Strategies in Introduction Emergent Literacy for Early Childhood in Early Childhood Education

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ABSTRAK. *Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh rendahnya minat literasi pada anak dan adanya tuntutan dari orang tua agar anak mahir dalam membaca dan menulis. Maka tujuan penelitian ini untuk menganlisis strategi yang digunakan oleh pendidik dalam mengenalkan literasi awal pada anak usia dini. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi kasus kualitatif dengan subjek penelitian empat guru pendidikan anak usia dini di PAUD Purwakarta. Teknik pengumpulan data ini menggunakan wawancara. Hasil wawancara tersebut akan dianalisis menggunakan analisis Grounded Theory. Analsisi data ini menggunakan tiga tahapan, yaitu open coding, axial coding, dan selective coding. Adapun hasil dari penelitian ini bahwa strategi yang digunakan oleh pendidik dalam mengenalkan literasi pada anak usia dini, seperti menciptakan lingkungan yang kaya anak literasi meliputi memberikan label pada setiap benda, menyediakan dinding gambar atau tulisan, menyediakan pojok bacaan. Kemudian, mengajarkan literasi melalui bahan bacaan meliputi pemilihan buku atau bahan bacaan, pelibatan anak dalam kegiatan membaca, dan berbagi pengalaman tulisan. Tidak hanya itu, pendidik juga memberikan strategi melalui permainan, lagu, dan gerak, serta bermain peran.*

Kata Kunci: *Strategi, Literasi Awal, Anak Usia Dini*

ABSTRACT . *This research is motivated by the low interest in literacy in children and the demands from parents for children to be proficient in reading and writing. So, this study aims to analyze the strategies used by educators in introducing early literacy in early childhood. This study used a qualitative case study method with four early childhood education teachers at PAUD Purwakarta as subjects. This data collection technique uses interviews. The results of the interview will be analyzed using Grounded Theory analysis. This data analysis uses three stages, namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The results of this study are the strategies used by educators in introducing literacy to early childhood, such as creating an environment rich in children's literacy including labeling each object, providing wall pictures or writing, and providing a reading corner. Then, prohibiting literacy through reading materials includes selecting books or reading materials, involving children in reading activities, and sharing writing experiences. Not only that, but educators also provide strategies through games, songs, and movements, as well as role-playing.*

Keywords: *Strategies, Emergent Literacy, Teacher, Earthly Childhood Education*

INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamental and becomes the main basis for the growth and development of children in the next period because the age of the child is in the golden age. The most appropriate period is to optimize the talents and potential possessed by children (Mulyasa, 2012). Giving a stimulus is one that adults need to pay attention to (Puranik et al., 2018). Issues that are often discussed in the education environment, especially early childhood education, are literacy, and the ability to read and write in children. This literacy needs to be introduced to children from an early age because this is a basic ability for every individual who plays a major role in everyday life (Neuman & Jillian Knapczyk, 2022). The ability to read becomes a place for children to obtain information and knowledge as well as usage instructions for their lives. This reading includes the process of reading codes such as recognizing sounds, shapes of letters and words, and

understanding reading material. Then, the ability to write is a process similar to the ability to read but requires additional abilities such as fine motor skills (Byington & Kim, 2017). These reading and writing abilities are interrelated and influence one another so that when reading and writing skills develop optimally, they can have a positive impact on language skills and vocabulary (Thomas et al., 2020). Because according to Chambers et al., (2016), life will be quality when someone has high literacy but on the contrary when someone lives without having the ability to read and write then life will face various obstacles and difficulties.

Moreover, the literacy rate in Indonesia is still relatively low. This can be seen from *the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)* in 2018 which stated that Indonesia was in the 74th position for reading ability with a score of 371. If present, only about 25% of children in Indonesia can read at a minimum level (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2021). Seeing this, it is important to introduce literacy from an early age to children so that when they are literate in letters or printed writing, they do not experience difficulties in obtaining and managing information when making decisions (Neuman, 2017). The introduction of literacy to children starts with things that are closest to the child's life or simple things (Lonigan, 2015). This ability to read is not always with activities that involve reading materials, such as books, but reading activities can be done through the exploration of the surrounding environment (Puranik et al., 2018). Apart from that, this writing activity does not always have to hold a pencil and form a letter or word on paper, but the crossing-out activity carried out by this child is one of the stages of writing (Thomas et al., 2020). However, parents often demand that their children be able to read and write as well as adults so that children do not only need to understand the concept of literacy through play, but the introduction of literacy requires separate reading and writing activities so that they have proficiency in reading and writing when they graduate from school. early childhood education programs.

The demands placed by parents on children's literacy create confusion for children related to understanding literacy. So it is not uncommon for parents' expectations and demands to force children and educators to emphasize that the ability to read, write and count is limited to conventional contexts. Even though in introducing this literacy, of course, it needs to be adjusted to the characteristics and needs, and interests of the child. This is by a circular letter given by the Ministry of National Education, Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education Management, which outlines that the introduction of reading, writing, and arithmetic to children must be carried out through an approach based on the stages of child development (Kemendikbud, 2019). Thus, at the early childhood education level, it is not recommended to teach literacy separately but can introduce it through fun activities such as playing activities because children are in the world of play. Playing is an approach used at the early childhood education level because through these activities children can learn various skills and concepts, including literacy (Roskos, 2019).

Based on these problems, of course, roles and environments are needed that can support early literacy in children. Children's reading and writing interests will increase depending on their environment, when the environment has good reading and writing habits, children will also be interested in doing these activities or vice versa. (Dennis & Horn, 2011) . To increase interest in reading and writing in children and realize the demands of parents, educators need to prepare effective and appropriate strategies for children so that they can provide knowledge to children not only cognitive but affective and psychosomatic which are useful for readiness at the next level of education. This strategy is often referred to as the pattern or steps provided by educators in

carrying out learning that follows the characteristics and conditions of the child, school, and environment (Neuman, 2017). So the creativity of educators in providing strategies is needed to stimulate children so that children are interested in reading activities. Previous studies discussing educator strategies in developing literacy in early childhood education were conducted by Fitria et al. (2022) in his research used the survey method with a total of 30 teachers as research subjects. The results of this study describe that educators develop children's literacy using story books and pictures. This study differs from research methods and focuses on analyzing strategies used by educators to introduce early literacy in early childhood. Thus, this study aims to describe educator strategies in the introduction of early literacy in early childhood.

METHOD

The design of this study uses a qualitative approach to understand the strategies given by educators in the introduction of early literacy in early childhood. In addition, this approach is carried out to provide descriptions and descriptions related to the literacy strategies applied by educators in depth based on the meaning of those who experience them. In addition, the research design used in this study is a case study because researchers can comprehensively describe various aspects of individuals, groups, or social situations through this design. Researchers involved four educators in Purwakarta Regency. The choice of subject for this study was because the four educators had dozens of years of experience teaching early childhood education and one of them was active in activities related to literacy so they had more or less experience in introducing literacy to early childhood. Then, the researcher collected data through open and in-depth interviews with four Early Childhood Education educators to find the strategies used by them in introducing early literacy. The interview will be recorded using a voice recorder to make it easier for researchers to transcribe oral data into writing.

The data obtained through the interview results will be transcribed, read back, and sorted to obtain accurate data. The data will be analyzed using grounded theory analysis. The analysis in this study consisted of three stages, namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Kathy Charmaz, 2006). At the open coding stage, the researcher will assign a label or category to each event or view. Then this axial coding is the stage where the researcher groups or categorizes the data to form the main themes that can describe the educator's strategy in introducing early literacy to children. Then the last stage, reading back the data that has been analyzed to obtain the validity of the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of research conducted by researchers related to early literacy recognition strategies in early childhood through interviews, several strategies used by educators were obtained as follows.

Creating a Literacy-Rich Environment

Creating an environment rich in literacy is important in developing early childhood literacy. This conditioned environment with a variety of writing or images can help foster children's interest in writing and read in children (Puranik et al., 2018). So that educators will provide and create an environment that can stimulate children's sensitivity to symbols, signs, letters, and words. But on the contrary, if the environment is not supportive, this will make children feel they don't need to read so

this environment can be a factor in growing children's interest in knowing literacy (Neuman, 2019). He added the family environment and school environment are the first literacy environments for children so that adults play an important role in creating a literacy-rich environment. Some of the strategies used by educators in creating a literacy-rich environment are as follows.

Labeling of objects

Labeling every object in the classroom environment is one of the strategies used by educators to introduce literacy to children. This labeling is in the form of providing a variety of toys and objects that can help children recognize words or letters so that they can add to the child's vocabulary. Educators will label each object's name in the classroom environment, such as blackboards, shelves, chairs, tables, doors, windows, cupboards, and others. This is in line with Neuman (2019) that children will start learning literacy when they get facilities to develop insights, such as symbols or printed writing in their surroundings.

Provides a wall of words and pictures

Providing a wall of words and pictures in each class can be one way to create a literacy-rich environment because this wall can contain writing or pictures that are the work of children. So, educators will ask children to make a project in the form of writing or pictures based on their observations. Apart from that, educators will display several posters containing matters related to literacy, such as letters of the alphabet, month names, angel names, and others. This is done so that children know and understand these names. The presence of printed writing in the classroom environment can encourage children to voluntarily interact. In addition, it also increases the number and quality of literacy in children (Johnson & Eberle, 2015).

Provide a Class Reading Corner

Providing a reading corner in this class is a means for children to develop their interest and love for reading and writing. This reading corner is used by educators to display various collections of reading materials, and various other media related to literacy. This reading material is in the form of books that have various themes so that children have broad insights and children can imagine through these books. Books provided by educators also do not only content writing but also contain pictures or illustrations. Not only that, but educators also provide pillows, and dolls to make this reading corner more interesting and fun for children. The purpose of providing a reading corner is to become a place for children to choose, read, and listen to stories from the books they like (Novrani et al., 2021). So that educators need to make better use of the space available in the classroom, maybe one of them is by creating a corner or corner equipped with a variety of media to support literacy (Neuman, 2017). Media that needs to be provided in this reading corner are in the form of open bookshelves filled with various reading books, small sofas, children's sized tables and chairs, paper and markers, papas and magnetic letters, puppets and a stage for hand puppet shows (Neuman, 2019). These media are needed to support children in speaking, singing, reading, writing, and playing (Neuman et al., 2020).

Teaching Literacy Through Reading Materials

Based on the results of interviews conducted with PAUD educators, reading books is a media that is often used to introduce and improve literacy in children. According to Hume et al. (2016) that books are good learning media for early childhood because books are not only in the form of

writing but can also contain pictures or illustrations so it is not surprising that this book can be a fun medium for children. In addition, the experience gained through reading this book can build positive things for children now and in the future (Mihai et al., 2015). It can be seen that when children have experience with books, children will begin to develop an understanding of printed writing, such as children knowing that books are read from top to bottom and from right to left and they realize that every printed text has a meaning (Svensson et al. al., 2021).

Interactions carried out by educators and children with books which include asking a question and taking pictures of this storyline can support children's language development (Neuman et al., 2017). It can be seen that when children read books they will ask questions related to what kind of storyline and why it happened. Because according to Dennis & Horn, (2011), this interaction is a good thing for children to learn a language even though children only listen to stories presented by other people or when they read them themselves. Not only the interactions carried out by educators but educators also pay attention to attitudes and the way educators interact with children around books can have an influence on children's interests and responses to literacy, including reading and writing (Hume et al., 2016). In reading activities through this book, educators use several strategies for early childhood to introduce literacy including selecting books, involving children in reading books together, reading big books aloud, and sharing experiences reading books.

Book Selection

Selection of this book is an important component in reading activities which is often neglected by some parties, so it is not uncommon for educators to dictate or choose books without thinking about the opinions or views of children. Even though the selection of this book aims to make the story related to everyday experiences. In addition, educators also provide a variety of reading materials for children to make it easier for children to access the types of books they want to choose. In providing this reading material educators pay attention to several things such as stories that are by the characteristics, development, and age of the child, and pay attention the storyline in the book must be strong, clear, and make sense because how many early children are in the pre-operational stage where they still think symbolic level so that they construct experiences through concrete things (Mihai et al., 2015; Santrock, 2012). The length of the book and the number of words on each page are also a matter of consideration for educators because children's attention and focus are limited to around 10-15 minutes so when the book is provided there are too many words, this will lead to behavior or attitudes that are inappropriate or unwanted. , like bored (Dennis & Horn, 2011). So according to Puranik et al (2018), educators can take their time to choose books that suit their interests and concerns because choosing books involving children can make children actively involved in their activities.

Involving Children in Joint Book Reading Activities

Reading books together by involving children in these activities is a strategy often used by educators. Reading books used by educators are books that have pictures or illustrations in them. The use of picture books can help children recognize environments and situations that are different from their own. This picture book can also provide support to them in terms of learning because this picture book is colorful which makes it easy for children to understand and enrich their experiences (Neuman et al., 2017). According to Allor & McCathren (2003), Books that contain pictures and text can make it easy for children to observe every letter and symbol

contained in the book. Reading books together is not just reading stories to children, but rather conversations between educators and children (Neuman, 2019). So that this activity becomes an interaction between educators and children which is translated into discussions and talks. Even so, according to Dennis & Horn (2011) to encourage good conversation, it is necessary to pay attention to several directions, namely completion, recall, open directives, use of question words (why who, what, where), and distance.

In reading this joint book, educators follow the directions previously described. This completion means the child completes the missing words to complete a sentence in the story. For example, the educator will show a picture book and then ask the child "white rabbit, white rabbit ..." then the educator gives the child the opportunity to complete the sentence by asking the question again "what do you see?". This completion is done after the educator has heard the book more than once. Then, the educator will give the child the opportunity to repeat words or sentences so that they recall the storyline by asking some questions such as what happened when or did you remember what they did. This submission is to take back the contents of the story that has been read before. Apart from that, educators provide opportunities for children to respond openly related to stories, not just one or two answers, and educators also provide questions openly to get more complex answers, not just yes or no. Generally, educators use interrogative sentences, according to the children, what do you think, or what part of the story do you like. Then, this distance is intended for educators to connect stories with the experiences or backgrounds of children. The goal is to make it easier for educators to tell the contents of the book.

Sharing Experiences in Writing

This strategy of sharing experiences in writing is also a concern for educators, especially when children are interested in printed writing in a story. Children's interest in printed writing can provide convenience and faster accessibility for learning printed writing (Thomas et al., 2020). To develop children's awareness and experience of writing, educators use it in writing or orally by paying attention to three components, such as questions related to printed writing, comments or responses to printed writing, and tracing writing using fingers when reading (Dennis & Horn, 2011). ; Puranik et al., 2018)

Questions and comments related to this printed writing by providing differences in writing on book pages because often children do not see the slightest difference related to writing so educators need to provide a stimulus to get a response from children. In addition, educators do writing lessons using fingers to connect children with the letters or words that are being read. According to Thomas et al (2020) pointing to a word or letter using their fingers can help children recognize and maybe make children start reading these words themselves. Apart from that, sharing experiences with writing is also a strategy for children to begin to be aware of and pay attention to writing so that they know that books do not only have pictures, but also letters, words, and sentences that are put together which will later become a story (Gerde et al. ., 2012).

Games, Songs, and Movement

Games, songs, and movement are the initial strategies for educators to introduce literacy to children because the child's world is a world of play. Apart from that, through playing children will not feel like learning, moreover playing is done voluntarily without any coercion from adults (Johnson & Eberle, 2015). The introduction of literacy through games, songs, and movements is presented by the learning material independently using learning media or without learning media.

This is in line with Neuman et al. (2020) outline that this play activity can be an appropriate medium for learning and developing children's literacy. Educators carry out these play activities not only in the classroom but educators also use the environment outside the classroom as a place to carry out play activities. Of course, playing provides opportunities for children to develop and improve communication and social interaction between children and helps them to be able to explore the tools and materials available in the environment (Roskos, 2019).

In this play activity, educators will present a variety of learning media that can support the introduction of children's literacy, for example using letter puzzles where children are asked to arrange letters and then the teacher will ask the child the sound and shape of the letters. After the child starts to recognize the shapes and sounds of letters, the teacher does a touch-and-say game. This game is to see how far children understand and know the shapes and sounds of letters. Then another game, writing letters on the back, the sky, or in the sand. Not only that, but educators also introduce literacy through songs related to literacy such as the ABC song followed by movement. To introduce literacy to children, it is necessary to provide activities that can stimulate children's interactions, enrich vocabulary, train sounds, and develop knowledge related to printed writing (Bingham et al., 2017).

Role Playing

This literacy introduction does not only use several learning media but requires direct involvement from the child so that the child can practice communication, pronouncing the sound of words, and language skills. Playing this role is a way to train children's language skills and has a positive impact on improving early academic skills in children (Neuman & Jillian Knapczyk, 2022; Roskos, 2019). In addition, role play is an environment that can train children's experience of print writing and train narrative skills (Mihai et al., 2015). By playing this role, children can describe the value of real play plans that can help children self-regulate, behave, and remember goals or roles in this play activity (Roskos, 2019). One of the role plays carried out by children at this school is usually related to the things closest to the child, such as activities in places to eat. Playing roles in the dining area, some children act as restaurant employees and buyers. The media to be used are menu books, pencils, and notebooks. The child who acts as a buyer will see the menu and place an order, while the child who acts as a waiter will write down the order. The activities of choosing, determining, and writing orders are activities that can develop literacy. According to Allor & McCathren (2003) in choosing a theme for this role play, it must be concrete and close to the child's experience, interesting so that the child gains a lot of experience. Apart from that, educators need to remember that the selection of topics or themes must be left to the child so that the educator acts as a friend for the child to discuss (Puranik et al., 2018).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, researchers found several strategies used by educators in introducing literacy to early childhood, such as creating an environment rich in literacy for children and teaching literacy through reading materials, games, songs, movement, and role-playing. In creating a literacy-rich environment, educators label each object, provide walls with writing and pictures, and provide reading corners to help foster children's interest and interest in writing and reading. In addition, educators teach through reading materials by asking children to choose reading materials, involving children in reading activities, and sharing experiences with writing because when

children have experience with books, children will begin to develop an understanding of printed writing, such as children knowing that books are read from top to bottom and from right to left and they realize that every printed word has a meaning. Besides that, the next strategy is through games, songs, and movements as well as role-playing because through these strategies children are directly involved to provide opportunities for children to develop and increase vocabulary. Thus, educators have an important role in introducing literacy to early childhood, so it is necessary to implement this strategy properly.

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