

4-TO-5-YEAR OLD CHILDREN SPEAKING ABILITY THROUGH CONSTRUCTIVE PLAY WITH PEER GROUP AT BON THORIF KINDERGARTEN IN PALEMBANG

SRI SUMARNI

*Lecturer of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
Sriwijaya University*

Abstract

The result of this research showed that there was improvement on pupils' speaking ability whose ages were from 4 to 5 through constructive play with peer group. The research was carried out at Bon Thorif Kindergarten in Palembang. The method was classroom action research from Kemmis and Taggart which consisted of planning, treatment, observation, and reflection. The treatments were conducted in 2 cycles and each cycle consisted of six treatments. The subjects of the research were 18 pupils whose ages were from 4 to 5 at Bon Thorif Kindergarten in Palembang. The data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative analysis showed pupils' speaking ability was improved from pre-treatments to the second cycle which was 82.2%. This showed the treatment's success with 75% improvement. It indicates that the reserach was successful. The qualitative analysis by using a model proposed by Miles and Huberman with triangulation was also carried out consisting: (1) data reduction; (2) data display; and (3) verification, through observation, interview, and documentation during the treatment. The result revealed that constructive play with peer group could improve pupil's speaking ability. Through some experiences in playing, having recreation, and interacting with peer group, all aspects of pupils' speaking ability were improved.

Keywords: *speaking ability, constructive play with peer group.*

1. Introduction

Basically, childhood is an initial portray of a child as a human being. As time goes by, children always experience motor, feeling, willingness, mind, and intellectual development. Parents obviously play a prominent role on children development. It is decribed in Ministerial Decree No. 58 Year 2009 which states that there are six aspects to be developed in young children: moral and religious values, cognitive, language, physic, motor, social, emotional, and art. As a teacher, this decree can be used as a strong basis to give the proper stimulation for children which is, of course, through various proper activities for children development.

Children with good development and growth are obviously teachers, parents, and people ideal expectation. In the learning process, a teacher has to understand children development, such as physical growth, motor, intelligence, sensory, linguistic, and emotional development. This paper is concerned with children linguistic development. One of the observable linguistic development is children speaking ability.

In kindergartens, children speaking ability is a top priority which requires special concern. In speaking ability, children are taught how to interact and communicate well with both their teachers and friends. They start to learn to express their thoughts and feelings. The speaking instruction is, of course, taught based on the levels of their ages.

One of the instructions done in kindergartens is through playing. Playing is not only a good activity for young children but also an appropriate strategy to train them to speak up. Through plays, they will develop all aspects including their ability to cooperate. Teachers have to design a fun learning activity to make young children enjoy. It is in line with what is written in *Early Learning Central* (2014), ***“Play nourishes for every aspect of children’s development-it forms the foundation of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional skills that is necessary for success in school and in life.”***

Furthermore, Rahim (2008) states that cooperative play is closely related to cooperation or roles division among children involved in the play to achieve certain goals. This activity generally appears at ages from 4 to 5, but children development depends on their parents whether or not they give their children an access to socialize. The use of media is to facilitate children to express the desired goals more easily through some interesting stimulation like plays.

Sudono (2003) recommends to choose high quality playing media. It is better if the media can expand knowledge, develop skills, and instill various good characters in society. The media can be in the form of sand, water, beam, and others. Media plays a prominent role for children, because the interesting media makes them interested in playing it and children's development will take place.

The experience of joyful plays with materials, things, other children, and adults' care will help child development in physic, emotion, cognition, linguistic, and social. Playing is the most appropriate approach used as activities for young children. This learning indicates that we are aware of children growth and development, and we even help them indirectly by analyzing new alternative learning method for them. Besides the fact that playing is fun, it also can motivate children to explore more.

A research entitled "*Constructive Play: A Value-Added Strategy for Meeting Early Learning Standards*" conducted by Cristie et al (2013) was: Constructive play can develop children's ability. Children can use materials and ideas like what is in their imagination. They can ask questions and keep trying new things. Constructive play has to be connected to several games and activities with different aspects from the curriculum. Constructive play is a creative play and important to be implemented.

2. Theoretical Background

Speaking ability is an effective communication to convey meaning by using articulation or words. Speaking is an ability which has to be learned like other abilities. Peaget cited in Jalongo (2007) explains that speaking ability is divided into two categories, namely: Communicative and Non communicative. Communicative or socialized speaking includes play talk, negotiation talk, excluding talk, challenge talk, emphatic talk, information and understanding talk. Non communicative includes: repetition, monologue, a dual or collective monologue.

Communicative is related to children's speaking ability in social life, while noncommunicative is related to children speaking which is in the form of

repetition in which a child's talk during a play with his/her friends still sounds awkward by producing separated words. An ability to produce certain sound in a combination is known as word. Speaking ability takes a long time and it is complicated to relate the meaning to the word and to learn the grammar. Motor mental involves muscle to coordinate to relate the word to its meaning, and then words will become symbols for children or objects (Hurlock, 1998). Speaking is an ability to utter sounds of articulation or words to express, state, and deliver thoughts, ideas, and feelings.

Learning grammar is performed with good speaking ability, so the children can talk appropriately and easily understood in interacting with others. According to Mayesky (1990), interaction becomes a very important part in communicating. Children talk and listen when they play clay, dough, painting, blocks, sand and water. If the childrentalk, they will feel comfortable, they try to talk more with the children grammar. The ability of children in playing activities helpsthem in developing speaking ability. Children will try to talk with words that can be understood by others, so they are able to interact via spoken as a meansofcommunication.

Based on the opinion above, the speaking ability is an ability and skill possessed by every child in expressing ideas, thoughts and feelings through the articulation of sounds or words as a symbol for child or the object that is represented. Children activities that they can perform are interacting and communicating with people nearby, so it can train the children to be able to speak. The children experience is important, in order the children can imitate and think of new ideas, and then expressed through talking with others.

The playgroup is a group of socialization for children with peers in school or out school. If in the family, most interactions are performed by involving unequal relationships (such as uncle, grandfather, mother, aunt, sister, etc.), whereas in children play groups can be performed with children peers. According to Pearson cited by Sarwono and Meinarno (2009) that humans are social beings. That is, as social beings, humans can not establish their own relationships, humans need other people to understand each other and form the interaction.

Someone can socialize means that the person is able to interact with other people around.

As known, in fact the human essence is not only as well as individuals beings but also as social beings. Humans are demanded to have their interconnected with each other in life, according to Santosa (2005) says that in a peer group (*kelompok sebaya*), individuals feel their similarity to one another such as in age side, needs and goals to strengthen the group (HimCayoo, 2013). Peer group among members of the group feel of having responsibility for the group success and failure. This peer group, the individual feels of finding himself (personal) and can develop interaction through social communication.

Children learn a variety of new abilities by entering the stage of game phase (learn the rules that manage people role in equal position), so they obtain the values of justice. In this stage, children egocentric attitude is still very prominent. This condition would have caused conflict with friends. Nevertheless, the existence of the conflict will allow individuals to improve their egocentric nature. The purpose of self-improvement is in order they can be accepted back by their friends as a group member. One of an important role in play group with peers is a child gets a place to distribute various feelings, such as feeling of happy and sad (HimCayoo, 2013). Group peer gives opportunities for children to express ideas, opinions and feelings through direct interaction.

Playing in a peer group helps children to develop abilities more optimum. Hughes says that children who play in a peer group give experience to the child to interact with friends through communication and the children can cooperate in conducting playing activities (Hughes, 2010). Communicating with peers provides a very important for children, in order to express ideas and opinions through communicating when playing with his friends. Related to constructive play, Piaget said that constructivist is the process of building knowledge and definition of being constructed is when someone is socially engaged in dialogue and active in experiments and experience (Fosnot, 1996). The establishment of meaning is interpersonal dialogue in which children require experience and interaction with other children.

The children experiences help them to learn to interact better, so they are acceptable in peer group. Play activities with a group of peers will also develop the children ability to receive opinions and ideas of their friends. Similarly with idea (McGrath and Francey, 1991) says that in play group, children will be able to develop cooperation attitude, appreciate the idea of the other friends, and can discuss with other child related to playing activities that will be conducted. Playing in a group provide an experience to the child to respect the ideas and opinions, cooperate with each other to complete their activities, and to be able to interact through active communication with friends.

Based on the above description, the constructive play based on peer based group is a play that performed in groups include designing, shaping and creating the ideas and thoughts, child interests and pleasures based on child own experience with the materials and tools available. The activities of constructive play has two types of material for playing: (1) liquid material, such as paint (drawing fantasy), crayons, markers, playdough, finger painting, collage, water and sand, and (2) to play a structured constructive material, such as puzzle, block units, maze, mosaic, and lego.

3. Method

This study was aimed at finding out the implementation of peer-group based constructive play to improve speaking performance of the children at Group A PAUD Bon Thorif Palembang. The sample was the children at Group A PAUD Bon Thorif Palembang. This study was conducted from January to March on the second semester in the academic year 2014/2015. The school was chosen because the children are weak in speaking performance.

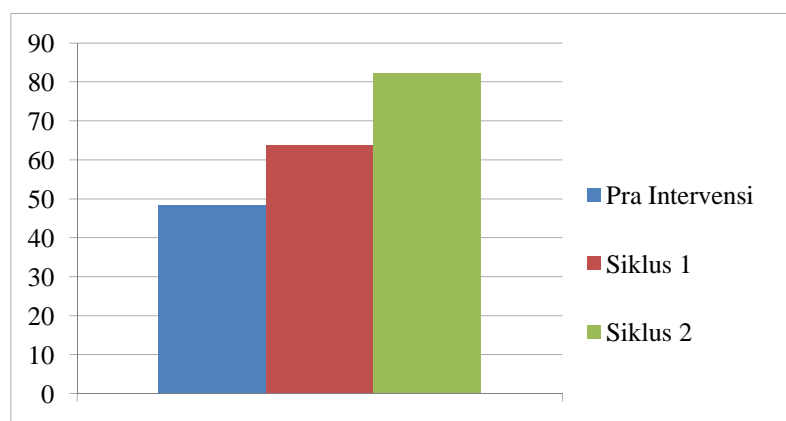
This was a collaborative action research. The design used was in accordance with the research theories in education. This study was also aimed at improving the teaching and learning process at the school. The peer group based-constructive play technique was used in this study to improve the speaking performance.

Kemmis and Taggart procedures were applied for teaching and learning cycles in this study in the following steps: Planning, action, observing, and reflection. Cycle 1 and 2 were given six meetings. After that, the result of cycle 1 was identified to find weaknesses in that cycle. The data were qualitative and quantitative as they are recommended for action research.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the analysis of the quantitative data, it was found that there was improvement in the speaking performance on the average of 63.7 %. In cycle 1 the speaking performance was 48.2 % before treatment and it increased to 15.5 %. There was 18.5 % increase from cycle 1 to cycle 2 with 82.2 % improvement in speaking performance

Based on the agreement between the researcher and collaborator which required the research to be stopped if there was 75% improvement before treatment, or if 75 % improvement was not reached, the research would go on. The data from the cycle 1 showed that there was 82.2 % speaking improvement before the treatment. This showed that the improvement percentage had been accomplished.



Picture 1. Improvement graph of speech ability through constructive play based peer group

Analysis model by Miles and Huberman also supported this finding. This strategy gave opportunity to children to train their speaking skill by the fun and playing provided in the strategy so that the children could freely express

themselves. Research by Halida (2010) had also supported the finding. In her study, she said that a teacher must choose appropriate teaching technique to improve students' speaking skill, for example, role playing.

Moreover, Baiti (2010) in her study entitled "Improving Spatial Intelligence through Constructive Play" state that constructive play could improve spatial intelligence. This study showed that constructive play could help children in learning. The study by Cristie et al also showed that constructive play could use and build something without the prior knowledge. Children could use materials and ideas appropriately in accordance with their age. Children could keep asking questions and trying things. Constructive play is very important for children since it can trigger creativity for students of play group. The play must also interconnect with the other children play suggested in the curriculum.

The ability to speak the children aged 4-5 years each had a goal and is a series that explains that the speaking development of children has a significant stage. Aspects of non-communicative and communicative is developmentally speaking skills of children are at an intermediate stage between the egocentric to the socialist stage, thereby proving that, in its development, speaking continues to evolve with experience. Lee and Park stated that child verbal interaction in accordance with the child's gender had a significant effect and attitude as a supporter of interaction. In this study, it appears that the attitude of the children to interact with peers demonstrates the ability to communicate, socialize, and how children express their opinions. The patterns found in order to achieve the development of speaking skills of children that initial experience has been owned by the child, giving the game that gives freedom to the child a fun, interaction with peers, repetition or re-memory of the initial experience of children, their motivation and chance of teacher or other person as well as the motivation and effort to develop the skills of children.

According relevant research. Oostermeijer, at all revealed that 38,16% of variance in mathematical word problem solving performance is explained by children's constructive play activities and spatial ability. More specifically, spatial

ability acted a partial mediator, explaining 31,58% of the relation between constructive play and mathematical word problem solving performance.

Tsai purpose of current study is to review related literature on play, imagination , and creativity. By doing so, it is hoped to provide some useful insight for eeducator to bring those concept into classrooms in terms of promoting creativity. Finnaly, several creativity strategies fr faclitating creativity are discussed. The overall result of literature review suggest that educators should bring play, imagination in teir classrooms in order to encourage creativity. Related to this research play and imagination include to constructive play.

4. Conclusion and Remark

Based on the results of analysis of constructive play with peer group in improving children's speaking ability of B Class at Bon Thorif Kindergarten, some conclusions can be drawn as follows: (1) The precentage of children's speaking ability from pre-intervention, with average percentage 48.2%, was improved 15.5% at Cycle I, with average percentage 63,7%. Then, There was an improvement 18.5% with the average percentage 82.2% from Cycle I to Cycle II; (2) The implementation of constructive play with peer group which could improve children's speaking ability are (a) the activity must ve creative and innovative, so that it gives freedom to children to explore and create something based on their own ideas or thoughts, (b) the media must be various, concrete, and interesting, so that children are actively engaged in the activity and it can facilitate their thoughts, (c) it gives chances for children to share thoughts, interact with friends, help them to practice their speaking ability, (d) it gives chances for children to tell their work made by their group which will stimulate them to repeat the same experience and convey new ideas by having a talk which will enhance their vocabulary, and (e) it gives a compliment to students' work.

Based on the conclusions, there are also some suggestions as follows:

First, for Kindegartens, the improvement of childrenspeaking ability through the use of various ineteresting media has to be paid more attention.

Besides, schools are expected to adjust the learning time allocation with students' ability.

This results in lack of chances for children to develop and build their knowledge which in turn it will result in lack of exercises and social interaction with their friends which aims to improve children's speaking ability.

Second, the implementation of constructive play with peer group can be carried out everyday in the form of various activities to draw children's attention and make the learning process enjoyable. It gives freedom to children to explore, so that they actively communicate with friends and teachers. It also help children to fix their mistakes/errors in their pronunciation, and to know the correct pronunciation through practices, so that their speaking ability can be improved optimally.

Third, it is expected that parents cooperate with schools to give the same stimulation at home and have free time to train their childrenspeaking ability, especially mispronounced words.

Fourth, it is expected that other researchers expand the reasearch/literature review related to children's speaking ability improvement by inventing various media or plays which are appropriate and suitable with children's development.

References

- Baiti, Nurlaili Hidayatul. 2010. "*Meningkatkan Kecerdasan Spasial melalui Bermain Konstruktif*". Tesis, Universitas Negeri Jakarta.
- Christie, James et al. "*Constructive Play A Value-Added Strategy for Meeting Early Learning Standards*". <http://www.journal.naeyc.org/about/permissions.asp>. (diakses Senin, 7 Oktober 2015).
- Early Learning Central, Teaching and Learning Central. 2014. *Playing Is Learning*, Online, <http://earlylearningcentral.ca/>, diakses 2014.
- Fosnot, Catherine Twomey. 1996. *Constructivism: Theory, Perspective and Practice*. New York: Teacher College, Columbia University.
- Halida. 2010. "*Peningkatan Kemampuan Berbicara melalui Metode Bermain Peran pada Anak Usia 4-5 Tahun di TK Aisyiyah*". Tesis, Universitas Negeri Jakarta.

- Huberman A, Matthew B. Miles. 1992. *Analisis Data Kualitatif, Buku Sumbertentang Metode-Metode Baru* (Penerjemah: Tjetjep Rohensi Rohidi, pendamping Mularto). Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia.
- Hughes, Fergus P. 2010. *Children, Play, and Development, Fourth Edition*. USA: SAGE Publications,
- Hurlock, Elizabeth B. 1998. *Perkembangan Anak Jilid 1*. Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Jalongo, Mary Renack. 2007. *Early Childhood Language Arts, Fourth Edition*. USA: Indiana University of Pennsylvania.
- Lee, Jeong Hwa. Jeong Eon Park. 2009. *Differences of Children's Verbal Interaction in Peer Collaboration According to Age, Gender, and Pairing Conditions*. Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education: ECERA.
- Mayesky, Mary. 1990. *Creative Activities For Young Children*. USA: Delmar Publisher Inc.
- McGrath, Helen dan Shona Francey. 1991. *Friendly Kids, Friendly Classrooms*. Australia: Longman Cheshire Pty.Ltd.
- Mills, Geoffrey E. 2000. *Action Research A Guide for the Teacher Research*. New Jersey: Person Prentice Hall Education.
- Oostermeijer, Meike., Anton JH Boonen, and Jelle Jolles. 2014. *The Relation between children's constructive play activities, spatial ability, and mathematical word problem solving performance: a mediation analysis in sixth-grade students*. *Frontiers in Psychology* Volume 5. Article 782. Doi:10.3389/fpsyg,2014.00782.
- Piaget. 2002. *The Language and Thought of the Child*. New York: Routledge Classics Publisher.
- Sudono, Anggani. 2000. *Sumber Belajar dan Alat Permainan*. Jakarta: Grasindo
- Rahim, Farida. 2008. *Pengajaran Membaca di Sekolah Dasar*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Tsai, Kuan Chen. 2012. *Play, Imagination, and Creativity: A Brief Literature Review*. Journal of Education and Learning Vol.1 No.2 2012. Canadian Center of Science and Education Publisher.

