

Read Aloud, Gain Intelligence! The Magic of Reading Aloud in Improving Children's Literacy Skills

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Abstract

Literacy is the first stage in the development of reading and writing skills in children, which occurs at an early age. At this stage, children begin to develop the basic skills needed to understand and use language, both orally and in writing. This study aims to explore effective strategies in building early childhood reading skills through a fun, interactive, and action-based literacy approach. The research used by the researcher is a descriptive qualitative research type. This study includes two cycles, where each cycle includes four stages: *planning*, *implementation*, *observation*, and *reflection*. Data was collected through interviews and observations. The results showed a significant increase in learning outcomes in children in Group B. The interviews concluded that *the read-aloud method* is very effective for early literacy development in children. This study concluded that using *the read-aloud method* can improve early literacy skills in Group B children at Al Aminah Early Childhood Education (PAUD).

Keywords: Language Development, Early Literacy, Reading Aloud .

1 INTRODUCTION

Literacy beginning is stage First in development skills reading and writing in children , which occurs at the age of early (Anshori & Damaianti, 2021; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998) . At this stage, children begin to develop the basic skills needed to understand and use language, as well as proficient in form spoken and written, (Hurlock, 1978). Early literacy is not only defined as the ability to read and write, but also includes basic skills in understanding symbols, recognizing language sounds, enriching vocabulary, and cultivating an interest in reading, (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). These skills form the basis of children's adaptation to the formal learning process in elementary school. The importance of early childhood education is based on Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning National Education, which states that Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a development effort aimed at children from birth to the age of 6 (six) years, which is carried out by providing educational stimulation through teaching to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children are ready to enter further education, (Mulyasa, 2003) .

However, the reality is that many young children still lack early literacy stimulation, both at home and at school. Children are often introduced to direct academic activities, such as writing letters or reading words, without going through the fun and meaningful stages of literacy development. (Bredenkamp & Copple, 2009). One method considered effective in stimulating children's early literacy skills is *reading aloud* (Santrock, 2011). This method involves teachers or parents reading storybooks with a clear voice, appropriate intonation, and engaging expressions. *Reading aloud* not only helps children learn new vocabulary but also fosters story comprehension, trains imagination, and instills a love of reading from an early age (Dewayani & Setiawan, 2018).

Therefore, research on early childhood literacy skills through the read-aloud method is crucial. It is hoped that this method can contribute to improving children's early literacy skills and serve as an alternative literacy learning strategy in early childhood education institutions and within the family environment.

Another reason for choosing *the read-aloud method* in this study is because it provides a more interactive, engaging, and emotionally connected learning experience compared to other literacy approaches such as phonics-based teaching or silent reading (Trelease, 2013). In early childhood education, children learn best through auditory and visual stimuli combined with social interaction. The *read-aloud method* allows teachers to model correct pronunciation, expression, and sentence rhythm, which helps children internalize language patterns naturally (Neuman & Roskos, 2020). Unlike silent reading or worksheet-based activities that can cause boredom, *read-aloud sessions* encourage active participation, imagination, and understanding through dialogue and questions. This method also strengthens the emotional bond between teachers and children, making the learning atmosphere fun and meaningful (Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, *reading aloud* was chosen as the main method in this study because it is in line with the developmental characteristics of early childhood and effectively encourages their early literacy growth (Justice, & Pullen, 2003).

2 RESEARCH METHODS

This study aims to examine how to improve early childhood literacy skills through the reading aloud method and student participation, as well as assess students' responses to the use of early childhood literacy skills through the reading aloud method.

This research used a qualitative approach with a classroom action research method. The research was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of four stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection.

The research subjects were 15 grade B students at PAUD AL AMINIAH in Depok, West Java. To collect data, the researchers used observation, tests, and interviews. Observations were conducted in two cycles. Pre-observations began with assessing early childhood literacy skills through a read-aloud method, while interviews were conducted after the learning cycle was completed.

Data obtained Then analyzed use procedure The data analysis proposed by Matthew and Michael consists of data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. In the data reduction stage, researchers used the completeness of all data collected from observations, tests, and interviews. In the next step, the data were classified based on the focus of the study. In data verification, researchers interpreted the findings and compared the results with existing theories and relevant previous research. Data were validated using triangulation techniques.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Research result

It seems that some children have started to be interested in books, they have started flipping through the books they have chosen, some have just looked at the books in silence, just holding the books, some have started to read the pictures in the books, and some have started to make sounds but not the words in the books they read but their own words. This is proven by the data of 6 children who have started to develop and 9 children who have not developed.

3.1.1 Cycle I

It is proven that there is an increase in the literacy skills of early childhood children with data showing 3 children developing very well (BSB) and 12 children developing according to expectations (BSH).

Based on the results of observations of action cycle 1, in the learning process, efforts to improve literacy skills began with the *reading aloud method* for Group B students at PAUD AL AMINIAH. There was an increase in the results aspect compared to before the action, but it was not optimal.

3.1.2 Cycle II

It is proven that there is an increase in the literacy skills of early childhood children with data showing 3 children developing very well (BSB) and 12 children developing according to expectations (BSH).

3.2 Discussion

This study analyzes the improvement of literacy skills of children aged 5-6 years at PAUD Al- Aminiah through method read loud which is conducted in two cycles.

Pre-action (April 2025): Observation results showed that children's literacy skills were still low, characterized by difficulties in expressing opinions, retelling stories, and limited vocabulary and understanding of meaning. Cycle I: Six meetings were held with various stories for children. The results showed an improvement from the pre-action, with 3 children reaching the Developing According to Expectations (BSH) stage, but the majority (12 children) were still at the Starting to Develop (MB) stage. The main obstacles were low communication initiative, limited vocabulary, and difficulty in composing stories. Cycle II: Planning focused on overcoming obstacles in the previous cycle. Strategies were strengthened by the use of more stories that stimulate dialogue, interactive props, a variety of questioning techniques, and positive reinforcement. As a result, all children achieved the minimum BSH target with significant improvements in vocabulary, articulation, sentence structure, and speaking initiative.

The observed improvements in children's literacy skills can be interpreted through several key aspects. First, the activities read loud in a way significant enrich vocabulary children Because they continuously exposed to new words, structures sentences and meaning contextual in every story, (Savage, 2020). When teachers stop to explain unfamiliar terms or ask children to repeat words, vocabulary retention becomes stronger. Second, this method improves story comprehension by encouraging children to predict events, identify character emotions, and retell the story in their own words. This process trains listening comprehension and writing skills (Wasik & Bond, MA 2001). Third, the session read loud Encourage social engagement and collaborative learning. As children listen together, share opinions, and interact with peers during discussions, they develop confidence in expressing ideas and respecting others' perspectives. This interaction fosters a classroom culture that values communication and empathy, which are essential foundations for literacy and learning (Cambourne, 2002).

The read-aloud method has been proven effective in improving early childhood literacy skills. Success is influenced by appropriate story selection, the use of interactive props,

and a variety of learning strategies. For further development, variations in themes, relevant characters, progressive language difficulty levels, and cross-curricular integration are recommended for motivation and the development of children's literacy skills.

3.3 Table

To determine the development of early literacy skills in early childhood after being exposed to *the read-aloud method*, researchers conducted observations during the pre-action phase, Cycle I, and Cycle II. Data from these observations were then summarized to compare the overall improvement in children's early literacy skills. A summary of the observation results can be seen in Table 1. below.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Early Childhood Literacy Skills Through the Read Aloud Method

NO	Pre-action	Cycle I	Cycle II
1.	33.3	55.5	77.7
2.	44.4	61	83.3
3.	47.2	66.6	88.8
4.	36.1	52.7	75
5.	44.4	58.3	80.5
6.	33.3	52.7	75
7.	41.6	55.5	77.7
8.	44.4	61	86
9.	44.4	61	86
10.	44.4	61	83.3
11.	44.4	66.6	91.6
12.	33.3	55.5	77.7
13.	33.3	52.7	75
14.	36.1	55.5	80.5
15.	38.8	66.6	91.6

Table 1 shows that early childhood literacy skills increased significantly from the preaction stage to cycle II. At this pre-action stage, children's achievement was still in the range of 33.3%–47.2%, indicating that children's early literacy was still low. After implementing the *read-aloud method* in **cycle I**, there was an increase in achievement to **52.7%–66.6%**. This indicates that the *read-aloud method* began to have a positive impact on children's early literacy skills.

A greater increase occurred in **cycle II**, reaching a range of **75%–91.6%**. The highest score was found in children with the **Fz code**, which reached **91.6%**. This indicates that most children have developed as expected and even very well in early literacy skills. Thus, it can be concluded that the implementation of *the read aloud method* is effective in improving early literacy skills in early childhood, as seen from the increase in achievement scores from pre-action to cycle II.

3.4 Picture

To clarify the results of improving early childhood literacy skills through *the read-aloud method*, the average data for the pre-action phase, Cycle I, and Cycle II are presented in graphical form. This graph aims to make it easier for readers to see the improvement trends that occur at each stage of the action. The data visualization can be seen in Figure 1. below.

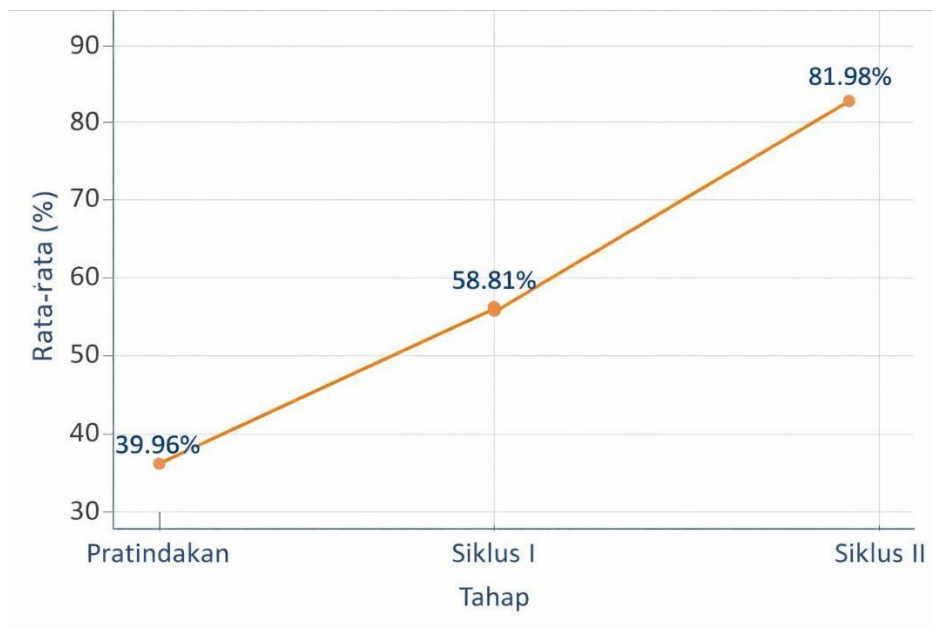


Figure 1. Early Childhood Literacy Through the Read Aloud Method

Figure 1. shows that early childhood literacy skills experienced significant improvement at each stage. In the pre-action stage, the average achievement was only **39.96%**, increasing to **58.81% in Cycle I**, and finally reaching **81.98%** in Cycle II. This upward trend confirms that the *read-aloud method* is effective in developing early childhood literacy skills gradually and evenly.

3.5 Equation

Based on the calculation:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Pre-action} &= \frac{599,9}{15} = 39. \\ \text{Cycle I} &= \frac{882,2}{15} = 58.81 \\ \text{Cycle II} &= \frac{1229,8}{15} = 81.98 \end{aligned}$$

Thus, it can be concluded that the average literacy ability score began to increase from **39.96% (pre-action)** to **58.81% (cycle I)**, then rose again to **81.98% (cycle II)**.

4 CONCLUSION

The early literacy skills of early childhood children at PAUD Al-Aminiah before being given action through *the reading aloud method* were still low, with an average achievement of **39.96%** at the pre-action stage. The implementation of actions in **Cycle I** through *reading aloud learning* with various stories and learning media was able to increase the average achievement to **58.81%**, even though most of the children were still in *the Beginning to Develop (MB) category*. Improvement strategies in **Cycle II** with a more diverse selection of stories, the use of interactive props, a variety of questioning techniques, and positive reinforcement provided optimal results. The average achievement increase was **81.98%**, and all children successfully achieved the minimum category of

Development According to Expectations (BSH). Thus, *the reading aloud method* has been proven **effective** in improving early literacy skills in children aged 5-6 years, both in terms of vocabulary mastery, retelling ability, articulation, and speaking initiative.

Based on the findings of this study, several practical implications can be proposed for early childhood educators, parents, and policy makers.

First, teachers are encouraged to integrate regular read-aloud sessions into classroom activities as part of the literacy curriculum. Using expressive reading, a variety of story genres, and interactive questions can help maintain children's attention and deepen their understanding.

Second, parents should be involved in supporting the practice of reading aloud at home. Reading with children, even for just a few minutes each day, can significantly strengthen the bond between parents and children while increasing vocabulary and comprehension.

Third, early childhood education institutions should provide adequate storybooks and training for teachers to implement read-aloud strategies effectively. Professional development programs that focus on storytelling techniques, voice modulation, and child engagement can further improve literacy outcomes.

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