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Improving Counting Skills Through Number Card Games in Children at RA Al-Basithiyah Batu Tunggal

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ABSTRACT

This research is based on child development in Raudhatul Athfal Al-Bashitiyah. In learning activities in early childhood education RA Al-Basithiyah in group B, the ability to recognize children's numbers is still very low. When asked to show numbers and match the shape of the numbers. In addition, there are only 13 children who can write numbers 1-10, and only 17 can re-state numbers 1-10 in sequence. The reason for the inability of children in RA Al-Basithiyah to recognize and mention the concept of numbers 1-10 is that the learning method used in recognizing numbers is not optimal. Very minimal learning media is used to recognize numbers, so it cannot stimulate children to recognize them. This study aims to determine whether using number card media can improve children's counting skills in RA Al Bashitiyah. This research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). Data collection techniques in this study were observation and documentation. The subjects in this study were children of RA Al Bashitiyah. The results of this study used two cycles: in cycle I, the MB category had 18 children (60%) and BSH 12 children (40%). In cycle II, the MB category was two children (7%), and the BSB category was 28 children (93%), meaning cycle II was declared complete. It can be concluded that number card games can improve children's counting skills.

I. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is organized to facilitate the growth and development of children because early childhood is a fundamental phase in influencing child development. The characteristics of early childhood are that they are active, have very high curiosity, often ask questions, and enjoy exploring their environment, which is reflected in fun learning activities for children—early childhood education, in particular. Early childhood education is organized to facilitate the growth and development of children or emphasize the development of all aspects of the child's personality.

The developmental aspect that researchers will examine is the cognitive development aspect. Cognitive development is a process in which children actively build a system of meaning and understanding of reality through children's experiences and interactions. This cognitive aspect is the ability to recognize, mention and use the concept of numbers using objects. (Fadillah, and Muhamad. 2012) Early childhood is important for children's cognitive development, as they can absorb information quickly. Therefore, early childhood is often referred to as the golden age or golden age, which, in essence, is the period of laying the foundation for subsequent growth and development.

Every child can count on developing their abilities; the characteristics of their development start from the environment closest to them and align with the development that can increase to the stage of understanding numbers, namely about addition and subtraction. (Ahmad Susanto. 2020) Recognizing numbers in early childhood is counting or mentioning the sequence of numbers, counting by showing objects, making a sequence of numbers with objects, connecting or pairing number symbols with objects, and distinguishing two groups of objects based on their number. Cognitive abilities are through number card games. (Muhammad Fadillah, 2014)

Based on the researcher's observation of the learning activities in early childhood education, RA Al-Basithiyah in group B (5-6) consisted of 30 people. The researcher found that the children's ability to recognize numbers is still very low. While learning to recognize numbers, the researcher found that out of 30 children, only 17 understood how to say the numbers 1-10, but 13 were still confused about writing the numbers 1-10. When asked to show the numbers and match the shape of the numbers. In addition, there were only 13 children who could write the numbers 1-10, and only 17 could re-state the numbers 1-10 in sequence.

The reason for the inability of children in early childhood education at RA Al-Basithiyah to recognize and mention the concept of numbers 1-10 is that the learning method used in number recognition is not optimal. In number recognition, very minimal learning media are used so that they cannot stimulate children in their ability to recognize numbers, for example in number recognition 1-10 using media from paper written with numbers, so that children find it difficult to understand and become easily bored with the tasks given by the teacher.

For this reason, researchers use number card games to learn to recognize numbers so that children will be more interested and not easily bored during learning, especially when learning to recognize numbers. The methods used in recognizing numbers in RA Al-Basithiyah's early childhood education are less varied. In recognizing numbers, we only use lecture and singing methods. While teaching basic mathematical concepts. Just ask the children to read together to name the numbers. Children are only given a worksheet containing the numbers 1-10; then, the child is assigned to write and name the numbers individually.

The author interviewed one of the teachers in early childhood education, RA Al-Basithiyah. The results of the interview showed that there was a lack of use of games in introducing the concept of numbers to children. However, the material studied will only be introduced directly. Therefore, the author is interested in introducing the concept of

mathematical numbers through games. Seeing the results above, the researcher tried to provide a solution to the problem. The solution offered by the researcher is a demonstration method using a number card game. The number card game is one type of game that is played by showing the appropriate picture by distributing number cards and picture number cards and asking for a picture of the number card by showing a picture number card and trying the child to play the number card that matches the number of number cards and letting the child try and match the number of number cards by arranging the numbers 1-10 with objects and arranging the numbers 1-10 and distinguishing and making two groups of objects with different numbers the game is played individually but still guided by the teacher.

Providing 5-6-year-olds with playing experience using number card games allows children to develop their cognitive abilities, especially in recognizing the concept of numbers. With the number card game, children will have a direct experience by exploring themselves through the game.

Based on the background of the problem, the author is interested in conducting a study entitled "Improving Counting Skills Through Number Card Games in Children at RA Al-Basithiyah Batu Tunggal".

II. THEORETICAL BASIS

1. Early Childhood

The definition of early childhood is a child who is just born until the age of 6 years. This age is decisive in forming a child's character and personality. That age is important for developing his permanent intelligence, and he can absorb important information. (Sujiono. 2011) Early childhood is a child who is in the age range between 1-5 years. This definition is based on the limitations of developmental psychology, which includes infants aged 0-1 years, early age aged 1-5 years, and childhood aged 6-12 years. (Ahmad Susanto. 2017)

Early childhood education aims to develop the knowledge and understanding of parents, teachers, and other parties related to early childhood education and development by developing children's potential from birth as a preparation for life and to adapt to their environment. (Ahmad Susanto, 2017)

2. Arithmetic Ability

Numeracy is the ability to use reasoning, logic, and numbers. Early numeracy is when every child can develop their abilities; the characteristics of their development start from the environment closest to them, which is in line with the development of their abilities. Children can increase to the stage of understanding numbers. (Rosa Imani Khan and Ninik Yuliani. 2016) Numeracy is an ability that every child has related to addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, which are important abilities in everyday life. (Ariyanti, Zidni Immawan Muslim. 2015)

Arithmetic Ability in Erik Hidayati is an ability that requires reasoning and algebraic skills, including arithmetic operations. So, in arithmetic, several indicators must be met during the process of a learning objective, namely:

a. Able to solve problems
   Students are able to work on the test questions given by teachers related to the understanding that being able is being able/competent in carrying out tasks and being agile.
b. Able to create questions and solutions
   In addition to being able to work on questions given by the teacher, students are also expected to be able to create and complete them independently. This is by the definition of ability itself, namely that ability is the ability to master something.. (Enik Hidayati. 2015)

3. Number Card Game

In the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, playing comes from the basic word main, which means doing activities or activities to please the heart (using certain tools or not). (Depdiknas. 2012) Many observers use several criteria in defining games. First, games are fun. Second, games do not have extrinsic goals; children's motivation is subjective and does not have practical goals. Third, games are spontaneous and voluntary, freely chosen by the player. Fourth, games include active involvement from the player. (Mansur. 2013)

The media for playing number cards is a picture made of cardboard paper and then written with numbers from 1 to 10. The cards can be played individually or in groups arranged according to learning objectives that are often used in the learning process in early childhood education. Using media to play with number cards is considered very appropriate for helping children understand the concept of numbers. When seeing the media for playing number cards, children can be interested in paying attention and then playing the media for playing number cards.

The illustrated number card media as one of the media that can be used in the learning process has advantages and disadvantages of the number card media according to Dhieni et al.:

1. The image is concrete.
2. Images can limit space, time and the capabilities of human senses.
3. Images can be used to explain a problem, whether concrete or abstract.
4. Images are a medium that is easily available and cheap.
5. Images are also easy to use, either individually or in groups, classically, throughout the class or school so that the message implied in the image can be re-stated in words or sentences. (Made Pande Megawati, Ni Ketut Suami, Made Sulastri, 2012)

According to Aisyah, picture number cards, in addition to the advantages of picture media, also have several disadvantages, namely:

1. It isn't easy to show movement in image media.
2. The costs that will be incurred will be large if you want to make better and more varied images.
3. Picture card media must be designed in such a way that it is not too numerous and boring for children
4. If not properly maintained, image media will easily be damaged and lost,

It requires high creativity from teachers to provide innovation from image media so that children are not bored.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

a. Place and Time of Research

The author conducted research at RA Al-Basithiyah, which is located not far from Rantau Prapat, more precisely in Jalan Batu Tunggal, NA IX-X District, North Labuhanbatu Regency.

The research period starts from April to June 2022. The determination refers to the school's academic calendar.

b. Subjects and Objects of Research

Many argue that the subject of research is the person who conducts the research, while the research is the person or thing being researched. The subject in research refers to the respondent, the informant who is to be asked for information or whose data is to be extracted. (Muh. Fitrah & Luthfiyah, 2017) The subjects of this study were 30 students at RA Al-Basithiyah.

Object refers to the problem or theme being studied. While the object of this study is to improve numeracy skills.

c. Type of Research

The type of research used in this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR). According to Wina Sanjaya, CAR can be interpreted as studying learning problems in the classroom through self-reflection to solve the problem by carrying out various planned actions in the situation and analyzing each problem from the treatment. (Wina Sanjaya 2016)Meanwhile, according to Totok Sukardi YonoClassroom action research (CAR) is an observation that applies reflective actions in the classroom by carrying out certain actions or using rules by the research methodology carried out in several periods or cycles to improve and or enhance learning practices carried out together in the classroom professionally so that an increase in understanding or quality or predetermined targets is obtained. (Totok Sukardiyono, 2015)

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

Physical development in children can be identified in several ways, such as paying attention to the various types of games and the steps. Before ending this teaching and learning activity, the teacher can ask students who can tell them what number they have made. Early childhood education is education to help the growth and development, both physically and spiritually, of children outside the family environment before entering elementary education, as an effort made so that children aged 4-6 years are more ready to follow the next level of education. Every child has creative potential; with creative potential, children need creative activities or activities to hone their creativity. Using strategies in learning helps children achieve their learning goals, but this requires more time and varied and interesting learning preparation for children.

The research does not solve the existing problems; often, the objectives to be achieved are less successful because strategies are too monotonous. Learning strategies are a way to carry out good and effective teaching. In improving children's numeracy skills, it is necessary to use interesting and fun strategies so that children do not get bored and tired. However, using the right strategy will develop children's activity and creativity. Interview with Mrs Midahtul Hanim and students of RA AL-Basithiyah Batu Tunggal After the researcher applied the method of giving assignments, he said that during the first implementation of playing number cards, children felt confused and were not used to the tasks they used, after the implementation of the following number card game, children began to be enthusiastic about the tasks that had been determined. Children could train their numeracy skills to play number cards neatly. According to students of RA Al-Basithiyahh, they felt happy because they could be directly involved in the activities assigned, so they did not feel bored learning by being given assignments to play number cards. It can be concluded from the interview results above that giving assignments to play number cards makes children feel happy, joyful, and not bored when participating in learning activities while playing. Besides that, when carried out, children can play neatly and become a form taught by their teacher, meaning that this activity gives a positive impression and meaning in children's lives. The implementation of the activity of giving assignments to play number cards in learning, namely:

1. Learning by using the strategy of playing number cards is very appropriate for improving the fine motor skills of early childhood, such as children's ability to play number cards neatly, recognize the shape of numbers, and recognize colours.

2. Children who participate in learning by being assigned to play number cards can further stimulate their creativity and imagination, as well as their varied creations, so that they can learn, such as the concept of learning while playing.
3. Learning to play with the strategy of number cards is very appropriate for training children's imagination, creativity, and interaction with other people.

In the implementation of cycle I through three meetings with the implementation of classical learning at RA Al-Basithiyah, several obstacles and weaknesses were found, including lack of time efficiency, time constraints so that number card playing activities have not developed well, children's self-confidence not developed well, this can be seen from there are still children who tend to be nervous, and do not understand the instructions given. The interest and motivation of students in participating in learning activities began to be seen but were still not optimal. This can be seen from the fact that some students still do not focus on the material, and some are still playing. In cycle II, learning went better and smoother; teacher readiness was more solid in providing learning direction so that the learning flow given to students could be clear and coherent, and students were more enthusiastic and active in number card playing learning activities. Number card playing activities were carried out.

Based on the analysis of cycle I and cycle II, the author can conclude that children's counting ability with the method of giving number card playing tasks has an important role in improving early childhood counting ability. By giving number card tasks, children can complete the tasks instructed by the teacher so that children can play number cards neatly, as exemplified by the teacher.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion description, it can be concluded that children's numeracy skills at RA AL-Basithiyah Batu Tunggal can be improved through number card games. The results of the study showed that there had been an increase in children's early numeracy skills in each cycle. In the observation results in the pre-cycle, the average value of children was 48, with the number of children in the category not yet developing, namely 10 (33%), children in the category starting to develop, namely 12 (40%), children in the category developing according to expectations, namely 8 (27%). In the results of the observation value in cycle I, with the number of children in the category starting to develop, namely 18 (60%), children in the category developing according to expectations, namely 12 (40%). In the results of the observation value in cycle II, with the number of children in the category starting to develop, namely 2 (7%), children in the category are developing very well, namely 28 (93%). This increase in early numeracy skills includes children being able to count pictures, point to the requested number symbols, unite numbers, unite meaningful numbers, and group numbers.

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