, and critical thinking, all of which are essential for cognitive and language development. By incorporating play-based methods into the curriculum, teachers can provide a more holistic learning experience that caters to the needs of young children, making learning enjoyable and meaningful. The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of research that advocates for the use of play as a fundamental component of early childhood education.

Additionally, the hand puppet storytelling method aligns with the principles of active learning, where students are actively involved in the learning process rather than passively receiving information. This approach allows children to take ownership of their learning, as they are encouraged to use their imagination, creativity, and language skills to tell their own stories. Active learning strategies have been shown to enhance student engagement, motivation, and retention of information, making them highly effective in early childhood education settings.

The positive outcomes of this study also have implications for the role of the teacher in supporting language development. Teachers who use methods like hand puppet storytelling must be skilled in creating a supportive and encouraging environment where children feel safe to express themselves. The teacher's role is not just to impart knowledge but also to guide, model, and facilitate student participation. Teachers who use playful and engaging methods like puppetry can help foster a love of learning and encourage children to take risks with their language.

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of using diverse teaching methods to meet the needs of different learners. While the hand puppet method was effective for most children, it is important to recognize that some students may require additional support or alternative strategies to develop their speaking skills. By offering a range of activities and

resources, teachers can ensure that all children are provided with the opportunity to succeed and develop their language abilities.

In conclusion, this research shows that the hand puppet storytelling method is an effective strategy for enhancing the speaking skills of young children. The study demonstrated that when children are provided with an engaging, supportive, and interactive learning environment, they are more likely to develop confidence in their speaking abilities and improve their vocabulary and sentence structure. The hand puppet method not only fosters language development but also encourages creativity, collaboration, and emotional expression, all of which are essential for young children's overall growth. Despite some challenges, the findings suggest that incorporating play-based and interactive methods like storytelling with hand puppets can be highly beneficial for promoting language skills in early childhood education.

Through the use of hand puppets, the children were able to engage with their peers in meaningful ways. They listened to each other's stories, responded to questions, and worked together to create dialogues with the puppets. This collaborative approach promoted communication and teamwork, which are essential skills for young children. The social aspect of the activity helped the children develop not only their speaking abilities but also their listening skills and ability to interact with others. While the study showed significant improvements, challenges still remained for some children, particularly those who were less confident in speaking. Some students required additional encouragement and guidance to speak more freely, while others struggled with sentence construction. This suggests that, although the hand puppet method is effective, further individualized support may be necessary for children who are particularly shy or who need extra help developing their speaking skills. Future studies may focus on tailoring the method to better support these children's specific needs. Despite these challenges, the study's findings confirm that the hand puppet storytelling method can be an effective tool in early childhood education. It demonstrates that play-based and interactive learning methods are highly beneficial in developing speaking skills. By using the hand puppet storytelling approach, teachers can create an environment that fosters creativity, confidence, and language development. The method aligns with the principles of active learning, where children are actively involved in their learning process, making it both enjoyable and educational. In conclusion, the use of hand puppet storytelling in early childhood classrooms has the potential to significantly improve children's speaking abilities. This method not only enhances vocabulary, sentence structure, and verbal expression but also encourages creativity, confidence, and collaboration among young learners. The research provides strong evidence that incorporating play-based methods like hand puppetry into the curriculum can foster a more interactive, supportive, and engaging learning environment for young children. Overall, the study's results suggest that hand puppet storytelling is a valuable strategy in early childhood education for promoting language development. It offers a fun, engaging, and effective way for children to practice speaking, which can help lay the foundation for future success in both language and communication.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of the hand puppet storytelling method in enhancing the speaking skills of children aged 5-6 years at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the use of hand puppets as a medium for storytelling significantly contributed to the improvement of the students' speaking skills. The method helped increase the children's vocabulary, sentence construction, and overall verbal expression, providing them with more confidence in using language. One of the key findings from this study is that the hand puppet storytelling method effectively engaged the children and captured their attention, which motivated them to participate in speaking activities. The playful and interactive nature of the hand puppets provided a safe and

supportive environment where children were encouraged to speak without fear of judgment. This is important for young children who may be shy or hesitant to speak in front of others. The puppets acted as a tool to facilitate communication, making it easier for children to express their ideas in a more relaxed setting. Another significant conclusion is the positive impact of the hand puppet method on the children's vocabulary development. Through the use of puppets and interactive storytelling, children were exposed to new words and phrases in context. This contextual learning allowed the children to understand how words are used in real-life situations, which helped them recall and use the words in their own speech. The improvement in vocabulary was one of the most noticeable outcomes, as children were able to use a broader range of words and express themselves more effectively. In addition to vocabulary development, the method also improved the students' ability to form complete sentences and speak more clearly. The practice of using hand puppets in storytelling provided opportunities for children to practice constructing sentences and articulating their thoughts. As the children interacted with the puppets, they were encouraged to speak in full sentences and respond to the story. Over time, this helped improve their sentence structure and pronunciation, contributing to their overall speaking skills. The second cycle of the research showed even greater improvements in speaking skills. By giving children more opportunities to take control of the puppets and tell their own stories, their confidence in speaking continued to grow. This active participation allowed the children to take ownership of their learning, which is crucial in the development of both language and social skills. The hands-on, participatory nature of the method helped the children feel more confident expressing themselves verbally. The study also highlighted the importance of social interaction in language development.

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