Learning Model During Post Covid-19 Pandemic to Improve Early Childhood Language Development

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Abstract
Bold learning during Covid-19 causes a decrease in the quality of linguistic abilities in children because teachers cannot convey material contextually. This study aimed to analyze learning models that can be used to develop post-pandemic early childhood language skills or through face-to-face learning. This type of research is qualitative research, in which the study is carried out to understand events regarding what happened to a research subject. This phenomenological research approach seeks to let reality naturally in the research place at Nyai Ahmad Dahlan Kindergarten, Yogyakarta. The study results indicate a learning model to develop early childhood language by departing from changes in early childhood behavior in learning. Behavioral changes that lead to learning with an activity-based learning approach and multi-media-multi-method are the solutions offered in this study to improve children’s language development. It contributes to the knowledge of the learning model in the post-Covid-19 pandemic toward early childhood language development.

Keywords: early childhood language development; learning model post-covid-19 pandemic; early childhood

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Introduction
There is a period of rapid growth and development in early childhood; at that time, children also experience the developmental leap. Furthermore, this time is the right time to develop their language. This period is known by the term “The Golden Age,” a period that happens once and cannot be repeated (Amalia et al., 2019). It is named the Golden Age because, at this age, the ability of the brain to absorb information is extremely high; whatever the info has been given, it will strongly affect the children in the future (Prasetiawan, 2019). Childhood is a much more critical age than the next due to the abnormal development of intelligence, which significantly determines the quality of a human’s future growth (Trenggonowati & Kulsum, 2018).

Childhood is a crucial period in one’s life (Syahrul & Nurhafizah, 2022). As time goes by, children’s physical, motor, cognitive, language, social, and emotional aspects are sustainably growing (Latipah et al., 2020). For early childhood, learning is not only transferring knowledge from teacher to students but also paying attention to children’s
development and referring to six child developmental aspects (Bastian et al., 2022). Child development does not just appear, especially during a covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, it requires consistent training to reach this (Darmayanti et al., 2022).

Early childhood language development is significant as a communication tool for the child’s developmental stage, or it is known as the ability possessed by children (Alfiana & Kuntarto, 2020). 0-6 years old is the critical and golden age for parents and teachers to monitor child development (Ida Saraswati, 2015). Furthermore, parents are required to be aware of the importance of the child’s language development because, by language, a child can communicate with others well and convey intentions, thoughts, and notions. Social life is an individual ability to respond positively to their surrounding environment (Diswantika, 2022).

Over two years of the Covid-19 pandemic period, the government is obliged to online learning. This situation decreases the quality of children’s linguistic competency because of the lack of ability of the teachers to deliver materials contextually (Gusti, 2021).

Other things that cause the decrease in language development are the activity of developing a child’s language not carried out well due to some situations, like social distancing, the lack of interaction with others or the surrounding environment, and parents who are not aware of their child’s development due to the limitation of school activity carried out just a few days and being less optimal—because child’s language development needs more time to and requires to train and guide (Sihombing et al., 2021).

Some research has studied early childhood language development at school. Rizkiyana (2019) studied the media of the picture flashcard to improve early childhood language development in the kindergarten of Aisyiah Bustanul Athfal, Wates Gadingrejo Pringsewu. The classroom action research shows that the child's language development is excellent due to picture flashcards, which aligns with Sari et al. (2022), which studied teachers’ efforts to improve early childhood language development through online learning during a Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, previous research has been conducted, like the TPR (Total Physical Response) in early child language development. A Total Physical Response method is considered to stimulate students to develop the linguistic aspects of kindergarten students (Fadlan et al., 2021). Moreover, regarding this issue, it requires arranging the proper learning model. Resources-based learning is a model that maximizes the use of learning sources as tools for helping students to study. Previous studies have also used this model in the early childhood field's learning principles(Kurnia et al., 2015).

In Fact, there are barriers to improving child language development through online learning in the Covid-19 pandemic. Teachers still assume that the process of online learning to improve child language development seems to be successful, turning out that parents still meet some obstacles, such as finding it difficult to help their children at home like introducing the writing symbols, which is also affected because the student lives with his grandmother. Nonetheless, older people are unready to understand smartphone use in learning, like grandmother or grandfather who takes care of grandchildren. The network is unstable to use by students who live near the field and ricefield (Sari et al., 2022).

The precedent research shows that the focus of the current research is to discuss the effectiveness of the picture flashcard, Metode TPR (Total Physical Response), Resources based Learning for child language development, and to study the effort of the teacher to improve child language development online throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The current research has not yet discussed the learning model during the Covid-19 pandemic to improve child language development. Nevertheless, Tayeb (2017) said that the learning model functions as a manual for learning designers and educators designing and carrying out learning activities. This is the regard carried out in which students comprehensively understand the specific concept over logic reasoning in communication.
The finding about the learning model during the Covid-19 pandemic to improve early childhood language development in Nyai Ahmad Dahlanc Aisyiyah Kindergarten can be an alternative to the best practice learning model in the Covid-19 pandemic to improve linguistic development in early childhood. Theoretically, this study result can enrich early childhood linguistic mastery in kindergarten. Furthermore, this research is fundamental to providing the alternative learning model from the psychological perspective since previous research has not yet studied the educational psychology of child language development.

Methodology

The type of research used by the researcher is descriptive qualitative research that relies on primary data. Qualitative research is a study to comprehend events regarding what happened to the research subject, like the perception of the action, behavior, motivation, motivation, and others holistically, by the description in the form of language and words, in a context especially a natural one (Moleong, 2018). Qualitative descriptive research is a study used to describe a variable or more (independence) without comparing or associating one variable with another one (Sugiyono, 2009). Figure 1 is stage of research method.

![Figure 1. Stage of Research Method](image)

The research approach that the researcher uses in this study is a phenomenological approach that seeks to reveal reality naturally through questions; the research subjects tell the various dimensions of their experience related to one phenomenon or an event. In another source, it is said that the phenomenological approach is descriptively aimed at revealing the consciousness and the world of life. Primary data is the writing proof obtained directly from the field by the author. Secondary data is obtained indirectly from the area, for instance, magazines, documents, and other readings. Data collection technique, to get data that are needed, the researcher uses data collection methods associated with interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis technique, analyzing the data, is highly required for this research to obtain the result of the research to be used as a result of the study. Data analysis techniques, referred to as data processing, provide information on how to analyze the data collected. Data analysis techniques contain, as follows, data reduction, data representation, and conclusion. More details are presented in table 1.

Table 1. The Questions of the Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How is the learning process carried out in schools after the Covid-19 pandemic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What models are used in online learning?</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>What media are used in online learning after the covid-19 pandemic?</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Do the school’s existing facilities support the continuity of learning?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What are the teacher’s roles in the implementation of learning?</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Are there obstacles in the implementation of teaching and learning?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>How do teachers overcome problems or obstacles experienced?</td>
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</table>
Result and Discussion

Learning Strategy in the Early Childhood Language Development

The teacher is one of the essential instruments in a child’s language development. The quality of education depends on the quality of competency that a teacher has (Mariyana, 2004). An educator or teacher's strategy to carry the learning process will significantly affect students’ learning achievements (Watini, 2022). A child acquires a language through his experience in his surrounding environment, either at home or at school. The teacher, as the facilitator, is supposed to arrange learning that can stimulate good language development for the child (Kurnia et al., 2015). The teacher is an element that should be existed in learning. Concerning learning, teachers must understand how to provide the proper stimulation for learning. Furthermore, it encourages the ability of the children to master the child’s language skills (Aulia & Budiningsih, 2021). According to the interview and observation, the researcher found several language learning models implemented in the learning process, such as the language learning model through the role-playing center, singing, question and answer, and storytelling. With the help of several tools, such as learning media, it is appropriate to do this according to the child’s language development. The core of the learning model is that teachers demonstrate knowledge or specific skills that further practice them with students gradually (Rif'ati, 2020).

Role-playing Centre

Role-playing is to play instinctively, be an individual activity, and increase a child’s understanding of himself and his world. In role-playing, children create places and scenes that are very familiar to them, like imitating what family does and playing a different role around them. Through role-playing, children can increase their vocabulary, which is one way for them to practice communicating, cooperating, exploring their world, imitating how to act, and copying the character surrounding them (Kiromi, 2018). According to Suyadi the best language development is when children act as partners in the conversation and include in talks and dialog. However, among children, language is diverse. Children, even so, have a unique culture in their social life. Indeed, their language is enormously affected by their surroundings (Suyadi, 2010).

According to the interview and observation in the Nyai Ahmad Dahlan Aisyiyah Kindergarten, the learning model for improving language skills at this school is, of them, a role-playing center, which the focus of this learning model is that children are being active in playing daily roles. One of the examples of role-playing is based on a family theme; the teacher arranges class learning as if they are at home. Every student acquires their role. Students are encouraged to speak actively according to their roles. Like mother, father, children, grandmother, and other family members. Tools such as learning media are also provided to

Figure 2. Child’s Learning Media
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support children's language skills. This learning model is highly effective for improving children’s language skills. The result of the research strengthens this by Farikha; there is a significant effect in the learning model of role-playing on child speech. This research uses a quantitative approach with an experimental method and pre-experimental design (non-design) of a one-group pre-test and post-test (Farikha et al., 2018). The media of the central train children to be more active. Before playing the center, role-playing has its plot or playing rules. Before children start playing, the teacher explains the game's rules; one of the examples in this game is that players are not allowed to take someone else’s role.

Flashcard Game

Enriching vocabulary in early childhood needs to be done continuously, mainly used through various media. To acquire optimal vocabulary learning outcomes, educators must equip students with multiple words related to the specific field. Since every area has some particular words, the effort of enriching vocabulary can be obtained through playing vocabulary cards. The vocabulary card learning technique aims to make students easy, happy, and passionate about understanding compound words through the process they go through alone (Dariyatun, 2019). Based on observations of early childhood language learning in Aisyiyah Kindergarten of Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, learning using card media begins with the teacher choosing words for students. Students take turns one by one for the teacher’s shirt; students are asked to draw up word cards given by the teacher, then students are asked to write the word on the blackboard. Thus the other students take turns playing the card game. The media assistance of word cards for children is innovative enough so that children are excited and can respond positively, as well as in choosing media word cards are quite effective in stimulating students to be active in these activities because, in the word card, there are pictures and attractive letter colors for children to enjoy. Furthermore, children are more skilled or can improve their language skills well, so teachers successfully carry out learning (Dewi, 2019).

A Singing

Singing is making sounds with the poems that are used. Managing the class by singing means creating and working on learning using sung poems. Usually, it is adjusted by the taught theme (Saripudin, n.d.). The benefit of the singing method is that it makes the atmosphere cheerful and passionate so that children's development can be stimulated more optimally; the tasks of early childhood institutions are principally to develop the whole child’s aspects, such as motor, linguistic, cognitive, art, moral, and socio-emotional aspects (Fadlillah et al., 2014).

According to the observation result of learning in the B2 group of Aisyiyah Kindergarten of Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, it is shown that children are enthusiastic about participating in the activity because it is an excellent experience for them. The child looks serious and carefully listens to every note that is taught. Even when asked to repeat the song, the children were excited and able to do it cheerfully, although, indeed, they were still assisted and directed by the teachers,. The chosen songs are also adjusted with the ongoing learning themes. This learning activity by singing is accompanied by clapping together. Because while singing, children can answer simple questions, express themselves through words and movements, and also get new vocabulary. Singing is also helpful for children to train motor skills, discover talents, and build self-confidence. This activity was closed with a question and answer session about the material being taught and singing back the notes that had been prepared together.

Storytelling

A method of storytelling is commonly used in early childhood education. Mainly to deliver the messages and values internalized to children. Telling a story is a strategy to
improve a child's language skills. This method is provided verbally in the form of a story. Storytelling aims to introduce, describe, and explain the new things that can develop the potential of early childhood. Storytelling provides learning value for children to continue to grow their passion for doing something, including a penchant for reading and retelling events that occurred in certain circumstances. Telling a story, moreover, helps them to habituate children to do something good (Fauziddin, 2017). According to research, the purpose of storytelling is to give information or instill social, moral, and religious values and provide information regarding the physical and social environment (Setiantono, 2012).

The activities of storytelling can improve children’s discipline, conducted through the form of learning activities that children like. Storytelling is also can be carried out by varied activities and media. The benefit of storytelling, except for instilling moral values like being disciplined, responsible, independent, and others, can also develop children’s cognitive and socio-emotional aspects. Storytelling can bring a more natural classroom environment and play an important role in socializing new values to children (Suha & Haris, 2016).

In language development itself, according to Piaget, language development is the result of a close relationship between children and their environment, as well as by the complementary interactions between the development of cognitive capacities and language experiences of children. Children’s learning abilities are strongly suppressed by the extent to which they know the world around them and the ability to interpret concepts by making categories of the world around them (Bangsawan et al., 2021).

Based on the observation and interview, the selection of stories conveyed in the learning is always adjusted to the theme of ongoing learning, so children feel unbored while learning. Therefore, it can be seen that the language learning strategy in the Aisyiyah kindergarten of Nyai Ahmad Dahlan can be implemented well, and it can be proven that children can tell a context of a simple story. They also can answer simple questions and understand the simple order given by their teachers. The children’s language development in offline learning can develop well compared to online learning because they feel confident talking directly to their teachers and peers. Also, teachers can more easily control and help students during online learning, so learning can go well without being constrained by online learning. Children become accustomed to speaking regularly because they are also accustomed to retelling what has been told by the teacher. Children are considered more confident in expressing their sentences.

**Mathematics Area and a Counting**

Kindergarten-age children are a very strategic period to introduce counting on the mathematical track because kindergarten age is very sensitive to stimuli received from the environment. Their high curiosity will be channeled if they get stimulation/motivation according to their development task. Counting activities that are given through various kinds of games will be more effective because playing is a vehicle for learning and working for children. In this regard, it is believed that children can be more successful in learning something if it is according to their interests, need, and ability (Winarsieh & Khotimah, 2014).

Playing tools in the counting and mathematical area contains number symbols, geometrical pieces, number cards, shells, puzzles, number concepts, a game cube, a counting tree, a mushroom board, long, short, thick, and thin, bottle caps, pencils, beads, fruit drawings, ruler, tape measure, notebook, styrofoam puzzle (numbers), calendar, number drawing. Understanding of the concept of numbers develops over time and also, there is the opportunity to repeat work with groups of objects and compare numbers and count them. Counting is the way of learning the names of numbers, thus using them to identify the number of the objects (Sujiono, 2004).

A counting and mathematical area is the place to provide games that help students to pair, count, classify, and create the games they like, as well as train their language skills (Nuraeni, 2014). Counting and the mathematical area have materials that cannot be separated
from and united by children. The activities in this area encourage them to develop their intellectual ability, smooth muscles, hand-eye coordination, and social skills like sharing, negotiating, and solving problem (Halimah et al., 2021).

**Art Centre**

Art centers can be divided into musical art, dance art, craft art, and sculpture. The determination of the craft art that was developed is based on early childhood ability. It is recommended that there are at least two activities designed at the art center, namely the Munik art and craft art. The art center sets fine motor skills, movement harmony, tone, socio-emotional aspects, and others (Suci et al., 2017).

The objectives of the learning center can be concluded as follows: a) increasing the service of learning experience to early childhood intensely by giving them the liberty to explore in every center; b) with the center, it trains the early childhood to be more independent, not depend upon only classroom teachers, but they are directed to do the activity with other teachers, especially with teachers of the center; c) with the presence of the teachers of the center, they will be more focus on developing center that becomes their responsibility to manifest the development of the whole creative ideas; d) learning process is expected to sustain naturally in the form of experiencing, not only transferring knowledge from teachers to children; e) children can position themselves as whom they need for their future life, teachers in this regard are responsible for being directors, mentors, or inspirator (Suryani, 2020).

**Natural Material Centre**

The center of natural materials is attached to knowledge of science, mathematics, and the arts. The raw materials center is filled with various play materials from nature, such as water, sand, rocks, and leaves. In this center, children have the opportunity to use play materials in various ways according to their thoughts and notions with different results. Use materials and tools that are around. Pay attention to safety. Materials and tools must be free from toxic materials or harmful small animals (Roostin & Swandhina, 2019).

The center-centered learning is carried out thoroughly from the beginning of the activity to the end and is focused on the kindergarten-age group in one activity center. Every center encourages child development in three kinds of playing: sensorimotor or functional play, role play, and constructive play (establishing child thought) (Farihah, 2018). As previously explained, science learning for early childhood benefits improves child development, especially in the cognitive aspect; one of them is to understand science concepts and their relationship with daily life, has the skills of the process and learning activities to develop knowledge about surrounding nature, also can use the scientific method and being scientific to solve a problem they face with more awareness on the greatness and power of the creator of the universe (Lailan, 2017).

Science trains children to use their five senses to recognize various symptoms of objects and phenomena. Children are trained to see, touch, smell, feel, and hear. The more senses are involved in learning; the more children understand what they learn. Children have new experiences upon the results of sensing various objects around; furthermore, the knowledge they get will benefit as an additional thinking (Munar et al., 2021). The awareness of the importance of providing science to children is increasing when they realize that we live in a dynamic world, constantly evolving and changing, and increasingly need science along with the development of science and technology in the current era of globalization (Muntomimah, 2014).

**Religious Centre**

In the educational field, today we see many children in the world of education who are experiencing a moral crisis, and this is contrary to what they learn in the subjects of morality (Aqidah Akhlak), and the lack of social encouragement from parents (Tumin & Hartati, 2021).
Therefore, religious teaching is supposedly taught from an early age. A religious area is a place that experiences children learn religion and practice the ways of praying according to their faith. The sacred space provides miniature houses of worship, worship equipment, reading books, drawing paper, and drawing tools. Introducing religious life with related ability according to a child’s religion (Saputra, 2014).

To instill religious values in early childhood, three aspects must be considered the child’s age as well as physical and psychological aspects. Religious taste and values will grow and develop during a child’s physical and psychological growth and development. The child’s concern toward religious values and understanding appears when they always look at and involve in the religious ceremony, decoration, and the beauty of the houses of worship, routine, parent's customs, and surrounding environment, while they are in worship (Hakim, 2012).

According to several analyses, as well as observation, interviews, and documentation regarding the strategy of learning in the early childhood language development upon Covid-19 pandemic through role play, card games, singing, storytelling, counting and mathematics, art, natural materials, and religious teaching in the post-covid-19 pandemic to improve the early childhood language development in the Aisyiyah kindergarten of Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, like has above described, it can be known that child’s language development in class B group B2 can develop according what is expected. Children can show significant linguistic development concerning talking; they dare to communicate simply and are more confident.

### Strategy by Teachers in Learning to Improve Child Language Development

In essence, learning is the process of regulating and organizing the environment around students to develop and encourage students to carry out the learning process. Learning is also said to provide guidance or assistance to students in carrying out the learning process. In learning, there are diversities, like the students who understand materials; on the other hand, some students need more time to produce the materials into their thinking. These two differences lead to teachers who manage the strategy for learning that is suitable for every student. Furthermore, if the essence of learning is “a change,” learning essentially is “a setting” (Djamarah, Syaiful Bahri Aswan, 2006).

The effort of the teacher toward the strategy of learning of child’s language development becomes a motivation for educators to actualize the goals. According to the interview, observation, and documentation by the researcher in the Aisyiyah kindergarten of Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, it can be analyzed that, first, in the classroom learning process, an educator must use the proper methods and media (innovate) by providing exciting learning. Like providing animation videos and toys for children like a ball, animals, posters, colored pictures, and others. Moreover, children are interested and captivated. Second, often greet children and invite them to communicate while learning or outside learning activities (while resting), asking for condition and what activities they do at home with their family by telling the story before the teacher deliver materials indirectly using verbal language. Third, asking for cooperation with parents related to a child’s language development, for example, inviting children to communicate or involving them in activities that encourage a child’s language development.

This is in accordance with the previous study, by Rahmawati et al., (2021), who discuss that early child language development can be focused on enjoyable learning. The factors that can affect them come from parenting style, the methods used in school, and environmental factors. Delivering education in schools is vital in improving children’s language development. However, due to the limited materials and times, this study is currently only conducted in the Aisyiyah kindergarten of Nyai Ahmad Dahlan. More research is working in other different locations and the broader scopes. In addition, more research is being expanded to look at various aspects of early childhood language development.
Conclusion

According to the research results, Aisyiyah kindergarten of Nyai Ahmad Dahlan has been conducting in-class face-to-face learning by applying interactive learning strategy through role play, card games, singing, counting and mathematics, art, natural materials, and religious teaching, which utilizes various kinds of learning media, like animation video, ball, animal, poster, colored picture, and others. Therefore, collaboration and cooperation from multiple parties must run the learning and simulate students well.

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