

# The Effectiveness of Straw Doll Assisted Storytelling Methods in Improving Children's Receptive Language Skills Kindergartners

Ismawati, S.<sup>1</sup>, Santoso<sup>2</sup> & Widjanarko, M.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Muria Kudus University, Kudus, 59327 Central Java, INDONESIA

\*Corresponding author: [sriismawati3581@gmail.com](mailto:sriismawati3581@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:** This study aims to describe the effectiveness of straw doll-assisted storytelling in improving children's receptive language skills in Rembang Kindergarten. This research method uses the Research and Development (R&D) method with group B child research subjects in the Dahlia ECD cluster unit. The data collection techniques used by researchers are 1) interviews with educators, students and kindergarten principals, 2) observation, 3) questionnaire, 4) validation, and 5) documentation. The results showed the validity test with  $n = 10$  and a significance value of 5% with  $r$  table 0.632. The results were declared valid because  $r$  calculated  $> r$  table, validation tests from material experts obtained an average score of 83.75%, and 93.75% means that they are included in the very decent category. In contrast, linguists obtained a score of 4, which is in the very good category. Data analysis to test effectiveness was shown in the results of calculating N-Gain in field tests as an experimental class obtained post-test results of 80.67 and 80.33, respectively, while for the control class, the post-test obtained 56.00 results. Based on the results of the feasible and effective in improving children's language skills.

**Keywords:** Storytelling method, Straw Doll, receptive language

## 1. Introduction

Golden age or childhood is a very appropriate time to develop all the potential contained in children because in the phase of growth and development, children are currently developing very rapidly. The development of religious and moral values, physical, motor, cognitive, language, and social-emotional, occurs very quickly. Early Childhood Education is the main foundation for developing children's potential and personality in terms of moral and religious values, cognitive, language and social-emotional (Nurwahyuni et al., 2021).

Anggraeni et al. (2019) said language can be used orally or in writing as a communication tool. Man uses language to connect himself with the world outside himself. Children's language development is one of the factors that affect children's cognitive development. As children grow and develop and begin to understand their environment, so does their language development from the simplest to the most difficult. A child's language acquisition can be developed in a variety of ways (Simsek & Erdogan, 2015).

To obtain optimal development, language development should be carried out in a balanced manner. There are two categories of language skills: receptive language skills and productive language skills. Receptive language skills are language skills that are applied to understand something conveyed through spoken and written language (Atmowardoyo & Sakkir, 2021). At the same time, writing activities and including language are productive. Language learning aims to allow children to express their ideas in language.

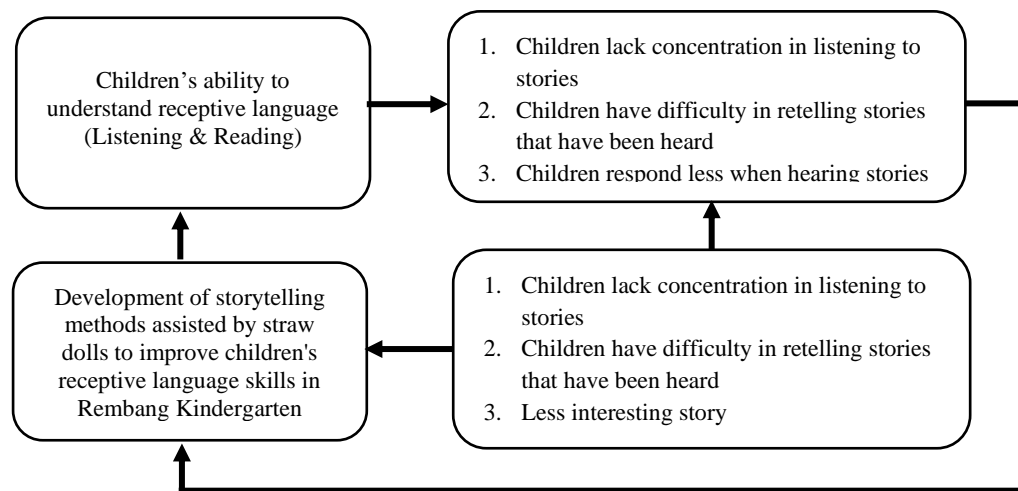
Related to language development, the problem that often exists in kindergarten is that children still have language difficulties. After the researchers made initial observations, the problem faced by researchers in Kindergarten B within the scope of the Dahlia Cluster was that children needed more concentration when telling stories using storytelling book media; they often struggled to see the pictures in them. When using a hand puppet, it can initially calm down, but over time, the child feels bored. Using storytelling-based hand puppet media is very interesting, but educators need IT mastery (Ismawati & Widjanarko, 2022).

Based on the results of previous research conducted by Mehmood & Dilawar (2019), researchers said that the use of storytelling methods using series image media, there are still many children who are not developing optimally; this is

due to monotonous storytelling presentation techniques; teachers often tell stories using magazines and student worksheets. Furthermore, to attract students' attention, image media with picture storybooks attracts students more. Mujahidah et al. (2021) state improving language skills using hand puppet media; from the results of this research, it was proven to improve children's language skills. Judging from some of the descriptions above, storytelling learning is easier to understand when using media. Gan et al. (2015) argue that using media makes learning more meaningful.

Early Childhood Language Development (ECCE) is one aspect of the stages of child development expressed through children's thinking using words that mark the increase in children's abilities and creativity according to their stage of development. Language is a tool for communication; it can be used to think and express feelings and through language, can accept the thoughts and feelings of others (Chen-Hafteck, 2021). Language development begins in infancy and relies on its role in language experience, mastery and growth. The development of language skills for early childhood aims so that children can answer correctly when asked, how children respond appropriately when hearing stories or books read by the teacher, children can do according to what is asked by some commands, and children can retell what they have heard. The bottom line is that the child's receptive language development is improving (Gooch et al., 2016).

In developing children's language skills, teachers can choose strategies and methods. Activities that can be done in developing language skills can stimulate the ability to listen, speak and write. The storytelling method is one of the most widely used methods for early childhood. The story presented by the teacher must attract and invite children's attention and be connected to the purpose of education for early childhood (Hidayati, 2019). Educators must master storytelling techniques to attract children's attention. One of the supporting means to make the story more interesting is to use learning media or props. In this study, researchers used storytelling aids in the form of straw dolls. Fig. 1 shows the conceptual framework for the study.



**Fig. 1 - Conceptual framework.**

Based on this background description, the researcher focused on related research to improve children's receptive language development using straw puppet media as props for telling stories. Making Straw dolls is because researchers see and want to take advantage of the potential of nature in the Kindergarten in Rembang, especially the scope of the Dahlia early childhood education cluster, in addition to wanting to take advantage of nature, also to find out how much the increase in children's receptive language skills using the storytelling method assisted by straw dolls.

## 2. Literature Review

Children continue to struggle with language. It's because children's speech may be clearer. To achieve optimal development, language development should be carried out and balanced. Language skills are classified into two types: receptive and productive (Psomadaki et al., 2019). Receptive language abilities are those used to comprehend information provided through spoken and written language (Rizal et al., 2023). Meanwhile, productive language is used in writing activities. The goal of language acquisition is for children to be able to communicate themselves in the language (Febriantini et al., 2021). In other words, early language development is more focused on helping youngsters process words holistically. These words should be expressed in body language (language and gestures) that others can understand. Understand, explain, and transmit each word to others. Try to persuade others with what they have to say.

Language learning is one of the areas of fundamental skill development created by teachers to improve children's talents and creativity based on their developmental stage (Rogde et al., 2016). So, in this paper, the concept of early childhood language development refers to the teacher's efforts to achieve the goals of early childhood education in developing their language, both in listening, speaking/telling/understanding pictures/writing, as well as drawing and or simple writing, and a variety of other skills.

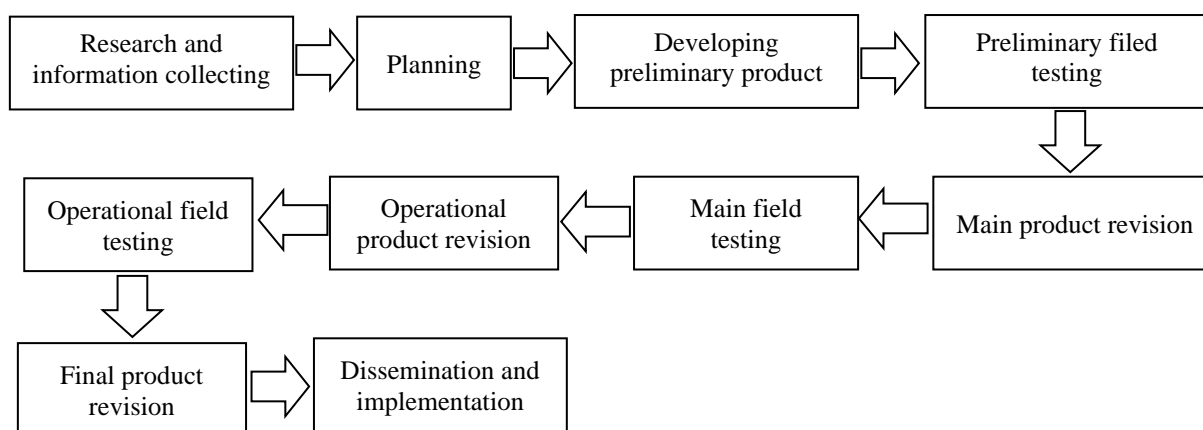
However, educators' methods vary from time to time. Nonetheless, there is a common issue that practically every child faces. All children learn their first language from their caretakers, particularly their mothers (Aulia & Budiningsih, 2021). How many languages are taught to children by their parents in a family environment, particularly in communication, is the child's language acquisition. Language is also acquired by children through their social surroundings, such as school or friendship (Rohmalina et al., 2020; Khairoes & Taufina, 2019). Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four stages of language development in early childhood. In terms of language development, a common issue in kindergarten is that children still struggle with language.

Language learning for children should be tailored to the learning objectives. To develop optimally, the narrative method using image series media still need a large number of children. This is because of the repetitive presentation of storytelling approaches. The teacher frequently uses publications and student workbooks to convey stories. Furthermore, picture media with picture storybooks will capture more students' attention. Language skills are improved in children through the use of hand puppet media. Digital storytelling-based hand puppet media. Several studies have found that using the storytelling method in early childhood helps increase speaking skills (Anggraeni et al., 2019). Storytelling, on the other hand, promotes early children language development (Syamsiyah & Hardiyana, 2021).

### 3. Methodology

The type of research used in this research is a research and development method, commonly called Research and Development, which is used to produce certain products and test the effectiveness of certain products (Richey & Klein, 2014). To be able to produce certain products, research is used, which is a needs analysis, and to test the effectiveness of the product so that it can function and be useful in the wider community, research is needed to test the effectiveness of the product.

The research and development procedure used in this research is the Gall & Borg (2002) model, which is a process to develop and consists of a study of the research findings of the product to be developed, developing products based on these findings, conducting field trials by the background where the product will be used and revising the results of field tests. According to Gall & Borg (2002), the research and development approach in Education includes ten steps, which in general can be seen in the following scheme in Fig. 2.



**Fig. 2 - Research and development model.**

Test the product's effectiveness using a quasi-experimental method using a non-equivalent control group design with an experimental group and a control group selected. The effectiveness test was carried out at Darma Persada Kindergarten and Kragan 1st State Kindergarten as the experimental group and Harapan Bangsa Kindergarten as the control group, each of which was a child of group B.

$$\frac{O_1 \times O_2}{O_3 \times O_4} \quad (1)$$

Description:

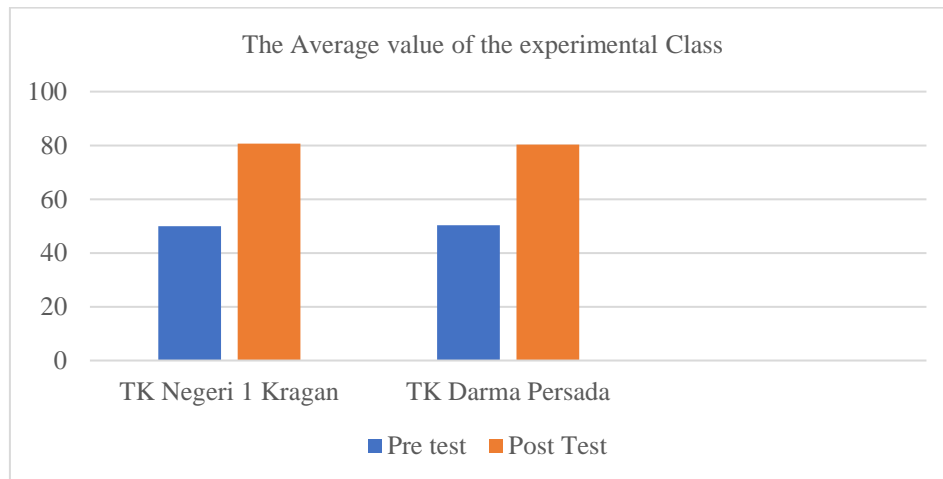
- $O_1$  = Experimental group pre-test results
- $O_2$  = Post-test results of the experimental group
- $O_3$  = Control group pre-test results
- $O_4$  = Control group post-test results
- $X$  = Treatment of Straw doll-assisted storytelling method

#### 4. Results

To determine whether or not the product of the development of storytelling methods is to conduct limited and large-scale trials carried out through pretest and posttest. N-Gain and t-test then analyze the results of these trials. The following is a graphic of large-scale test results.

Based on Fig. 3, it can be seen that the receptive language skills of children aged 5-6 years in group B at Public Kindergarten No. 1 Kragan, as experimental class 1 pretest results obtained an average score of 50.0, then after using the development of storytelling methods assisted by straw dolls got an average score of 80.7. In experimental class 2, namely group B at Darma Persada Kindergarten, the pretest results got an average score of 50.3, then after using the development of the straw doll-assisted storytelling method, got an average score of 80.3.

These results prove that the development of straw doll-assisted storytelling methods is feasible and effective for learning. Based on children's receptive language skills improved after treatment using the development of storytelling methods assisted by straw dolls (Ismawati & Santoso, 2022).



**Fig. 3 - N-gain cart result.**

A normality test is performed to test whether all data is normally distributed. The normality test uses the Kolmogorov-Smirnov formula and the Shapiro-Wilk test. To find out whether it is normal if the Sig > 0.05 is normal and if the Sig < 0.05 can be said to be abnormal. The statistical results of using the SPSS for Windows version 22 program for normality can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1 - Normality test.**

Tests of Normality							
Children's receptive language skills	Pretest Public Kindergarten Kragan	.233	15	.057	.886	15	.058
	Posttest Public Kindergarten Kragan	.232	15	.079	.858	15	.073
	Pretest Darma Persada Kindergarten	.178	15	.200	.940	15	.384
	Posttest Darma Persada Kindergarten	.193	15	.139	.872	15	.086
	Pretest Harapan Bangsa Kindergarten	.170	15	.200	.957	15	.635
	Posttest Harapan Bangsa Kindergarten	.196	15	.124	.935	15	.323
a. Lilliefors significance correction							

The results of the data normality test in Table 1 show that the significance value is greater than 0.05 at a significance level of 5%. Thus, it is concluded that the data on each class are normally distributed. This normality assumption is necessary because if normality is not met, the effectiveness test decision (t-test) obtained becomes invalid.

The homogeneity test measures whether both classes belong to a homogeneous population, meaning that all children are equally capable. The homogeneity test in this study serves to see the homogeneity of the control and experimental classes. Data from the calculation of homogeneity tests to two experimental and control classes obtained results as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2 - Homogeneity test.**

Test of Homogeneity of Variance					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Children's Receptive Language Skills	Mean	1.428	3	56	.244
	Median	1.157	3	56	.334
	Median and with adjusted df	1.157	3	54.001	.335
	Trimmed mean	1.440	3	56	.241

Based on the results of SPSS version 24.0 output, it is known that the results of the significance value (Sig) based on mean are  $0.244 > 0.05$  at the level of 5% so that it can be concluded that the abilities of children in the experimental and control classes are the same or homogeneous. Thus, one of the paired sample t-test requirements is met.

Furthermore, an effectiveness test was carried out using a paired-sample t-test to determine whether the development of straw doll-assisted storytelling methods was effective in improving the receptive language development of kindergarten children in Kragan District, Rembang Regency. The results of the paired-sample t-test analysis can be seen in Table 3.

**Table 3 - Paired samples of children's receptive language skills test.**

Paired Samples Test								
	Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pretest - Posttest Public Kindergarten Kragan	30.667	11.932	3.081	37.275	24.059	9.954	14	.000
Pretest - Posttest Darma Persada Kindergarten	30.000	12.101	3.124	36.701	23.299	9.602	14	.000
Pretest - Posttest Harapan Bangsa Kindergarten	5.667	2.582	.667	7.097	4.237	8.500	14	.000

Based on the paired samples t-test of receptive language skills of kindergarten children, it can be concluded that Kragan State Kindergarten (Experiment 1) obtained a Sig. (2-tailed) value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , or Tcount  $9.954 > \text{Table } 2.14479$ , then it can be interpreted that there is a difference in the average receptive language skills of children before and after using the development of the straw doll-assisted storytelling method. Thus, the development of the storytelling method is assisted by straw dolls effective in improving the receptive language skills of Group B children in Kragan State Kindergarten.

Darma Persada Kindergarten (Experiment 2) obtained the value of Sig. (2-tailed) obtained  $0.000 < 0.05$  or Tcount  $9.602 > \text{t-table } 2.14479$ , then it can be interpreted that there is a difference in the average receptive language skills of children before and after using the development of the straw doll-assisted storytelling method. Thus, it can be concluded that the development of the storytelling method is assisted by straw dolls effective in improving the receptive language skills of Group B children in Darma Persada Kindergarten. Based on the mean value (average) results in each class, both experimental and control classes can be seen in the paired sample statistics in Table 4.

**Table 4 - Paired sample statistics.**

Paired Samples Statistics				
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest Public Kindergarten Kragan	50.00	15	11.802	3.047
Posttest Kragan State Kindergarten	80.67	15	19.809	5.115
Pretest Darma Persada Kindergarten	50.33	15	12.022	3.104
Posttest Darma Persada Kindergarten	80.33	15	19.591	5.058
Pretest Harapan Bangsa Kindergarten	50.33	15	14.075	3.634
Posttest Harapan Bangsa Kindergarten	56.00	15	13.390	3.457

## 5. Discussion

Based on the results of paired samples statistics, it is known that the receptive language skills of children in the Experiment class (Public Kindergarten Kragan, Darma Persada Kindergarten), namely learning using the development of storytelling methods assisted by straw dolls, in Public Kindergarten Kragan, obtained a posttest score of 80.7; the posttest score at Darma Persada Kindergarten was 80.3. These results can be interpreted that the average score of children's receptive language skills from experimental classes at Public Kindergarten Kragan Darma Persada Kindergarten, which both use the development of straw doll-assisted storytelling methods, has relatively the same children's receptive language skills (Ismawati & Santoso, 2022).

Meanwhile, compared with the average score of children's receptive language skills in the control class at Harapan Bangsa Kindergarten, namely learning without using the development of storytelling methods assisted by straw dolls, a post-test value of 56.0 was obtained. These results were lower than those of the experimental class. So, children who are given learning using the development of straw doll-assisted storytelling methods have better receptive language skills than children who are not given learning using the development of straw doll-assisted storytelling methods (Mujahidah et al., 2021).

The development of the Straw doll-assisted storytelling method is expected to have benefits in addition to improving children's receptive language development; the development of the Straw doll-assisted storytelling method is expected to also improve other aspects of development (Syafii et al., 2021). This is because language development influences other aspects of child development. According to Sulianto & Yulianti (2016), development is one of the overall indicators of children's cognitive abilities related to success in school. Delays in developing early language skills can affect different functions of daily life. In addition to affecting personal social life, it will also cause difficulties in learning and workability. So, the development of storytelling methods assisted by straw dolls is needed to improve children's language development because if language development increases, it will also improve other aspects of child development.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the straw doll-assisted storytelling method has proven effective in improving receptive language skills in children; this is based on the average value of children's receptive language development from experimental classes both in Public Kindergarten Kragan No. 1 and in Darma Persada Kindergarten, which both use the development of straw doll-assisted storytelling methods, showing the development of children's receptive language relatively improved compared to the control class.

The teacher needs to develop the straw doll-assisted storytelling method, so the teacher is advised to apply the straw doll-assisted storytelling method, which has been scientifically proven feasible and effective. Based on the needs of teachers and children in learning to improve receptive language development, this shows a need for a more innovative learning method. Therefore, schools should be able to further motivate teachers to be creative in creating learning methods combined with learning media for language and learning methods for all aspects.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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