



Knowing Letters Through Media Flashcards For Children Aged 4-5 Years



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Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah upaya meningkatkan kemampuan mengenal huruf melalui media flash card pada anak usia 4-5 tahun. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan Penelitian Tindakan Kelas. Penelitian dilakukan di Taman Kanak-Kanak Bustanul Athfal Aisyiyah Karangasem dengan subjek berjumlah 20 anak. Sedang pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa anak lebih memahami pembelajaran dengan menggunakan media yang menarik seperti kartu flas card dengan kartu flas card anak dapat memahami huruf dengan warna yang cerah dan mudah difahami. Pembelajaran yang bervariasi membuat anak memiliki semangat dan motivasi untuk meningkatkan kemampuan memahami dan mengenal huruf.

Abstract

This research aimed to improve the ability to recognize letters through flashcards in children aged 4-5 years. This study used a qualitative method with Classroom Action Research. The research was conducted at TK Bustanul Athfal Aisyiyah Karangasem with a total of 20 children as subjects. Data collection was done through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results showed that children better understand learning by using interesting media such as flashcards. By using flashcards, children can understand letters in bright colors and are easy to understand. Varied learning makes children enthusiastic and motivated to improve their ability to understand and recognize letters.



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INTRODUCTION

Improving language skills in early childhood aims to improve children's ability to communicate verbally with the surrounding environment in the family, school, and community. Therefore, an understanding of children's language development needs to be considered early on by both teachers and parents. Language skills and speech are two things that are continuous and cannot be separated. A language is a form of communication that originates from thoughts and feelings to express meaning to others. (Zubaidah & Enny, 2004).

In Permendikbud (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture) Number 137 of 2014 describes aspects of language development for children aged 4-5 years introducing literacy including recognition of symbols, sounds of animals/objects around them, giving streaks that have meaning, imitating (in writing and speech) e.g. letters A-Z. Parents have an important role in children's language development. According to (Salwiah & Asmuddin, 2019: 2), in developing language skills in early childhood, parents and the surrounding environment are very influential on children's language success, especially at the age of 4-5 years. In developing language and introducing letters using games, interesting games can foster children's interest in understanding learning. Game selection can be combined two or more games into one game, or it is called a collaborative game (Sary, 2018). Collaborative play is a teacher's method for giving it to children in groups.

Literacy ability often referred to as the reading ability of children at the beginner level or elementary level is a child's reading ability, namely the child can change and pronounce the symbols of written sounds into meaningful sounds. Furthermore, the ability of children at the next stage is the ability to be literate in discourse. At this stage, it is said to be the actual stage of the child's ability. At this stage, the child is already able to change the symbols of writing into meaningful sounds accompanied by the child's understanding.

The teacher, in this case, has an essential role so that students can understand signs or symbols in beginner reading. The method used by teachers in understanding children's language in early childhood is the method of synthesis and the method of analysis. The synthesis method in beginner reading begins with the teacher introducing syllable letters and continuing with introducing words and sentences. The analysis

method begins with teaching reading words or sentences and begins with letters. According to Slamet (2008, p.58), the ability of novice reading students influences subsequent reading skills. Beginner reading ability is a basic reading ability that children master. The benefits of reading are that it can increase thinking power, sharpen reasoning, and can improve self-quality (Language and Arts Education & Dewi Hapsari, 2019). According to Iskandarwassid (2008), the preliminary reading aims (1) to recognize language symbols or symbols, (2) to recognize words and sentences, (3) to find main ideas and keywords, and (4) to retell the contents of a short reading.

Children aged 4-5 years are very important in knowing the process of learning to read. Knowledge of reading helps children to name letter symbols, recognize letter sounds, recognize the initial letters of objects around them, children can name groups of images that have the same initial sound or letter, understand the relationship between sounds and letter shapes, read their names, write own name or understand the meaning of the words in the story. Therefore, it is necessary to provide stimulation in learning in schools using the right media.

According to Hamalik, the right learning media can increase children's talent interest and influence child psychology (Arsyad, 2008, p.15). According to Sardiman (1993, p.17), the benefits of using various media are a) increasing enthusiasm in receiving lessons, b) enabling children to learn to interact with the environment both in the school, family, and community environment, and c) enabling children to learn according to the interests and abilities. In early childhood education, children can develop children's cognitive through recognizing objects around the school and home according to shape, size, type, size, recognizing scientific concepts, introducing geometry, introducing the concept of time, introducing simple mathematical concepts, introducing numbers, especially introducing concepts numbers with objects (Fauziddin, 2016).

In his article, Arends (2012: 5) said that children's literacy skills and basic numeracy are the main goals of the 21st-century education curriculum. Children's ability to improve literacy can be seen from the child's ability to name letter symbols that are strung into syllables and finally become a word. Literacy skills are activities that are needed for students in kindergarten to continue their further education. This is

a place to prepare and hone aspects of children's language development even better in the future (Agustini & Mapuh, 2020)

In addition, the teacher's ability to find interesting media to increase the ability and level of intelligence of children is very important, in this case, the author found a journal in the literature study. S. Bechtolt et al. said Flashcards are used for young preschool students with disabilities. Erby and colleagues (2011) used flashcards media. For children with disabilities, the ability to read children is very difficult for teachers to feel. Teachers must be able to find learning media suitable for people with disabilities. Teaching children with disabilities to read is like a horse race to teach students with learning disabilities to see words, letter sounds, and math facts.

Researchers teach disabled children in the afternoon. Every preschooler in the class was instructed to use the same wide range of materials. This includes picture books, handwriting, and letter recognition games during circles. The number of letters each participant correctly identified is the dependent variable. The correct response was defined as the participant verbally stating the name of the letter when shown the flashcard containing the appropriate letter. If the participant pronounces the wrong letter name or does not give a verbal response within 5 seconds, it is scored as an error. Each participant has 5 seconds to make a response or an error occurs. For each trial, the order in which each letter was presented to each participant was randomly changed to save each participant from memorizing the sequence where the letters were presented. The first author noted "+" for correct responses and "-" for errors. These were placed next to each letter on the data collection sheet.

Media in education is an introductory medium for teachers to convey a theme or lesson so students can easily understand it. One of the media used in introducing letters is flashcard media. Flashcard media, according to Suharso and Ana Retnoningsih, cards are thick, rectangular-shaped paper used for membership signs, tickets, and others. According to Ambarini, letter cards are a collection of cards that contain letters from A-Z (capital and small) and are given pictures and words to support children to understand and memorize the alphabet from A to Z (Ambarini, 2006). Meanwhile (Hasan, 2009), reveals letter cards are many cards used as a tool for learning to read by seeing and remembering the shapes of letters and pictures written with the meaning of the pictures on the cards. From the above understanding, it can be concluded that

letter card media is a tool in the form of alphabetic cards containing pictures, letters, and symbols used by teachers to learn to read by showing and reminding the shapes of letters (Andini, 2022).

Researchers, in conducting observations at Busthanul Athfal Aisyiyah Karangasem, Cawas, and Klaten, found several things related to the learning media used classical media so that it was less interesting and the child's ability to recognize letters, know letter symbols, and the ability to distinguish and be able to know letter sounds. Some children could not recognize letters properly. Besides, the activity of recognizing letters was carried out with teachers' classic in introducing letters by the way the teacher writes letters on the blackboard, mentions the pronunciation of the letters, and then connects the dotted lines that form a pattern of a letter using children's worksheets in their learning activities.

The total number of students in BA Aisyiyah Karangasem, Klaten Regency is 36 students, consisting of 21 students in group A, and 15 students in group B. While the subjects to be studied are students in group A with a total of 21 children. This classroom action research was conducted in group A, BA Aisyiyah Karangasem, Klaten Regency.

This method was used to collect data in the field or research location (Suharsimi, 1989). While the instruments used in this study were:

a) The observation method was "a deliberate and systematic study of social and natural phenomena by observation and recording" (Sutrisno Hadi, 2000: p.157). The author used this method to obtain certain data easily and can be directly observed by researchers, namely the location of BA Aisyiyah Karangasem, Klaten Regency.

b) Documentation Method

Documentation is "A method of collecting data by finding data about things or variables in the form of notes, transcripts, books, newspapers, magazines, inscriptions, meeting minutes, agenda books, and so on" (Suharsimi Arikunto, 1992: p.23). The documentation method is also a data collection technique that is not directly addressed to research subjects but through other documents. Based on this, the study aimed to improve the ability to recognize letters through flashcard media in children aged 4-5.

RESEARCH METHODS

The researchers used the Classroom Action Approach (CAR). Following the CAR model, the researchers carried out the stages: planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. This research was conducted in two cycles. The research stages were carried out as follows: first, the planning stage. In this stage, the researcher carried out the planning stage, namely, making a learning implementation plan (RPP). Second, the researchers prepared flashcards according to the theme. Third, the observers provided evaluation sheets. Fourth, at the implementation stage, the researchers gave several letters using flashcard media, then the child could a) mention the letters shown by the teacher, b) mention letter symbols according to the child's ability, c) distinguish letters, d) connect the initial letters in the picture, and e) write letter symbols. Fifth, the results of reflection in which researchers reviewed of successes and failures in carrying out learning.

The subjects in this study were children aged 4-5 years at TK Busthanul Athfal Aisyiyah Karangasem, Cawas, Klaten, with a total of 20 children, namely 12 girls and 8 boys. The research object was recognizing letters through flashcard media in children aged 4-5 years in class A. The research instrument is an observation sheet used to measure children's ability to recognize letters through flashcard media. The indicators can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Ability to Recognize Letters

Basic Competence	Indicator	Category			
		Not developed yet	Starting to develop	Developing as Expected	Very well developed
3.12 recognize early literacy	Saying or pronouncing letter sounds	Saying or pronouncing letter sounds	Children can say or pronounce 4-10 letters	Children can say or pronounce 11-20 letters	Children can say or pronounce 21-26 letters
4.12 shows early literacy	Children can show letter symbols	Children can show 1-3 letters	Children can show 4-10 letters	Children can show 11-20 letters	Children can show 21-26 letters

in various forms of work	Children can distinguish letters	Children can distinguish 1-3 letters	Children can distinguish 4-10 letters	Children can distinguish 11-20 letters	Children can distinguish 21-26 letters
	Children can connect pictures and initial letters in pictures	Children can connect pictures and initial letters in pictures	Children can connect pictures with the first 1-5 letters in pictures	Children can connect pictures with the first 6-10 letters in pictures	Children can connect pictures with the first 7-15 letters on pictures
	Children can write letter symbols	Children can write 1-3 letters	Children can write 4-10 letters	Children can write 11-20 letters	Children can write 21-26 letters

Student activity data and teacher performance were obtained from observation sheets and then analyzed descriptively by percentage. Data on student responses to ongoing learning activities were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively. The cycle success category used a percentage score of 80% in the child's receptive language ability in the criteria, as shown in Table 2. Meanwhile, student learning outcomes data were analyzed by calculating evaluation scores, namely:

$$\text{Final Evaluation Score} = \frac{\text{Total score obtained}}{\text{Maximum score}} \times 100\%$$

Table 2. Interval dan Kategori Hasil Belajar

No	Interval	Star	Category
1.	80-100	☆☆☆☆	Very well developed
2.	60-79	☆☆☆	Developing as expected
3.	40-59	☆☆	Start developing
4.	0-39	☆	Undeveloped

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Researchers planned to make a lesson plan at BA Aisyiyah Karangasem, Cawas, Klaten Regency arranged systematically. Before carrying out learning cycle 1,

researchers needed to collect pre-cycle data to see children's abilities before carrying out learning using flashcards. At the pre-cycle stage, the researchers used the classical method where the researcher wrote on the blackboard, the child said the sound of the letters, and the child combined objects according to the same initial letter. From pre-cycle observations, data were obtained, as shown in Table 3. The results at the pre-cycle stage showed that children did not master the material given, so the evaluation results given by the teacher did not meet the DAL (Development Achievement Level).

Table 3. Pre-Cycle Results

No	Indicator	Pre-Cycle				Cycle I				Cycle II			
		B B	MB	B S H	B S B	B B	M S H	B S B	B S	B B	M S H	B S B	B S B
1.	Say or pronounce the sound of the letters	2	10	8	0	-	4	10	6	-	3	7	10
2.	Shows letter symbol	6	5	7	2	-	4	10	6	-	3	7	10
3.	The child's ability to distinguish letters	8	4	8	0	-	4	10	6	-	3	7	10
4.	Connect the same pictures and initial letters	4	6	10	4	-	4	10	6	-	3	7	10
5.	Writing letter symbol	3	5	9	3	-	4	10	6	-	3	7	10

Based on the results of the pre-cycle, the action was taken in cycle I by using the learning model following the learning plan, the feedback in the explanation would increase the child's interest in participating in learning and can improve learning outcomes properly and correctly, and then the motivation to learn in children was also given.

Cycle I action in group A BA Aisyiyah Karangasem focused on the classical method using flashcard media. In the first step, the child sat down, and then the teacher showed the letter card. When the child said the sound of the letter in 5 seconds and said the letter correctly, the researcher gave a "+" score. When the child did not answer, he/she got a "-" score according to the level of development based on BB (Not yet

developed), MB (Starting to Develop), BSH (Developing as Expected), and BSB (Very Well Developed).

The researchers improved learning for children who have yet to reach completeness. In remedial activities, children were guided in overcoming the difficulties they faced. For example, correcting/reflecting on their learning and improving the technique of delivering material in the learning process. In the learning activities using flashcards, it was shown that 6 children achieved very good success, 10 children achieved good success, and 4 children achieved moderate success. This success was caused by active and creative children participating in learning, children have understood the material presented by the teacher, and children have been able to complete the activities provided. While the cause of failure in the learning process was that children lack concentration in participating in the learning process, and delivery in the learning process was less attractive.

Table 4. Percentage Results Per Cycle

No	Interval	Category	Cycle I	Cycle II
1.	80-100	Very well developed	30 %	50%
2.	60-79	Developing as expected	50 %	35 %
3.	40-59	Start developing	20%	15%
4.	0-39	Undeveloped	0%	0%

Based on the results of the evaluation of the first cycle, they still did not get maximum results in learning achievement, as shown in Table 3, so improvements were made in the second cycle. The learning activities using flashcards showed that 10 children achieved very good success in cycle II, 7 children achieved good success, and 3 children achieved moderate success. The results are shown in Table 4.

The use of flashcards has a good impact on development. Children initially used monotonous learning. After using flashcard media, children could see colors, various letter shapes, making it easier remember and memorize letters. The teacher guided and modified student activities to increase children's creativity and imagination.

Letter cards are the use of many cards as a tool for learning to read by seeing and remembering the shapes of letters and pictures accompanied by the writing of the meaning of the pictures on the cards (Maimunah Hasan, 2009, p.65). Letter cards are alphabetic cards that contain pictures, letters, and symbols, which increase or guide the child about these symbols. However, the word letters referred to here are letter cards made by yourself in a rectangular shape made of white paper. On one side there is a patch of letter pieces and on the other side, there is a patch of a picture of an object accompanied by the inscription of the picture's meaning (Azhar Arsyad, 2005, p.119).

Based on this explanation, it can be emphasized that the letter card method is an activity using tools or media in the form of letter cards containing letter symbols and pictures accompanied by the writing of the meaning of the pictures, to increase the ability to know or recognize and understand the letters of the alphabet.

Some of the benefits that can be drawn from the letter card game, according to Maimunah Hasan, (2009, p.65) include:

1. Able to read easily.
2. Letter card games can help children recognize letters easily, thus helping their reading skills.
3. Develop the memory of the right brain.
4. Letter card games can develop right-brain abilities because they can train emotional, creative, and intuitive intelligence.
5. Increase vocabulary. The letter card game contains pictures and writing of the meaning of the picture printed on the card to increase the children's vocabulary.

The functions of letter cards include introducing letters to children aged 4-6 years more quickly because, with the help of teaching aids, the teacher can explain more things in a short time and achieve faster results in a fun way (Pangastuti & Hanum, 2017).

According to Carol Seefeldt and Barbara A. Wasik, the notion of the ability to recognize letters is the ability to do something by recognizing signs or characteristics of script marks in the writing system, which are members of the alphabet that symbolize the sounds of language (Seefeldt & A Wasik, 2008). Another opinion about knowing letters for early childhood can foster concepts and thinking ideas to support children's abilities to speak and speak more fluently. Therefore, children need to

understand the concept of print which includes the shape and sound of letters. This is done by giving the child as much experience as possible regarding printed letters, with repeated experiences, and as often as possible with printed letters. Over time the child will understand the function of printed letters related to reading ability (Rasyid, 2009).

According to Ika Budi Maryatun, the stages of early childhood reading are divided into 4 stages (Hasan, 2009), namely:

- a. Stage I Reading Pictures
- b. Stage II Reading Images + Letters
- c. Stage III Reading Pictures + Words
- d. Stage IV Sentence-Based Reading (Andini, 2022)

According to Mauliyah (2020), the ability to recognize letters is the ability to do something by recognizing the signs or characteristics of script marks in writing which are members of the alphabet that symbolize the sounds of language. Meanwhile, according to (Cania et al., 2020), by introducing letters to early childhood, you should first introduce easy letters for children and avoid difficult letters. Difficult letters can be taught after the child can compose words. The same thing was conveyed by Hidayat (2019), who said that letter recognition is usually done indirectly by showing letters rather than through certain pictures. For example, pictures of types of animals or pictures of certain objects that children are familiar with. The same thing was conveyed by saying that in recognizing letters by using their names, the names of objects around them will help children to recognize letters, words and sounds. Besides, it also helps children start learning to read and write by connecting letter shapes with letter sounds (Nurhayati et al., 2021).

This study used flashcard media as a form of intervention. Flashcard media was given or used as a tool for learning to read by paying attention to and remembering the

shapes of letters and pictures that were given writing or letters (Hasan, 2009). The intervention was carried out in eight sessions (Andini, 2022).

Sadiman et al. (2014, p.7) said that the role of the media is to channel messages from the sender to the recipient of the message as research at BA Aisyiyah Karangasem conducted by (Febriyanto & Yanto, 2019). The steps for learning to use flashcards (Trisniwati, 2014., n.d.) are conditioning the children to sit in their respective places, giving explanations about the flashcards, giving examples of how to use them, inviting them to practice playing flashcards together, and allowing the children to do flashcard games individually.

Using flashcards as a medium makes it easier for students to understand the learning conveyed by the teacher. Parents and teachers can stimulate children's language development (Pangastuti & Hanum, 2017). Parents and people around them can talk to children in the right language because children will easily imitate modeling. With this approach, it can also be done using flashcards by way the teacher invites the children to talk and shows the flashcard. Then, the children mention the letter given by the teacher. Using flashcards, children can develop knowledge of understanding letters with colors, shapes of objects, and pictures. Children's ability to recognize letters, especially the concept of letter recognition, must be carried out from an early age, and literacy recognition programs in PAUD (Early Childhood Education) institutions can be learning activities that greatly assist the development of children's literacy (Refiani et al., 2020)

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that the researchers have done from the data that has been collected and the analysis of recognizing letters through flashcards at BA Aisyiyah Karangasem Klaten, the researchers conclude that the learning process at BA Aisyiyah Karangasem Klaten by using flashcard media has improved very well. Recognition of letters through flashcards is increasing due to stimulation or stimulus with flash card media. Flashcard games make children happier and more enthusiastic about getting to know letters. Through flash cards, children can recognize letters, and children can also explore knowledge through colors, shapes, and pictures so that children are more interested in learning.

This shows that the subject has achieved good results, starting from the child has not been able to pronounce letters optimally and yet to be able to distinguish letters that are almost the same until the child could distinguish letters well. Children can pair pictures with the same initial letter. Children could already recognize the letters of a word. That way it meets the standards of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia No. 58 of 2009 on Early Childhood Education Standards, namely the ability to recognize letters is part of a child's language development, including the ability to know letter symbols and know the first letter of an object.

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