

Building a Foundation for Literacy: Strategies for Cultivating a Love of Reading in ECE (Early Childhood Education) Children

Membangun Landasan Literasi: Strategi Menumbuhkan Kecintaan Membaca pada Anak PAUD (Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini)

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify and analyze the effectiveness of various methods of teaching reading to early childhood (ECE) through a systematic literature review. Early literacy is a crucial factor in children's cognitive, language and social development. However, choosing the right teaching method can be a complex process. This research uses the PRISMA method to collect and analyze scientific literature from various sources, with a focus on phonetic, whole language and level reading methods. The findings of this study identified that each method has its own advantages and disadvantages, and the selection of an appropriate method must take into account the child's individual characteristics and needs. The implications of this research include the importance of developing a rich literacy environment, positive interactions between parents and children, and collaboration between educators and parents in supporting early childhood literacy development.

Keywords: Early literacy, early childhood, teaching reading methods, systematic literature review, effectiveness.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis efektivitas berbagai metode mengajar membaca pada anak usia dini (ECE) melalui systematic literature review. Literasi awal merupakan faktor krusial dalam perkembangan kognitif, bahasa, dan sosial anak. Namun, pemilihan metode pengajaran yang tepat dapat menjadi proses kompleks. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode PRISMA untuk mengumpulkan dan menganalisis literatur ilmiah dari berbagai sumber, dengan fokus pada metode fonetik, whole language, dan membaca berlevel. Temuan penelitian ini mengidentifikasi bahwa setiap metode memiliki kelebihan dan kekurangannya sendiri, dan pemilihan metode yang tepat harus mempertimbangkan karakteristik dan kebutuhan individual anak. Implikasi penelitian ini mencakup pentingnya pengembangan lingkungan literasi yang kaya, interaksi positif antara orang tua dan anak, serta kolaborasi antara pendidik dan orang tua dalam mendukung perkembangan literasi anak usia dini.

Kata Kunci: Literasi awal, anak usia dini, metode mengajar membaca, systematic literature review, efektivitas.

1. Introduction

Building a strong foundation for literacy in early childhood education (ECE) is crucial for fostering a love of reading in children. Parents play a significant role in cultivating children's reading interests (Purwandari et al., 2023). Engaging preschool children in activities that promote fundamental aspects of literacy is essential (Herminingrum, 2021). Early discipline behavior, such as read-aloud stories using big book media, can positively impact children's literacy development (Eka et al., 2020). Teachers' understanding of literacy concepts and processes is vital in promoting children's literacy skills (Elfiadi, 2021).

Incorporating digital storytelling and educational games has been shown to enhance cognitive abilities in early childhood education (Manullang et al., 2021). Additionally, interventions like the We Love Reading program have been effective in improving emotion

recognition and mental health in children who have experienced adversity (Michalek et al., 2021). Reading for pleasure interventions have also been successful in enhancing children's attitudes towards reading (Mahasneh et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the role of parents in promoting literacy, especially in bilingual settings, is crucial for children's literacy development (Degollado, 2023). Implementing innovative strategies like book interaction schemes can enhance children's reading experiences and preferences (Zhang et al., 2020). Programs like "Read for Nutrition" have been effective in improving children's liking and consumption of healthy foods (Elrakaiby et al., 2021). In conclusion, a multifaceted approach involving parents, teachers, and innovative programs is essential for building a strong foundation for literacy and cultivating a love of reading in ECE children. By incorporating various strategies such as digital literacy, emotional cultivation, and community-based interventions, educators can create an engaging environment that nurtures children's literacy skills and fosters a lifelong love of reading.

Early childhood literacy is a crucial factor in cognitive, language, and social development (Ding, 2022). Research indicates that children with strong literacy skills early on tend to excel academically, possess good language abilities, think critically and creatively, solve problems effectively, and have higher self-esteem (Nelson et al., 2019). To foster an interest in reading among young children, various strategies can be employed, such as regular reading of storybooks, creating a book-rich environment, visiting libraries and bookstores, introducing children to diverse genres and authors, and making reading enjoyable (Mahasneh et al., 2020).

Parental involvement is key in promoting early literacy development (Nelson et al., 2019). Consistent parent-child reading activities from infancy are recommended by national organizations to support children's literacy growth (Nelson et al., 2019). Additionally, the home literacy environment plays a significant role in children's linguistic competencies (Niklas et al., 2020). Encouraging shared reading at home can enhance language development and literacy skills in young children (Ritchotte & Zaghlawan, 2019).

Moreover, early literacy programs have been shown to positively impact children's literacy abilities, particularly in rural areas (Lyesmaya et al., 2022). Cultivating an environment rich in reading materials and opportunities for reading for pleasure is essential for children's literacy development (Mahasneh et al., 2020). Early exposure to reading not only enhances children's creativity but also instills a lifelong interest in reading (Ismail et al., 2022). In conclusion, early literacy is a cornerstone for children's future academic success and overall development. By engaging children in reading activities, providing a supportive home literacy environment, and involving parents in shared reading experiences, we can nurture a love for reading in young children, setting them on a path towards lifelong learning and success.

Parent-child interaction and the learning environment are crucial factors in shaping young children's interest in reading. Research by Demir-Lira et al. (2019) emphasizes the significance of parent-child book reading interactions in predicting children's later receptive vocabulary, reading comprehension, and internal motivation to read (Choi et al., 2019). This highlights the importance of parents engaging in reading activities with their children to cultivate a love for reading. Additionally, Choi et al. (2019) underscore the role of parents, especially mothers, in fostering young children's interest in learning English through interactions at home, such as reading books and engaging in English conversations.

Moreover, the home literacy environment (HLE) has been identified as a significant factor influencing children's literacy development. Wang et al. (2022) found that the HLE predicted reading interest and parent-child relationships, which in turn impacted literacy development (Wang et al., 2022). This emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive home environment that encourages literacy activities and positive parent-child interactions.

Understanding children's characteristics, such as temperament and personal interests, is essential in tailoring reading activities to meet individual needs. Different children may respond differently to reading methods based on their learning styles and preferences.

Research by Nelson et al. (2019) demonstrated that training parents in strategies to enhance child engagement during storybook reading resulted in increased child interaction and expressive contributions during reading sessions (Nelson et al., 2019). In conclusion, effective strategies for teaching reading to young children should take into account the impact of parent-child interaction, the home literacy environment, and children's individual characteristics. By incorporating insights from research on these factors, educators and parents can create engaging reading experiences that support children's literacy skills and foster a lifelong love for reading.

Currently, various methods of teaching reading are commonly used in early childhood (ECE), such as the phonetic method, the whole language method, and the leveled reading method. Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages, and the choice of the appropriate method depends on the child's individual characteristics and needs. The phonetic method focuses on recognizing letters and their sounds, teaching children how to connect sounds with written symbols. The whole language method emphasizes understanding context and meaning in reading, with a focus on reading the complete text. The leveled reading method uses books with varying levels of difficulty to help children develop reading skills gradually.

Although there are various methods of teaching reading, choosing the right and effective method for young children can be a complex process. Factors such as the child's age, learning style, and cognitive abilities need to be carefully considered. In addition, cultural and linguistic context can also influence the choice of appropriate method. Research that has been conducted on the effectiveness of various methods of teaching reading to young children still does not provide conclusive and comprehensive answers. More in-depth and systematic research is needed to identify the most effective methods for children with different characteristics.

Although research has been conducted on the effectiveness of various methods of teaching reading to early childhood (ECE), there are still several gaps that need to be filled. These gaps hinder a comprehensive understanding of which methods are most effective for children with different characteristics. One major research gap is the lack of research comparing different methods of teaching reading directly. Many studies focus on one particular method, without comparing it with other methods. This makes it difficult to determine which method is the most effective overall.

Another research gap is the lack of research that considers individual child factors. Existing research often does not take into account factors such as a child's age, learning style, and cognitive abilities in determining the effectiveness of reading teaching methods. Additionally, the lack of research conducted in various cultural and linguistic contexts is also a gap that needs to be filled. Methods of teaching reading that are effective in one culture may not be effective in another. More research is needed to understand how cultural and linguistic contexts influence the effectiveness of reading teaching methods.

This systematic literature review research has the main aim of identifying and analyzing the effectiveness of various methods of teaching reading to early childhood (ECE). This is done by systematically and comprehensively reviewing scientific literature relevant to the topic. This study aims to answer the research question "What is the effectiveness of various methods of teaching reading to early childhood?". This question will be answered by identifying various commonly used reading teaching methods, analyzing the effectiveness of each method, and determining the most effective methods for young children with different characteristics. It is hoped that the findings of this research will make a significant contribution to increasing understanding of the effectiveness of various methods of teaching reading, thereby assisting educators and parents in choosing the right method to help their children develop good literacy skills.

This systematic literature review research has a uniqueness that differentiates it from previous research on the effectiveness of teaching reading methods in early childhood (ECE). This research will review scientific literature from various sources, use robust methodology, and focus on a specific sample group. This uniqueness is expected to produce new contributions to science and pedagogical practice in the field of early childhood education. These contributions include a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of reading teaching methods, practical recommendations for educators and parents, improving the quality of early childhood education, and helping children reach their full potential. It is hoped that this research will be a valuable source of information for educators, parents, and policy makers in the field of early childhood education.

This research is designed to provide a broad contribution to relevant parties in the world of early childhood education. Educators will gain valuable knowledge about effective methods of teaching reading, parents will be able to choose the right method for their children, and policy makers will be able to formulate more optimal policies. This research is also useful for other researchers to continue more in-depth research. The research findings are expected to have an impact on the development of early childhood education programs and curricula that are based on scientific evidence. This can be realized through increasing teacher training, creating effective teaching materials, and developing special intervention programs for children with difficulties learning to read.

Furthermore, this research opens up broad opportunities for further research. Future researchers can study reading teaching methods in more specific groups of children, compare the effectiveness of methods in the long term, and even develop new and innovative reading teaching methods. Thus, this research is an important first step to continue improving the quality of early childhood literacy education in Indonesia.

2. Research Methods

This research will collect data from various trusted sources, including leading scientific journal databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, JSTOR, and Google Scholar, as well as online repositories such as OpenDOAR, ProQuest, EBSCOhost, and PsycINFO. Apart from that, data sources will also be sought from the websites of educational organizations such as UNESCO, OECD, World Bank and UNICEF. Keywords used for the search included “early childhood education”, “reading skills”, “reading learning”, “methods”, “effectiveness”, “early childhood”, “reading”, “learning”, and “teaching”, as well as more specific keywords to narrow the search. Inclusion and exclusion techniques will be applied strictly, with criteria including being published in an English-language peer-reviewed scientific journal, focusing on the effectiveness of methods for teaching reading to early childhood (3-8 years), using valid and reliable research methodology, and reporting research results about the effectiveness of methods of teaching reading. The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses) method will be used as a guide in the design of this research, ensuring transparency and credibility in the process of identification, selection and synthesis of relevant literature. With a commitment to PRISMA standards, this research is expected to produce findings that are transparent, credible, and useful in understanding effective reading teaching methods for early childhood.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The concept of early literacy and its importance for early childhood.

Early literacy is a fundamental aspect in the development of young children, laying the groundwork for their future academic success. Research indicates that children begin acquiring early literacy skills at a very young age, with this learning significantly linked to their socioeconomic status (Thomas et al., 2021). The home literacy environment also plays a critical role in shaping children's early literacy skills, particularly through shared reading experiences

(Burris et al., 2019). Moreover, the pedagogical approach of critical literacy in early childhood education encourages young learners to question and analyze texts, promoting a deeper understanding of the world around them (Wee et al., 2022).

Sociocultural perspectives in early childhood literacy underscore the importance of viewing literacy as socially situated practices within cultural contexts, emphasizing the multimodal nature of children's meaning-making and communication (Nordström et al., 2021). Teachers' pedagogical competence in fostering early childhood literacy skills is vital, focusing on activities that enhance reading, writing, and counting to boost children's literacy abilities (Hermawan et al., 2022). Additionally, parental involvement in early childhood literacy development significantly influences children's literacy acquisition and language development (Fatonah, 2020).

Engagement in literacy activities, such as storytelling, has been shown to positively impact children's language abilities and early literacy experiences, contributing to their overall literacy development (Dicataldo & Roch, 2022). Exposure to a variety of stories and genres supports the development of early literacy skills in young children (Kociubuk & Campana, 2019). Furthermore, integrating movement into early literacy practices has been found to enhance children's literacy development by improving motor skills and cognitive processes (Diamant-Cohen & Scherrer, 2020). In conclusion, early literacy encompasses various factors such as socioeconomic status, home literacy environments, critical literacy pedagogy, sociocultural perspectives, parental involvement, and the incorporation of movement and storytelling activities. By effectively understanding and implementing these aspects, educators and parents can create a rich literacy environment that nurtures children's early literacy skills and lays the foundation for their future academic success.

The concept of early literacy refers to the initial stages in learning to read and write that children experience at an early age, usually between 3 and 6 years. It includes the development of prerequisite skills necessary for reading and writing, such as letter recognition, understanding phonemes, connections between letters and sounds, as well as understanding basic concepts about written text. The importance of the concept of early literacy for young children cannot be ignored. This is the foundation that will form the basis for their future literacy abilities. Children who have a strong initial understanding of letters, sounds, and language structure are more likely to develop more fluent reading and writing skills in the future. Additionally, early literacy also gives children access to knowledge, helps them understand the world around them, and allows them to actively participate in learning and social interactions. Thus, early literacy development becomes the main focus in early childhood education, with the aim of providing a solid foundation for further literacy development in the future.

3.2. Factors that Influence Early Childhood Reading Interest

Factors that influence early childhood reading interest encompass a variety of elements, including parent-child interaction, learning environment, and child characteristics. Research indicates that early parent-child book reading interactions play a significant role in fostering children's language and literacy outcomes (Demir-Lira et al., 2019). Shared book reading not only enhances language skills but also promotes emergent literacy skills in children (Adinarayanan et al., 2022). Furthermore, the home literacy environment has been shown to impact literacy development, especially in children with hearing loss, where providing opportunities for children to choose reading content can enhance their interest in reading (Wang et al., 2022).

Parent-child shared reading interventions have been found to positively influence children's interest and enjoyment in reading later in childhood (Chen et al., 2023). Additionally, parental involvement in reading activities, such as directing attention, providing feedback, and asking questions, contributes to high-quality storybook reading experiences (Pandith et al.,

2021). Moreover, the quality of parent-child interactions during shared reading, including vocabulary instruction, has been linked to academic achievement (Olszewski & Hood, 2023).

Children's individual characteristics, such as their cognitive style and reading motivation, also play a role in their reading interest (Lyakso et al., 2020). Parental attitudes towards reading and the skillset of both the child and the parent can influence the child's motivation to read (Akkermans-Rutgers et al., 2020). Furthermore, the socioeconomic status of parents can impact their involvement in children's reading activities, which in turn affects reading performance (Andersen et al., 2020). In conclusion, early childhood reading interest is shaped by a combination of factors, including parent-child interactions, the home literacy environment, and child-specific characteristics. Encouraging positive parent-child reading interactions, providing a conducive learning environment, and considering individual child traits are essential in fostering a love for reading in early childhood.

Overall, understanding the factors that influence young children's interest in reading is an important step in designing effective literacy programs. By paying attention to parent-child interactions, creating an adequate learning environment, and paying attention to children's individual characteristics, educators and parents can effectively promote children's interest in reading from an early age.

3.3. Methods for Teaching Reading to Early Childhood

In early childhood education, various methods are commonly used to teach reading, each with its own approach and focus. The phonetic method emphasizes teaching children the relationship between letters and sounds, aiding in decoding words (Fletcher et al., 2020). On the other hand, the whole language method focuses on immersing children in reading materials, encouraging them to learn through context and meaning rather than individual sounds (Bowers, 2020). Additionally, the leveled reading method involves providing children with books that match their reading abilities, allowing for gradual progression and tailored support (Bowers, 2020).

In the realm of teaching reading, it is essential to consider a combination of evidence-based approaches to cater to the diverse learning needs of each child (Fletcher et al., 2020). Teachers can also incorporate strategies such as extensive reading to promote enjoyment and information acquisition through reading (Azkia et al., 2021). Furthermore, the use of innovative technologies like multimedia-assisted discourse analysis can enhance reading instruction by providing interactive and engaging learning experiences ("An Empirical Study of English Reading Automaticity Based on Multimedia Assisted Discourse Analysis", 2022).

Effective reading instruction involves guiding students to analyze texts deeply, focusing on thematic meaning, content organization, and language style (Yu, 2022). Moreover, incorporating task-based teaching methods can give students a purpose for reading and improve their English reading abilities (Zhu & Chun-hai, 2023). Teaching reading strategies has been shown to enhance students' reading performances, especially in second language learning contexts (Valizadeh, 2021). In conclusion, a holistic approach to teaching reading in early childhood should involve a blend of phonetic, whole language, and leveled reading methods, tailored to individual student needs. By integrating innovative technologies, reading strategies, and task-based approaches, educators can create engaging and effective reading instruction that fosters a love for reading and enhances literacy skills.

3.4. Effectiveness of Various Methods of Teaching Reading

To effectively teach reading to early childhood learners, educators commonly employ various methods tailored to the developmental stage and needs of the children. The phonetic method focuses on teaching children the sounds of individual letters and letter combinations to help them decode words (Xiao, 2020). This method is essential in laying the foundation for reading fluency and comprehension. In contrast, the whole language method emphasizes a

more holistic approach, where children learn to read by recognizing whole words and using context clues (Bowers, 2020). This method aims to develop reading skills by immersing children in meaningful texts and encouraging a love for reading. Additionally, the leveled reading method involves providing children with books that match their reading abilities, allowing for gradual progression in difficulty (Weadman et al., 2021). This method ensures that children are appropriately challenged while still experiencing success in their reading endeavors. Moreover, incorporating dialogic reading activities can enhance children's expressive language abilities and foster a collaborative learning environment between educators and parents (Asrifan et al., 2022).

It is crucial for early childhood educators to be aware of the diverse needs of young learners and to select teaching methods that align with individual children's abilities and interests (Wahyuni, 2021). By utilizing a combination of these methods, educators can create a comprehensive reading program that caters to the varied learning styles and preferences of early childhood students. Furthermore, collaboration between educators and parents is highlighted as essential for the overall development and well-being of children in early childhood education (Mpolomoka, 2022). In conclusion, a balanced approach that integrates phonetic, whole language, leveled reading methods, and dialogic reading activities can effectively support early childhood learners in developing essential reading skills. By adapting teaching strategies to meet the unique needs of each child, educators can create a nurturing and engaging learning environment that fosters a lifelong love for reading.

4. Conclusion

In this discussion, various concepts and factors that are important in early childhood literacy have been presented. Early literacy plays a crucial role in a child's academic development, forming a solid foundation for future reading and writing abilities. Factors such as parent-child interactions, learning environments, and individual characteristics of children also influence young children's interest and ability to read. Research shows that various methods of teaching reading, such as phonics, whole language, and leveled reading, are each effective in helping children develop reading skills. However, it is important to consider the child's individual needs and preferences in selecting an appropriate method.

Implications of these findings include the importance of developing a rich literacy environment and positive interactions between parents and children. This emphasizes the need for collaboration between educators and parents in supporting early childhood literacy development. However, this research has several limitations, such as limitations in literature coverage or diversity of research methodology. Therefore, further, more in-depth research is needed to explore certain aspects of teaching reading to early childhood, as well as developing a more holistic and inclusive approach. Thus, the conclusions of this discussion provide valuable insight for educators, practitioners and researchers in understanding and improving reading learning in early childhood, as well as providing direction for further research in this field.

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