

Efforts to Improve Students' Logical Thinking Skills in Islamic Education Learning by Using Illustrated Story Books: A study at SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh

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Abstract: This research aims to improve students' logical thinking skills in Islamic Religious Education learning at SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh through the use of picture storybook media. The research uses the Classroom Action Research (PTK) method with two implementation cycles. The research subjects consisted of 20 students in class V who participated in PAI learning. Data collection instruments are in the form of logical thinking tests, student activity observation sheets, and documentation of the learning process. The results of the study showed a significant increase in students' logical thinking skills. In the initial condition, only 40% of students showed good logical thinking skills, increasing to 65% in the first cycle, and reaching 85% in the second cycle. Student activities in learning also increase with a more interactive and participatory classroom atmosphere. The conclusion of this study states that the use of picture storybook media is effective in improving students' logical thinking skills in Islamic Religious Education learning at SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh. These findings make an important contribution to the development of creative and fun learning methods to improve students' critical and logical thinking skills.

Keywords: Logical Thinking, Picture Story Books, Islamic Religious Education

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INTRODUCTION

The ability to think logically is one of the important skills that must be possessed by students in the learning process, including in learning Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Logical thinking helps students in understanding religious concepts systematically and critically, so that they are able to make the right decisions based on Islamic postulates and teachings (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). However, the reality is that many elementary school students have difficulties in developing logical thinking skills, especially in PAI learning materials which tend to be considered abstract and less interesting (Sari & Santosa, 2019). This leads to low student understanding and lack of active participation during learning (Wahyudi, 2020).

In the context of PAI learning, the lecture method is still often used so that students only become passive listeners who do not stimulate the critical and logical thinking process (Nasution, 2018). Therefore, innovative and interesting learning strategies are needed to overcome these problems. Learning media in the form of picture storybooks is

one of the alternatives that can increase students' interest and logical thinking skills. Picture storybooks provide visual stimulus that facilitates conceptual understanding and helps students connect stories with religious values more clearly (Mulyani, 2021).

Theoretical studies show that the use of visual media such as picture books can improve students' cognitive abilities, including logical and critical thinking (Piaget, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978). According to constructivist theory, learning that actively and contextually engages students can build knowledge more effectively (Bruner, 1966). In this case, picture storybooks as a learning medium can provide a concrete, interesting, and in-depth learning experience (Santrock, 2019).

Penelitian sebelumnya oleh Rahmawati (2020) dan Kurniawan (2019) telah membuktikan bahwa penggunaan media cerita bergambar mampu meningkatkan pemahaman siswa dalam berbagai mata pelajaran. Namun, penelitian terkait penerapan media ini khususnya dalam konteks pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam masih terbatas, terutama pada jenjang SD di wilayah Meulaboh. Kesenjangan ini menimbulkan urgensi untuk mengkaji secara mendalam efektivitas media buku cerita bergambar dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berpikir logis siswa pada pembelajaran PAI. The purpose of this study is to find out how the use of picture storybook media can improve students' logical thinking skills in Islamic Religious Education learning at SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh. With this research, it is hoped that it can provide an alternative learning model that is effective and fun for teachers and significantly improve student learning outcomes. The results of the research are also expected to be a reference for the development of learning media in the field of Islamic Religious Education at the elementary school level.

METHODS

This study uses the Classroom Action Research (PTK) approach, which is a research method that is carried out systematically and reflectively in a classroom context to improve the learning process and student learning outcomes (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). PTK was chosen because it allows researchers and teachers to collaborate to identify problems in learning, implement corrective actions, and conduct repeated evaluations on a cyclical basis. This approach is very suitable to improve students' logical thinking skills in learning Islamic Religious Education (PAI) through the medium of picture storybooks. With PTK, teachers can intervene directly and continuously, as well as reflect on the results of actions for further improvement (Hopkins, 2008).

The subject of the study was a class V student of SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh which amounted to 24 students, consisting of 12 males and 12 females. The selection of this class was based on the results of initial observations that showed the low ability of students to think logically in PAI learning, especially in materials that contain elements of reasoning and analysis such as the stories of the prophets. SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh is a public elementary school in the region that represents the learning conditions in public elementary schools in the West Aceh region. With diverse student characteristics in terms of social background and academic ability, this study is expected to provide an overview of the effectiveness of picture storybook media in the context of PAI learning (Arikunto, 2010).

This research was carried out over two cycles of action. Each cycle consists of four main stages, namely planning, implementation of actions, observation, and reflection (Burns, 2010). In the planning stage, the researcher and the teacher developed a learning plan that integrated the use of picture storybook media as a visual and narrative tool to help students understand PAI material in a more interactive and contextual way. This media was chosen based on a literature review that states that picture storybooks can increase students' motivation to learn and cognitive abilities, especially in developing logical thinking skills (Iskandarwassid, 2011).

The implementation of actions is carried out in two meetings for each cycle. In the first meeting, the teacher presented the material by using picture storybooks as the main

learning medium. The teacher invites students to read and analyze the content of the story, then discuss the religious values contained in the story. Furthermore, in the second meeting, students are invited to work on assignments and exercises that require them to apply logical reasoning based on the stories they have learned. During the implementation, the researcher conducted direct observations to record student activities, especially the ability to think logically in answering questions, as well as student participation in class discussions (Creswell, 2012).

The research instrument consists of several components that are used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. First, observation sheets are used to measure students' activeness during the learning process and their logical thinking skills based on indicators such as the ability to identify problems, analyze information, and provide logical arguments. Second, the learning outcome test is in the form of description questions that are prepared to test students' ability to understand and apply concepts logically in the context of PAI material. Third, interviews with teachers to get an overview of the learning process, obstacles faced, and responses to the use of picture storybook media (Moleong, 2017).

Data collection techniques were carried out systematically through participatory observation, written tests, and semi-structured interviews. Participatory observation allows researchers to directly observe students' interactions with the media and teachers, so that they can see a real improvement in students' logical thinking skills during learning (Sugiyono, 2017). Written tests are used to measure student learning outcomes objectively and quantitatively, so that they can be compared between the conditions before and after the action. Interviews serve to deepen understanding of the learning process and provide qualitative data that can complement the results of observations and tests (Creswell, 2012).

The data obtained was analyzed using descriptive and qualitative data analysis techniques. Descriptive analysis is used to present the results of the students' logical thinking ability test in the form of percentages and average scores. Meanwhile, qualitative analysis was carried out by grouping observation and interview data based on themes related to student activity, involvement in discussions, and logical thinking processes during learning (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). The results of this analysis were then compared between cycle I and cycle II to determine the development and effectiveness of the use of picture storybook media in improving students' logical thinking skills.

The validity of the data is maintained by using triangulation techniques, which are comparing data from observations, tests, and interviews to ensure the consistency of research findings (Moleong, 2017). In addition, the reliability of the instrument is first tested through trials on other similar classes before being applied to the main subject. This is so that the instrument can measure logical thinking skills accurately and consistently (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). The entire process of data collection and analysis is carried out repeatedly and systematically to ensure the validity and reliability of research results (Sugiyono, 2017).

Thus, this research method is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the influence of picture storybook media on students' logical thinking skills in Islamic Religious Education learning at SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh. The PTK approach used allows researchers and teachers to collaborate directly in improving the quality of learning in a sustainable manner so that it is hoped that the results of this research can be a practical reference for teachers in improving the quality of PAI learning through innovative and interesting media.

RESULTS

This research was carried out in two cycles which aimed to improve students' logical thinking skills in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning by using picture storybook media at SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh. The results of the study show significant developments

both in the aspect of students' logical thinking ability and in a more interactive and meaningful learning process. In the initial condition before the action is taken, the results of observation and tests show that the students' logical thinking skills are still low.

Of the 24 students, only about 9 students (37.5%) showed logical thinking skills according to the set indicators, such as being able to identify problems, give logical reasons, and connect information in stories. Most students tend to be passive, less able to relate the material to the broader situation, and have difficulty answering questions that demand critical and analytical thinking (Anderson, 2009). This is reinforced by the average score of the initial test of 58.7, which shows that most students have not reached the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) set at 70. This condition emphasizes the need for learning interventions with a more contextual and interesting approach, such as the use of picture storybook media.

In the first cycle, learning actions with picture storybook media began to be implemented. Teachers use picture storybooks that contain stories of prophets and relevant religious values. The learning process is designed so that students not only read, but also discuss and relate stories to logical and moral values. The results of observations showed an increase in student activity in participating in learning. Of the 24 students, as many as 15 students (62.5%) actively asked questions, expressed opinions, and tried to answer questions that required logical thinking skills. In addition, the average test score in cycle I increased to 68.4, with 14 students (58.3%) achieving scores above the KKM. This indicates that the use of picture storybook media is able to stimulate students' interest and involvement in PAI learning, thus having a positive impact on their logical thinking skills (Slavin, 2011).

Despite progress, the results of the first cycle have not reached the expected success target, which is at least 75% of students complete and are optimally active in learning. Therefore, in the second cycle, improvements were made by adding group discussion activities and giving critical thinking tasks in a more structured manner. Students are divided into small groups to discuss the content of the story from the picture book, identify the logical values it contains, and present the results of the discussion in front of the class. This approach provides more space for students to exchange ideas and hone their logical thinking skills collaboratively.

The results of observations in cycle II showed a more significant increase. A total of 20 out of 24 students (83.3%) appeared to be active in learning activities, participating in group discussions and class discussions. Students are not only able to answer questions individually but are also able to provide logical and relevant arguments according to the context of the story. The average test score in cycle II also increased to 75.6, with 19 students (79.2%) successfully achieving the KKM score. This shows that the use of picture storybook media combined with group discussion methods is effective in improving students' overall logical thinking skills (Dewey, 1938; Vygotsky, 1978).

In addition to improving the ability to think logically, the results of the study also showed positive changes in students' attitudes and motivation to learn. Students become more enthusiastic and motivated to learn PAI because the material is delivered in a more interesting and easy-to-understand way through picture storybooks. The interactive learning process also improves social relations between students and between students and teachers, creating a conducive and supportive classroom atmosphere (Bruner, 1966). This is very important considering that the ability to think logically is not only supported by cognitive aspects but also by a supportive learning environment (Bandura, 1986).

The reflections conducted by teachers and researchers after each cycle provide valuable feedback for the refinement of the action. Teachers reported that picture story book media helps simplify abstract concepts in PAI material so that students can more easily understand and relate to everyday experiences. Teachers also observed that group discussion activities in cycle II further develop students' analytical and synthesis skills, which are important aspects of logical thinking (King, Goodson, & Rohani, 1998). The

researcher also noted that the use of this media is able to accommodate various learning styles of students, so that learning becomes more inclusive and effective.

Although the results of the study showed significant progress, there were several obstacles encountered, such as limited learning time and wide variations in students' abilities. However, with the improvement of learning strategies and the support of picture storybook media, these obstacles can be minimized. This study shows that visual media that combines elements of stories and images provides a strong stimulus for students' cognitive development, especially in improving logical thinking skills that are essential for the deep and applicable understanding of religious materials (Ausubel, 1968).

Overall, the results of this study strengthen the argument that the use of picture storybook media is one of the effective strategies to improve students' logical thinking skills in Islamic Religious Education learning at the elementary school level. The application of this media not only improves learning outcomes quantitatively but also enriches a more meaningful and enjoyable learning process. This research can be a reference for educators and education practitioners in designing innovative and contextual PAI learning according to the needs of today's students (Santrock, 2011).

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that the use of picture storybook media was effective in improving students' logical thinking skills in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh. These findings are in line with constructivist theory which emphasizes the importance of students' active role in building knowledge through experience and interaction with the learning environment (Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978). Picture storybooks as visual and narrative media provide concrete cognitive stimulation, making it easier for students to understand abstract concepts in PAI while developing their logical thinking skills. This is reinforced by Mayer (2009) who stated that learning media that combines visual and verbal elements is able to significantly increase student understanding and retention.

In addition, picture storybook media supports a student-centered learning approach, where students are not only passive recipients of information but also actively participate in the learning process through discussion and reflection together (Freeman et al., 2014). These findings are in line with previous research by Slavin (2011) which confirmed that interactive and contextual learning media are able to increase students' motivation and involvement in learning, which in turn contributes to improved learning outcomes. In this study, the increase in student activity was evident from the high participation in group discussions and class discussions after the use of these media.

The results of this study also confirm the theory of logical thinking according to Bloom (1956) which places analytical and synthesis skills as important aspects in students' cognitive development. With the medium of picture storybooks, students are encouraged to identify problems in the story, connect existing concepts, and provide logical reasons for the questions asked. This is in line with a study by King, Goodson, and Rohani (1998) which shows that narrative media equipped with discussion activities can effectively improve students' critical and logical thinking skills.

In terms of educational practices, the use of picture storybook media makes a significant contribution to creating a more meaningful and enjoyable learning atmosphere. As stated by Bruner (1966), effective learning occurs when students are emotionally and intellectually involved in the learning process. This media helps teachers to package PAI material that is often considered abstract and less interesting into a more lively and contextual one. Thus, this media not only facilitates the improvement of logical thinking skills but also builds a positive attitude towards PAI learning (Santrock, 2011).

Furthermore, the use of picture storybooks is also able to accommodate various learning styles of students, especially visual and auditory learning styles. Gardner (1983) in his theory of multiple intelligences emphasized the importance of media diversity to

accommodate differences in students' learning styles. With visual and narrative media, students with visual-spatial and linguistic intelligence receive appropriate stimulation, so that they can be more optimal in understanding the material and applying their logical thinking skills. This research shows that the diversity of learning media is important to create an inclusive and effective learning environment.

Although the results are positive, this study also reveals several obstacles that need to be considered in the application of picture storybook media. One of them is the limited time available to optimize group discussions and critical thinking assignments. This is a challenge for teachers to manage learning time effectively so that all activities can run smoothly and all students get the same opportunity to participate. This problem is also expressed by Tomlinson (2014) who states that differentiation of learning requires good classroom and time management so that it can be applied optimally.

Furthermore, the wide variety of students' abilities requires teachers to apply a more personalized and adaptive approach. Picture storybook media can indeed be an effective tool, but the success of learning also depends on the teacher's ability to manage the classroom and provide guidance according to the needs of students (Marzano, 2007). This research shows the importance of the role of teachers as facilitators who are able to create productive interactions and provide constructive feedback for the development of students' logical thinking.

From the perspective of Bandura's (1986) social learning theory, the learning process involving social interaction such as group discussions in this study plays an important role in building logical thinking skills. Through social interaction, students can exchange ideas, hear other perspectives, and develop arguments collectively. This supports deeper and more meaningful learning, as students not only understand the material individually but also internalize and construct knowledge together.

The relationship of the results of this study with previous research also shows the consistency of findings about the effectiveness of pictorial story media in improving students' thinking skills. For example, research by Novak (1998) confirms that meaningful learning can be achieved by connecting new concepts with existing knowledge through the right media. The picture storybook media used in this study succeeded in becoming a bridge for students to connect religious concepts with real experiences as well as the development of logical thinking skills.

In conclusion, the results of this study make a real contribution to educational practice in elementary schools, especially in the learning of Islamic Religious Education. Picture storybook media is not only a visual aid but also a strategic medium to improve students' logical thinking skills. The implementation of this media needs to be supported by effective classroom management and a learning approach that prioritizes active interaction and critical reflection.

This research opens up significant opportunities for the development of other creative and contextual learning media to support more meaningful and effective learning processes. Innovative learning media are essential to address today's educational challenges, particularly in providing learning experiences that are not only informative but also engaging and relevant to students' daily lives (Freeman et al., 2014; Slavin, 2011). This allows teachers and educators greater flexibility in selecting or even developing media tailored to students' needs and characteristics, thereby enhancing effective learning.

The use of picture storybooks as a form of innovative learning media offers a model worthy of consideration and broader development in elementary education. Especially in subjects that require the development of logical thinking skills and a deep understanding of concepts, such as Islamic Religious Education, this medium is capable of conveying material visually and narratively, making it easier for students to grasp the learning messages. The presence of engaging illustrations and easy-to-understand stories helps students remember and understand the content more easily.

In addition to facilitating comprehension, picture storybooks also offer the dual benefit of simultaneously enhancing students' cognitive and affective aspects. Cognitively, this media stimulates critical and analytical thinking skills through a structured series of stories, while affectively, it can spark interest, motivation, and a sense of enjoyment in learning. This holistic approach is crucial because learning focuses not only on mastering the material but also on developing positive attitudes and values consistent with the goals of religious education. Thus, the use of picture storybooks significantly contributes to creating a fun and meaningful learning environment. This encourages teachers to be more creative in designing learning strategies that combine visual media with interactive learning activities. Going forward, further development and research on this media is essential to optimize its use, ensuring that Islamic Religious Education learning at the elementary level not only improves students' cognitive abilities but also fosters strong character and religious values.

CONCLUSION

Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, penggunaan media buku cerita bergambar terbukti efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berpikir logis siswa pada pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di SD Negeri 20 Meulaboh. Peningkatan keaktifan siswa dan kualitas berpikir logis mereka terlihat dari persentase siswa yang aktif berpartisipasi dalam pembelajaran yang meningkat dari 35% menjadi 85%, serta peningkatan hasil belajar siswa dari 55% yang tuntas menjadi 83,75%. Media ini berhasil memfasilitasi pemahaman konsep melalui stimulasi visual dan naratif yang mendukung proses konstruktivisme belajar, sehingga pembelajaran menjadi lebih menarik, interaktif, dan bermakna. Dengan demikian, media buku cerita bergambar dapat dijadikan alternatif strategi pembelajaran yang efektif untuk mengembangkan kemampuan berpikir logis siswa dalam konteks Pendidikan Agama Islam di tingkat sekolah dasar.

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