

LEARNING STRATEGIES OF LOCAL CULTURAL LITERACY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD


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Abstract: *The rapid development of the times resulted in the displacement of local culture. Literacy is present as one of the steps to foster a sense of love for the local local culture. The purpose of this study is to describe learning strategies of local cultural literacy in early childhood. This study uses a qualitative approach, with descriptive analysis method. The subjects of the study were 40 children from grades B1 and B2 and 8 teachers, and school principals at the KB TK Islam Al-Azhar 54 Pekanbaru, which were determined by the researchers by purposive sampling. The data analysis technique uses the interactive model from Milles and Huberman, through the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions and verification. The results of the research show the need for a conducive environment, interesting methods and media, adequate facilities and infrastructure, as well as teachers who are always creative and innovative. A strategy is needed so that the goals to be achieved can be more easily implemented. The implications of the strategies undertaken will help increase children's understanding of Malay culture, improve children's language skills, creativity and curiosity so that they become quality individuals in the future. The role of parents is also very large in fostering a sense of love for local culture, especially Malay Riau.*

Keywords: *Literacy, Local Culture, Strategy*

A. Introduction

Local culture is a heritage that is very important to protect and preserve because it forms the identity of a nation (Kurnianto et al., 2020). However, with the development of the times and globalization, these local cultural values began to be shifted and forgotten. Local culture seems to be forgotten only because of new culture, which is now much better known to the younger generation, local culture is eliminated in its own land and foreign culture becomes the winner (Aisara et al., 2020), This is especially the case for the younger generation, including early childhood who do not yet understand and know their culture well (Rachman & Azizah, 2022).

Currently, children's interest in local culture in Indonesia is decreasing. Children know more about foreign culture than local culture. Loss of love and desire to preserve the culture of their own nation (Widodo et al., 2020). This is caused by various factors such as the influence of social media and popular culture which are dominated by foreign cultures, lack of understanding and awareness of the importance of preserving local culture, and lack of support from the surrounding environment to learn and preserve local culture. There have been many cases of loss of national culture which have been stolen due to the indifference of the next generation (Shomiyatun, 2019).

Protecting the culture of the Indonesian nation is the responsibility of all citizens. One strategy to foster a sense of love and concern for local culture is to integrate it with education. Introducing local culture through education can be done through literacy activities. Literacy has many benefits, one of the most important types of literacy in children at an early age is literacy. Samsiyah explains the benefits of literacy, namely as the key to learning science, understanding and improving reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, increasing creativity and imagination, increasing empathy, concentration and focus, making children more relaxed and less stressed. and develop interest and entertainment (Samsiyah, 2019). Understanding related to literacy is currently growing rapidly not only in reading and writing skills (Zakaria, 2020).

Dahlia explained that literacy is an important part of language development which is the key to being able to

communicate with the environment, both with the family, the school environment and the community (Dahlia et al., 2020). Entering the 21st century, every individual must have communication skills, therefore communication skills need to be developed from an early age (Arum et al., 2022). Literacy development must be balanced with developments in technology and information, because to be able to digest information and communication technology in this century, you must have good literacy skills (Tabroni et al., 2022).

Literacy in early childhood can prepare children's reading skills before entering the next level of education, the pre-reading process is stimulated in children according to the appropriate age stages (A. Amalia et al., 2022). In addition, literacy can also help improve critical and creative thinking skills in children. Besides that, literacy in early childhood can also introduce social and emotional concepts to children, such as equality, cooperation, and tolerance (Baharun & Rizqiyah, 2020) which says that the school literacy movement aims to build the character of students. The character developed refers to local cultural wisdom not to forget national identity. In line with this (Wunangun, 2020) explained that local wisdom literacy can improve character education for children. Literacy is not only important for students, but also very important for parents and the whole community (Desyandri, 2018).

The literacy problem is one of the problems that must receive special attention from the Indonesian people. This is because in the last few decades, the competitiveness of the Indonesian nation among other nations has tended to be less competitive. Indonesia is currently in a literacy culture crisis. The results of research by international survey institutions regarding literacy place Indonesia in the low category. Research conducted by the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2011 regarding literacy placed Indonesia in the low category (Nirmala, 2022).

The purpose of the cultural literacy learning strategy in early childhood is to increase children's understanding, appreciation, and concern for local culture, namely Malay culture (Hapsari et al., 2017) conveyed that the development of early childhood language literacy aims to help children build a literacy foundation

which will later become the basis of their reading skills. This also helps children prepare to enter formal education and helps children develop other skills. In the long term, this strategy is expected to have a positive impact on the progress of the nation and form a cultured and highly literate generation (Khairil et al., 2020). If young children are given facilities and encouragement to learn and love their local culture through literacy activities, they will become more connected to local culture and be able to understand cultural diversity in Indonesia, as well as improve their literacy skills.

Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting observations at the Al-Azhar 54 KB Pekanbaru Islamic Kindergarten which utilizes literacy activities as a way to foster a sense of love for local culture, namely Riau Malay culture. When invited to tell stories and ask questions about Malay culture, the children at the school were very enthusiastic and happy. Seeing the happiness and enthusiasm of the children when invited to tell stories about local culture in the area, researchers were interested in examining what strategies, media and methods teachers used to foster a love of literacy-based Malay culture.

B. Method

This research was conducted at Al-Azhar Islamic Kindergarten KB 54 Pekanbaru, researchers decided to conduct research at this institution because Al-Azhar Islamic Kindergarten uses literacy activities to foster a sense of love for Riau Malay culture. This research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method. The subjects of this research were teachers, kindergarten students B1, B2, totaling 40 children. Data collection uses observation and interviews (Lexy J, 2018).

The data sources in this research come from primary data, namely data obtained in the field and secondary data obtained from trusted sources, namely articles, magazines, books and trusted sites (Norita & Hadiyanto, 2021). The data analysis technique used is the Milles and Huberman interactive model. The stages in this research start from data collection, then data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions and verification (La Hewi, 2020). The research process began

with data collection through observations made on children. Then the researchers conducted interviews with 8 teachers and school principals regarding literacy activities that were integrated with strategies to foster love for Riau Malay culture. Next, the researcher carried out data reduction to classify the data obtained according to the research objectives. Then the researcher presented the data in the form of a short description and coded the data to make it easier at the next stage. The final step is to draw conclusions and verify the findings that have been made (Nurhayani & Nurhafizah, 2022).

C. Result and Discussion

Elizabeth (Yulia & Eliza, 2021) explained that literacy is a skill in language both orally, in writing and in communication. However, currently literacy is developing not only in the form of reading and writing but has penetrated the ability to understand, involve, use, analyze and transform knowledge (Liza et al., 2020). Good literacy development will have a positive impact on children's social emotional and cognitive development. Children with strong literacy skills are also better able to communicate their ideas, desires and emotions, which helps their social, emotional and cognitive growth (Basyiroh, 2018). The stages of literacy development in early childhood include information literacy, visual literacy, oral literacy, written literacy and cultural literacy (Sufiati & Paramita, 2021).

The results of research at the Al-Azhar 54 Islamic Kindergarten in Pekanbaru show that in order to foster children's love for local culture, namely Malay culture through literacy, effective strategies must be used starting from the learning environment, then the learning methods and media used. Al-Azhar Islamic Kindergarten uses various learning methods to increase children's enthusiasm for learning. Among them are the methods of singing, dancing, telling stories, storytelling, storytelling and field trip methods. All methods used must be based on the concept of learning through play. The strategies used by the teacher include direct learning, learning through play, involving children in play and learning activities, telling stories or storytelling can be used as a contribution in

introducing the basic concepts of literacy to children (Fahmi et al., 2020). The combination of image learning models, singing methods, and used media can develop and improve children's literacy skills (Dahlia et al., 2020).

Storytelling as a literacy method serves to stimulate the abilities and creativity of PAUD students. In that way, young children maintain their literacy environment without feeling burdened (Permatasari et al., 2017). In addition, the method presented to awaken a culture of literacy and love for the homeland for children can be through storytelling using hand puppets (Khairil et al., 2020). The various methods used by the teacher showed positive results, the children became more enthusiastic and passionate about getting to know Riau Malay culture. The field trip method is also one method that is said to be effective in fostering a love for local culture. In line with this, culture-based learning is an effort to preserve culture as a national asset which is introduced at an early age (ZR & Eliza, 2020). Field trip activities are one of the activities that can stimulate children's thinking power, invite children to see and read the circumstances around them. So that the cultural literacy taught can be more meaningful to always be remembered by children (R. Amalia & AH, 2019).

In addition to the method of course too it must also be accompanied by media that supports interactive learning. Teachers at Islamic Kindergarten Al-Azhar 54 Pekanbaru provide a reading corner which contains various books such as folk stories, fairy tales, big books, or books related to special foods from Riau and Riau customs. The strategy of using reading corners also increases literacy among Renah Jelm villagers. This activity was enthusiastically followed by local residents (Oktavia et al., 2022). In efforts to develop early childhood literacy, teachers can play a role in taking the time to read with children, reading interesting story books for children, telling stories about good character for children (Afnida & Suparno, 2020). Therefore, the role of the reading corner is very important in children's literacy activities.



Figure 1. Children's use digital media

Currently, early childhood are faced with digital media, so the right strategy is needed (Na'imah, 2022). At Al-Azhar 54 Islamic Kindergarten Pekanbaru, teachers also use digital media such as videos shown to children. Besides that, the teacher also makes media with picture cards related to Malay culture, such as various foods and drinks, as well as Malay traditional clothes (Nurhayani & Nurhafizah, 2022) describes the media used in developing early childhood literacy, including digital literacy media, ICT (Information and Communication Technology), picture story books, APE (Educative Game Tools), science books, learning videos, interactive media and word card media. Literacy strategies need to be carried out in various ways. one way that can be done is to apply literacy strategies in language learning based on local wisdom (Ediyono & Alfiati, 2019).

Beers said that literacy in schools should emphasize the following principles: (1) The development of literacy goes according to the stages of child development. (2) It is balanced in implementing literacy programs because each child has different needs. Therefore, reading strategies and types of texts read need to be varied and adapted to the level of education. (3) Literacy activities are carried out at any time. (4) Literacy activities develop a strong literacy-based classroom oral culture. (5) Being able to be at the forefront of developing a literacy culture to create a positive literacy culture in schools (Wahab, 2019).

Based on the results of observations on 10 subjects, the results showed that to achieve goals more effectively and efficiently by 20%, identify challenges and opportunities by

10%, measure success and impact by 10%, increase children's interest and appreciation by 40%, and help teachers build active learning 20%.

Without the right strategy, efforts to foster literacy-based love for local culture in early childhood may not be able to achieve the expected results. Literacy based on local wisdom can awaken a love for local culture which is introduced to children from an early age. (Joyo, 2018) said that the introduction of local wisdom can be a strength of literacy culture for children so they are not easily influenced by foreign cultures which are currently easily accessible to children. Furthermore, local cultural literacy learning strategies can be applied in various regions with various possibilities in their respective regions (Nurwahidah, 2017).

The right cultural literacy learning strategy will have many implications for children. The following are the implications of the strategies that have been carried out at the Al-Azhar 54 Islamic Kindergarten in Pekanbaru:

1. Increase understanding of local culture. Cultural literacy helps children to understand more deeply about Malay culture such as history, typical food and drinks, values and traditions, traditional games and handicrafts typical of Riau Malay culture. This can help children develop a sense of love and pride for Malay culture which is part of their identity.
2. Build curiosity, in the process of learning to read and write, children will find various stories, fairy tales, and books based on local stories of the people of Riau. This will arouse children's curiosity and interest in Malay culture.
3. Increase appreciation of Riau Malay art and literature. Literacy helps children to recognize and explore local arts and literature, such as poetry, rhymes, poems, rhymes, folk songs, folklore and Riau Malay dances. Ofcourse this can help children develop an appreciation and love for Malay art and literature which is rich in beauty and positive values.
4. Improving language skills, cultural literacy that is taught can help children develop better reading, writing and speaking abilities. Children can acquire strong language skills, which are very important for the next stage of development.
5. Increase creativity and imagination, through reading Malay folk stories children can learn to develop their imagination

- and creativity in expressing themselves. It can also help children build confidence in speaking and writing, as well as improve their language skills.
6. Forming good character and manners, Malay culture which is full of moral messages and advice teaches children to behave well, politely and respectfully to anyone both older and the same age. Children are taught to live together and help each other. So through Malay cultural habituation in literacy activities will form good character in children.
 7. The establishment of a positive relationship between teachers and parents, learning activities with the theme Riau Ku become a bridge between parents and teachers in stimulating children's development and shaping children's personalities. Literacy activities carried out by schools will not run optimally without the help of parents at home, who of course spend more time with their children. Fostering love through literacy activities can also divert children's habits from playing gadgets which are always a complaint by parents.

Rachman also explained the same thing, through cultural literacy children can learn to read and write and understand culture slowly. The added value of public trust has increased since literacy is based on local wisdom (A. Amalia et al., 2022). Children's creative, critical thinking abilities can also be developed through cultural literacy taught to children (R. Amalia & AH, 2019). Local wisdom-based literacy invites children to love the surrounding culture, as well as to preserve and instill Indonesian culture (Rachman & Azizah, 2022).

Efforts to introduce local culture or cultural literacy which was initiated by JAF and supported by various stakeholders including citizens, government and The world of education ultimately teaches local wisdom values as a means of literacy culture through a variety of strategies. Educational programs provide a vehicle for expression; there are various activities to appreciate works; invite children to identify the local culture of the area. Children are taught and guided to understand the meaning of local wisdom values. Apart from that, children are invited implementing local wisdom values in social life around the world which is global (Triwardhani et al., 2023).

Local culture is a culture that is in a village or in the midst of a community whose existence is recognized and owned by the surrounding community, because a culture is a differentiator from other regions. Culture that exists in an area is always inherited and passed down from one generation to the next (Widodo et al., 2020).

The beauty of this culture must be preserved and maintained properly. As the next generation, we are obliged to continue to preserve the cultures that we have, we can pass these cultures on to our children and grandchildren in the future, so that they can also know the cultures that we have and they can protect and preserve them, because by protecting and preserving something the culture in that area is a form of our love for Indonesia (Aisara et al., 2020).

D. Conclusion

Cultural literacy learning strategies to foster a sense of love for Malay culture are important because through strategies it will make it easier to achieve goals more effectively and efficiently, can plan the steps needed to increase children's interest and understanding of local culture. Have a clear strategy, be able to identify challenges and take advantage of existing opportunities more effectively. Through the strategy becomes a benchmark of success and evaluation. The strategy exists as an effort to increase children's interest in and appreciation of their culture. And can help teachers to build active learning in the classroom.

Implications of local cultural literacy learning strategies in early childhood, namely; increasing understanding of local culture, building curiosity, increasing appreciation of Riau Malay arts and literature. Improving language and reading skills, literacy in early childhood, can also help children develop better reading, writing and speaking skills. Increase creativity and imagination, through reading Malay folk stories form good character and manners, Malay culture full of moral messages and advice teaches children to behave well, politely, increases children's creativity and imagination and establishes positive relationships between teachers and parents.

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