

# Storybook Reading Technique to Support Toddler Literacy Development in The New Normal Era

**Gusti Ayu Putu Diah Permata Sari AR**

STAH Negeri Mpu Kuturan Singaraja

## **A. Introduction**

English is one of important aspects which must be introduced for the students since early childhood. This situation is certainly motivating the Government and Educational Institution to develop English as lesson in school area. English lesson can be taught starting from elementary school levels until high school levels. Especially in primary school, English is not compulsory subject but rather a local curriculum since 1994 (Artini, 2017). English lesson depends on the actual need of community where the school is located. Thus, the teacher is expected to develop four essential skills including speaking, reading, listening, and writing which improve the culture identity of regions. Those skills can be taught by some teaching techniques and strategies which are appropriate with students' levels and the condition of schools area.

Furthermore, the children who can start learning English Lesson at the early age will be able to communicate fluently by using English since they have introduced to get knowledge about English very soon. This process will possibly make the children have many vocabularies used to speak English. To do so, English literacy can be alternative to introduce English for the kindergarten students. English

literacy is defined as the ability to read and write in English and also using appropriate expressions in English, especially in written form. In this case, English literacy can be introduced through some activities which are appropriate for kindergarten students. As we know that, the kindergarten students are categorized as toddler level. Thus, the teacher should be aware to create fun activity for students during the English literacy session.

Nowadays, the education system and mechanism has changed because of the Corona Virus Pandemic. This condition has lasted more than 6 months and killed many people around the world. Reflecting to this situation, Indonesia Ministry of Education takes decision to create the regulation of learning from home. This regulation applies in primary school until university. In this case, all the students are instructed to learn from home through some applications such as zoom, Cisco Webex Meeting, Google Meet, etc. The teacher or lecturer must monitor the student activity by using those applications. In addition, teacher or lecturer can share the material, send the assignment, or even make some discussions with their student. The assessment is also done through the application. Thus, the students are able to get their report card in the end of semester.

Generally, learning from home agenda is still ongoing in the normal era. In this case, parents have important role to support the successful teaching and learning process. Specifically, teacher in kindergarten area can involve students' parents to support the English literacy session. In this case, teacher and students' parents would be able to implement story book reading technique during literacy session. The implementation of this technique is quite easy to be applied by parents in the new normal era. In this case, parents can use English story book which can be found in book store or downloaded from the internet. This learning

material would be useful for successful literacy session. Thus, the children able to increase their English Literacy skill in this situation

## **B. Discussion**

Corona virus pandemic has affected educational system around the world. The face-to-face classes system has been postponed until undetermined time. Reflecting to this situation, the Educational Government has set up policy to implement online learning system. The online learning system has several benefits for students. According to Nguyen (2015), online learning will be able to provide a world class education to anyone, anywhere, and anytime as long as they have access to the Internet. In this case, online learning gives opportunity for students to learn independently during the learning process. They can explore and searching material related with the topic in teaching and learning process. In addition, the students also could build an access to meet a lot of people without limited space and time. Thus, the students can share the information and knowledge through online learning.

Moreover, online learning allows the students to work at a time and a place that is compatible with their learning needs (Gilbert, 2015). In other words, the students are able to focus on finding some resources which are suitable for their lesson. But, in some situations, the students cannot have chance to play during online learning. This usually happens in online discussion which has limited time. As example, the teacher gives topic and several questions during discussion session. In this situation, the students should participate by answering the question and giving some opinion or argument. Besides, the time allotment must be considered by the students. This will be an assessment for the students in teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, the online learning has been applied along this new normal era. In the kindergarten institution, the teacher can implement the online learning through fun activities. This based on the students characteristic as toddler. Toddler is defined as children who range 1-4 years old. In this period, toddler may be introduced by literacy session. Toddler may choose their parents, siblings, friends, neighborhood, and teacher as role model to build their literacy level. Actually, these activities make social relationship among toddler and component writers and readers. In developing literacy level, there are differences in the ways of reading and writing based on their communities. This means that, children encounter differing resources and differing kinds and degree of support for early literacy development. For example, some children observe their parents' writing and reading frequently, others only occasionally. Those phenomena will make the differences of literacy level between one children' with another one.

The kindergarten teachers are able to involve parents to support the successful toddler literacy level. The children who actively make social interaction with their parents will be successful in the next literacy steps. This is connected with socio-cultural theory from Vygotsky (1978) which explains that socio-cultural perspective interaction emphasizes the development guided by the interaction of adults with children in the cultural context that determines how, where and when this interaction takes place. In this case, automatically the children will develop their literacy skill especially in social and individual levels in the interaction process. Social skill can be seen from process whereby interaction and communication occurs from parents to child. Meanwhile, individual skills can be possessed when the child processes the information conveyed to them in cognition, which enables them to develop their literacy ability.

The development of toddler literacy level can be improved through some literacy activities included make-believe play, drawing, and writing. Those activities can be viewed as different moment in an essentially unified process of development of written language (Vygotsky, 1978). This is also supported by Dyson (as cited in Mclane&Mcnamee, 1990) stated that drawing, play, and talking are symbolic activities as a process of beginning of literacy. In addition, Brooker (as cited in Sari AR, 2017) agreed that playing is used as literacy activity for young learner. Between ages of 1 and 5, children learn to use symbols to create and communicate meaning. This means that, toddler may try using symbols to express and create their idea, feeling and experiences.

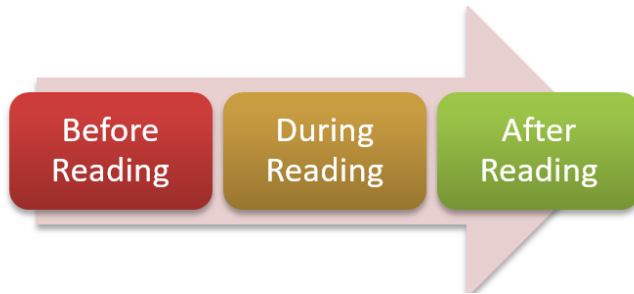
Besides, the teacher may use story during the literacy session. Through story, children will get interested to follow the classroom meeting. According to Siahaan (2012), stories help the children to develop the ability to understand spoken language and engage in thinking skills. The children also unconsciously learn new vocabulary through story. It results to story written by using simple words and sentence. The language used in story is easy to understand. Thus, the children can understand the plot of the story quickly. Moreover, there are also some moral values which affect to build positive attitude in the real life. In other words, the character in the story will be reflection of good behavior.

Nowadays, teachers can introduce English Literacy to toddler. Teacher can use story as English learning material to support literacy session with storybook reading technique. According to Roskos, Christiem and Richgels (as cited in Sari AR, 2017), storybook reading technique is one of early literacy teaching technique to support English Literacy session. Story book reading technique was effective to improve children vocabulary. This was connected with

the research conducted by Cuningham (as cited in Siahaan, 2012) which explained reading aloud positively affect students' vocabulary acquisition and comprehension. By reading a story, the students will get the new vocabularies. The children who have got a lot of vocabulary will easily interpret and express the new ideas to others.

In addition, Shed and Duke (as cited in Siahaan, 2012) stated that there are some steps in implementing storybook technique. First, the teacher should sit or stand quite close to the students so that all of them can see the book. This situation also makes intimate relationship among teacher and students. Second, the teacher should minimize distractions so each student can focus during the read-aloud. The teacher can give warning and punishment if there is student disturbing another one. Third, the teacher should plan ways to alter her tone of voice. In this case, the teachers were expected to have skill in delivering story based on the character in the story. The intonations and inflections made the students interesting to listens the story. In addition, it can help the student to know every character in the story. The teacher can stimulate the students by making the conversation during the literacy session. This situation motivates the student to improve their language skill by participating in the conversation.

The implementation of storybook reading technique is quite easy to implement. In the new normal era, the teacher can involve parents' participation to support toddler literacy development. In this case, the effective reader use the strategies to which showed in the cycle below:



### Cycle 1 : Strategies in effective reading

Based on the cycle above, there are three steps for effective reading included before reading, during reading, and after reading. Those cycles can be implemented by using storybook reading technique. In the phase of before reading stage, parents can select the reading material for toddlers. The material should be interesting and can attract the children attention during literacy session. According to Hopkins as cited in Maximo (2019) suggest that teacher and adult may able to use the books but it must include familiar characters. Actually, kids love to see familiar faces and famous character such as Cinderella, Snow White, etc. In addition, parents may give opportunity to their children in choosing their storybook. Parents only need to put down the story book in front of their children and give a chance for their children to choose the storybook.

After that, parents are able to introduce the title of the story book to their children. This makes the children can imagine about the story. Then, parents show the story book cover and mention the author. There are many famous authors which has released the book story. In this case, parents should be aware to choose the story book based on the children ages. Besides, parents can ask their children about illustration displayed in story book covers. It would help the children to speak independently in sharing their opinion and ideas in literacy session.

Meanwhile in during reading activity, parents allow the children to read independently. In addition, parents can ask their child to read aloud. Parents can observe the pronunciation and intonation in this activity. When the children have some mistakes or even difficult to say some words or sentence, parents give example how to spell those words or sentence in the right way. Besides, giving praise is also effective to support children literacy development. In other word, praise is very useful to increase children motivation. Besides, Bear as cited in Ferguson (2013) stated that we need to use praise more strategically to develop the social, emotional and behavioral competencies of self-discipline. So that in the absence of praise students can be categorized as acts in a socially and morally responsible manner. In this case, praise can be used as reflection of good behavior for children in process of learning. Thus, the children have responsibility to learn optimally in teaching and learning process.

Parents can give some praise for their children during literacy session. Parents generally use words as praise includes “well done, good girl, clever boy, marvelous, fantastic, super, brilliant, ace or cool, etc”. In addition, Crow and Small (2011) stated that the educator may give reward for student reading performance such as bookmark, book of their choice, customized booklist, more time to read, etc. Those praises and reward adjusted with the children conditions. Moreover, parents can implement pause strategy to check the students understanding during literacy session. In this case, parents give some question that related with the story. When the children can answer the questions fluently, it means that the children have good understanding on the story. However, sometimes some children get difficulties to answer the question. In this case, parents can repeat the



story in front of their children. Through repetition, the children have more knowledge about the plot of the story.

The last, parents may do some activities in after reading activity. In this activity, parents may give some question to the children. This is used to check children comprehension about the story. According to Department of Education and Training Queensland Government, there were some question examples as guidelines in after reading activity. The following questions showed below:

That was very interesting where it said that the bear went to sleep for all of the winter months.

What did you think about that?

Was there a character you liked the most?

The character I liked the most was \_\_\_\_\_.

Why was \_\_\_\_\_ your favorite?

Was there any part of the book that you liked especially?  
Why?

This reminds me of another book we read last week. Does it remind you of another book?

Yes, they were both about \_\_\_\_\_

Do you know anyone like that?

Have you ever felt like that?

Besides, parents can give suggestion about the children spelling and pronunciation during literacy session. Parents may give some examples how to spell and pronounce words or sentence in good way. In addition, drilling technique can

be implemented in teaching pronunciation. The aims of this technique are to help the learner speak with better pronunciation and help memorizing new items (letter, word, sentence, etc). There are some pronunciation component will be taught by using this technique namely word stress, sentence stress, and intonation.

According to Larsen-Freeman (as cited in Dwiningrum, 2016) pointed out that there are some types of drilling technique namely backward build-up drill, repetition drill, chain drill, single slot- repetition drill, multiple-slot repetition drill, transformational drill, question and answer drill. Those types of drilling technique implemented based on problems that face by the children in pronunciation. Nevertheless, repetition drill most often used by parents in teaching their children especially toddler. The children merely repeat what their parents said previously. By repeating letter, word or sentence correctly in lots of time, the children would be mastered in developing their English skill. Here some example the combination of implementation of repetition drill technique with storybook reading technique

Children : He /wänt/ to the forest

Parents : You make mistakes dear. The correct sentence is "He/went/ to the forest". Please, repeat after me "He /went/ to the forest"

Children : "He /went/ to the forest"

Parents : Good job

Based on example above, the repetition drill gives positive effect to the children' learning progress. Children are able to know the wrong pronunciation in spelling the word or sentence. When the children made some mistakes, parent must give their support as the part of developing the language skill. Parents are expected to pay attention for

children's language development during the literacy session. Parents can write some notes and report the children language development to their teacher. It would help the teacher to prepare the learning material and learning activity which is suitable with children level.

Besides, it is highly recommended to establish positive comparisons about characters to children. Parents can classify between good character and bad character in the story in front of their children. After that, parents ask their children to share their opinion about the character in the story. In this session, parents can observe the children language development and build the children positive attitude toward the story. In addition, parents can also know the children favorite characters in the story during this activity. So, it can be used as references in providing another storybook with the same characters.

### **C. Conclusion**

Corona Virus Pandemic has changed all the sector includes Educational System. Kindergarten as part of National Educational Systems should involve student parents to support learning from home agenda recommended by the government. The learning from home agenda still exists until the new normal era. There are many strategies, technique, and learning material which develop by some educational activist to support teaching and learning process for kindergarten students. On the other hand, parents have important role to create good learning environment at home. Parents can improve children literacy development through story book reading technique.

Storybook reading technique is one of early literacy teaching technique to support toddler literacy development. This technique is suitable to implement by parents. In

implementing this technique, there are some activities to optimize the result. Those activities are divided into three stages includes before reading activity, during reading activity, and after reading activity. Those activities have the important aspect to support toddler literacy development.

## References

Artini, L.P. (2017). Rich Language Learning Environment and Young Learner's Literacy Skill in English. *Lingua Cultura*, 11(1), 19-24. Retrieved on June, 27<sup>th</sup>, at <https://journal.binus.ac.id/index.php/Lingua/article/view/1587>

Crow,S.,& Small.R.V. (2011). Developing the Motivation within: Using Praise and Rewards Effectively. Retrieved on July, 11<sup>th</sup> 2020, at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234645804\\_Developing\\_the\\_Motivation\\_within\\_Using\\_Praise\\_and\\_Rewards\\_Effectively](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234645804_Developing_the_Motivation_within_Using_Praise_and_Rewards_Effectively)

Dwiningrum, N.(2016). The Teaching Pronunciation To Young Children (A Case Study at The Sixth Grade Students of SDN 06 Ciputat). Thesis, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta. Retrieved on July, 11<sup>th</sup> 2020, at <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d2dd/2db302c9d3ff01c883a22a38330dfefb18e5.pdf>

Ferguson, M. (2013). Praise: What Does the Literature Say? What Are the Implications for Teachers?. *Kiraranga*, 14 (2), 35-39

Gilbert, B. (2015). Online Learning Revealing the Benefits and Challenges. M.S Special Education Degree, St. John Fisher College. Retrieved on July, 15<sup>th</sup> 2020, at [https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1304&context=education\\_ETD\\_masters](https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1304&context=education_ETD_masters)

- Maximo, M. (2019). Storybook reading strategies to enhance English skills with preschool children in Honduras. *Revista de Investigación Educativa*, 46-68
- McLane, J.B., & McNamee, G.D. (1990). *Early Literacy*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press
- Nguyen, T. (2015). The Effectiveness of Online Learning: Beyond No Significant Difference and Future Horizons. *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 11 (2), 309-319, June 2015
- Sari AR, G.A.P.D.P. (2017). *A Study on Literacy Development and It's Teaching Technique at Bilingual Kindergarten*. Thesis, Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha
- Siahaan, S.D. (2012). Using Story Reading Technique to Improve EFL Young Learner's Vocabulary. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2(3), 208-222, October 2012
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds. & Trans.). Cambridge: MA, Harvard University Press.