

# Teacher's Ability to Use Basic Literacy to Develop Language Skills in Early Childhood in Kaliwates District Kindergarten

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**Abstract:** Basic literacy refers to the foundational skills in reading and writing that involve both spoken and written language—namely, listening and speaking abilities. Language functions as a tool for communication and interaction among individuals. In this context, kindergartens in Kaliwates District, as early childhood education institutions, implement basic literacy as part of their child-centered learning approach. The application of basic literacy in these kindergartens creates engaging learning experiences that stimulate children's language development effectively. This study aims to explore two main questions: (1) How is basic literacy applied to develop early childhood language aspects? (2) How do children's language skills improve after participating in basic literacy activities? The research uses a descriptive qualitative method. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. Primary data were obtained from interviews with group B teachers and school principals, focusing on their ability to implement basic literacy to enhance children's language skills. The findings suggest that evaluating the success of literacy programs is crucial, particularly in early childhood settings. Observations indicate positive changes in children's interest and participation. Initially, some students were reluctant to engage due to boredom or sleepiness. However, with the introduction of interesting, picture-rich books, many of these children became more enthusiastic and involved. These results highlight that with the right materials and approach, basic literacy activities can significantly support the language development of young learners in a fun and meaningful way.

**Keywords:** *teacher skills, basic literacy, language skills, early childhood*

## INTRODUCTION

Literacy skills or children's interest in reading in Indonesia is very low. Low interest in reading is caused by the lack of reading habits from childhood by parents. Therefore, children do not want to read at this time. Low interest in literacy in children has a very big impact. Literacy is very useful for the future of children, namely in receiving information or reading existing information without seeing its truth or clarifying it first and spreading the news. If children have good literacy skills, children will see or clarify the information first (Sari, 2018).

Introduction to basic literacy is one of the efforts made to develop children's cognitive and language abilities which include introducing the concepts of reading, writing and arithmetic. This statement is supported by the opinion of Hurlock (Marwiyati & Hidayatulloh, 2018) that children's literacy skills affect their

social, emotional, and cognitive development. Thus, the introduction of the concept of basic literacy from an early age can affect children's development from various development domains.

Language is one of the parameters in child development. Language skills involve cognitive, sensorimotor, psychological, emotional and environmental development of children. Language skills in children are influenced by intrinsic factors originating from the child and extrinsic factors originating from the environment. Intrinsic factors are the child's innate condition since birth including the physiology of the organs involved in language and speaking abilities. Meanwhile, extrinsic factors are manifested in the form of stimuli that are around the child, especially words heard or directed at the child. The language aspect in early childhood includes 4 aspects, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four aspects are interrelated with each other.

Kaliwates District Kindergarten is an early childhood education institution that applies basic literacy to its students and education here is centered on the needs of children. The reason Kaliwates District Kindergarten was used as a research location is because language development in Kaliwates District Kindergarten is interesting to study, seen when the children there are able to communicate and express their feelings to teachers and peers every day about what they like and dislike, children are able to tell stories systematically, and creatively with vocabulary that is always increasing.

The implementation of basic literacy for early childhood in Kindergarten in Kaliwates District is able to provide fun learning activities for children, so that children's language development is well stimulated. It is proven that in Kindergarten in Kaliwates District after implementing basic literacy for early childhood, the language aspect is getting better, children have new vocabulary from the activities they carry out. Based on the background description, the researcher is interested in researching and raising the title regarding "Teachers' Ability to Use Basic Literacy to Develop Language Skills in Early Childhood in Kindergarten in Kaliwates District".

## METHOD

### Type of Research

The type of research used in this study is qualitative descriptive research. In descriptive research, only describing the observed conditions, no need to look for interrelationships and get implications. Qualitative research in it involves researchers so that they will understand the context with the situation and setting of natural phenomena according to what is being studied.

### Data

The data of this study are primary data obtained through interviews with group B teachers and the principal regarding the ability of teachers to use basic literacy to develop language skills in early childhood in Kindergarten in Kaliwates District. The data of this study are related to basic literacy to develop language skills in early childhood obtained from the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. What is meant in this study is how teachers' ability to use basic literacy to develop language skills in early childhood.

### Data Sources

In this study, the primary data sources were the Principal and Group B Teachers of Kaliwates District Kindergarten. Subjects and objects in the study were Children aged 5-6 years. Data sources came from Class Teachers of Group B and the Principal of Kindergarten, Kaliwates District. The research instruments used interviews, observations, and documentation.

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## Research Location

This research was conducted in one of the kindergartens in Kaliwates District on Jl. Hayam Wuruk Gg. 4 No.8, Gerdu, Sempusari, Kaliwates District, Jember Regency, East Java 68131.

## Data Collection Techniques

Data collection is the initial process in an effort to collect all the information needed in the study. The data collection stage carried out at the Kaliwates District Kindergarten uses three data collection methods, namely observation, interviews and documentation.

### 1. Observation

At the observation stage, the researcher conducted observations on children in group B on September 29, 2024 with a total of 15 children. The study was conducted within 2 weeks with 1 full week to conduct observations, why did it take 2 weeks because in conducting observations the researcher saw the children's activeness in learning activities in the classroom. Especially during basic literacy to develop language aspects.

### 2. Interview

This interview involved the class teacher of group B and also the principal by asking questions related to basic literacy to develop language aspects in early childhood and aimed to obtain information to complete the research data. Mahsyud (2016:272) stated that interviews are divided into two, namely structured questions and unstructured questions.

Structured questions are data collection instruments used in structured interviews, namely interviews using a list of questions that have been systematically arranged and have been prepared in advance in full.

Unstructured questions are collection instruments used in unstructured interviews, free interviews where the author does not use interview guidelines that have been systematically and completely arranged for data collection. The interview guide is only an outline of the problems that will be asked. Thus, questions can develop according to the conditions of the time for the interview.

### 3. Documentation

The data obtained in this study with documentation data are the results of learning assessments when children carry out the learning process in class and also the teaching modules used. The author also uses complementary documentation in the form of photos of children's literacy activities in class.

## Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is critical in the qualitative research process. Analysis is used to understand the relationship of concepts in data so that it can be developed and evaluated.

### 1. Data Collection

Data collection is the initial process in an effort to collect all the information needed in the study. The data collection stage carried out at the Kaliwates District Kindergarten uses three data collection methods, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations are carried out to observe children's literacy activities at school. Interviews are conducted with key informants, namely group B teachers and supporting informants, namely the principal, by referring to the interview guidelines that have been prepared previously and documentation related to the research at the Kaliwates District Kindergarten.

### 2. Data Reduction

The data reduction process carried out at the Kaliwates Kindergarten is by focusing on the findings of data obtained in the field related to basic literacy to develop language aspects in early childhood at the Kaliwates District Kindergarten which is carried out using various data collection methods. Then the data obtained is linked to the literature review and indicators contained in the research variables.

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### 3. Data Presentation

Data presentation is limited as a group of informants that are arranged and provide the possibility of drawing conclusions and taking action. Data presentation tends to lead to data simplification, complex into simple and selective units so that they are easy to understand. This presentation is intended to make it easier for researchers to present the data they have studied. The existence of a lot of data obtained makes it difficult for researchers to see the results of their research because the results of the research obtained are still in the form of raw data, so researchers must process and present the data so that their research can be presented. 4. Drawing Conclusions

Drawing conclusions is the result of research that answers the focus of the research based on the results of data analysis (Gunawan, 2014:212). The conclusion in qualitative research is a new finding that has never existed before. Findings can be in the form of a description or picture of an object that was previously still dim or dark so that after being studied it becomes clear (Sugiono, 2017:142). Drawing conclusions is the final stage carried out in data analysis in basic literacy re-search to develop language aspects in early childhood in Kindergarten, Kaliwates District.

### Data Validity Testing Techniques

The validity of data in qualitative research is an important factor in scientific research. In addition to being used to refute accusations that qualitative research is unscientific, checking the validity of data is also an important component of the body of knowledge related to qualitative research.

So there is source triangulation, triangulation of data collection techniques and time triangulation.

#### 1. Source Triangulation

Source triangulation is carried out to check the reliability of data by assessing data from various sources. Source triangulation from group B teachers and the principal of the Kaliwates District Kindergarten.

#### 2. Technique Triangulation

The triangulation technique is used to test the reliability of data by checking data from the same source using different techniques. For example, data is obtained through interviews and then verified through observation and documentation. When the techniques used to test the credibility of the data produce different data, the researcher consults with relevant data sources to determine which data is believed to be correct or may all be correct because they represent different points of view. Technique triangulation, researchers observe class group B in the basic literacy learning process to develop language aspects. And for the interview, the researcher asked the principal and teachers with interview guidelines.

#### 3. Time Triangulation

Time also often affects the reliability of data. Data collection using interview techniques in the morning, when respondents are already at school, provides more valid data so that it is more credible. Time triangulation researchers studied in group B for 2 weeks, namely September 29, 2024 to October 12, 2024, which in 2 weeks is a full 14 days. Researchers want to find complete data so that they can obtain the necessary information within two weeks.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of observations conducted by researchers that were carried out starting from before entering until going home from school. From observations, researchers found that when welcoming students, teachers greet children with a smile which is continued by saying hello, if there are several children who are dropped off by other people, the teacher asks the child who is dropping

them off today, from there the child answers the teacher's question while telling why he was dropped off by that person. When learning activities begin, from the results of observations, researchers found that teachers invite children to do movements and songs that are followed by all students and then continued with activities where the teacher conveys and explains the theme/topic of the day's activities.

Continuing activities in the classroom, the teacher explains the task of the activity and makes an agreement with the children before choosing activities according to the interests of each child. The implementation of literacy learning in Kindergarten, Kaliwates District is carried out by reading story books at the beginning of learning for approximately 15 minutes. This activity is carried out in the era of globalization like today because children's interest in learning has decreased greatly, such as literacy learning. At first, many children were lazy to do this activity, because they were still not used to this learning. Teachers are always patient in guiding children to get used to literacy learning. With a fairly long time, one by one they like literacy learning activities.

In literacy learning for children aged 5-6 years group B, the teacher provides varied learning and adjusts the character, interests, development level and needs of the child. Group B is a group that enters the 2nd stage in the learning process in kindergarten. The first time it was done in story-book media learning to improve literacy in group B. After the implementation of learning is carried out, there needs to be a development of learning, with the aim of seeing how the development was before and after and to what extent the results of the application of basic literacy to develop language skills in early childhood.

One of the goals of the institution in holding literacy learning is to develop the language skills of children in group B so that children can increase their vocabulary and are ready to continue to further education because in group B children really need to be stimulated often, especially in terms of language development.

Based on the findings in the field, it states that there are three readiness for implementing literacy learning, namely, opening, core, and closing. Group B when carrying out literacy learning activities is carried out at the opening or beginning of activities carried out in the classroom with all group B students with the homeroom teacher. The steps in implementing literacy learning are that the teacher gives students the freedom to choose and take the story books they want, the story books are available in the reading corner class and the school library.

After the students take the story books, the teacher calls the names of the students in turn to come forward to read, then as a marker the teacher notes the page limits that have been read by the students in a special literacy book. Then in the core learning activity, the children remain in their seats and the teacher reviews the previous literacy learning to the students so that they do not forget, and in closing the teacher gives the children riddles to guess the title of the book that has been read, and tells what is in the book, if they succeed in answering then they can go home or leave the class, then the children compete to answer, the children find it easier to answer and understand the lesson because of their interest in the story book media, where the children first see the pictures in the story book section, then slowly the children can recognize letters or words by word. Before leaving the class, the children do not forget to shake hands with the teacher.

Development towards the success of a program is very important to do especially in Kindergarten of Kaliwates District. Based on the findings in the field, it states that child development can be seen when several students who participate in literacy learning begin to show development, from

initially there were children who did not want to participate in literacy learning because they were bored and sleepy, finally the child wanted to because they saw the book chosen was very interesting to read and the pictures in the book were very varied.

Likewise, other students, children also began to focus on understanding what the teacher was explaining in front of the class, began to dare to come forward and answer without fear and shame. Based on the statement above, a teacher must also always see the development of the child and see the interest in individual students, based on the theory of child development, it is believed that every child is born with more than one talent that is potential and is like not yet appearing on the surface of the water. For that, children are given education according to their development and cannot be forced but must always be given stimulus so that they can develop well just like other students.

### CONCLUSION

The readiness and implementation of teachers in using basic literacy to develop language skills in early childhood in Kindergarten in Kaliwates District, there are 3 things that are implemented, the first is the opening activity, the second is the core activity, the third is the closing activity. The teacher explains the activities that will be carried out that day, frees children to choose the story book to be read, then gives questions to students, then children answer them and read the story book in turns. Is seen when children begin to be interested in the media being taught, then children focus on what is being explained by the teacher in front of the class, then children begin to understand what is being taught by the teacher, then children begin to dare to come forward and answer questions that have been given by the teacher.

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