

IMPROVING CHILDREN'S SELF-CONFIDENCE THROUGH THE CONVERSATION METHOD USING FINGER PUPPET MEDIA FOR CHILDREN AGED 5–6 YEARS AT TK 'AISYIYAH TENGAH TANI

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Abstract: This study aims to enhance self-confidence in children aged 5–6 years through the conversation method using finger puppet media at TK 'Aisyiyah Tengah Tani. The research was driven by the initial observation that many children demonstrated low self-confidence, such as hesitation to express ideas, lack of initiative, and dependence on teacher assistance during classroom activities. The research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) with two cycles involving planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, focusing on indicators of self-confidence based on the Indonesian Early Childhood Education Standards (Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014). The results indicated a significant improvement in children's ability to communicate, express themselves, and participate actively after the implementation of finger puppet-based conversation activities. This method proved effective in creating a joyful and interactive learning environment, encouraging children to speak up, make decisions, and show independence. The findings highlight the importance of appropriate media and engaging teaching strategies in supporting early childhood development.

Keywords: self-confidence, conversation method, finger puppets, early childhood education, classroom action research.

INTRODUCTION

Self-confidence is one of the essential aspects of early childhood development that influences a child's ability to interact, express opinions, and complete tasks independently. Children with high self-confidence tend to be more active, responsive, and willing to face challenges in their learning environment (Yuliani, 2018). However, based on initial observations at TK 'Aisyiyah Tengah Tani, several

children aged 5–6 years exhibited low levels of self-confidence. This was evident through behaviors such as reluctance to answer questions, hesitation in expressing ideas, and dependency on teachers or peers when performing individual tasks. Such conditions, if left unaddressed, can hinder their social-emotional development and limit their active participation in learning.

To address this issue, educators must implement strategies that are engaging, developmentally appropriate, and capable of stimulating children's interest and willingness to communicate. One effective approach is the conversation method, which allows children to develop verbal expression and confidence in structured interactive settings. This method becomes more impactful when combined with learning media that attract children's attention—such as finger puppets. Finger puppet media not only offer visual and tactile stimulation but also help children shift focus away from themselves, thus reducing communication anxiety (Suryaningsih, 2020). Puppets serve as a medium through which children can project ideas and feelings, allowing them to speak more freely and confidently in front of others.

Prior studies have emphasized the effectiveness of play-based media and teacher-facilitated interaction in fostering confidence and verbal skills among young learners (Isnawati & Fitriani, 2022; Rahmawati, 2019; Utami, 2021). Nevertheless, there remains limited research that specifically examines the integration of the conversation method with finger puppet media to enhance self-confidence. This study seeks to fill that gap by implementing a classroom action research model that systematically observes and reflects on changes in children's behavior during learning activities.

The research aims to address the following question: How effective is the conversation method using finger puppet media in increasing the self-confidence of children aged 5–6 years at TK 'Aisyiyah Tengah Tani? Accordingly, the objectives of the study are: (1) to describe the implementation process of the conversation method using finger puppets, and (2) to analyze its impact on improving indicators of self-confidence, such as the ability to speak, act independently, and participate actively in class.

METHOD

This research employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design conducted in

two cycles to improve the self-confidence of children aged 5–6 years at TK ‘Aisyiyah Tengah Tani. The CAR model used in this study followed the stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection in each cycle. The participants in this research were a group of children in class B, consisting of 15 students. The data were collected using observation sheets, interviews with teachers and children, as well as documentation of learning activities. Observation focused on specific indicators of self-confidence such as the ability to express opinions, willingness to perform tasks independently, and active participation in classroom discussions and performances. The research instruments were developed based on the self-confidence indicators stated in the Indonesian Early Childhood Education Standards (Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014). Data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data were obtained from field notes and interview transcripts, while quantitative data were derived from the observation scores of each child’s behavior during the learning process. The results of the observations from both cycles were compared to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented method and to determine improvements in children’s self-confidence. The combination of descriptive analysis and reflection allowed the researcher to assess the progress of the intervention and make necessary adjustments between cycles.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results The implementation of the conversation method using finger puppet media was carried out over two cycles. Each cycle consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection phases. The focus of the intervention was to increase self-confidence among children aged 5–6 years through interactive and creative learning strategies. The improvement in self-confidence was observed through indicators such as the ability to speak in front of the class, independence in completing tasks, and willingness to participate in discussions and group activities.

1. Improvement of Children’s Self-Confidence Across Cycles

Based on the observations, children’s self-confidence gradually increased from the pre- cycle to the end of cycle II. The following table illustrates the percentage of children achieving the expected indicators at each stage:

Table 1. Improvement of Children’s Self-Confidence from Pre-Cycle to Cycle II

| Cycle | Minimum Score | Maximum Score | Average Score | Percentage of Completion |
|--------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Pre-Cycle | 40 | 60 | 50 | 33.30% |
| Cycle I | 60 | 73.3 | 66 | 66.70% |
| Cycle II | 73.3 | 86.7 | 80 | 100% |

The data indicate that during the pre-cycle phase, only 33.3% of children demonstrated indicators of self-confidence. In cycle I, the percentage increased to 66.7%, and finally reached 100% in cycle II. This significant increase demonstrates the effectiveness of using finger puppet media in conversation-based learning activities.

2. Analysis of Learning Activities and Behavioral Changes

During the first cycle, many children were still hesitant to speak and needed encouragement. However, with the use of finger puppets, they became more enthusiastic and engaged. The puppets served as mediators that helped them overcome their shyness. In the second cycle, children showed greater independence, initiated conversations, and actively participated in role-playing activities. They were more confident in expressing opinions and completing tasks without constant teacher assistance.

3. Discussion: Comparing Findings with Previous Research

These findings are consistent with the study of Isnawati and Fitriani (2022), who emphasized that creative media stimulate children's expressive language and foster confidence. Similarly, Rahmawati (2019) concluded that the use of storytelling and puppet media enhances children's emotional and social skills. The results of this research also align with Yuliani (2018), who stated that an active learning environment—where children are encouraged to speak, act, and respond—positively contributes to self-confidence development.

The success of this intervention is not only attributed to the use of media but also to the structured interaction provided by the conversation method. Children are not merely passive listeners; they are given opportunities to take on roles, respond to peers, and construct meaning through dialogue. This supports Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which underlines the importance of social interaction in cognitive and emotional development.

In conclusion, the integration of finger puppet media in conversation-based activities has a significant impact on improving the self-confidence of early childhood learners. The method effectively bridges communication barriers and encourages active participation through playful, yet purposeful, learning engagements.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the conversation method using finger puppet media has proven effective in improving the self-confidence of children aged 5–6 years at TK 'Aisyiyah Tengah Tani. This approach provided a playful and interactive learning experience that encouraged children to express themselves more openly, take initiative, and engage confidently in classroom activities. The results showed a consistent increase in self- confidence indicators across two action cycles, culminating in 100% of children achieving the desired level of development.

Theoretically, this study reinforces Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective on the importance of social interaction in early childhood learning. Pedagogically, it contributes to the development of instructional strategies that utilize simple yet engaging media to foster emotional and communicative growth in young learners. The findings highlight the importance of integrating creative, dialogue-based methods into the early childhood curriculum to support social-emotional competencies.

Despite its success, this study had several limitations. The research was conducted in a single institution with a relatively small sample size, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the study relied primarily on observational data, which could be complemented by more diverse assessment tools in future research.

Future studies are encouraged to explore the use of other interactive media and expand the research to different educational contexts and age groups. Longitudinal research could also be conducted to examine the long-term impact of such interventions on children's self-confidence and social development.

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