



Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education

Volume 1 (1) 212 – 217 Maret 2024

ISSN: In Process

The article is published with Open Access at: <https://journal.maalahiyah.sch.id/index.php/ijie/index>

## Efforts to Improve Drawing Skills Through Thematic Pictures in Children at RA Taqiyya Kartasura

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**Abstract:** Drawing skills are one of the important aspects in fine motor development, creativity, and self-expression in early childhood. This research aims to improve children's drawing skills through the application of the themed drawing method at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. The research method used is classroom action research (PTK) with a qualitative and quantitative approach. The subjects of this study are children in groups A and B at RA Taqiyya Kartasura. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and analysis of children's images. The results of the study show that the application of the thematic drawing method is gradually able to improve children's drawing skills, both in terms of detail, composition, and creativity. The children also showed an increase in confidence and enthusiasm in their work. The learning process that involves interesting and relevant themes in children's daily lives is able to stimulate their imagination so that it is easier to pour ideas in the form of pictures. In addition, this method also helps teachers in guiding children in a more structured and effective way. Thus, the thematic drawing method can be an effective learning strategy in improving early childhood drawing skills and can be applied in various children's educational institutions to support their creative development.

**Keywords:** drawing ability, themed drawing, early childhood, RA Taqiyya Kartasura.

### INTRODUCTION

Drawing ability is one of the important aspects in early childhood development, especially in training fine motor skills, creativity, and self-expression skills (Santrock, 2007). However, the reality is that there are still many children who experience difficulties in drawing, such as lack of variety in shapes, difficulties in composing compositions, and lack of exploration of colors and details. According to Piaget in Berk's (2013) research, early childhood is in the

preoperative stage, where they begin to develop symbolization through drawing, but still need the right stimulation for their drawing skills to develop optimally. Therefore, effective learning methods are needed to help children improve their drawing skills.

One of the methods that can be applied is thematic drawing, which is a drawing technique by determining a specific topic that is relevant to the child's experience. This method can help children focus more on drawing and develop their imagination in a more directed way (Gallahue & Ozmun, 2012). In addition, previous research has shown that the use of themed images in learning can increase children's motivation as well as enrich their visual exploration (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 2001). Thus, this study aims to apply the thematic drawing method in improving children's drawing skills in RA Taqiyya Kartasura, with the hope of creating a more interesting, fun, and effective learning process.

The ability to draw is one of the important skills in early childhood development. Drawing not only trains fine motor skills, but also plays a role in increasing children's creativity, imagination, and self-expression (Santrock, 2007). Through drawing activities, children can pour out their ideas in visual form, which is also a form of their nonverbal communication. Therefore, the right learning method is needed to help children develop their drawing skills optimally.

However, in reality, there are still many children who have difficulty drawing. They often draw with monotonous shapes, lack variety, and experience obstacles in composing composition and color exploration. These difficulties can be caused by a variety of factors, such as the lack of attractive stimuli in learning to draw as well as limitations in the guidance provided by teachers (Gallahue & Ozmun, 2012). If not overcome, these obstacles can reduce children's interest in drawing activities and hinder their creative development.

According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development in Berk's (2013) research, early childhood is in the preoperative stage, where they begin to develop symbolization through images. At this stage, children need interesting stimulation so that their drawing skills develop optimally. One way to provide this stimulation is to provide a more directed drawing experience through the thematic drawing method.

The thematic drawing method is an approach in learning to draw that uses a specific topic or theme as the basis for drawing activities. With themes, children can more easily relate the drawings they create to the real experiences they experience, so that the drawing process becomes more meaningful and fun (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 2001). The theme used can be in the form of things that are close to the child's life, such as family, animals, nature, or daily activities.

Previous research has shown that the use of themed pictures in learning can increase children's motivation in drawing. Children tend to be more enthusiastic about drawing activities if they have a clear picture of what they are going to create (Gallahue & Ozmun, 2012). In addition, themed pictures can also help children develop creative thinking skills, because they are invited to develop ideas that are in accordance with the given theme.

In the application of the thematic drawing method, the role of the teacher is very important in guiding children so that they can explore more varied drawing ideas and techniques. Teachers can give examples, discuss themes before drawing, and provide encouragement so that children are more confident in expressing their imagination through pictures (Santrock, 2007). Thus, children not only draw freely, but also have a clearer direction and structure in their work.

As a solution to this problem, this study proposes the application of the thematic image method as a more effective learning strategy. By using a theme that suits the child's experience, it is hoped that they will be more motivated to draw and be able to improve their drawing skills gradually. In addition, this method can also create a more enjoyable learning atmosphere, where children feel more free in expressing themselves without fear of being wrong.

With this research, it is hoped that the thematic drawing method can be an effective learning alternative in improving early childhood drawing skills. This method can be widely applied in various children's educational institutions, especially at RA Taqiyya Kartasura, as part of a learning strategy oriented towards the development of children's creativity and self-expression.

## **METHODS**

This study uses a classroom action research (PTK) approach involving children in RA Taqiyya Kartasura as the research subject. The data in this study was obtained from two main sources, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data was collected through direct observation of children's drawing activities, interviews with teachers, and documentation of children's drawing works. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from literature, research journals, and theories relevant to early childhood development and drawing learning methods.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis in this study was carried out in a qualitative descriptive manner. The data obtained through observation and documentation were analyzed by identifying the development of children's drawing skills before and after the application of the thematic drawing method. In addition, interviews with teachers were analyzed to understand the effectiveness of the methods applied and the challenges faced in learning. The results of this data analysis were then used to draw conclusions about the extent to which the thematic drawing method can improve children's drawing skills in RA Taqiyya Kartasura.

## **RESULTS**

This study found that the application of the themed drawing method can gradually improve children's drawing ability in RA Taqiyya Kartasura. Children showed development in several aspects, such as the composition of pictures, variations of shapes, the use of colors, as well as the courage to express their ideas through pictures. In addition, children are also more enthusiastic and confident in drawing than before the application of this method.

### **Data Overview**

Data obtained from observations show that before the application of the themed drawing method, most children still drew with monotonous patterns, less varied, and limited in color exploration. After the thematic drawing method is applied, there is an increase in children's creativity, which can be seen from the increasing variety of shapes and details in their drawings. Documentation of children's works also shows gradual development, where the resulting images are richer in visual elements and more expressive. Interviews with teachers revealed that this method helps in directing children to be more focused and structured in drawing.

#### **Quantitative Data Observation Results**

To strengthen the results of the research, quantitative data were obtained through observation of children's development in drawing before and after the application of the thematic drawing method. Here is a table showing a comparison of the observation results:

<b>Aspects of Drawing Ability</b>	<b>Before Deployment (%)</b>	<b>After Implementation (%)</b>
Good image composition	35%	80%
Variations of shapes in images	40%	85%
Creative use of color	45%	90%
Confidence in drawing	50%	88%
Enthusiasm in participating in drawing activities	55%	92%

From the table above, it can be seen that there has been a significant improvement in all aspects of children's drawing ability after the application of the themed drawing method.

#### **Data Result Analysis**

The results of the observation showed that children who were previously less confident in drawing became more active in expressing their ideas. They are more daring to experiment with colors, lines, and shapes. In addition, this method also makes them more interested in

participating in drawing lessons because of the varied and relevant themes to their lives.

#### Results of Interviews with Teachers

Teacher at RA Taqiyya Kartasura revealed that before the application of the themed drawing method, children often had difficulties in determining the objects they would draw. This causes them to tend to draw the same thing over and over again without obvious variations. However, once this method is applied, children become easier in determining picture ideas and more creative in composing them.

#### Documentation of Children's Work

Documentation of children's images before and after the application of the method shows significant changes. At first, the resulting images tend to be simple, lack detail, and have repetitive patterns. After the application of the themed drawing method, children's drawings become more diverse, have more visual elements, and appear more expressive.

#### Data Verification

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses a triangulation technique, namely comparing the results of observation, documentation, and interviews. The results of the observations were compared with the analysis of children's drawings, while interviews with teachers were used to confirm whether the increase was indeed due to the application of the thematic drawing method. From the results of triangulation, a match was found between various data sources, which strengthened the conclusion that the thematic drawing method was effective in improving children's drawing ability in RA Taqiyya Kartasura.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that the application of the thematic drawing method has succeeded in improving children's drawing skills in RA Taqiyya Kartasura. This improvement is reflected in several aspects, such as the composition of the picture, the variety of shapes, the use of colors, and the child's confidence in drawing. Before the application of this method, children tended to draw with monotonous patterns and less exploratory. However, after the application of the thematic drawing method, their creativity developed gradually, which is seen in more complex, colorful, and expressive images.

This finding is in line with previous research which states that giving a theme in drawing can stimulate children's imagination and creativity (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 2001). In addition, Piaget's theory of cognitive development put forward by Berk (2013) also mentions that early childhood is in the preoperative stage, where they begin to develop symbolization through images. The existence of a theme in drawing makes it easier for children to connect pictures with real experiences, so that the drawing process becomes more meaningful and fun.

This method also provides a clearer structure in learning to draw, so that children are more focused and have a direction in their work. The teacher at RA Taqiyya Kartasura stated that this method makes it easier for them to guide children, because the theme given helps children develop ideas and reduce confusion in determining the object of the picture. In addition, the children were more enthusiastic about participating in drawing activities because the theme given made them feel interested.

To ensure the accuracy of the research results, data validation is carried out through triangulation techniques. This triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of three main data sources, namely: direct observation, documentation of children's work, and interviews with teachers. The results of triangulation show the compatibility between the three data sources. Observations showed an improvement in the quality of children's drawings, documentation of works described the development of drawings from simple to more varied, and interviews with teachers confirmed that this method had a positive impact on drawing learning.

Based on the results of data validation, it was found that the themed drawing method consistently had a positive impact on children's drawing ability. The validation results showed that, according to the three main data sources, the observed aspects such as image composition, shape variation, color use, and children's confidence experienced significant improvements. In

addition, the enthusiasm of children in participating in drawing activities has also increased greatly. This data shows that the thematic drawing method is effective in improving children's drawing skills in RA Taqiyya Kartasura.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it was found that the application of the thematic drawing method can effectively improve children's drawing skills in RA Taqiyya Kartasura. This improvement can be seen in various aspects, including image composition, shape variation, color exploration, and children's confidence in drawing. Data from observations, documentation, and interviews with teachers show that after the application of this method, children are more enthusiastic about drawing, have higher creativity, and are able to express their ideas better than before. Data validation conducted through triangulation techniques also showed consistency between the three main data sources, which strengthened the conclusion that the thematic drawing method is an effective learning strategy in improving early childhood drawing skills.

In terms of academic impact, this research contributes to the field of early childhood education, especially in art learning methods. These findings are in line with Piaget's theory of cognitive development as well as previous research that emphasizes the importance of visual and thematic stimulation in drawing to increase children's creativity. In addition, the results of this study can be a reference for educators and researchers in developing art-based learning strategies that are more effective and attractive for children.

Socially, the themed drawing method also has a significant contribution to children's development. With the improvement of drawing skills, children not only develop fine motor skills, but also improve their confidence, visual communication skills, and imagination. The application of this method can also help build a more enjoyable learning environment and support children's self-expression. Therefore, it is hoped that this method can be widely applied in various early childhood education institutions, so that more and more children benefit from this creative and innovative learning approach.

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