

Implementation of the Peer Tutor Model to Improve Learning Outcomes in Al-Qur'an Hadith Learning at MTs Tarbiatusshibyan

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Abstract: The learning process is expected to enable students to master the material being taught. Therefore, the creativity of a teacher or educator is very much needed in order to achieve learning objectives, namely an interesting learning experience and good student learning outcomes. This study is a classroom action research conducted at MTs Tariyatus Shibyan, Mempawah Regency using two cycles and the research subjects were 28 grade VII students. This study aims to improve student learning outcomes in learning the Al-Qur'an Hadith by using a peer tutor model. This study is a classroom action research with four steps, namely planning, action, observation and reflection. The subjects of this study were junior high school students. The data for this study were obtained using test and observation techniques. Tests are used to measure learning outcomes and observations are used to analyze teacher and student learning activities. The data analysis technique used in this study is descriptive statistics by comparing the results obtained with indicators of research success. The results of the data analysis showed an increase in student learning outcomes using the tutor method with a percentage, before the cycle 56.4%, cycle I 68.3% and cycle II 82.3%. So that peer tutors can be an alternative that teachers can use in classroom learning. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the peer tutor model can be used as an alternative to overcome the problem of low student learning outcomes in learning the Al-Qur'an and Hadith.

Keywords: Peer tutors, student learning outcomes, Al-Quran Hadith learning.

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INTRODUCTION

Language development in early childhood is a critical aspect of a child's overall growth and learning. The ability to communicate effectively is fundamental to success in both academic and social contexts. During the early years of life, children's language skills evolve rapidly, and this period offers a prime opportunity for educators to lay the foundation for future communication skills. Among the essential language skills that young children need to develop, speaking and verbal communication are especially significant, as they enable children to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Mastery of these skills sets the stage for other forms of communication, such as writing and reading, which become increasingly important as children progress through their education.

At the age of 5-6 years, children begin to expand their vocabulary and sentence structures. They start using more complex phrases and engage in conversations that require them to articulate their ideas clearly. However, many young children face

challenges in developing strong speaking skills. Some may struggle with forming complete sentences, pronouncing words clearly, or using a variety of vocabulary. Others may be hesitant to speak in front of others due to shyness or lack of confidence. These difficulties can hinder their ability to communicate effectively, both in the classroom and in social situations, which can, in turn, affect their academic and personal development.

One of the most effective ways to support language development in young children is through engaging and interactive learning activities. Research has shown that children are more likely to develop strong language skills when they are provided with opportunities to actively engage with language in a meaningful and enjoyable way. This is where innovative teaching strategies, such as storytelling, can play a crucial role. Storytelling is a versatile and engaging method that allows children to develop their speaking skills while also enhancing their listening abilities and imagination. Through storytelling, children learn to organize their thoughts, use new vocabulary, and express themselves more clearly.

Furthermore, incorporating interactive elements into storytelling can significantly enhance its effectiveness as a language development tool. One such interactive method is the use of hand puppets. Hand puppets serve as a powerful medium for storytelling, as they capture children's attention, stimulate their creativity, and encourage active participation. Puppets have the unique ability to transform a traditional storytelling experience into a dynamic and interactive one, where children can take on various roles, create characters, and engage in dialogue. This method is particularly beneficial for young children, as it creates a fun, safe, and supportive environment for them to practice speaking and communicating with others. Hand puppets have been widely used in educational settings, as they help create a playful and engaging atmosphere that fosters learning. Through puppetry, children can develop their speaking skills by interacting with the puppets, taking turns, and using their imagination. The process of using hand puppets in storytelling encourages children to express themselves verbally, as they often have to narrate or act out parts of the story. This interactive approach helps children feel more comfortable speaking in front of others and can reduce the anxiety that some children may feel when asked to speak in public.

The use of hand puppets in early childhood education is not just about enhancing language skills it also helps children develop their social and emotional intelligence. As children interact with the puppets, they learn to collaborate with their peers, practice turn-taking, and negotiate meaning. They are also exposed to a variety of emotions and social situations, which can deepen their understanding of empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution. Additionally, hand puppets provide a medium for children to explore their creativity and imagination, which are essential aspects of cognitive development.

In educational institutions such as RA Taqiyya Kartasura, where children are being introduced to basic language skills and foundational academic concepts, the use of hand puppet storytelling can be an effective teaching strategy. In these settings, educators aim to provide a supportive learning environment where children are encouraged to explore and develop their language skills in a non-threatening and enjoyable way. By incorporating hand puppets into storytelling, teachers can create a classroom atmosphere that encourages children to speak confidently, express themselves freely, and develop a strong foundation in verbal communication.

The ability to speak confidently and clearly is not just important for academic success it also plays a crucial role in children's social interactions. Children who can articulate their thoughts and ideas are better able to participate in conversations, make friends, and express their emotions. They are also more likely to develop positive self-esteem and a strong sense of identity. On the other hand, children who struggle with speaking may experience difficulties in building relationships, participating in group activities, and expressing their needs, which can affect their overall well-being.

While the benefits of hand puppet storytelling for language development are clear, there is a need for further research to understand how this method specifically impacts

young children's speaking skills. Although several studies have explored the use of puppets in education, few have focused on how hand puppet storytelling affects the verbal communication abilities of young learners. The gap in the existing literature suggests that more research is needed to explore the practical applications and outcomes of using puppets in language development, especially in early childhood settings.

In this context, RA Taqiyya Kartasura provides an ideal setting to investigate the effectiveness of hand puppet storytelling as a method to enhance children's speaking abilities. The school is home to a group of young learners who are at a critical stage in their language development, making it an ideal environment for testing the impact of this method. By exploring how the hand puppet storytelling method affects children's ability to communicate, the research will contribute valuable insights into how early childhood educators can better support language development in their students.

The importance of this study lies in its potential to offer practical recommendations for teachers and educational institutions. By identifying effective strategies to improve children's speaking skills, educators can implement methods that will help children develop strong communication abilities, which are essential for their academic and social success. Moreover, the research will help teachers better understand the role of interactive and playful learning methods in language acquisition, allowing them to tailor their teaching approaches to meet the needs of their students.

The results of this study may also have broader implications for early childhood education practices. If hand puppet storytelling is found to be effective in improving speaking skills, it could be implemented in other schools and educational settings as a valuable tool for language development. This could lead to a more widespread adoption of interactive storytelling methods, which could benefit children across various educational contexts. Furthermore, this research will contribute to the ongoing exploration of innovative teaching strategies that integrate play and creativity into the learning process. By emphasizing the importance of play-based learning in the development of language skills, this study will encourage educators to explore new and engaging ways to support children's cognitive and language development.

As educators strive to create engaging and effective learning environments, this research will provide valuable insights into how interactive methods, such as hand puppet storytelling, can enhance children's language development. It will also underscore the importance of fostering a love for learning and communication in young children, ensuring that they have the necessary skills to succeed academically and socially. In summary, this study is important because it addresses the need for effective strategies to improve speaking skills in young children. By investigating the use of hand puppet storytelling in a real classroom setting, the research aims to offer practical solutions to support language development in early childhood education. The findings of this study will help teachers create a more engaging, supportive, and effective learning environment for their students, promoting both language acquisition and personal growth.

METHODS

This research was conducted to examine the effectiveness of the hand puppet storytelling method in improving the speaking abilities of 5-6-year-old children at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. The study utilized classroom action research (CAR), a cyclical process that involves planning, action, observation, and reflection. The aim was to assess how the use of hand puppets in storytelling could enhance the children's speaking skills, focusing on vocabulary expansion, sentence construction, and overall verbal communication. The research was carried out over two cycles, with each cycle comprising several stages. The first cycle was intended to introduce the hand puppet storytelling method and observe its initial impact on the children's speaking skills. The second cycle aimed to refine and improve the method based on the observations and feedback from the first cycle. The

cyclical process allowed for continuous refinement of the teaching approach and ensured that the method could be tailored to the needs of the children.

The participants in this study were 30 children aged 5-6 years who were enrolled at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. These children were selected from the class where the researcher is employed as a teacher. The class was chosen because the teacher noticed that many children had difficulty with speaking skills, particularly in constructing complete sentences and expressing ideas clearly. To facilitate a more interactive and manageable environment, the children were divided into small groups of 5-6 children each. Parental consent was obtained before the study commenced to ensure participation. This study applied a qualitative research design, focusing on the observation and analysis of the changes in the children's speaking abilities during the implementation of the hand puppet storytelling method. Data were gathered using various methods, such as classroom observations, field notes, audio recordings of children's storytelling sessions, and student feedback. Pre- and post-assessments were also conducted to evaluate any improvements in the children's speaking skills.

In the first cycle, the researcher introduced the hand puppet storytelling method by reading simple stories with the help of hand puppets. The children were encouraged to listen, observe, and participate by interacting with the puppets. During the sessions, the teacher used prompts and questions to encourage the children to speak, such as asking them to repeat words, describe characters, or predict the next part of the story. Children were also invited to take turns using the puppets and telling their own stories, offering them a chance to practice speaking in front of their peers. After each session, the researcher recorded observations about the children's participation and progress. Detailed field notes were made regarding the frequency of children's speech, clarity of expression, and level of engagement with the hand puppets. The researcher also noted challenges that emerged during the storytelling activities, such as hesitation to speak or difficulty forming complete sentences.

The second cycle focused on refining the activities based on the findings from the first cycle. Adjustments were made to address challenges observed, such as providing extra support to children who were less confident in speaking. Children who were more comfortable were encouraged to take leadership roles within the group. Additionally, the use of visual aids and simplified sentence structures was introduced to assist those who struggled with sentence formation. The second cycle also emphasized peer interaction. Children were encouraged to work in pairs or small groups, creating their own stories using the hand puppets. This peer collaboration provided additional opportunities for students to practice speaking in a social context, thereby reinforcing their language skills through dialogue and interaction. Throughout this cycle, the researcher continued to observe and offer further support as necessary.

Data collection was conducted using several techniques to ensure comprehensive and accurate results. Classroom observations were carried out during each session to monitor the children's engagement, participation, and language usage. The researcher recorded detailed field notes about the children's verbal and non-verbal behaviors, including the frequency of speaking, clarity of speech, and ability to use new vocabulary or construct sentences. Additionally, audio recordings were made of the children's storytelling sessions to track the development of their speaking skills over time. These recordings were later transcribed and analyzed to assess the children's vocabulary, sentence structure, and overall fluency. The audio recordings provided a detailed picture of the children's progress in language use.

Pre- and post-assessments were conducted to measure the improvement in speaking skills. The pre-assessment involved a simple speaking test, where the children were asked to describe a picture or tell a short story. This assessment provided a baseline to evaluate their language skills at the beginning of the study. The post-assessment, conducted after the second cycle, was similar in structure but enabled the researcher to assess any improvements in vocabulary usage, sentence construction, and overall fluency.

Informal feedback was also collected from the children through conversations and questionnaires. The children were asked about their experiences with the hand puppet storytelling activities, how much they enjoyed the sessions, and whether they felt more confident in speaking as a result of participating. This feedback offered valuable insights into how the children perceived the method and whether it had a positive impact on their speaking abilities.

The data gathered from observations, recordings, and assessments were analyzed qualitatively to identify trends and patterns in the children's speaking skills. The researcher focused on improvements in vocabulary, sentence formation, fluency, and general communication. The transcriptions of the audio recordings were analyzed for frequency of speech, new word usage, and sentence complexity. The field notes and feedback were reviewed to understand the children's level of engagement and how they responded to the hand puppet method.

The pre- and post-assessment data were compared to assess the extent of improvement in the children's speaking skills. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the percentage of improvement in vocabulary and sentence construction. This quantitative analysis provided an objective measure of the effectiveness of the hand puppet storytelling method in enhancing the children's speaking abilities. Ethical considerations were taken into account throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from the parents of all participating children, ensuring voluntary participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by keeping the data secure and ensuring that the children's identities were not disclosed. The researcher also ensured a respectful and supportive environment, where children felt comfortable participating in the activities without any pressure.

There were some limitations to the study. The research was conducted in a single classroom with a small sample size, limiting the generalizability of the results to other settings. The study was also conducted over a relatively short period of time, and a longer duration might be necessary to observe more significant improvements in the children's speaking abilities. Additionally, the study relied on qualitative data, which, although detailed, may have been subject to researcher bias in interpretation. In conclusion, the research methodology for this study was designed to evaluate the effect of hand puppet storytelling on the speaking skills of children aged 5-6 years. Through a cyclical process of planning, action, observation, and reflection, the study aimed to provide a thorough understanding of how interactive and play-based learning methods can improve early childhood language development. By using a combination of observations, assessments, and feedback from students, the research sought to offer a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of the hand puppet storytelling method in enhancing children's speaking skills.

RESULTS

The research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using the hand puppet storytelling method to improve the speaking skills of children aged 5-6 years at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. The study was conducted in two cycles of Classroom Action Research (CAR), with each cycle involving several stages, including planning, action, observation, and reflection. The results were derived from various sources of data, including classroom observations, audio recordings of children's storytelling activities, field notes, and pre- and post-assessments of children's speaking abilities. In the first cycle, the implementation of hand puppet storytelling involved introducing simple stories to the children. The children were encouraged to listen attentively and interact with the puppets, either by answering questions, repeating words, or describing scenes from the story. The initial observations showed that the children were highly engaged during these sessions. Their eyes were focused on the puppets, and many of them expressed excitement about the interactive

nature of the activity. However, despite their enthusiasm, many children struggled with speaking clearly and were hesitant to participate actively.

During the initial storytelling sessions, it became clear that some children had difficulties in constructing full sentences. They often used short phrases or words that did not form coherent statements. For example, when asked to describe a character from the story, a few children responded with fragmented phrases such as "big man" or "yellow car." Others were reluctant to speak at all and preferred to listen quietly. These challenges highlighted the need for further support and encouragement to help the children become more confident in their speaking abilities.

Throughout the first cycle, the researcher provided various prompts and cues to stimulate verbal participation. The teacher would ask questions that required the children to think and express their ideas aloud, such as "What do you think will happen next?" or "Can you describe how the puppet feels?" Despite the prompts, many children continued to struggle with responding in full sentences. This suggested that they needed additional practice with sentence construction and vocabulary building. After the first cycle, the researcher reviewed the data collected from the observations, field notes, and student feedback. It became clear that although the children enjoyed the activity, there were still significant gaps in their speaking skills, particularly in terms of sentence structure and vocabulary usage. The researcher reflected on the need to adjust the activities in the second cycle to better address these challenges and ensure more opportunities for the children to practice speaking in complete sentences.

The second cycle focused on refining the activities and providing more support to children who struggled with speaking. The storytelling sessions in this cycle were modified to be more interactive and dynamic. The researcher incorporated more opportunities for the children to use the puppets themselves. Children were given the chance to hold the puppets and narrate parts of the story in their own words. This change allowed the children to take on more active roles in the storytelling process, which increased their confidence in speaking. The second cycle also included the use of visual aids, such as story cards with pictures, to help children better understand the context of the story and encourage them to use new vocabulary. Each child was given a set of story cards related to the plot, and they were encouraged to use the cards to help them narrate the story using complete sentences. This visual support helped children form more cohesive narratives and provided them with the necessary prompts to practice vocabulary related to the story.

By the end of the second cycle, it was evident that many children had made significant progress in their speaking abilities. The children were more confident when speaking in front of the class, and they were able to use more complex sentences to describe characters, actions, and settings in the story. Several children who had been previously reluctant to speak were now more willing to participate actively, and some even volunteered to lead the storytelling activities. These changes were evident in the classroom observations, where children engaged more freely in conversation with the puppets and their peers. The audio recordings of the children's storytelling sessions in the second cycle revealed a noticeable improvement in both the fluency and complexity of their speech. Children were using a wider range of vocabulary and were more confident in articulating their thoughts. For instance, a child who had previously used simple phrases such as "big house" now spoke in full sentences, such as "The house is very big, and it has a red door." The increased complexity of their sentences demonstrated that the children were developing a stronger command of language and sentence structure.

The pre- and post-assessment results further supported these observations. In the pre-assessment, the children were asked to describe a picture and tell a short story. Many of the children struggled to form coherent sentences and used limited vocabulary. In contrast, the post-assessment revealed that most of the children had made substantial progress in their ability to construct full sentences and use new words. For example, the children were able to describe pictures with more detail and were more confident in

narrating short stories. The post-assessment also showed a significant increase in the number of children who could express their thoughts clearly and coherently.

Field notes collected during the second cycle indicated that the children were not only improving their speaking abilities but were also enjoying the process. Several children mentioned that they liked using the puppets and that it made the storytelling more fun. This feedback from the children highlighted the positive impact of the hand puppet method on their motivation to participate in language-related activities.

The analysis of the data revealed several key findings. First, the hand puppet storytelling method was highly effective in engaging the children and encouraging them to speak more confidently. The interactive nature of the activity allowed children to practice speaking in a supportive and enjoyable environment. Second, the use of puppets as part of the storytelling process helped children better understand and organize their thoughts, which in turn improved their ability to use complete sentences and new vocabulary. Finally, the combination of prompts, peer interactions, and visual aids contributed to the overall improvement in the children's speaking skills.

Despite the positive outcomes, the research also identified areas for further development. While most of the children showed improvement, some still had difficulty constructing more complex sentences. This suggests that additional practice and targeted support may be necessary for these children to reach the same level of fluency as their peers. Furthermore, some children continued to struggle with articulation and pronunciation, indicating the need for additional focus on these aspects of speech development. Overall, the research results suggest that the hand puppet storytelling method is a promising tool for enhancing speaking skills in young children. The method effectively encourages verbal participation, improves vocabulary usage, and helps children construct more complex sentences. Additionally, the interactive and playful nature of the activity promotes a positive and supportive learning environment, which fosters confidence and engagement in children.

In conclusion, the research demonstrated that the use of hand puppet storytelling can significantly improve the speaking abilities of children aged 5-6 years. The findings highlight the importance of providing young children with engaging and interactive learning experiences that encourage them to express themselves verbally. By using creative methods such as puppetry, educators can help children develop the language skills they need to succeed in both academic and social contexts. The results of this study have important implications for early childhood education. Teachers can use the hand puppet storytelling method to create an engaging and supportive environment that promotes language development and enhances children's speaking skills. This method could be integrated into regular teaching practices to support the language growth of young learners, helping them build a strong foundation for future communication and learning.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the effectiveness of the hand puppet storytelling method in improving the speaking skills of young children at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. The study was conducted over two cycles of Classroom Action Research (CAR), with both cycles involving a process of planning, action, observation, and reflection. In both cycles, hand puppet storytelling was introduced as a way to engage the children and enhance their speaking abilities. The results revealed several important insights into the role of interactive and creative methods in early childhood education.

At the start of the study, many children displayed a reluctance to speak or were only able to produce short phrases or incomplete sentences. This finding aligns with what is commonly observed in young children at this age, as language development is still in its early stages. Previous studies have shown that at the age of 5-6, children are still refining

their ability to articulate thoughts and express themselves clearly. The initial struggles faced by the children in this study reflect these developmental challenges.

Despite these initial difficulties, the use of hand puppets quickly demonstrated its effectiveness in capturing the children's attention and encouraging their active participation. One of the key strengths of the hand puppet method is that it transforms a simple storytelling activity into an interactive experience. The use of puppets adds an element of playfulness and creativity that appeals to young children, making it easier for them to become engaged and participate without feeling self-conscious. This aspect of the method appears to be especially important for children who are hesitant to speak or struggle with shyness.

In the first cycle of the research, the children exhibited high levels of enthusiasm for the storytelling activity, yet many still found it challenging to form complete sentences. The limited language use observed in the first cycle can be attributed to several factors. For one, the children were still in the process of building their vocabulary and understanding how to structure sentences effectively. Additionally, some children were not yet accustomed to speaking in front of others, which made them reluctant to share their thoughts aloud. These challenges are not uncommon in young children, as language acquisition is a gradual process that requires consistent practice and support. However, the results also indicate that the children gradually became more comfortable with the activity as the cycles progressed. The second cycle saw a significant improvement in the children's ability to use more complex sentences and express themselves with greater confidence. This improvement can be attributed to several factors. First, by taking on more active roles in the storytelling process, such as holding the puppets and narrating parts of the story themselves, the children had more opportunities to practice speaking. This hands-on approach allowed them to experience the story from different perspectives and gave them the space to experiment with language in a low-pressure environment.

The use of story cards in the second cycle also played a crucial role in improving the children's speaking abilities. The cards provided visual cues that helped the children better understand the sequence of events in the story and supported their vocabulary development. By referring to the cards, children were able to expand their descriptions and articulate more detailed thoughts. The visual prompts were particularly useful in helping children who had difficulty remembering key story elements or were unsure of how to express their ideas verbally. The findings from the second cycle are consistent with research that suggests that visual aids can significantly enhance language acquisition. Visual cues have been shown to help children connect words with meanings, reinforcing their understanding and expanding their vocabulary. In this study, the use of story cards proved to be an effective tool for helping children organize their thoughts and provide more cohesive narratives. By combining the use of puppets and visual aids, the hand puppet storytelling method offered a multifaceted approach that appealed to different learning styles.

Another important observation from this study was the impact of the hand puppet storytelling method on children's self-confidence. Several children who were initially reluctant to speak or participate in activities showed noticeable improvements in their willingness to engage with others. This change in behavior can be attributed to the non-threatening, playful nature of the puppetry activity. The puppets served as a safe and supportive medium for children to practice speaking without the fear of being judged. This finding highlights the role of positive reinforcement and encouragement in promoting language development. Moreover, the group dynamic of the storytelling sessions contributed to the children's growth. During these sessions, children took turns speaking and interacting with the puppets, which not only provided them with opportunities to practice their speaking skills but also helped them develop social skills such as listening, turn-taking, and cooperation. These social skills are critical for children's overall development and lay the foundation for successful communication in both academic and social contexts.

The data collected from the audio recordings and observations provided further evidence of the positive impact of hand puppet storytelling on the children's speaking skills. The recordings showed that children were more confident in expressing themselves, and many of them were able to use new vocabulary words and form longer, more complex sentences. This improvement in sentence structure and vocabulary usage is a clear indication that the children were internalizing the language and becoming more proficient in their speaking abilities.

In addition to these academic and cognitive benefits, the use of hand puppets also supported the children's emotional and social development. Puppetry can be a powerful tool for fostering empathy and emotional intelligence, as children often engage in role-playing scenarios that require them to consider the perspectives of others. Through their interactions with the puppets, the children were exposed to various emotions, such as happiness, sadness, and surprise, which helped them understand and express their own feelings more effectively. This emotional aspect of the activity contributes to the overall development of social and emotional intelligence, which is vital for healthy interpersonal relationships.

However, while the overall results of the study were positive, there were still some challenges that remained. Despite the improvements observed in most children, some children continued to struggle with articulation and pronunciation. This suggests that additional targeted support is needed to address these specific areas of speech development. Activities that focus on improving pronunciation and clarity of speech may be necessary to ensure that all children benefit equally from the hand puppet storytelling method. Another challenge was the varying pace of progress among the children. While some children rapidly gained confidence and speaking skills, others required more time and repeated exposure to the activity before showing noticeable improvements. This variation in progress is typical in early childhood education, where each child develops at their own pace. To address this, future interventions could include more individualized support for children who need additional assistance in mastering speaking skills.

Despite these challenges, the study provides valuable insights into the potential of hand puppet storytelling as a method for improving speaking skills. The research highlights the importance of providing children with a supportive, engaging, and interactive environment in which they can practice speaking. By incorporating play-based methods like puppetry, educators can create a safe and enjoyable space for children to develop their language abilities. The findings also suggest that the hand puppet storytelling method is particularly effective in enhancing children's speaking skills when it is combined with other visual aids and interactive elements. The use of story cards, along with the puppets, provided a comprehensive learning experience that allowed children to engage with language on multiple levels. This multimodal approach is in line with current educational theories that emphasize the importance of incorporating various learning styles into the teaching process.

Moreover, the research supports the notion that children learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. The hands-on, interactive nature of hand puppet storytelling encourages children to take an active role in their own learning, which can lead to greater retention and understanding of language concepts. By making learning fun and engaging, the method fosters a positive attitude towards language acquisition and helps children develop a love for learning. The results of this study contribute to the growing body of research on the use of creative methods in early childhood education. The success of the hand puppet storytelling method underscores the value of incorporating play, creativity, and interactive learning techniques into the curriculum. These methods not only support language development but also enhance social, emotional, and cognitive skills, all of which are crucial for a child's overall growth and development.

In conclusion, the use of hand puppet storytelling is an effective way to improve speaking skills in young children. The study demonstrated that this method provides an engaging, interactive, and supportive environment in which children can practice speaking

and develop their language abilities. While there were challenges to address, the overall results suggest that hand puppet storytelling can play a significant role in enhancing language development, particularly when combined with other visual aids and interactive techniques. The findings offer valuable insights for educators looking to create dynamic and effective language learning experiences for young children.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of using hand puppet storytelling as a method to enhance the speaking skills of children aged 5-6 years at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. The results of the study indicate that hand puppet storytelling significantly improves children's ability to express themselves verbally and boosts their confidence in speaking. By engaging children in an interactive and playful environment, this method facilitated both the development of speaking skills and emotional expression, contributing to a well-rounded learning experience. In the first cycle, it was observed that while children participated enthusiastically, many still struggled to construct complete sentences and express their ideas clearly. This initial challenge is common in young children who are still in the process of developing their language abilities. However, through consistent exposure to the hand puppet storytelling method, children gradually became more confident and fluent in their speech. This improvement was evident in their increased willingness to participate and the more sophisticated sentences they used in later sessions. The second cycle revealed marked progress. Children who initially showed hesitation in speaking were more eager to participate and speak in full sentences. The interactive nature of the activity, which involved the use of hand puppets and visual aids such as story cards, provided a stimulating learning environment. The use of visual aids was especially effective in helping children organize their thoughts, expand their vocabulary, and improve sentence construction. This finding aligns with research suggesting that visual cues support language development by linking words to their meanings. An important outcome of this study was the improvement in children's self-confidence. The puppets served as a supportive tool that allowed children to practice speaking without the fear of judgment. As they interacted with the puppets, children were able to express themselves more freely, which encouraged them to take more risks in using language. This change in behavior highlights the role of creative methods, such as puppetry, in reducing anxiety and fostering a positive learning environment. The findings also showed that the children were not only improving in their speaking abilities but were also developing key social and emotional skills. Through storytelling, children practiced turn-taking, listening, and collaborating with their peers. These social skills are crucial in early childhood development, as they lay the foundation for healthy interpersonal relationships and effective communication. Thus, the hand puppet method contributed not only to language development but also to the children's overall social growth. However, it is important to note that some children continued to face challenges in areas such as pronunciation and articulation, even after the second cycle. These difficulties suggest that further support may be required for children who are still struggling with speech clarity. Additional targeted interventions focusing on pronunciation and articulation would help ensure that all children benefit equally from the method. Nonetheless, the overall improvement observed in the majority of the children suggests that the method is generally effective in promoting speaking skills. The study also highlighted the individual differences in learning progress. While most children showed noticeable improvement, a few children required more time to demonstrate significant progress. This is consistent with the understanding that children develop at different rates, and some may need more practice and guidance than others. Future research could explore how to tailor the method to meet the needs of children with varying levels of language proficiency, ensuring that all children can benefit from this approach. In conclusion, the use of hand puppet storytelling proved to be an effective and engaging method for improving the speaking skills of young

children. By providing a safe and interactive space for children to practice language, the method facilitated not only vocabulary growth and sentence construction but also boosted children's confidence and social skills.

The study's results suggest that hand puppet storytelling should be considered as a valuable tool for language development in early childhood education. Moreover, the study contributes to the growing body of research on the importance of creative, play-based learning methods in early childhood education. Puppetry, as an interactive tool, enhances language acquisition by allowing children to actively engage with language in a meaningful and enjoyable way. By integrating such methods into the classroom, educators can create more dynamic and effective learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of young learners. Ultimately, the success of this study demonstrates the potential of hand puppet storytelling as a valuable pedagogical strategy for enhancing children's speaking skills. It provides important insights into the role of creativity and interaction in supporting language development. Moving forward, educators can adopt this method to help children become more confident speakers, and further research can refine and expand its application in various educational contexts.

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