

Implications of Reading Interest in Improving Language Intelligence in Early Children

Isti Pujiati

Corresponding author. Email: istipujiati97@gmail.com

Pascasarjana Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini, Universitas Islam Negeri Prof. K. H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto

Abstract

Language intelligence can be seen when various stimulations and efforts can be provided by the environment around the child. Language intelligence is a skill that can be used and competently structured through words to convey ideas in speaking, reading and writing. There are many activities that can be pursued in improving language intelligence in early childhood. Early childhood is the most important period in honing all skills including language skills. There are previous researchers who examined the effectiveness of reading interest which influences language development with various background efforts. The researcher was then interested in reviewing several articles from the researchers so that the formulations and results that had been tested could be taken. The research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method by analyzing data, namely in the form of previous research article documents that had been carried out on the theme of reading interest and its relation to language intelligence in early childhood. The techniques chosen are content analysis techniques, note-taking techniques, and listening techniques. From the research conducted, it was found that through reading interest built by the child's environment, namely the family environment, school environment, and community environment continuously and sustainably, an increase in children's language development is obtained and children have language intelligence when the three environments synergize strongly and compact.

Keywords: *Interest in reading, language intelligence, early childhood.*

1. Introduction

Early childhood is a crucial phase characterized by rapid growth and development at that age. Starting from physical motor, intellectual, moral, language, and social. All intelligence has the potential to increase significantly, especially in language intelligence. Language or linguistic intelligence is intelligence that is integrated into language development at a higher level than usual. Language intelligence consists of the ability to manage words effectively in spoken or written form. As for children who are considered to have the ability of language intelligence they will have four skills and mastery of the skills of listening, listening, writing, and reading. Children who have language intelligence are also shown to be sensitive to a meaning when they are receiving information and messages, children also have sensitivity to the order and sound of a word, they have the ability to explain, have a good memory of memorizing names and words. date, and have good skills in reading and listening to stories. Thus, in general, when an individual has language intelligence, he also has good literacy skills. This is because the components of literacy skills are integrated into an individual's language intelligence.

It is important to instill literacy skills from an early age. Not just teaching reading and writing skills, providing books and writing materials to children as an effort to prepare them to adapt after they enter elementary school. However, it is from this age that parents, families, schools, and society have a role to start inviting children to love

reading books in a fun way, playing with cards/pictures, and often showing or inviting children to see or buy books in stores and in a reading room or library (Ruhaena, 2012). When children feel happy to be able to interact with literacy activities, trauma will not arise in the future. This is because the cultivation of literacy skills which is carried out in a fun way at an early age as a golden age, both good and bad, will have an impact so that the child grows into an adult human being in the future. When looking at the needs in the field when the technological era is developing continuously and increasingly rapidly, humans feel obliged to be able to meet literacy needs so that they can boost the quality of the nation's life. Many factors can confirm that now literacy skills are starting to become an essential part of life.

A dark phenomenon has occurred in the form of labeling the low literacy level of Indonesian society in 2016. Based on the acquisition of statistical data from the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), that is, out of a total of 61 countries, Indonesia is ranked 60th. This is because awareness of reading is high. Owned by Indonesian people have not grown well so that literacy skills are low. From this, it can be concluded that the reading interest of the Indonesian people is of course low. Comparisons arise if there are a thousand Indonesian people, only one person has good literacy skills.

A good human being is a human who likes to learn and correct mistakes. A good increase has occurred in the literacy skills of the Indonesian people. Based on data obtained from the National Library on the reading interest of the Indonesian people, there was an increase of 7.4%, better than in 2021, which was 63.9 points from the previous 59.52 points. Benchmarking is good when there is a change in progress. Efforts to improve are carried out starting from the family environment, school, to the community. Infrastructure to support reading activities is widely available everywhere, even Indonesia is ranked above European countries in providing reading infrastructure (Devega, 2021). Literacy awareness has begun to be shown well by Indonesian people.

In line with this, some experts have stated that language intelligence is related to children's thinking intelligence. Good literacy skills have an impact on children's intelligence in thinking because children will automatically be skilled at processing information and solving problems. This thinking intelligence is related to language intelligence, so that children will have a large vocabulary, then automatically the child's intelligence will get better. Thus, it is important for all parents to be able to motivate their children so that they can maximize their language skills in everyday life, including through literacy activities so that children have a high interest in reading activities.

Language intelligence is an important part of early childhood development, so it is recommended for parents and educators to provide appropriate understanding and stimulation according to the child's age level. Unique early childhood has characteristics that are unique and different from other age levels, so parents and educators must be able to understand these characteristics, especially in supporting the improvement of their language intelligence. Invite children to learn in a fun way, namely by playing which can mature the growth and development of children. From playing activities, children will feel happy and are less likely to feel bored, thus children will receive everything they learn well. One of the most effective and enjoyable ways for children to be able to develop language skills and other skills is through storybook reading activities. Fostering a love of reading books so as to bring up good reading interest in children.

The wider community considers that literacy is always related to books, this is why there has been an increase in interest in reading books among the public as one of the pro-literacy actions. Based on data from research conducted by Picodi.com (research using internal data on global e-commerce platforms, regarding transactions at online bookstores. The survey was conducted in March 2019 to 7,800 respondents), the number of requests for books on the Indonesian market towards the end of 2018 could reach 12% of annual transactions, or it can be said that it has almost doubled from sales at the beginning of the year. From these data it appears that there is intensive attention to enliven the literacy movement in Indonesian society with people starting to flock to try to read books for their children, it is hoped that more and more individuals will emerge who have a higher interest in reading. The effectiveness of the efforts made by parents, the community, and the environment on children's language intelligence through increasing reading interest that has been carried out by previous researchers will be the material for research studies to be carried out. How are the efforts made by educators and the community in fostering this? Thus, the researcher will collect several articles that discuss interest in reading as an enhancer of language intelligence in early childhood.

2. Research Methods

Research Literature on various studies that have been conducted regarding the efforts and effectiveness of increasing children's reading interest which has implications for early childhood language intelligence. The research is in the form of a qualitative descriptive which will analyze a data that is in the form of a document with the final result in the form of word descriptions (Moleong, 2009). The object used as research study is in the form of previous research articles that have been carried out on the theme of reading interest and its relation to language intelligence in

early childhood in the last three years. Data were obtained by carrying out content analysis techniques, note-taking techniques, and listening techniques. Previous articles were analyzed by researchers using the steps of (1) reading several articles repeatedly, (2) looking for data on article excerpts regarding the effectiveness of reading interest on language intelligence in early childhood, and (3) conducting an analysis of the data that has been collected .

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Language intelligence of early children through literacy cultivation

A child to be able to grow and develop requires the role of an adult who participates in accompanying and facilitating his growth and development. Children born already have rights and obligations inherent in them. Children have the right to grow and develop, play, study, rest, recreation in both formal and non-formal education (Amalia & AH, 2019). To be able to fulfill children's rights, adults, especially parents, are required to provide services and advice as well as supporting infrastructure for children's education in order to fulfill their right to learn. Learning aimed at children is fun, makes children excited, motivated, and effective (Hasan & Maemunah, 2013). Thus education aimed at early childhood must be centered on the needs of the child and adapt to the characteristics of the child. It is appropriate that early childhood education is organized to provide facilities in growing all aspects of growth and development including religion and morals, physical motoric, cognitive, language, and social-emotional. So early childhood is referred to as the golden age where they will easily absorb various things that they get through their environment.

From all aspects of growth and development that are pursued by adults around children, they become an important part of a child's life. However, in this study the researchers will focus on aspects of the development of language intelligence that occur in early childhood. Striving for language intelligence in children to be well formed requires various ways including by providing and introducing children to reading books. Reading books play a vital role in the realm of education. Serves as a source of information as well as enhancing intelligence in children. The introduction of books to create a love of books and happy reading as part of literacy skills in children. When a child has good literacy skills at an early age, it will have an impact on the language intelligence that the child will have.

Literacy skills must be instilled from an early age through playing with books, reading books, getting children used to interacting with books. Early literacy is a formation of reading and writing skills which is known early before school children (5638). The child's initial ability to read and write is born because of the child's curiosity and high desire to know something. In addition, children who play with friends or siblings who are able to read and write can also encourage children to want to be able to read and write (Susanto, 2017). When children are accustomed to these things, the ability to read, write, count, obtain information, and solve problems will be obtained by children automatically. When a child exhibits such behavior it can be said that the child has a high interest in reading. Through a high interest in reading, various language abilities of children will be absorbed.

Referring to the basic understanding of literacy, literacy in early childhood involves reading skills, writing only, communication processes in children namely reading, writing, speaking, listening or listening, seeing and finally teaching children to think logically, critically. Literacy in early childhood is at a basic stage, early childhood literacy skills cannot develop with increasing age, but their abilities will increase when the stimulation provided by the family, school and community environment continues to be given regularly.

Linguistic intelligence has four skills namely listening, hearing, writing, and reading. Linguistic intelligence is intelligence language possessed by children, this intelligence includes individual abilities to process information and messages through sensitivity to meaning, sensitivity to word order and sounds, ability to explain, good memory skills in memorizing names and dates, and the ability to hear stories or read stories

(Nur Tanfidiyah & Ferdian Utama, 2019; Ruiyat et al., 2019; Try Setiantono, 2012). The goals of developing linguistic intelligence include children being able to provide explanations and be able to explain the language itself (Fitriani et al., 2021; Nur Tanfidiyah & Ferdian Utama, 2019).

3.2. Efforts to increase children's reading interest

Interest in reading is the desire of an individual to want to do reading activities in order to get some information (Taulabi et al., 2017). Interest in reading can arise because of encouragement from outside a person and from within a person. Starting from early habituation, the factor of reading books that makes someone interested in reading it. Someone who can be said to have a good interest in reading can be seen at first, they have an interest in reading, so that when they are met with a book, they have an interest and a passionate desire to read the book in order to get some information. Efforts to foster interest in reading are also needed from outside the individual, namely the environment. All kinds of environments contribute to the growth of interest in reading in children, especially in the family

environment, school environment, and community environment. Mulyani argues that the most beneficial level of development for a person to develop an interest in reading is during the sensitive period, which is around the age of 5-6 years. Then this interest in reading will develop until adolescence (Mulyani, 1981).

It takes several efforts made by all layers of the environment around the child. These efforts are aimed at making children have an interest in reading so that it leads to good literacy skills.

a) Family Environment

Many studies show that children who succeed in achieving literacy at school usually come from a home environment that provides books, and parents have the opportunity to read with their children, and see their parents and siblings doing reading activities (Bingham, 2007).

1) Provision of a reading corner at home

The family environment that is maintained at home based on research when children grow an interest in reading when they are often confronted with books in their home. Facilitating children with a variety of interesting books is an effort by parents to provide educational facilities at home for children. Procurement of books at home can be placed specifically in one corner of the room in the house. Invite children to interact with books and model to children how people

Parents also interact with reading books.

Activities in contact with books carried out by parents, children will automatically participate in doing the same things as their parents. Because actually children are great imitators and good absorbers of everything that happens in their environment.

2) Family Library and Playing

Make a library in the house that is intended for families and do book reading activities. Activities shown as examples that can be imitated by children. The movement of reading books carried out by parents is shown to be fun and continuous (Amalia & AH, 2019). The books in the library contain various genres based on their age range and interests every reader in the family.

In addition to providing books in the library, various educational games are also provided to attract children's interest. The existence of learning activities through fun game media makes it easier for children to learn things such as numbers and letters for example (Ypung, 2008).

3) Interact with the Library

Familiarizing children to interact with books is a basic effort for parents to introduce reading material so that children become interested in it. It is necessary for parents to introduce means of providing reading books outside the home, such as a library. Familiarizing children to visit the library is an activity that can be applied by other parents. Coming and visiting the library, registering him as a member of the library, and inviting him to borrow and being responsible for the books he lends is an important part of learning.

In order to foster a love of reading in children, it is necessary to habituate continuously. The library as a provider of reading materials has a duty to increase the reading interest of its people. Apart from providing reading materials, the library also provides an opportunity for its visitors, especially children, to be able to enjoy reading and acquiring knowledge (Amalia & AH, 2019).

4) Library Tour

Traveling or visiting a pleasant place is liked by all groups, including children. Providing valuable experiences in childhood is an opportunity for parents to present experiences in the form of library tourism recreation. Inviting children to visit a library or reading garden in the vicinity as an effort to introduce literacy culture to children. In addition, library visits can also be carried out at bookstores or book bazaars or book fairs. The library visit activity aims to introduce children to reading skills around them and it is hoped that children will be stimulated to be able to like books and have a good interest in reading books. Children in the golden age period enjoy a liberation activity to choose the book they want, they will enjoy the contents of a story book in which they tell something they have done or thought about (Dorothy, 2014).

5) Storytelling

Story telling is a storytelling activity or known as storytelling. Tell stories by cultivating fun and educating aimed at children. Listening activity for children and listening to the story told by the storyteller is one of the efforts to get children interested in a fairy tale that will build the experience and pleasure of reading for children. Besides building imagination and educating children, through the storytelling activities that children do they will be infused with a lot of new vocabulary which will help them understand reading well because the vocabulary they have is stored properly and periodically.

Parents have a greater role in developing an interest in reading in their children. One that is effectively done based on previous research is through story telling activities. Introducing a variety of new vocabulary to children, building fantasies for children through listening to stories, and providing messages that can educate children. Through storytelling activities children will get many benefits with fun. Storytelling activities can be done with children when parents relax with children. Giving a special time each day will promote increased language skills in children.

6) Read Aloud

Routines in the form of reading aloud activities or activities of reading books aloud to children from many studies conducted, especially by Jim Trelease, are one of the best efforts to foster a love of reading to children that parents can do regularly. The routine of reading books aloud helps to strengthen the relationship between parents and children, this activity is also able to stimulate language skills in early childhood (Trelease, 2017). Parents simply provide reading books for children according to their age level and a special time to read books to children. Position the child and parents together facing the reading book and the parents read it aloud using variations of reading to make it more interesting for children to be happy with the activity. When children sit, listen, listen to and see books, explore their imagination, children will get used to seeing various letters, get used to lots of new vocabulary, get used to getting information, and cause fun, so from the activity of reading books aloud, children will find it easier to opens opportunities for himself to love reading books, becomes an individual who likes to read, and becomes an individual who is intelligent because he is used to managing information easily and learning problem solving from books and his experiences.

7) Field Trips

Field trips are activities to make tourist visits to enrich children's knowledge through direct learning. Children will interact with various new things and will increase their curiosity. The parents' duties when carrying out field trip activities are to provide assistance, explanations, regarding everything that children need to know correctly and in accordance with the facts. Parents can promote reading books that can provide information to children about everything they want to know while traveling. Parents can also bridge their children to be able to relate their experiences during field trips with reading books related to these matters. Another way that parents can do is to do field trip activities based on recommendations from books that their children have read or have read. Thus the child will be more proud and happy with the reading book. Children will be more motivated towards reading books.

b) School Environment

1) Provision of a reading corner at school

Children do not have an interest in reading because there are no reading books around them (Trelease, 2017). Children will become interested in something if they often encounter it and look attractive in appearance. Libraries that contain various kinds of reading books are always present in schools, but in terms of affordability, libraries are less effective. Thus a location for providing books is needed that is closer and easily accessible to children while at school (Hayun & Haryati, 2020). There is more time for children in the classroom than children outside the classroom, so it is appropriate for each class to have a well-organized book corner with a wide selection of interesting reading books outside of the subjects provided by the school. The government's efforts to participate provide support literacy development for schools through the school literacy movement in which one of the activities carried out is the provision of a book corner or the like.

2) Interesting book media

Children especially those who still think concretely are interested in something when they see it, this is because children still think concretely about something. Efforts that can be made by schools, especially teachers, to foster an interest in books in children. Teachers can create and innovate to be able to make books that attract children's attention. The books that are made can use materials that are easily found around. As with previous research, educators try to create a book so that children can gain knowledge from these books and children can play these books. Books made from flannel, thick paper, and so on. Books are interactive and provide new insights and experiences (Fitriani et al., 2021).

c) Community Environment

1) Organize activities

Society enters into the role of educators for children. Increasing interest in reading is part of the community's role in other communities. One of the efforts to improve the reading culture that has been held in the community is to establish corners where reading books are available aimed at all groups, from children, adolescents, to the elderly. However, the activity of inviting people to be interested so that they are interested in reading books requires strategy and creativity. The strategy is intended so that people are interested in coming to places that provide reading books, then they are interested in viewing and borrowing reading books, and it is hoped that people will love reading books. Based on previous research, the first step that must be taken is to organize activities to describe encouragement to the

public to be interested in reading books. Activities organized to make the community more effective fond of reading is held regularly and continuously.

The types of activities that can be held are directly related to books and some are not directly related to books. It all started with people wanting to go to the place where the book was provided. Based on the results of research conducted by Santi and Ari at a Community Reading Center (TBM), the results found concluded that the activities held at TBM which had been running for more than 7 years were considered effective in increasing the community's reading culture. TBM or the like can organize various activities by adjusting the facilities and infrastructure of TBM and taking into account the management human resources and the surrounding environment. The activities held are creative and innovative activities at all times. Routine and periodic activities are divided into daily activities, weekly activities, monthly activities, annual activities, and incidental activities.

The daily activities organized by the reading garden include the first of which is reading a book to each child. Those who can't read. The purpose of this activity is to invite children from an early age to be interested in and love reading books. The books read are interesting picture story books. The second activity is a coloring activity with the aim of attracting children to come to the reading garden. The reading garden manager provides coloring media ranging from coloring sheets, coloring tools, and places to color. The third activity is writing assistance aimed at developing children's creativity by producing works that can be read, collected, recorded, and published on media pages. Writing assistance can be in the form of poetry, fairy tales, scientific writing, and so on. Writing activities are addressed to all people who need writing guidance. And daily activities next is lending books.

Regular activities are held in the form of weekly activities. The activities held are related to reading books directly and some are not directly related to reading books. The first activity was in the form of organizing a children's show at the reading garden. The place to watch is conceptualized like children are in a cinema. The spectacle that is presented is educational for children through a film selected by the reading garden management team. The second activity is holding regular discussions with the local community. Discussions are carried out with children, adolescents, and parents. Through discussions held aimed at exchanging information and knowledge to solving problems.

The next activity that is carried out routinely and periodically is training. The trainings held are aimed at honing skills and exploring the potential of the surrounding community based on needs. The training is aimed at children, youth, and among women and men. Other routine and periodic activities are annual activities with the aim of gathering the community and making this an opportunity to promote reading parks and books and encourage people to love reading. And other activities in the form of incidental activities by organizing activities to commemorate certain days, working on competition projects, and so on. Selected incidental activities related to books and reading.

Based on the results of research that has been done, through various activities carried out by the reading garden or the like to the community on a regular and periodic basis, it has a good impact on increasing interest in reading. Another addition is the increase in achievements achieved by local children and youth to the increasingly proficient skills possessed by the community.

From the activities held at a reading center or the like, it can be concluded that activities are in the form of activities that can hone literacy skills, namely interacting with books, reading books, obtaining information, managing information, solving problems, and creating works. Because literacy skills are in the ability to be skilled at reading, skilled at writing, skilled at understanding information, and skilled at solving problems.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the explanation above, it can be concluded that previous researchers who studied the effect of reading interest on language intelligence in early childhood had a strong connection. The existence of interest in reading that is owned by early childhood can be pursued by the family environment, school environment, and community environment. In order to foster language intelligence, efforts to develop interest in reading in children must be carried out continuously and periodically while still paying attention to the characteristics of children. Getting children interested in reading books is the main capital for parents to foster interest in reading in early childhood, because when young children have developed a good interest in reading, for the next life the child will continue to love reading activities. Thus the children's language skills are directly honed properly and have a good impact in the form of improving literacy skills that are good for the child himself. Strengthening interest in reading and language intelligence that is carried out early on is a strong foundation for children to grow and develop after they are adults with sufficient provision to get them from an early age.

Reference

- Amalia, R., & AH, N. M. (2019). Peran Orang Tua dalam Pengenalan Budaya Literasi untuk Meningkatkan Kecerdasan Bahasa Pada Anak Usia Dini 5-6 Tahun. *ThufuLA: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Guru Raudhatul Athfal*, 7(2), 223. <https://doi.org/10.21043/thufula.v7i2.5638>
- Bingham, P. (2007). *As Easy as ABC: Facilitating early literacy enrichment experiences*. Young Exceptional Children 10.
- Devega, E. (2021). *Teknologi Masyarakat Indonesia Malas Baca Tapi Cerewet di Medsos*. Kominfo. https://www.kominfo.go.id/content/detail/10862/teknologi-masyarakat-indonesia-malas-baca-tapi-cerewet-di-medsos/0/sorotan_media
- Fitriani, A. P., Wijayanti, A., & Koesmadi, D. P. (2021). Meningkatkan Kecerdasan Linguistik Anak Usia Dini Dengan Menggunakan Buku Language Smart Kids. *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini Undiksha*, 9(2), 270. <https://doi.org/10.23887/paud.v9i2.34123>
- Hasan, & Maemunah. (2013). *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Manajemen Mutu Pendidikan Anak untuk Para Guru dan Orang Tua*. Cet.ke-X (Diva Press).
- Hayun, M., & Haryati, T. (2020). Program Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (GLS) Dalam Meningkatkan Kecerdasan Linguistik Siswa SD Lab School FIP UMJ. *Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 4(1), 79–89.
- Moleong, L. J. (2009). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (PT. Remaja).
- Mulyani. (1981). *Pembinaan Minat Baca dan Promosi Perpustakaan*. Ber. Perpust. Sekol.
- Nur Tanfidiyah, & Ferdian Utama. (2019). Mengembangkan Kecerdasan Linguistik Anak Usia Dini Melalui Metode Cerita. *Golden Age: Jurnal Ilmiah Tumbuh Kembang Anak Usia Dini*, 4(3), 9–18. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jga.2019.43-02>
- Ruhaena, L. (2012). *Model stimulasi dini kemampuan baca tulis anak prasekolah di rumah*. UMS.
- Ruiyat, S. A., Yufiarti, Y., & Karnadi, K. (2019). Peningkatan Keterampilan Berbicara dengan Bercerita Menggunakan Komik Elektronik Tematik. *Jurnal Obsesi : Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 3(2), 518. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v3i2.256>
- Susanto, A. (2017). *Pendidikan Anak Usia Din (Konsep dan Teori)*. PT. Bumi Aksara.
- Taulabi, I., Imron, A., & Khoiruddin, M. A. (2017). Menumbuhkan Minat Baca Sejak Dini Di Taman Baca Masyarakat. *LISAN AL-HAL: Jurnal Pengembangan Pemikiran Dan Kebudayaan*, 11(1), 137–158. <https://doi.org/10.35316/lisanalhal.v11i1.165>
- Trelease, J. (2017). *The Read-Aloud Handbook Membaca Buku dengan Nyaring, Melejitkan Kecerdasan Anak*. Noura PT. Mizan Publika.
- Try Setiantono. (2012). Penggunaan metode bercerita bagi anak usia dini di PAUD Smart Little Cilame Indah Bandung. *Jurnal EMPOWERMENT*, 1(2), 20. <https://doi.org/10.22460/empowerment.v1i2p18-23.611>