

Improving Children's Ability in Knowing Vocabulary through the Experiential Learning Model Approach

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Abstract

Developing the vocabulary comprehension skills require a complete understanding to be obtained by the children. This study aims to improve the children's ability recognize vocabulary through the Experiential Learning Approach for children aged 4-5 years in group A of Ulil Albab Kindergarten. This research used group action research method. The subjects of this study were 12 people. The method of data collection in this study used observation, interviews, and documentation while the data analysis technique used mix method. The results of this study indicate that there is an increase of ability to recognize the concept of numbers for children, in the pre cycle there is 49.7%. Experiencing an increase in cycle 1 of action 1 of 61.1% and increased again in cycle 2 of action 2 of 91.1%. It is concluded that the Experiential Learning approach was very low possibility applied to improve children's skills in writing numbers and connecting vocabulary symbols with objects, because there is no significant change in its application. The Experiential Learning approach is very suitable to be applied in object comparisons. As for recommendations for teachers: the Experiential Learning approach can be used as an alternative approach in improving the ability to recognize vocabulary for children in group A of Ulil Albab Kindergarten. The findings in this study are that the use of the Experiential Learning approach is still not fully experienced directly because it adapts to the achievement indicator which still has to use paper pencil. But, so far the approach taken is appropriate because it doesn't really change the pattern of learning that has been done in Kindergarten which is more to the direct learning.

Keywords: *Child Ability, Vocabulary, Experiential Learning, CAR*

Introduction

Early childhood era that is at a vulnerability of 0-6 years is a period of development and growth which is very decisive for the growth and development of children in the future. Therefore, the cognitive, moral, and social and physical formation of children has a good impact if done at this age (Khairi, 2018). Children's brain development will function 80% better than adults. At this age it is very good to teach something to children without forcing it (Wahyuningsih, 2016). In line with Montessori who believed that in the first two years, children go through sensitive periods (sensitive periods), during this sensitive period children will easily receive certain stimulation (Isnaini et al, 2021). Thus, parents and teachers should guide and provide stimulation on an ongoing basis so that all the potential that children have can develop optimally (Sumitra et al, 2019).

Education that serves ages 0-6 years is often known by the name of Early Childhood Education (PAUD) unit especially in education services in Kindergarten (TK) which has two types of services, namely group A which is at the vulnerable age of 4 -5 years and Group B is at a vulnerable age of 5-6 years (Rosa et al, 2019). Those aged 4-5 years who are in group A in their play activities always stimulate good vocabulary to support the child's further language development (Fauziddin et al, 2020). Vocabulary is one of the important elements in language for children in group A (Khomsin et al, 2021). Vocabulary is an important element in the development of language skills which include speaking, listening, reading and listening which are embodiments of the unity of feelings and thoughts that can be used in their use (Arumsari et al, 2017).

The experience gained by children in the school environment is obtained from at least six sources, as follows: (1) sensory experience; (2) language experience; (3) cultural background; (4) peers or playmates; (5) mass media; and (6) scientific activities (Méndez, 2015). Vocabulary mastery can affect a person's language skills, and vice versa that a person's ability in using language is also heavily influenced by the vocabulary he has (Arif et al, 2022). Vocabulary is a person's skill or ability to understand and know the use of words contained in a language, both spoken and written language (Kurniawati et al, 2020). Thus, a person's language skills can improve if the quality and quantity of his vocabulary also continues to increase.

Learning through direct experience presented through game, simulation and adventure activities as a medium for delivering material is an Experiential learning approach (Udjir et al, 2022). That is, through play activities, PAUD students can be actively involved in all learning activities carried out (Nitecki et al, 2015). The purpose of this model is to influence students in three ways, namely; (1) changing students' cognitive structure, (2) changing students' attitudes, and (3) expanding students' existing skills. These three elements are interconnected and affect each other as a whole, not separately, because if one element is not present, the other two elements will not be effective (Silberman, M, 2014). This stimulation is well implemented in play activities in children. However, more specific research discussing the Experiential Learning model approach in introducing vocabulary to children is still limited (Iman et al, 2021).

Preliminary observations made by researchers in group A of Ulil Albab Kindergarten revealed that the understanding of vocabulary in children was still not yet developed so that children only understood speaking but did not understand the vocabulary he mentioned. This problem requires an approach to handle it. Researchers will respond to this good opportunity to make efforts to improve the ability to recognize vocabulary in children through the Experiential Learning Model Approach. The novelty of this research is to increase the ability to recognize vocabulary in children through an experiential learning model approach, where research that is more specific discusses the Experiential Learning model approach in introducing vocabulary to children is still limited.

Method

The research method used is the Group Action Research (PTK) method. This type of research uses collaborative action, where researchers collaborate directly with teachers in the research process from the beginning to the research ends (Farhana et al, 2019). Group Action Research aims to produce an improvement that is able to solve problems that occur and even be able to improve learning activities. Researchers will reflect on every action to solve problems that occur gradually and continuously according to the stages of each cycle, resulting in an improvement and improvement to solve the problems that have been found (Prihantoro et al, 2019). The location of this research was conducted at Ulil Albab Kindergarten, Walantaka District, Serang City, Banten Province. The subjects in this study were children of group A at Ulil Albab Kindergarten academic year 2020/2021 which consisted of 12 children with an age range of 4-5 years with 7 boys and 5 girls.

The instrument used is a checklist, a checklist is a list containing statement items about aspects that might occur in a situation, behavior, or individual activity being observed. All aspects of behavior, situations to be observed have been stated in a list (Yanti et al, 2020). The analysis technique of this research uses a mix of methods in the form of observations and interviews for group teachers conducted directly, field notes, and documentation used to develop children's abilities. Implementation data and documentation studies were carried out qualitatively by describing the results of observations, interviews and findings from the documentation study in accordance with field findings. Meanwhile, quantitative techniques are obtained from children's learning outcomes to develop children's abilities (Arifin, 2020). The data obtained will be classified, using descriptive statistics to find the percentage.

1. Maximum score $(3 \times \text{total subjects}) \times \text{total items}$, while the total maximum score $144 + 72 + 36 + 108 = 360$.

- a. Indicator 1 $(3 \times 12) \times 4 = 144$
- b. Indicator 2 $(3 \times 12) \times 2 = 72$
- c. Indicator 3 $(3 \times 12) \times 1 = 36$
- d. Indicator 4 $(3 \times 12) \times 3 = 108$

$$\frac{\text{Maximum Score}}{\text{Total Maximum Score}} \times 100\%$$

2. Skor rill

From the calculation of results that have been obtained then interpreted into 4 levels. According to Tohidin et al (2021) the criterions are interpreted as follows:

- a Good criterion, that is if the value obtained by the child is between 76% - 100%
- b Fair criterion, that is if the value obtained by the child is between 56% - 75%
- c Less criterion, that is, if the value obtained by the child is between 41% -55%
- d Poor criterion, that is, if the value obtained by the child is between 0% -40%

Results

Pre action description

Based on the preliminary observation, the researcher can describe the initial condition of children's ability in recognizing vocabulary at Ulil Albab Kindergarten described as follows:

Mentioning and Demonstrating vocabulary

In terms of vocabulary, almost children cannot be able to write down the letters of what they pronounce, there are also some of them who have to be guided in mentioning the letters that they pronounced one by one. In showing the vocabulary symbols in red words sequentially, 2 children namely AZ and IA could not show them correctly and 10 children namely YM, VT, SF, SyG, SG, MZ, LH, IAA, AG, & AA, were already starting to be able to show them sequentially. In mentioning randomly there were 10 children namely YM, VT, SG, MZ, LH, IAA, IA, AG, AZ, & AA, haven't be able pronounce them unwell and 2 children namely SF and SyG be able pronounce well. In showing randomly there were 3 children namely MZ, SyG, SF who were able to show well and there were 9 children namely YM, VT, SG, LH, IA, IAA, AG, AZ, & AA, who were still lacking in showing the letters one by one the letters contained in red.

Writing the word "Red"

The children's ability to write the word "red" was performed well by 3 children namely SyG, VT, YM, while 9 children namely SF, SG, MZ, LH, IA, IAA, AG, AZ, & AA, did not do well. while in completing the blank numbers, 1 child namely SyG could do well and 11 children who did poorly were YM, VT, SF, SyG, SG, MZ, LH, IAA, AG, & AA.

Connecting vocabulary symbols with objects (the word chair with chair)

The ability to connect vocabulary symbols with objects can be done well by 1 child namely MZ and 11 children who were still lacking namely YM, VT, SF, SyG, SG, MZ, LH, IAA, AG, & AA.

Comparison of objects (stationery and cutlery)

There were 10 children namely YM, VT, SF, SyG, SG, MZ, LH, IAA, AG, & AA, who were able to make the same number of objects well, while 2 children namely IA and MZ were still lacking. There were 3 children who could make a collection of different objects namely AA, IAA, LH, while those who were still lacking were 9 children namely YM, VT, SF, SyG, SG, MZ, LH, IAA, AG, & AA.

Based on the observation results of the preliminary conditions of the children's ability to recognize vocabulary in indicator 1 was 20.56%, indicator 2 was 11.39%, indicator 3 was 3.61%, indicator 4 was 17.78% and generally categorized into Less category as much as 53.33%. This condition become the reason for researcher and teacher to determine the efforts that must be done in stimulating children's cognitive ability, especially the ability to recognize 20.56% 11.39% 3.61% 17.78% 0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% indicator 1 indicator 2 indicator 3 indicator 4 children's vocabulary. Researcher and teacher discussed carefully about

the solutions that would be given to overcome these problems and finally decided to use the Experiential Learning approach for children that basically children like learning in which they directly experience the process.



Diagram 1. Preliminary Observations of Children's Vocabulary Comprehension

These preliminary observations show that the average ability of children to recognize vocabulary is in the less category. In the second cycle of the second action, it can be seen in generally that the achievement indicator is in the good category. Based on the results of these observations, the less category was increase into fair and good categories. The ability to recognize vocabulary in the pre-cycle is 49.7%, while in cycle 1 action 1 it was 61.1%, then in cycle 1 action 2 it was increase 76.9%, in cycle 2 action 1 was 86.1%, in cycle 2 action 2 was increase 91.1%.

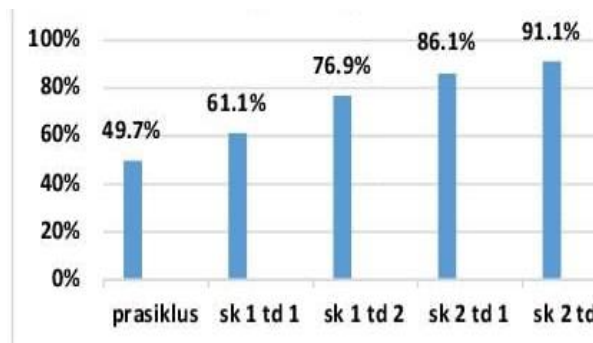


Diagram 2 The Improvement of Children's Ability in Knowing Vocabulary

The overall observation results illustrate that the children's ability to recognize vocabulary has been increase after using the Experiential Learning approach, most of them had been able to show the vocabulary with a word in primary colors sequentially, they had been able to mention the vocabulary in primary colors sequentially, they already could show vocabulary in primary colors randomly, they could mention primary color vocabulary randomly, they could write vocabulary in primary colors, they could fill in the empty vocabulary in sequence, they could relate vocabulary with objects which have appropriate color with the names of the vocabulary they wrote , they were able to make a conclusion about the number of objects that have the same color, they were able to show objects that were more in number, and they were able to show objects that were less in number.

The decision of researcher and teacher in choosing the Experiential Learning approach as a solution is based on several assumptions that children really like learning that is

done/experienced directly where children experience and feel what is happening. They will be free to express what they want through this approach. One of them is the Experiential Learning approach (Aristhi et al, 2020). If the activity of introducing vocabulary concepts is given through various kinds of games, it will certainly be more effective because playing is a learning and working mode for children (Jubaedi et al, 2018).

Discussion

Based on the results of preliminary observations before doing the Experiential Learning approach, the children's ability to recognize vocabulary at Ulil Albab Kindergarten had not been stimulated maximally. Most of the children still lack of vocabulary, they had not not skilled in writing simple vocabulary, filled vocabulary in the empty color, connected letter symbols with objects and mentioned or showed vocabulary randomly. This study used indicators which found in Permendikbud Number 137 of 2014, namely: 1) Answering more complex questions, 2) Mentioning groups of pictures that have the same sound, 3) Having a lot of vocabulary and recognizing symbols for reading, writing and arithmetic preparation, 4) Having more words to express ideas to others. This research was conducted on September, 2, 2021 to September, 28, 2021 in group A of Ulil Albab Kindergarten, Walantaka District, Serang City, Banten Province.

Before applying this Experiential Learning approach, there are several things that must be prepared in advance by researcher, for example the preparation of the stages of the Experiential Learning approach such as: the Feeling, Watching, Training, and Doing stages. Basically, the application of Experiential Learning learning that will be used in Ulil Albab Kindergarten is an approach that the children like, besides it collaborates the learning method which is more project learning. Under certain conditions, the researcher and teacher slightly changed the approach that did not use a pencil to use a little pencil paper for the needs of a predetermined instrument. But beyond that, the children really felt the activities were so flowing and the researcher can assess the changes of them.

Teacher also had an important role in determining the appropriate approach in dealing with the children's ability to recognize vocabulary (Nabilah et al, 2020). From the various approaches that have been carried out, the Experiential Learning approach is considered very suitable in its application and the theme of the game is taken freely according to the curriculum being used. Likewise with the activities planned to be carried out by the teacher. Regarding the stages of teaching, the most suitable in this approach is the project method. Each game using the Experiential Learning approach is assumed to improve the ability to recognize children's vocabulary (Prada et al, 2017).

The first cycle was carried out with two actions. The theme used in this first cycle is vehicles with the sub-theme of land vehicles. The observation in the first cycle of cycle one illustrated an increase of the children's ability to recognize vocabulary. In 10 aspects of the 4 indicators show that generally the achievement of knowing vocabulary of children is in the fair category. It is different from the ability to recognize vocabulary that children must have.

Generally, the children aged 4-5 years especially in mathematics, they can already do many things cognitively. In the Child Development Standards. (Khomsin et al, 2021), including: 1) mentioning and counting 1 to 10 2) getting to know vocabulary symbols 3) connecting vocabulary with vocabulary symbols 4) making vocabulary sequences with objects, and distinguishing and making two groups which had same numbers, different, more less, less, and more objects. Based on these, the researcher and teacher decided to continue to the next cycle so that the children's ability in recognizing vocabulary increased optimally.

There is no difference in the theme used between the second cycle and the first cycle, namely the vehicle theme and the watercraft sub-theme. The results of observing the children's ability to recognize the vocabulary in the second cycle of action one is in the very good category as well as in the second cycle of the second action. The increase of children's ability was felt to have reached expectations, mostly dominated by the good category. Based on the results of these observations, the researcher and teacher made the decision to end the implementation of the actions in this study in the second cycle because they felt they had fulfilled the expected goals.

The Experiential Learning approach felt can improve the children's ability to recognize the vocabulary actually was not unreasonable. Children learn to improve their ability in recognizing vocabulary using this approach, in which it has a major role in every aspect of children's vocabulary development (Gunadi et al, 2023). Because this approach uses experience in each lesson so that it makes children think fast in the process because they prefer to learn (Gustina et al, 2019). As stated, (Erwinsyah, 2017) stated that experiential learning provides a set or series of learning situations in the form of actual experience involvement designed by the teacher. This method directs children to gain more experience through active and personal involvement, compared to when they only read a material or concept. Thus, experiential learning is more focused on children's learning experiences that are open and children are able to guide themselves (Iman et al, 2021).

The use of the Experiential Learning approach in improving the children's ability to recognize vocabulary was carried out twice in each cycle consisting of two actions. For the description of the improvement of the children's ability to recognize vocabulary is illustrated in the diagram below:

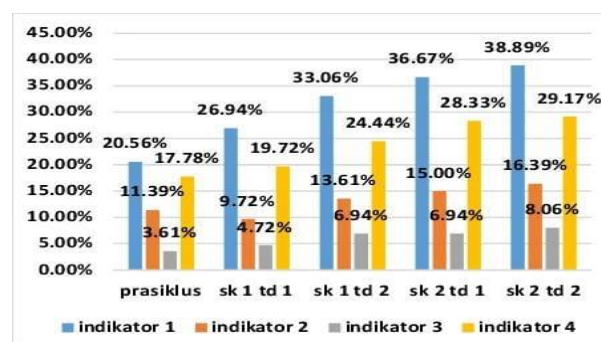


Diagram 3. The Improvement of Ability to Recognize Vocabulary in Each Indicator

The improvement of 10 aspects of the children's ability to recognize the vocabulary which is shown in the table above shows the changes from each cycle. There were 12 children present at the preliminary observation before being given the action. Preliminary observations show that generally, the achievement of indicators for the children's ability to recognize the vocabulary was still in less category, but after being given the Experiential Learning approach, it turned out increased.

The results of the study showed a decrease in cycle 1 of action 1 of indicator in writing numbers because at that time the preparation did by teacher was lack so that the child was not conditioned properly. Basically, writing is something that requires high concentration and it is not possible to write while walking, so that when writing children are not well conditioned. Furthermore, from cycle 1 action 2 to cycle 2 action 2 in connecting vocabulary symbols with objects there was no improvement in that implementation because there were several uses of media that were almost the same as the previous action so there were no significant changes.

The children's ability to recognize the vocabulary after using the Experiential Learning approach has changed, it can be seen from each cycle, their ability was better than before. Experiential Learning gives children the opportunity to decide what experiences they focus on and how they conceptualize the experiences they experience (Puspitowati, 2019). This is different from the traditional learning approach where children are passive listeners and only the teacher controls the learning process (Scientific et al, 2020). Vocabulary is a skill activity or person's ability to understand and know the use of words contained in a language, both spoken and written (Nabilah et al, 2020). Vocabulary mastery can affect a person's language skills, and vice versa where a person's ability in using language is also heavily influenced by the vocabulary that he/she has (Buadanani et al, 2022).

Thus, a person's language skill can improve if the quality and quantity of his/her vocabulary also continues to improve. Vocabulary is an important element in the development of language skills include speaking, listening, reading and listening which are embodiments of a unity of feelings and thoughts that can be used in their use (Yulianti et al, 2022). At the age of 4-5 years who are in group A, in their play activities they always stimulate good vocabulary to support the child's further language development (Nurhadijah et al, 2021). Vocabulary is one of the important elements in language for group A children (Yufitasari, 2015).

The decision of researcher and teacher in choosing the Experiential Learning approach as a solution is based on several assumptions that children really like learning that is done directly where children experience and feel what is happening. They will be free to express what the child wants through this approach. One of them is the Experiential Learning approach (Amalia et al, 2021). If the activity of introducing vocabulary concepts is given through various kinds of games, it certainly will be more effective because playing is a learning and working mode for children. It is believed that children will be more successful in learning something if what they learn is in accordance with their interests, needs and abilities (Nurhadijah et al, 2021). The aim of this model is to influence the students in three ways, namely; (1) changing students' cognitive structure, (2) changing students' attitudes, and (3) expanding students'

existing skills. These three elements are interconnected and affect each other as a whole, not separately, because if one element is not present, the others will not be effective (Yeni et al, 2020).

This stimulation is well to be implemented in children's playing activities. Through playing activities, PAUD students can be actively involved in all learning activities carried out (Dini, 2022). Apart from the changes achieved, this research also has certain weakness, namely it was lack of maximum use of the Experiential Learning approach. Sometimes the teacher forgot what stages the children must experience according to the approach taken. So, it is necessary to repeat the approach. The findings in this study are that the use of the Experiential Learning approach is still not fully experienced directly because it adapts to the achievement indicator which still has to use paper pencil.

Conclusion

Based on the results of preliminary observations before applied the Experiential Learning approach, the children's ability to recognize the vocabulary at Ulil Albab Kindergarten has not been maximally stimulated. Most of the children had not skilled in writing vocabulary, filling in empty vocabulary, connecting vocabulary with objects and mentioning or showing vocabulary randomly. The results of preliminary observations of the ability to recognize the vocabulary of 10 aspects in 4 indicators show that the average of the children's ability to recognize the vocabulary is in the less criterion. But, so far this approach applied is appropriate because it does not really change the pattern of learning that has been done.

The preparation of stages of the Experiential Learning approach included the stages of Feeling, Watching, Training, and Doing were more to the project learning. In certain rules, the researcher and teacher slightly changed the approach that did not use a pencil became using a pencil. But beyond that, the children really felt activities that are so natural, so the researcher could assess children's changes. The children's ability to recognize the vocabulary after using the Experiential Learning approach shows changes, it can be seen from each cycle, their ability was better than before using the Experiential Learning approach. From the result of this research, it can be concluded that the Experiential Learning approach was very low possibility applied to improve children's skills in writing numbers and connecting vocabulary symbols with objects, because there is no significant change in its application. The Experiential Learning approach is very suitable to be applied in object comparisons.

Acknowledgment

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