

Improving Letters Memorize Ability Through the Alphabet Box Media Using the Playing Method

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ABSTRACT

The ability to memorize letters of the alphabet is an early readiness in children's reading skills. This study aims to improve the ability to memorize alphabet letters in group A TK Kuncup Melati. In development activities, the researcher prepares several alphabet box media to hone children's ability to memorize letters. Learning media significantly encourages a learning activity's success in achieving developmental aspects. Therefore, development activities require appropriate learning media for children, namely creative, innovative media that can attract children's learning interests. The method used in this study is a class action research method. The research was conducted in cycles, each consisting of planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. The results of this reflection are used as a basis for making improvements, processes, and results in the next cycle. Of the 19 students consisting of 14 girls and five boys, there was an increase after improvements and actions were made in cycle I; the average percentage obtained was 65% because it had not yet reached the average limit of achievement in a study, namely 75%, then the second cycle of research was carried out and showed an average presentation of 86%, that is, children's learning outcomes were more than 75%. Based on the results of research on increasing the ability to memorize letters of the alphabet through the alphabet box media using the play method, it shows that there is an increase in children's ability to memorize letters of the alphabet with correct pronunciation and children can arrange letters or words using the alphabet box media. So, that means the teacher must continue developing the learning media and provide varied activities for children.

Keywords: Alphabet Squares, Memorizing Alphabet Letters, Playing Methods

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of 2020, the world was shaken by an outbreak of disease dubbed the 2019 Coronavirus. This outbreak continues to expand to cause a global health crisis in today's modern era. Coronavirus 2019, often called Covid-19, is a new type of disease that has never been identified in humans and has a fast and large-scale spread rate. The closure of schools and educational facilities is the choice of many countries, both at the elementary and tertiary levels.

Handayani et al. (2021) stated that based on data from UNESCO. This most prominent organization handles education, science, and culture under the United

Nations. There are at least 290.5 million students worldwide whose learning activities are disrupted due to the closure of schools or colleges.

At that time, all schools in Indonesia implemented policies for teaching and learning activities with online or distance learning. This was done as part of the government's efforts to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Kindergarten (TK) education aims to stimulate, guide, nurture, and provide learning activities through stimuli so children can hone their abilities and skills (Campbell et al., 2016). The kindergarten development program includes religious, moral, physical-motor, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and artistic values, given through educational stimulation in learning activities while playing.

Online learning forces students to participate consistently because while studying from home, students get more assignments to gain knowledge even though a virus outbreak is attacking the city and the world. The role of parents here is significant, namely providing motivation, encouraging children to take part in online learning and complete their assignments, and supervising their child's learning process at home. This virtual learning is less effective than face-to-face learning because more obstacles or problems are encountered in this virtual activity, such as lazy children, no encouragement from parents, internet constraints, or parents working outside the home. As a result, the child does not receive lessons encouraging several aspects of development. Finally, many parents have a solution to register their children for additional tutoring. After about two years of the Covid-19 pandemic, it began to improve, and the government allowed the re-opening of educational facilities for face-to-face learning.

To pursue aspects of development that are hampered by learning that is carried out online, especially in the cognitive development of children in memorizing letters of the alphabet, teachers need to compile and design creative learning activities that can improve the child's abilities, namely through the media of the alphabet box with play method. Because playing is children's soul, learning while playing will increase their willingness to participate, and it is hoped that children can receive learning material well.

From the results of observations made in group A of Kuncup Melati Kindergarten, Blitar City, namely because learning is carried out online for a relatively long period of approximately two years, parents complain about this because if their children study at home, children cannot focus and continue to want to play. In addition, there is a lack of parental involvement in accompanying children when studying at home, such as parents who work outside the home. Finally, the parents signed up for additional tutoring to help their children learn. As a result, the child has recorded all the learning methods received during the additional tutoring.

In this problem, the method used to recognize and memorize letters of the alphabet is to pronounce A = a, B = ba, C = ca, D = da, F = fa, etc. This is a mispronunciation and is accepted in the child's mind. The observations results of 19

children, as much as 70% or 13 children who have not been able to recognize and memorize the letters of the alphabet with the correct pronunciation.

Based on these problems, the teacher's actions to justify the pronunciation are to provide a creative and innovative learning atmosphere, which will foster children's enthusiasm and willingness to learn through the media of the alphabet box. This is done by reintroducing letters of the alphabet to children. Thus, children's learning outcomes will increase with the help of learning media while playing.

Based on the problems described above, researchers collaborated with teachers to conduct action research titled "Improving Ability to Memorize Alphabetical Letters Through the Media of Alphabetical Boxes Using the Playing Method in Group A of Kuncup Melati Kindergarten". Researchers and teachers hope this alphabet box game can improve children's ability to memorize letters at Kuncup Melati Kindergarten.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Memorization Ability

Soelaiman [Muschalla & Kutzner \(2021\)](#) define ability as a trait born or learned that allows someone to complete his work mentally and physically. Employees in an organization, although well-motivated, cannot work well. Abilities and skills play a significant role in individual behavior and performance. Skills are skills related to tasks owned and used by someone at the right time.

According to [Peña-García et al. \(2020\)](#), a person will determine behavior and results. What is meant by abilities or abilities is the talent inherent in a person to carry out an activity physically or mentally that he has acquired from birth, learning, and experience. In addition, the ability is an individual's capacity to carry out various tasks in a particular job. All abilities of an individual are essentially composed of two sets of factors, namely intellectual abilities and physical abilities ([Panadero, 2017](#)).

Meanwhile, the actual ability is a power that can encourage the creation of a synergy of constructive capabilities of all the potential that exists in humans in the form of physical strength, mind, soul, spirituality, and social ethics in their environment to create the best and most valuable works ([Niemiec et al., 2020](#)).

Memorization is embedding verbal material in memory so that later it can be reproduced (remembered) literally, according to the original material. Memorization is remembering facts in a new field, in terms of terminology, symbology, and other details of the new field that must be memorized by rote for those who study it so that the notion of memorization is a technique and method used by an educator by calling on his students to memorize several words or sentences as well as rules.

So, the ability to memorize is the ability or ability to remember a fact related to something that will later be recalled literally or by the original material.

Recognize Letters Ability

According to [Xu et al. \(2018\)](#), knowing letters is a cognitive activity stimulated through hearing and sight. The ability to recognize letters starts early, and children like

to explore books by holding or flipping through them. Besides that, in the opinion of [Ahlquist & Gynther \(2019\)](#), One way to improve the ability to recognize children's letters is to carry out learning variations in the learning activities carried out".

So, the way to introduce letters to children is by continuously stimulating children's abilities. Teachers and parents can provide media that can develop the ability to recognize letters in children from an early age. Like giving books, even though they are only made as toys, the child's brain can be stimulated through these media. Besides that, it can also be stimulated through toys such as letter cards, alphabet boxes, letter blocks, etc.

Instructional Media

The learning process is essentially a communication process. In communicating, the teacher acts as a communicator whose job is to convey learning messages to the recipient of the message (communicant), namely children/students. For the learning messages the teacher conveys to be well received by children, a vehicle for conveying messages called learning media is needed in the learning communication process.

According to [Arsyad \(2014\)](#) the word media comes from the Latin, *medius*, which means 'middle', 'intermediary', or 'introduction'. In Arabic, media is an intermediary or message delivery from the sender to the recipient. Learning media is a tool or means to assist the teaching and learning process and functions to convey messages so that they are visible so that learning objectives can be achieved more optimally ([Puspitarini & Hanif, 2019](#)).

So, learning media is a tool or intermediary in delivering material so that students easily understand it. The delivery of the material also uses a learning procedure commonly called the method. Therefore, instructional media needs to be designed as attractive as possible because it supports the success of learning in and outside the classroom.

Playing Method

Playing is an activity that children do all day because, for children, playing is life, and life is a game ([Shi et al., 2019](#)). Early childhood does not distinguish between play, study, and work. Children generally enjoy games very much and will continue to do so wherever they have the opportunity. [Piaget & Inhelder \(2019\)](#) stated that playing is an activity that is carried out repeatedly and creates pleasure/satisfaction for someone. Play activities as a means of socialization, it is hoped that play can encourage children to explore, discover, express feelings, be creative, and learn in a fun way ([Allen et al., 2015](#); [Chawla, 2020](#); [Ernst & Burcak, 2019](#)). Playing is necessary for children because they will gain knowledge to develop their abilities ([Letourneau & Sobel, 2020](#); [Dag et al., 2021](#)). Playing is a particular activity that differs from other activities, such as studying and working, which are always carried out to achieve a result.

So, it can be concluded from the description above that play is a natural activity carried out by children repeatedly with happy feelings, and there is no element of

coercion. So, playing in learning activities can foster children's enthusiasm and interest. Because the world of children plays, it is better if children's learning activities are made and designed so that they can still learn through play. In this case, the teacher must be able to manage and utilize play activities in the early childhood learning process.

Alphabet Box Media

According to [Sofiani, \(2012\)](#), picture-word dice are: "a small cube-shaped box consisting of 6 sides, and each side is given the word and picture that can be used for games to recognize letters and words". Each one has different letters written on each side so the child can recognize all the letters and distinguish between the shapes of the letters and their sounds. Meanwhile, according to [Prihantini \(2015\)](#), an alphabet box is a container with symbols or sound images that describe language in the form of written symbols called letters.



Figure 1. Alphabet Box Media

Recognizing letters is the stage of language development for children who do not know about the relationship between shapes and sounds of alphabet letters. When children know the relationship between shapes and sounds of letters, they can distinguish or recognize the letters of the alphabet, but some early children do not know the relationship. Between the shapes and sounds of the letters of the alphabet, some children say the letters are still wrong (such as when asked about the letter b, but the child points to the letter d), so the child cannot recognize letters properly.

Various types of media can be used in learning, one of which is using alphabet boxes. Alphabet squares can be used to introduce letters to children. In addition, media can stimulate children's ability to memorize letters of the alphabet with the correct pronunciation. The alphabet box can also be used to arrange or sort words. Alphabet boxes are used in early childhood learning because of their attractive shape, so children are interested in using them. This study used letter boxes to arrange or line up vowels, consonant letters, and words according to the learning theme, group letters, and name letters. However, the alphabet box media used differs between cycles 1 and 2, so children know and understand various forms of alphabet box media. In addition, the goal is to support success in this research activity because the difference in media will

increase children's learning interest to participate in learning activities so that children can receive and understand the material presented.

METHOD

This research was designed with action research methods. The determination of the research design was based on the researcher's desire to improve children's ability to memorize letters of the alphabet through the media of the alphabet box using the playing method at Kuncup Melati Kindergarten, Blitar City. This research activity begins with planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, then rotating until the expected improvement occurs. The model used in this research is the Consolidation of Collaborative Professional Capabilities, in which researchers and class teachers work together to solve problems in class.

The research model used by researchers is the model developed by Arikunto, with the following picture:

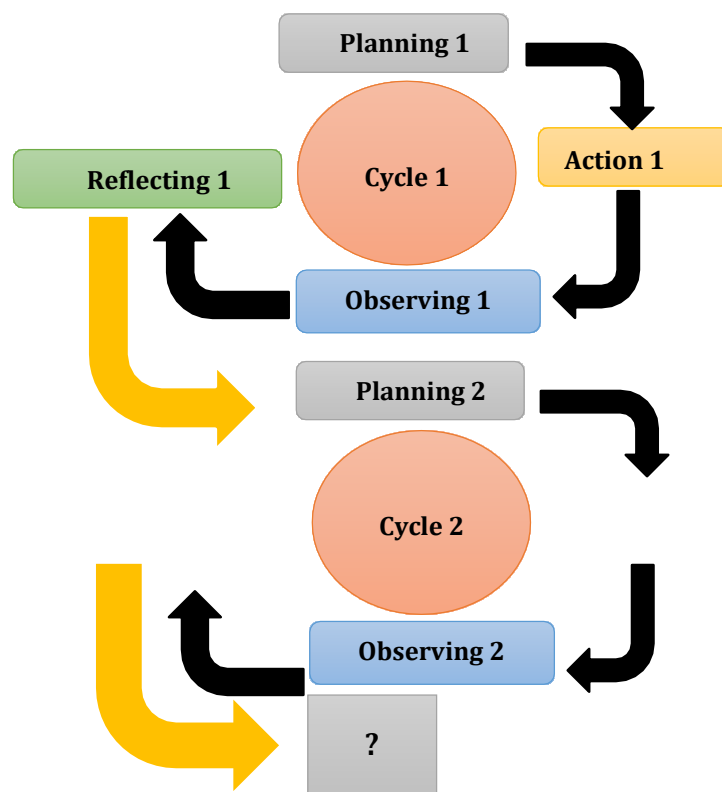


Figure 2. Classroom Action Research Model (Arikunto et al., 2021)

Based on the above research procedures, classroom research actions to improve children's ability to memorize alphabet letters through the media of alphabet boxes start from planning, implementing, observing or observing, and reflecting, referred to as one cycle. Using the cycle model, if the initial implementation results are not good, action can be taken in the next cycle until the desired target is achieved.

The data collection technique used in this study was a direct observation, which was used to retrieve and assess the results of increasing children's ability to memorize

letters of the alphabet through the media of alphabet boxes before taking action and after taking action to see differences or development in children's abilities. In addition to assessing the child's performance, which consists of several aspects, namely the child's cognitive abilities in memorizing letters of the alphabet, tenacity in playing the alphabet box, children's activeness in answering questions and completing assignments by the orders given. Documentation is used to document data about learning that describes the steps practiced by the teacher or researcher in the development process through the alphabet box media using the play method.

The assessment instrument in this study used an observation sheet in the form of an instrument to record the development of the ability to memorize letters of the alphabet through the media of the alphabet box using the playing method. With the following criteria:

1. ND : Not Developed
2. SG : Start Growing
3. GAE : Growing As Expected
4. VWD : Very Well Developed

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study results for indicators to be achieved are increasing children's ability to memorize letters of the alphabet with the correct pronunciation. It can be seen that there is an increase after the improvement in cycle I and cycle II. The pre-action conditions consist of 19 children, 70% or 13 children who have not been able to recognize and memorize the letters of the alphabet with the correct pronunciation, that is, with an average percentage of learning outcomes of 55%, which means less than 75% and it is necessary to do something actions to improve children's ability to memorize letters of the alphabet.

Cycle I:

Based on the observation sheet of children in group A of Kuncup Melati Kindergarten, it can be seen that the child's ability to memorize letters of the alphabet is still lacking. This can be seen from the child's ability to arrange vowels and consonants and compose a word using the alphabet box. From the results of the recapitulation of the alphabet box playing activities above, it can be seen that of the 19 children, 2 children, or 10%, have not yet developed, 7 children, or 37%, have started to develop, 6 children or 32% have developed as expected in activities to develop the ability to memorize alphabet letters through the media of the alphabet box. , 4 children, or 21%, developed very well in these activities. So, the average percentage obtained from children's learning outcomes in this cycle is 65%.

Cycle II :

Based on the results of observations made, this cycle showed a remarkable increase because with the improvement and development of learning media, namely

alphabet box media, by adding pictures and writing to play activities, children are more enthusiastic about participating in learning activities. So that children can understand and memorize the letters of the alphabet with the correct pronunciation. From the results of the recapitulation of the alphabet box playing activities above, it can be seen that of the 19 children, 2 children, or 10%, began to develop, 6 children, or 32%, developed according to expectations in developing the ability to memorize alphabet letters through the media of the alphabet box, 11 children or 58% developed very much. Good at this activity. So, the average presentation obtained from children's learning outcomes in cycle II is increased to 86%.

The increase in children's abilities can be seen in the following graph:

Action Presents

Pre-Action 55%

Cycle I 65%

Cycle II 86%

Table 1. Graph of Improved Learning Outcomes

Action	Percentage
Pre Action	55%
Cycle I	65%
Cycle II	86%

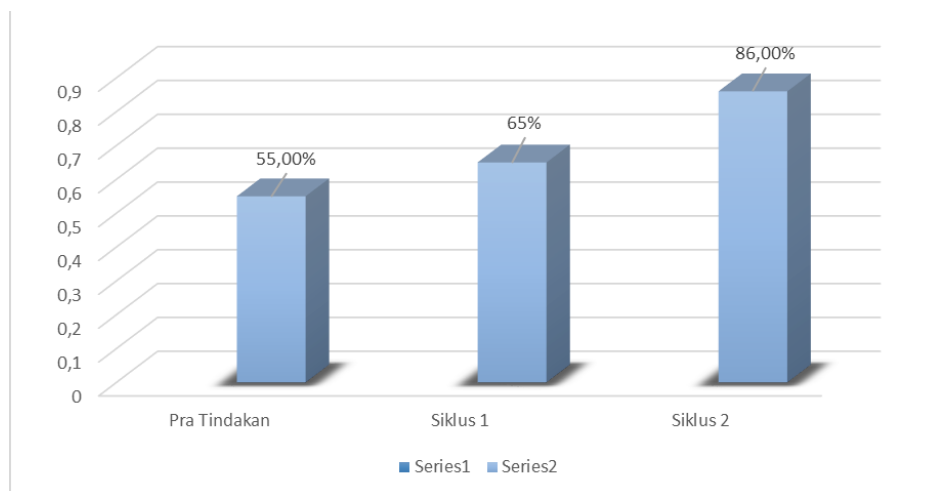


Figure 3. Graph of Improved Learning Outcomes

With the help of learning in the form of learning media, namely the alphabet box, it is proven that it helps children memorize the letters of the alphabet correctly. Of course, by using this playing method, children are more excited than with the demonstration method that is usually used. Because with the playing method, children feel that they are playing and not learning. Therefore, children enjoy all learning activities. This encourages the success of a study by the indicators to be achieved.

The final results of the research showed a positive change in the activity of increasing the ability to memorize letters of the alphabet. During the observation, the children were excited and enthusiastic about playing with the alphabet boxes prepared during the learning activities. So the ability to memorize children had increased very well from before the action was carried out with a percentage of only 55% after the improvement reached 65%. In cycle II, the use of alphabet box media was different from the previous cycle; namely, by adding pictures along with their descriptions, children's memorization continued to increase and reached an average percentage of learning outcomes, namely 86%.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of research on "Improving Ability to Memorize Alphabet Letters Through the Media of the Alphabet Box Using the Play Method" show an increase in children's excellent learning outcomes. This is because learning is done while playing, a form of early childhood's natural spirit. One of the learning methods that can attract early childhood learning interest is playing, especially in group A children at Kuncup Melati Kindergarten. Children become very enthusiastic and participate in activities with excited faces. Because children feel learning, but children can still play in class. This playing method increases the interaction between children and friends, children and teachers or researchers because many activities are carried out in groups and receive instructions from the teacher or researcher.

The alphabet box media was designed to be as attractive as possible in Cycle I and developed again in the alphabet box in Cycle II by adding pictures and writing. So, it helps the child memorize letters more and play with the alphabet box. There was a continuous increase after improvements and actions were made in Cycle I, reaching 65%, and in cycle II, the average percentage of children's learning outcomes reached 86%. The average percentage of children's learning outcomes with pre-action conditions was 55%. So, it can be concluded that using alphabet box media through the playing method can improve children's ability to memorize alphabet letters in group A of Kuncup Melati Kindergarten.

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