

The Influence of Busy Book Media on the Language Development of Children Aged 5-6 Years

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ABSTRACT The use of instructional media in early childhood education plays a pivotal role in supporting children's language development, particularly during the preoperational stage when symbolic thinking and emergent literacy skills begin to form. Busy Book media serves as an effective pedagogical tool that enables teachers to introduce letters, facilitate phonemic awareness, and guide children in constructing simple words through engaging, hands-on activities. Its interactive and tactile nature enhances children's intrinsic motivation, reducing feelings of boredom and promoting sustained attention throughout the learning process. In implementing the Busy Book intervention, the lesson plan (RPP) was adapted to align with the thematic unit on transportation, specifically focusing on two-wheeled vehicles such as bicycles. Findings from hypothesis testing indicate a significant influence of Busy Book media on the language development of children aged 5–6 years at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, Bogo Nganjuk. The average N-Gain score of the experimental group reached 95.00%, demonstrating high effectiveness, while the control group achieved 64.29%, categorized as moderately effective. Furthermore, the effect size analysis revealed that Busy Book media contributed to a 62.22% improvement in children's language development outcomes, underscoring its substantial impact as a developmentally appropriate language-learning resource

Keywords: *Busy Book, Language Development, Children Aged 5-6 Years.*

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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood, when viewed from a developmental stage, is in the golden age. This golden age is a child's golden age, determining their future. During this period, children experience extraordinary development that will never be repeated (Bonita et al., 2022). Language development encompasses a child's ability to use written and spoken words to express ideas appropriate to their age. Children's language development will further develop through the use of learning media, resulting in improved communication.

Furthermore, according to Afifah and Latifah, language development can be achieved through a combination of social activities, emotions, thinking skills, and physical motor skills. Parents and teachers must pay attention to children's language development. Children's language development can also be stimulated through the application of role-playing methods for early

childhood, where children learn through games that suit their desires, needs, and physical and language development. (Afifah et al., 2021)

The current problem is that children cannot learn in person due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has forced learning to be conducted at home. (Pramana, 2020) The government's educational policies have changed school learning. Children have not seen their friends for too long, so activities that support language development are not functioning as they should in early childhood language development post-pandemic.

Teachers generally continue to assess children's development. Teachers can assess children's language development using anecdotal notes, work assessments, daily assessments, monthly assessments, and semester assessments. Assessment of language development in early childhood children aged 5-6 years in the new normal is unlike before (Smith et al., 2015). The role of media in the learning process, especially in early childhood education (PAUD), is increasingly important because children's development during this period is in the preoperational stage of thinking. Children at this preoperational age still think symbolically, so teachers are expected to teach through concrete symbolic forms. (Fidesrinur et al., 2022).

Visual media, such as animation and images, can foster children's imagination and help them remember information more effectively (Shan & Wang, 2022). This is especially important in teaching basic concepts like letters and numbers, where multimedia applications can maintain children's interest and prevent boredom. (Mado, 2023) One medium that can be used to develop early childhood language skills is through Busy Books. Busy Books are flannel-based books containing pictures and writing, aimed at developing children's language, cognitive, and motor skills.

Teachers, as the primary facilitators of young children's learning, hold a fundamental responsibility to stimulate the full range of developmental domains. This obligation reflects the essence of professional commitment in early childhood education, which requires educators to intentionally design learning experiences aligned with children's developmental trajectories (Britto et al., 2017). Such commitment inevitably influences classroom practices, including the arrangement of learning environments, the selection of media and materials, and the use of pedagogical strategies that effectively support early language development—particularly in the areas of phonology and morphology. Within this context, teachers must create learning conditions that are both developmentally appropriate and intrinsically motivating. One medium that has gained increasing attention in recent years is the Busy Book, a multisensory learning tool designed to support interactive, hands-on engagement.

Busy Books offer children opportunities to manipulate objects, explore symbols, and engage in playful learning activities that simultaneously enhance motivation and cognitive engagement. Prior studies have shown that multisensory materials can significantly improve early literacy skills by strengthening children's phonological awareness and early morphological understanding through repeated tactile and visual interaction (e.g., Neumann, 2018; Hachey, 2020). In line with these findings, the use of Busy Books has been found to assist learners in recognizing letters, matching symbols with corresponding sounds, and assembling letters into simple word forms (Nuriani & Juli, 2023). These activities provide a concrete pathway for children to internalize foundational literacy concepts that are otherwise abstract when presented through traditional print-based methods.

Compared with earlier research on literacy media, Busy Books share similarities with interactive literacy kits, picture-letter cards, or Montessori-based tactile materials, all of which emphasize independent exploration and sensory engagement. However, Busy Books offer added advantages due to their customizable components, reusability, and capacity to integrate diverse activities into a single compact medium. Previous studies on manipulatives such as Velcro-based letter boards (Gerde et al., 2019) and laminated phonics task cards (Piastra & Wagner, 2019)

highlight their effectiveness in supporting phonics instruction but often note limitations in durability or adaptability. Busy Books, by contrast, allow teachers to tailor content to specific learning goals, incorporate thematic visualizations, and maintain student engagement through colorful and dynamic designs. These characteristics contribute to a more varied and immersive linguistic environment, enabling children to experience language learning in a manner that is both enjoyable and pedagogically meaningful.

In sum, the integration of Busy Books into early literacy instruction aligns with contemporary research emphasizing multisensory, play-based, and child-centered approaches. Their capacity to combine visual, tactile, and cognitive elements situates Busy Books as a promising innovation that extends beyond traditional learning materials, enriching the quality of teaching and learning in early childhood settings.

Based on observations of 12 students at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, Bogo, Nganjuk, specifically in Group B, children aged 5-6 years, five children experienced difficulties with language skills and had not yet developed optimally. Therefore, the researcher of this research focused on the application of Busy Book media for children aged 5-6 years, the language development of children aged 5-6 years, and the influence of Busy Book media on the language development of children aged 5-6 years at Mutiara Bunda Bogo Kindergarten, Nganjuk.

METHOD

This study follows a quantitative experimental methodology, utilising a Pre-Test–Post-Test Control Group Design a structure that remains widely accepted in recent educational research (e.g. Akmam et al., 2025). In this particular investigation, the population encompassed all 5- to 6-year-old students at Mutiara Bunda Bogo Nganjuk Kindergarten. A probability sampling strategy, specifically saturated sampling, was used to select 30 students in total. These were divided equally into two classes: Class A-1 ($n = 15$) as the experimental group and Class A-2 ($n = 15$) as the control group.

Data collection was conducted through a combination of standardized testing, document review, and direct observation. For data analysis, the researchers first verified the reliability and validity of the research instruments, followed by preliminary tests to check the assumptions of the hypothesis tests. Subsequently, descriptive statistical analyses were carried out to summarize the data, and finally, inferential statistical methods were applied to test the study's hypotheses.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Busy Book Media for 5-6 Year Olds at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, Bogo, Nganjuk

The implementation of the Busy Book media for children aged 5–6 at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, located in Bogo, Nganjuk, is meticulously aligned with the lesson plan (RPP) centered on the theme of vehicles, with a specific focus on the subtheme of two-wheeled vehicles, particularly bicycles. The instructional process is designed to facilitate active and meaningful learning through a series of carefully sequenced steps. It begins with an opening activity to capture the children's attention and establish learning objectives, followed by opportunities for observation, where children engage directly with the Busy Book to explore concepts visually and tactilely. This is complemented by a question-and-answer phase, encouraging children to articulate curiosities and hypotheses. Subsequently, children gather information from the materials provided, which supports the development of reasoning skills as they analyze and make sense of the observed phenomena. The process continues with activities that promote communication, allowing children to express their understanding, share insights, and engage in collaborative dialogue. Finally, the lesson concludes with a recall session, which

reinforces the knowledge acquired and ensures the consolidation of learning as the culminating reflection of the instructional sequence.

This media can be played by several children according to the desired theme. It also includes the names of objects and descriptions for each image. Here's how to use Busy Book media: (1) Children look at and observe the main section to understand the theme. (2) Children will open the media, and on the first page, they will discuss the theme and subthemes in the game. (3) Children will name several objects in the media. (4) In the first sub-theme, children will count and group several themes. (5) In the second sub-theme, children will sew and differentiate. (6) Third, children will try role-playing. (7) Finally, children will count and glue. (Handika, 2025)

Busy Book media is included in visual media. The advantages of Busy Book learning media are that it can be used for all subjects, can be made independently, items can be arranged independently, can be prepared in advance, allows for adjustments to student needs, can be used repeatedly, and saves time and energy (Helminsyah et al., 2022). The advantages of this Busy Book learning media are that there are items that can be used or arranged repeatedly, accelerate children's understanding, can be adapted to children's needs and made as attractive as possible with the colors contained in the media (Budiastara et al., 2025). Teachers can modify and develop the media, but in essence the Busy Book learning media is a cloth book containing various simple activities that are used as teaching aids and games that can develop aspects of development in early childhood.

Language Development of 5-6-Year-Old Children at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, Bogo, Nganjuk

The language development of 5-6-year-old children at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, Bogo, Nganjuk, in this study was measured using pre-test and post-test scores from the control and treatment classes. Based on the research data, the average pre-test score for language development of 5-6-year-old children in the experimental class was 2, or (MB: Still Developing), with an average score of 59. Meanwhile, the average pre-test score for language development of 5-6-year-old children in the control class was 2, or (MB: Still Developing), with an average score of 56. Based on these results, the language development of 5-6-year-old children in the control class is still developing. The results also indicate that in the pre-test phase, the experimental class scored higher than the control class.

The post-test results showed that the average language development of children aged 5-6 years in the experimental class showed a score of 3 or (BSH: Developing According to Expectations) with an average value of 84. Meanwhile, the average post-test results for language development of children aged 5-6 years in the control class showed a score of 3 or (BSH: Developing According to Expectations) with an average value of 71. Based on these results, the language development of children aged 5-6 years in the control class is developing according to expectations. These results also show that at the post-test stage, the experimental class had a higher score than the control class.

Good language development in children is certainly in accordance with the established developmental characteristics. As with the characteristics of early childhood language development, it is said to be developing well if the goals of language development that were previously applied can be achieved (McCauley & Christiansen, 2019). In language development, there are several goals that include several points that must be mastered by early childhood in general for optimal development, as follows: (1) Introducing early childhood to letters in the alphabet as sound symbols or sound signs. (2) Training early childhood to express themselves by getting them used to asking questions can stimulate their language development. (3) Early childhood language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening, must be practiced briefly during the early childhood language development process. (Otto, 2015)

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the characteristics of language development in children aged 5-6 years old include children being able to express themselves through reading, writing, speaking, and so on.

The Influence of Busy Books on the Language Development of 5-6 Year Old Children at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, Bogo, Nganjuk

According to Mufliharsi, learning using Busy Books has the following advantages: first, it makes it easier for educators to determine teaching materials. Second, it makes it easier for educators to evaluate students because the activities in the books allow them to explore each child's abilities. Third, educators can ask students to directly engage in the educational process outlined on each page of the Busy Book. Fourth, it fosters students' curiosity. Fifth, the media used is durable. Sixth, the learning process becomes more enjoyable and students become more active. Seventh, the enjoyable learning process makes students active and stimulates their creativity, leading to better and more systematic activities using Busy Books. (Mufliharsi, 2017)

Busy Books have an impact on the language development of 5-6 year old children at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, Bogo, Nganjuk. Based on the average N-Gain score for the experimental class of 95.00%, it is categorized as effective. Meanwhile, for the control class, the score was 64.29%, making it quite effective. Therefore, based on the N-Gain score test, the average score for the experimental class treated with Busy Books was higher than the average score for the control class treated with conventional learning. Based on the effect size calculation, the use of Busy Books influenced the language development of 5-6-year-old children at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, Bogo, Nganjuk, by 0.6222, or 62.22%. The remaining 37.77% was influenced by other factors. This indicates that Busy Books are highly effective and significant for the language development of 5-6-year-old children at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten, Bogo, Nganjuk.

Busy Books are based on theories related to brain function, which focus on recognizing neuroscience-based learning styles (Alsufi et al., 2025). Busy Books can make learning activities more engaging and enjoyable, engaging children actively in the learning process. In addition, several factors can attract children's interest in busy books, namely (1) varied colors; (2) containing various forms of activities; and (3) easy to understand, well, and systematic (Rika et al., 2022).

When teachers conduct activities to stimulate letter recognition and letter imitation using the Busy Book game, children appear very enthusiastic and interested in participating in the letter recognition and letter imitation activities (Ulfa et al., 2024). Although children are less organized in the game because many children still fight over letters during the game. Sometimes there are children who fight over letters during the game, sometimes there are also children who grab letter pieces even though they are already in the hands of their friends. They are very enthusiastic in the Busy Book game because it is a new game they have encountered. With the Busy Book game, children learn to recognize letters more effectively and gain new things and experiences.

CONCLUSION

The application of Busy Book media is adjusted to the learning implementation plan (RPP) with the theme of vehicles, sub-theme of two-wheeled vehicles/bicycles. The steps include opening, children observing, children asking, children gathering information, children reasoning, children communicating, and recalling (final touch of learning). The application of Busy Book media, through the help of teachers to recognize the sounds of bicycles around them, communicate verbally, by having vocabulary about bicycles, understand stories about bicycles, and through the help of teachers to make meaningful scribbles about bicycles and imitate letters about bicycles using learning media. The influence of Busy Book media on the language development of children aged 5-6 years at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten Bogo Nganjuk with the t-test method shows that there is a significant relationship between pre-test and post-test data in the experimental class, there is a difference between pre-test and post-test data in the experimental class, and there is an influence of Busy Book Media on the language development of children aged 5-6 years at Mutiara Bunda Kindergarten Bogo Nganjuk.

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