The Use of Big Book Media to Improve Speaking Skills of Children Aged 3-4 Years in Early Age Child Education

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There are many benefits to using Big Books for language development and literacy in particular speaking skills. This paper aims to find out how the process of developing children's speaking skills is affected by utilizing Big Book media with children aged 3-4 years. In the learning process, the activity and interest and motivation of children appear when the teacher uses the Big Book as a learning medium. Field data shows that Big Book media can develop speaking skills in children aged 3-4 years. Utilization of Big Book media provides a variety of interactions in developing speaking skills so that there is an increase and change in children which includes saying words or sounds, expressing ideas and feelings, changing tone, intonation and pressure in producing words, and receiving and conveying information. Children are actively involved in discussions and provide responses to stories in the Big Book. The most important thing is the ability of the teacher when utilizing Big Book media in the process of improving speaking skills.

Key words: *Big Book, Speaking Skills, Early Childhood Education.*

Introduction

From the birth of a child until the age of 4 years is a golden period. At this time there is a very rapid development of capability, especially the intelligence of the brain of up to 80% which doesn't reach 100% until the age of 18 years. This period is also referred to as a critical period for children because this period will determine and be very influential in the next period until adulthood. This golden age only happens once in the life of every child, if this period is not

optimised then the opportunity for all development will disappear. Every individual has unique potential that must be developed into competence. Humans, basically have several types of intelligence that stand out.

Howard Gardner (Gadner, 2013) a psychologist from Harvard University suggested eight types of intelligence that include language, mathematical, logical, spatial, musical, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. This multiple intelligence learning strategy aims to enable all children to develop potential. The learning strategy starts with building or triggering intelligence, strengthening intelligence, teaching with or for intelligence and transferring intelligence. All the intelligences mentioned above will be stimulated if the child gets stimuli that are in accordance with the stages of development and growth. This can be done at early childhood education institution to develop all the potentials and capabilities of children so that development will be achieved optimally. One of the developments that will be traversed by children is the development of language.

The language development aspect is one of the basic abilities that must be possessed from early childhood. This language development is a change that occurs and lasts a lifetime that is influenced by several factors that are interconnected with one another, namely physical, cognitive and social emotional development. Busari (2004) states that motor skills and cognition develop according to the age level of children as well as this, the acquisition of language increases through the development process starting from the first language, pre-school age and school age where language plays a very important role in academic achievement. Therefore language development becomes important for early childhood as a tool to interact with the surrounding environment.

Speaking is one aspect of the development of language skills that is very important for children's language development. Speaking skills can increase the activity of children communicating with their environment. Children will be attracted to the words they have just heard and use 3-4 words in the sentence thereby further increasing their mastery of vocabulary. Children begin to speak in simple and clear sentences. Children can convey messages and use question words "what, who, and where" in extracting information from their interlocutors. Children can also tell simple experiences to parents, teachers, peers or others. Knowledge about the use of media in learning is very important to develop aspects of language skills so that it can support speaking skills for early childhood.

According to Tarmansyah (Tarmansyah, 2009) quoted by Enny Zubaidah, there are several factors that influence language development and speech in children. These factors are: (1) physical condition and motor abilities, (2) general health, (3) intelligence, (4) environmental attitudes, (5) socioeconomic factors, (6) gender, (7) bilingualism, and (8) neurology. Of the eight factors mentioned, it is the third and fourth factors that play an important role in the

development of speaking skills. In learning activities there are children who are still having difficulty speaking (communication), children are still finding it difficult to express simple opinions, to provide information, to answer questions and are embarrassed to ask questions, finding it difficult to share simple experiences, to retell stories or events that were experienced in a simple way, and difficult to comment when finished reading the story and experience reluctance in participation in conversations with their peers.

Alexander and Vygotski quoted by Alesia Malec (Malec & Peterson, 2017) and friends in their journal articles state the importance of children in expressing ideas and intentions in communicating with others. Children use language to regulate and reflect on experiences. In expressing ideas and intentions children tend to be shy and afraid, this is due to stimuli from environments that are not supportive. Parents tend to ignore and do not want to hear opinions and ideas conveyed by children. Bringing together words to communicate with others helps children to clarify and deepen their understanding. To stimulate speaking skills media can be used to make it easier to convey what we want.

In reality, the use of media in learning is still not maximal, the media used in the book are picture books that have lots of text and picture books that contain color, connect letters and numbers and fill in summaries based on images. The existing media have never been used to practice speaking skills, so far the learning process of speaking skills has not received attention. Learning activities have only revolved around reading, writing and counting so that the developmental aspects of speaking skills have not been touched at all.

Difficulties experienced by early childhood in speaking or communicating with adults, peers and the environment have a tremendous impact, if this is ignored continuously and not considered the child will experience learning difficulties and difficulty reading and writing and will lead to lower academic achievement and this can continue into young adulthood Owen RE (Owen RE, 2001). Furthermore, adults with low academic achievement due to delays in speaking and language, will experience related behaviors and psychosocial adjustments. Language development at the age of five years (toddlers) develops very rapidly, language delays in this period can cause problems in the learning process after school. This is in accordance with the opinion of Law J, Dennis JA, Charlton, (Law et al., 2017) which shows the importance of learning speaking skills from an early age, children with speech difficulties can experience long-term difficulties that persist into adolescence and so on with around 30% to 60% experience continuous problems in reading and spelling, and with difficulties in understanding literacy, mental health and work ability. Speaking skills are the basis for other language developments such as listening, reading and writing. Therefore the authors are interested in conducting research on how to improve speaking skills by utilizing Big Book learning media. Curtain and Dahlberg were quoted by Susan Colville-Hall and Barbara

O'Connor (2006) who say that Big Books can be used as an effective approach in learning new languages (foreign languages and English) as a second language (ESL) professional language.

Theoretical Study
Big Books

Strickland and Morrow (Strickland, D.S. & Morrow, L.M, 1990) expressed their opinion about Big Books as an enlarged version of children's books, usually narratives and considered as one of the most effective ways to involve young people with print. Enlarged text allows all children in the classroom to see and react to words and pictures on the page when the teacher reads aloud, vital similarities with shared reading between parents and children. Many teachers believe that the Big Book approach is a good approach that can be accomlished in the classroom in learning to read family story books. O'Connor, Barbar, Coville-Hall, & Susan (O'Connor, Barbar, Coville-Hall, & Susan, 2006) explain that a Big Book is an alternative medium that can be used by educators and students with large size as its trademark. Nambiar (Nambiar, 2017) conducted a study on the effect of using Big Books in the application of early reading learning. They were inspired by Don Holdaway who considered ledgers as a tool for early reading learning in English.

Bromley (Snow, E. Catherin, Susan Burns, and Peg Griffin, 1998) cites Holdway's Big Book definition in the book Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children, that Big Books are not just too big story books. Big Books are able to provide opportunities to share experiences through illustrations and printed writing. Through Big Books children can share sized books for some time. This definition explains that there are interactions between children and peers when using a Big Book. Based on the above understanding, it can be concluded that Big Books are one of the learning media that has its own characteristics in the form of large books with a size of 14 inches x 20 inches, equivalent to 34.3 cm x 49 cm and full of basic colors that are liked by children. Big Books also have illustrations that are large in size and have large print letters. Big Book can be used in groups so that children can understand the concepts of printed letters, how to read and understand texts and learn appreciation of literature.

Speaking skills

Speaking is a basic skill that every child must have before communicating well (Hurlock, 1978). Language includes every means of communication by symbolizing thoughts and feelings to convey meaning to others. This includes the different forms of communication such as: writing, speech, language symbols, facial expressions, gestures, pantomime and art (Hurlock, 1978). Speech is a motoric mental skill, which not only involves coordinating a different set of sound mechanism muscles but also has a mental aspect, namely the ability to associate meaning with the sound produced. However, not all sounds can be interpreted as

speaking. Before a child can adequately control the mechanism of the nerve muscle to cause clear, distinct and controlled sounds, the voice expression is only the sound of articulation. Tarigan (Tarigan, 1983) which defines speaking skills is the ability to say sounds of articulation or words to express, say and express thoughts, ideas,and feelings. Dickinson & Snow (Malec & Peterson, n.d.2017) state in addition that using spoken language expresses ideas and intentions in communicating with others. According to Alexander and Barnes children also use language to regulate and reflect on experiences. Mercer & Littleton, Wells, Vygotsky (Malec & Peterson, nd2017) concluded that speaking skills are the ability to express thoughts by constructing words and phrases through sound so that they can be understood by others by expressing ideas or ideas and feelings, using changes in tone, intonation in producing words, asking questions, reflecting on experiences and receiving and conveying information.

Research Methods

This research is development research (Rn D). This research was conducted at the Early Childhood Education Institution in Batanghari district, East Lampung. This development research refers to the Lee and Owen models. Research on the development of Lee and Owen (2004) has 5 stages, namely designing and analysis (assessment and analysis of needs and initial and final analysis and analysis), design, development, implementation, evaluation conducted at the Early Childhood Education institution. Big Book media is adjusted to the stages and age of child development.

Result and Discussion
Result
a) *Analysis and analysis*

This step is divided into two:
1) Needs assessment. There are 3 steps taken. The first is the observation that is completed by collecting information about how the learning process of speaking skills has been conducted to date and what learning tools need to be developed. At the second interview with the teacher analysis of the assessment of aspects to make and develop a Big Book that is good and in accordance with the level of early childhood development that meets the aspects of the feasibility of the content, aspects of language feasibility, aspects of feasibility of presentation, aspects of image feasibility is made. Analysis was also carried out on the approach to speaking skills activities as the basis of the Big Book media that will be developed so that Big Book media are in accordance with the level of children's development in developing language skills in speaking. Third is the student questionnaire and the purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain an objective description of the condition of the child's initial abilities in speaking skills and children's responses to the learning process so far.

2) Analysis of students aims to identify the characteristics of students. The results of this analysis will be adjusted to the development of learning media. Analysis of students includes:

✓ The number of students in the class is the object of research
✓ Characteristics of students in the learning process
✓ Response of students to learning by the teacher.

The characteristics of early childhood that will be the object of this study range from the age of 3-4 years. Consisting of 3 accredited early childhood education institutions. The tribe in the District is almost majority Javanese and so the language used every day is Javanese. In educational institutions from the Early Childhood to High School Education levels, on average they have used the unity language, namely Indonesian. So it can be concluded that early childhood institutions in the Batanghari District already use two languages, namely Javanese (as a regional language) and Indonesian. When making Big Book learning media researchers will use Indonesian because early childhood have been introduced to Indonesian when studying at school.

b) **Design.**

Designing Big Book media that can improve children's speaking skills in the learning process is the design objective. Designing the specifications of the media to be developed, after knowing the initial and final conditions of students and those that are in accordance with the level of child development in language development especially in speaking skills can be developed in the form of visual media and physical images, namely the Big Book. Designing material structures to be developed based on the results of the analysis means that the material to be developed in Big Book media in order to improve speaking skills involves three different themes, namely the theme of cause and effect, themes with problems and problem solving and themes based on sequence.

c) **Development.**

Developing media designs that will be used in the learning process, Big Book media is designed in such a way that is in accordance with the needs and level of early childhood development. Big Books will be designed with learning activities in class in the form of groups and individuals so children can use and feel the benefits of Big Book as a whole class. Big Book readability can be seen from all classrooms without children scrambling to take a closer look. This is due to the large size and shape of the Big Book image that can cover the entire room and allows development of presentation of content as and effective learning media. The content contained in Big Books has a predictable storyline that makes it easier for children to learn the meaning of the images in the Big Book. With different

themes in each Big Book to attract the attention of children they are not bored quickly when the see a Big Book

d) Implementation

Validation instruments for material experts and media experts are aimed at obtaining the feasibility and validity of Big Book media so that they can be used in the learning process to improve children's skills. The teacher makes a Daily Work Plan that will be used in the learning process using Big Book media. The Big Book is designed and adapted to the themes contained in the Daily Work Plan made by the teacher to improve children's speaking skills and students are tested for appropriacy. After the media is declared feasible by the expert, then it is tested on students. This stage consists of both small group trials and large group trials.

e) Evaluation

The fifth stage is the evaluation stage, the researcher evaluates the learning media. The evaluation was oriented to the validity of learning media developed through media validation experts, material expert validation and the results of learning media trials. The actual class were tested with a pre-test and post-test to measure improvement before the study and after the study. Data was taken on 3 institutions of early childhood education that were used to determine the effectiveness of Big Book media use.

Discussion
Big Book Media that can Improve Speaking Skills.

Big Books have 3 types in concept: the first type based on is list and sequence, the second is based on a type of cause and effect and third type is based on problem solving in research and development of learning models with Big Book media to improve speaking skills.

a) Big Book Type Based on List and Sequence for Increasing Themes Saying Words or Word Sounds on Speaking Skills

Big Books that can enhance the theme of saying words or sounds is a Big Book media attract the attention of students with large shapes and sizes, images that are full of color and large text in the Big Book image. Morrow ((Morrow, 2004) explained the definition of Big Book as a picture story book that was raised measuring 14x20 inches to 24x30 inches. From this definition it means that the Big Book size in centimeters is 34.3 cm x 49 cm. Kargess cited by Sholehudin (Sholehudin, 2009) explains that Big Book is a storybook that has special characteristics that are raised, both text and images, making it possible for joint reading

between teachers and students to occur, this book has special characteristics such as full color, has a word that can be repeated, has a predictable storyline and has a simple text pattern. A Big Book that can improve speaking skills on the theme of saying words or sounds according to Priscilla Lynch (Lynch, 2008) enriches the development of spoken language through how a teacher or educator reads it to students, through discussion and learning skills with positive and strong learning experiences obtained by students in the learning process.

b) **Big Book Type Based on Problems and Solving Problems to Improve Themes Expressing Ideas or Ideas on Speaking Skills.**

On the theme of expressing ideas or ideas Big Book types will be used for problems and problem solving. Big Book that can improve speaking skills on the theme of expressing ideas or ideas are those with special characteristics that can attract the attention of students in addition to their large shape and size. A Big Book is also an interesting image with bright colors and written forms that are as attractive as possible to engage students who want to see and touch them. Rhodes states that the characteristics of Big Book are the repetition patterns of words and cumulative repetition patterns in some sentences and can be likened to reading patterns based on cultures known to children and predictable storylines (Rhodes, 1998).

Kargess quoted by Sholehudin (Sholehudin, 2009) explained that a Big Book is a story book with special features that were raised, in the form of text and images, thus making a joint reading activity between teacher and student. Sitepu (Sitepu, 2012) explains the use of colors in book illustrations that function to give a certain meaning or for aesthetics that cause attraction and motivation. Images reflect clear meanings in the story and bring up the contents of the story with repeated words in order to make it easier for students to understand the contents of the story through pictures. Since students prefer to hear stories, Big Books are a medium that can be used by teachers as storytelling material to stimulate students to think critically through questions stimulated from pictures in the Big Book that can be read to students in the initial class with early age storytelling techniques.

c) **Big Book Type Based on Cause and Effect To Increase Themes Reveal Feelings In Speaking Skills**

Big Books are packaged to improve the theme that can express feelings on this speaking skill. Hurlock (Hurlock, 1978) argues the concept of the beauty of color, that children include the meaning of color based on their own experience or that it is culturally determined. Choosing the right color in each picture makes a Big Book very attractive to students who want to see and touch it. Big Books are made with three-dimensional "Pop-

Up" images and thus give a texture to each image so that children can distinguish rough and soft textures when touched by hand.

In a Big Book picture additional information can be given using texture like duck feathers which if touched will feel soft, from this the students will express their feelings whether happy, sad or afraid and angry when touching the duck feathers that feel soft with the word "oh yeah soft duck feathers". Likewise vice versa on the images coupled with a rough texture such as thorns on porcupines. When students touch the porcupine thorns they will scream in shock "oh sick" by expressing feelings of fear or anger and can also be sad because their hands feel pain when they touch the thorn. Annisa, Dian and Fika (Annisa et al, 2018) cite opinions from (Fahmi et al, 2015, O'Connor et al., 2006; Santi et al., 2016) and all three found that Big Book's effectiveness and significant effects can be found in increasing students' vocabulary. Big Books enable students to learn vocabulary more effectively than other picture books with normal size because they can attract students and can be used independently or can be read by educators to their students.

d) Big Book Types Based on Cause and Effect To Enhance Themes Changing Tones and Intonations in Producing Words on Speaking Skills

Madyawati (2016) argues that to be able to develop children's speaking skills in the pre-operational stage (2-4 years), Big Book media that has text and images that have a larger size than other normal books in full color and in harmony with children's thinking age of 2-4 years should be used. Big Books can also be used for children in the pre-operational stage according to their developmental needs in speaking skills. Lynch cited by Madyawati (Madyawati, 2016) also expressed his opinion about the advantages of Big Books being able to develop all aspects of language including writing and oral language. Karges Bone (USAID, 2014) states that Big Book has the following characteristics: 1) Short story; 2) The pattern of repetition of words; 3) Clear sentence patterns; 3) Pictures have meaning; 4) Type and size of letters clearly read; 5) The storyline is easy to understand. In line with Solehuddin (Sholehuddin et al, 2008) the big book has characteristics, namely: 1) The pattern of repetition of words; 2) cumulative repetition patterns; 3) have rhythms (such as baby rhythms); 4) reading patterns based on culture known to children; 5) has a predictable storyline. Due to these characteristics a Big Book can develop children's speaking skills at an early age.

e) Big Book with Types Based on Problems and Solving Problems to Improve Themes Receiving and Delivering Information on Speaking Skills.

A Big Book is one of the most effective ways to get students involved with print art (book). This is explained by Strickland & Morrow, (Morrow, 1990) cited in Nambiar (Nambiar,

1993). Enlarged text allows all children in the classroom to see and react to words. Learners can carry out joint learning activities using Big Book media in order to foster a sense of confidence and confidence in the students that "they can" convey the information they receive when reading Big Book stories by educators. Big Books also facilitate the use of certain reading strategies such as reading aloud so that it can be imitated by students to convey information obtained through hearing stories read by the teacher, attracting their curiosity and maintaining their enthusiasm. According to Lynch (Lynch, 2008) Big Books create a safe and relaxed atmosphere in the classroom and engage students in the teaching and learning process.

Conclusion

The use of Big Books as a medium in the learning process provides a meaningful learning experience that will be remembered throughout life by students and increases curiosity about the things they can see and hear. During this time the Big Book can only be seen and touched by students. In this study, researchers tried to develop speaking skills with Big Book media. As Big Books are a visual medium, their design must be as attractive as possible with a trademark shape and size that is enlarged in comparison with other storytelling picture books measurements. In addition to enlarged text and images, the choice of colors and storyline is important for Big Books in order that they work to develop early childhood speaking skills.

Recommendation

Big Books are used as a medium of learning in Early Childhood Education. Big Books are is a very effective visual medium to grow children's motivation in learning something new. Research on Big Books is still a hot topic of conversation especially in Early Childhood Education and Basic Education. However in elementary schools it has been very rare to find Big Books used in the learning process because making them requires a long time and teachers are not always able to create learning media in the form of a Big Book. Therefore in the future, research could be conducted in the field of training in making Big Book media for teachers of Early Childhood Education and Basic Education.

Acknowledgement

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