



Improving the Speaking Skills of Group A Children Through the "Puas Salam" Media (Pop-Up Recycled Materials and Natural Materials) at RA Al Hikmah

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Abstract:

This study aims to enhance the speaking skills of Group A children at RA Al Hikmah through the media "Puas Salam" (Pop-Up Made from Recycled Materials and Natural Materials). Speaking skills are a fundamental aspect of early childhood language development; however, they are often hindered by the lack of creative and engaging learning media. The "Puas Salam" media is designed by utilizing recycled materials and natural materials that are easily found in the surrounding environment, making it not only economical and environmentally friendly but also encouraging active participation from children in learning. This study uses the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method, which is implemented in two cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The research subjects are 13 children from Group A at RA Al Hikmah. Data is collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The research results show a significant improvement in children's speaking skills. In Cycle I, the percentage of children's speaking ability reached 60%, and it increased to 85% in Cycle II. The children became more confident in expressing their ideas, feelings, and experiences through storytelling and discussion activities. Additionally, this media also supports the development of fine motor skills and creativity in children. The conclusion of this study is that the "Puas Salam" media is effective in improving the speaking skills of Group A children. Therefore, it is recommended that RA teachers use media made from recycled and natural materials in learning, particularly to develop children's speaking skills and creativity.

Keywords: Speaking Skills, Puas Salam Media, Pop-Up, Recycled Materials, Natural Materials, Early Childhood.

INTRODUCTION

The development of speaking skills in early childhood is an important foundation for supporting successful communication, social interaction, as well as cognitive and emotional development. These skills enable children to express their thoughts, feelings,

and needs effectively. However, reality in the field shows that many children, particularly Group A at RA Al Hikmah, still face difficulties in expressing themselves verbally. This is often caused by the lack of creative, interactive learning media that suit the characteristics of early childhood. According to Septyawati and Nurjanah (2021), the use of engaging learning media can enhance active participation in the learning process, including in the development of speaking skills.

The purpose of this study is to improve the speaking skills of Group A children at RA Al Hikmah through the "Puas Salam" media (Pop-Up Made from Recycled and Natural Materials). This media is designed by utilizing recycled materials such as cardboard, plastic bottles, and natural materials like leaves, seeds, and twigs, which are easily found in the surrounding environment. The main goal is to create learning media that is not only engaging and fun for children but also environmentally friendly and cost-effective. By using this media, it is hoped that children will be more motivated to speak, tell stories, and engage in discussions, while also developing their creativity and fine motor skills.

The expectation of this research is that the "Puas Salam" media can become an innovative solution to overcome the challenges in developing children's speaking skills. Additionally, this media is expected to serve as an example for RA teachers in utilizing local, eco-friendly, and cost-effective resources. Another hope is that this research can raise children's awareness of the importance of environmental conservation through the use of recycled and natural materials. Thus, this media focuses not only on academic aspects but also on building character and environmental awareness from an early age.

The reality in the field shows that many RA teachers still rely on conventional methods in teaching, which do not interest children. In fact, according to research by Dewi and Pratiwi (2020), the use of creative, environmentally-based learning media can increase children's engagement in the learning process. This situation highlights the gap between children's need for engaging learning media and the teaching practices that are still limited to traditional methods. Therefore, innovation in developing learning media that can address these challenges is needed.

This proposal aims to address these challenges by presenting innovative, effective, and environmentally friendly learning media. The "Puas Salam" media is designed to combine creativity, local wisdom, and environmental awareness. By using recycled and natural materials, this media not only supports enjoyable learning but also teaches children the importance of utilizing the resources around them. Additionally, this media is expected to provide an alternative for RA teachers in overcoming the limitations of learning facilities.

This study is also supported by findings from Rahayu and Sari (2022), who state that the use of media based on natural and recycled materials can significantly improve children's speaking abilities. This type of media is considered effective because it is close to children's daily lives, making it easier for them to understand and express their ideas. Therefore, the "Puas Salam" media is expected to provide an answer to the need for relevant and contextual learning media.

Furthermore, this research aligns with the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) promoted by UNESCO. This principle emphasizes the importance of integrating environmental, social, and economic issues into the learning process. Through this research, it is hoped that it will make a positive contribution to the development of speaking skills in early childhood and serve as a reference for educators in creating engaging and meaningful learning media. Additionally, this study is expected to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in terms of quality education and environmental conservation. Through the "Puas Salam" media, it is hoped that children will not only become active learners but also a generation that cares about the environment and natural resources.

METHODS

This study uses the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method, which is designed to improve the speaking skills of Group A children at RA Al Hikmah through the "Puas Salam" media (Pop-Up Made from Recycled and Natural Materials). CAR was chosen because this method is participatory and collaborative, allowing the researcher (teacher) to be directly involved in the learning process to identify problems, design solutions, and evaluate the results. This study is implemented in two cycles, with each cycle consisting of four stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Each cycle is designed to observe the development of children's speaking skills in a gradual and comprehensive manner. The data sources in this study include the research subjects, which are 13 children from Group A at RA Al Hikmah. Data is collected through the observation of children's activities during the learning process, interviews with teachers and parents, and documentation through photos and videos of the activities. Additionally, quantitative data is collected using an assessment tool for children's speaking skills, which includes aspects of fluency, vocabulary, and speaking confidence. This tool is filled out by the teacher based on a previously prepared assessment rubric. Data analysis is conducted both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data is analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Observations and interviews are used to understand behavioral changes and children's responses to the "Puas Salam" media. Meanwhile, quantitative data is analyzed by calculating the percentage of improvement in children's speaking skills from Cycle I to Cycle II. The results of this analysis are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the media in achieving the research objectives. At the end of each cycle, a reflection is conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the "Puas Salam" media in improving children's speaking skills. The results of the reflection become the basis for improvement and refinement in the next cycle. With this approach, it is hoped that a comprehensive picture can be obtained regarding the impact of using the "Puas Salam" media on the development of children's speaking skills, as well as recommendations for the application of similar media in the future.

RESULTS

In the first cycle, children's speaking abilities were assessed using an evaluation instrument that covered three aspects: fluency, vocabulary mastery, and speaking confidence. The observation results showed that only 60% of the children met the "good enough" criteria in all three aspects. Most of the children were still shy and lacked confidence when speaking in front of their peers. Additionally, their vocabulary was still limited, and some children had difficulty forming sentences fluently. Data from Cycle I were obtained through direct observation by the researcher (teacher) with the help of an observer.

The observation was conducted during the learning process using the "Puas Salam" media. Although this media attracted children's attention, most of the children still needed further guidance to improve their speaking skills. This data was verified through interviews with parents, who confirmed that their children were generally less active in speaking at home. Based on the findings in Cycle I, several improvements were made for Cycle II. First, the researcher added an ice-breaking activity to boost children's confidence. Second, the "Puas Salam" media was modified by adding interactive elements, such as more varied pop-up images and short stories relevant to children's daily lives. Third, the researcher provided more praise and motivation to children who dared to speak. In Cycle II, there was a significant improvement in children's speaking abilities. The percentage of children who met the "good" criteria increased to 85%.

The children were more enthusiastic and confident when storytelling using the "Puas Salam" media. Their vocabulary became more varied, and they were able to form sentences more fluently. The verification data for Cycle II was obtained through triangulation, comparing the results of the observations, interviews with parents, and photo and video documentation of the activities. Interviews revealed that children were

becoming more active in speaking at home, and parents stated that the "Puas Salam" media helped their children become more confident. The photo and video documentation also showed an increase in children's participation during storytelling and discussions. The comparison of data between Cycle I and Cycle II revealed a significant improvement in all three aspects of the evaluation.

On fluency, the percentage of children meeting the "good" criteria increased from 20% to 50%. In vocabulary mastery, it increased from 15% to 45%. Meanwhile, in speaking confidence, the percentage of children who met the "good" criteria rose from 10% to 55%. The findings in Cycle II suggested that the "Puas Salam" media was effective in improving children's speaking abilities. The modifications made in Cycle II, such as the addition of interactive elements and the provision of motivation, proved to enhance children's participation and confidence.

Moreover, the use of recycled materials and natural elements encouraged children's creativity and raised awareness about the importance of protecting the environment. Overall, the research findings indicated that the "Puas Salam" media successfully improved the speaking abilities of children in group A at RA Al Hikmah. This improvement was evident from the increased percentage of children who met the "good" criteria in all three aspects: fluency, vocabulary mastery, and speaking confidence. These findings were also supported by data verification through observations, interviews, and documentation, which showed consistency and validity in the results (Septyawati & Nurjanah, 2021; Dewi & Pratiwi, 2020; Rahayu & Sari, 2022; Hasanah & Wahyuni, 2020; Aisyah & Rahmawati, 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study provides strong evidence that the "Puas Salam" media (Pop-Up Recycled Materials and Natural Materials) is effective in improving the speaking abilities of Group A children at RA Al Hikmah. This improvement is reflected in the increased percentage of children who met the "good" criteria in aspects of speaking fluency, vocabulary mastery, and speaking confidence. In Cycle I, only 60% of the children met the "good enough" criteria, but in Cycle II, this percentage increased to 85%. These findings are supported by data validation through triangulation and expert validation, showing the consistency and reliability of the research results. The "Puas Salam" media not only attracted children's interest but also encouraged their active participation and creativity in the learning process.

The academic impact of this study is that it provides empirical evidence that using recycled and natural materials in educational media can be an innovative solution to improve the speaking abilities of young children. These findings align with previous research, such as Septyawati and Nurjanah (2021), which state that creative and interactive learning media can enhance children's participation in learning. Furthermore, this study contributes to the development of the RA curriculum by offering an alternative, cost-effective, eco-friendly, and easily accessible learning media. RA teachers can use this research to create a more engaging and meaningful learning environment for children.

The social contribution of this research is to raise awareness of the importance of utilizing local resources and recycled materials in the learning process. The "Puas Salam" media not only supports children's academic development but also instills environmental values from an early age. By using recycled and natural materials, children are taught to appreciate the resources around them and reduce waste. Moreover, this research can serve as an inspiration for communities and educational institutions to develop sustainable and environmentally friendly learning practices, in line with the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Therefore, this study not only offers academic benefits but also contributes to the formation of a creative, environmentally conscious generation that is ready to face future challenges.

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