

## **Interactive Read Aloud as An Effort to Improve Foreign Language Skills at Early Age**

**Elwin Walimatul Fara<sup>1</sup>, Rohinah<sup>2</sup>, Na'imah<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia; elwinfaraa@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia; rohinah@uin-suka.ac.id

<sup>3</sup> UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia; drnaimah@gmail.com

---

### **ARTICLE INFO**

#### **Keywords:**

Interactive Read Aloud;  
Foreign Language;  
Early Childhood Education

---

#### **Article history:**

Received 2022-07-09

Revised 2022-11-15

Accepted 2023-02-03

---

### **ABSTRACT**

One of the efforts of developing foreign language skills in early childhood is listening skills. Various kinds of listening activities that can be applied to early childhood are packed with interesting and fun activities. One of the methods for listening to non-stop that invites children to actively participate is the interactive read aloud method. The research method in this study uses the library research method, researchers collected various references related to foreign language learning for early childhood, especially by using an interactive read aloud strategy. The purpose of this study is to review interactive read aloud method as an effort to improve foreign language skills in early childhood. The results of the discussion showed that foreign language learning with the interactive read aloud method is effective and can invite children to actively participate, understand the text, and be able to retell the story that is being played.

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license.*



---

### **Corresponding Author:**

Elwin Walimatul Fara

UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia; elwinfaraa@gmail.com

---

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Early childhood education starts from birth to the age of six by providing stimulation to support the development and growth of children. The stimulation is not only for physical development but also for spiritual development to prepare for the next level of education. In creating an atmosphere and environment that helps children explore and develop experiences, knowledge, and understanding of the learning experience, it is necessary to provide stimulation, guidance, care, and nurturing by educators and parents. So, children can observe, imitate, experiment repeatedly and involve all their potential and intelligence.

The process of growth and development of children takes place naturally, but the process does not escape the influence of the environment, including adults or parents who take care of them. Dr. Nia Kania in an article submitted in the seminar "Stimulation of Child Development" (2006) stated that at that time, the process of developing language skills, creativity, social awareness, emotionality, and intelligence developed rapidly (Kania, 2006). So that it will greatly affect further developments.

In providing positive stimulation for children from an early age, such as forming tree roots, becoming stronger (Asmani, n.d.) . As a way to fulfill the stimulation needed by children, many components play an important role. This role is not only carried out by parents at home, but the role of teachers and the environment also has an important role. Parents are the main component that plays a full role in the growth and development of early childhood, because the interaction between parents and children is very intense. On the other hand, the teacher also has an important role, with the insight possessed by the teacher it will help in determining the appropriate strategy in selecting alternative learning activities that are systematic, directed and effective.

One of the periodic developments of children and the longer the better their abilities are language skills. This ability greatly affects the quality of socializing children in the future (Cheriana & Sumaryanto, 2018). The increase in language skills will increase when children's interactions with peers at school are increasingly intense through various kinds of activities inside or outside the classroom and their cognitive abilities will also increase.

Language is one form of communication from the results of learning to socialize with the environment (Cheriana & Sumaryanto, 2018). According to Montessori in his book states that children who are given good and appropriate environmental materials and experiences, children respond to activities spontaneously. In this education aspects of children's growth and development will be supported to fulfill and satisfy their desires (G, 2002). With various activities that are in accordance with the wishes of the child, the delivery of information and knowledge will be maximized so that energy and effort in building creativity and personality can be channeled optimally.

Based on the explanation regarding the importance of the right stimulus for the growth and development of early childhood, it is necessary to have a strategy in delivering the right material. There are many strategies that can be applied to early childhood activities, one of the activities that can be applied to improve communication and language skills is reading or listening activities. Listening is the first language skill in developing children and communication skills are also very dominant in everyday life (Kusuma, Wahyuningsih, & Syamsuddin, n.d.). So it can be concluded that listening skills are one aspect of language development in early childhood that needs to be improved.

Listening skills can be said as an effort to develop children's language skills. Listening activities consist of listening to fairy tales, stories, poems, fables, or texts in the form of audio or visual displays such as videos (Gulec & Durmus, 2015). In the listening process, children will respond actively and pay attention to everything they hear. Listening can be said as a learning tool if it involves the active sense of the listener so that children can understand and integrate information with a response (Gulec & Durmus, 2015). According to some experts, the stimulation that can be given in improving listening skills is through Interactive Read Aloud activities (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004).

Interactive read aloud is an activity that is able to improve language skills for early childhood, this is based on research conducted by Ardi, et al (2016) about the effectiveness of the Read Aloud method on early childhood listening skills which states that the method is effective with a percentage of results of 75.2%. In addition, the findings of research conducted by Priyantini (2020) show that Read Aloud activities can improve early childhood receptive language skills which can stimulate children's responses so that they have interest and attention to engage in storytelling activities. The purpose of this study was to determine the efforts to improve foreign language skills of early childhood through Interactive Read Aloud activities.

## 2. METHODS

The research method in this study uses the library research method, where the researcher as the research subject collects library data. The data collected is in the form of scientific papers that are analyzed and solved by relying on critical and in-depth studies. The data collection technique in this method is by reviewing the literature, reports, books and important notes relating to the problem to be solved (Nazir, 2005). In this study, researchers collected various references related to foreign language learning for early childhood, especially by using an interactive read aloud strategy. The interactive read

aloud strategy is not new in the world of education, especially in foreign language learning. Many practitioners have implemented this strategy in foreign language learning. In this study, researchers want to draw conclusions from various experts by collecting data related to foreign language learning with interactive read aloud strategies.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### Nature of Early Childhood and Early Childhood Language Development

Early childhood is an individual who is undergoing a process of rapid growth and development. The standard for early childhood age used by the NAEYC (National Association Education of Young Children) is 0-8 years old (Naeyc, 2022). According to these standards, early childhood is a group of children who are in a period of growth and development. Early childhood has a unique personality with different growth and development patterns for each individual. The pattern of development and growth of early childhood consists of physical aspects, cognitive aspects, socio-emotional aspects, creativity, language and communication (Ariyanti, 2016).

There are 4 stages in early childhood, including infancy from birth to 12 months of age, ages 1 to 3 years is childhood (toddlers), ages 3 to 5 years is preschool, and the fourth stage is elementary school from age 6 to 8 years (Ariyanti, 2016). The developmental characteristics of each child will look different at each stage, because they have their own characteristics. So that the treatment of each early childhood will be different, depending on the development of each stage.

Early childhood education (PAUD) is carried out as an effort to stimulate, direct, guide and provide learning in helping children hone their abilities and skills. This education is based on the needs of children who adhere to the values of their environment. Activities in the learning process are carried out with fun playing activities (Amal, Musi, & Hajerah, 2019). In accordance with Ministerial Regulation 137 of 2014 Article 13, namely learning at the Kindergarten level is carried out through interactive, fun, inspiring, contextual, and child-centered play activities. So, children must participate actively with the flexibility provided by educators.

Children's language skills develop through dialogue or conversation interactions with other people in the surrounding environment. Interaction in the form of conversations between the two parties are able to transfer information and knowledge to children. This experience is an important lesson for children's language and social development. New vocabulary can be recorded well when children are in their golden age. Uniqueness and superiority in higher memory skills in early childhood is something that needs more attention, because this needs to be developed to prepare a superior personality in the future.

#### Introduction of Foreign Languages in Early Childhood

The introduction of foreign languages to early childhood in Indonesia is one of the implementations of the statement of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia to raise a golden generation in the future. Foreign language learning for early childhood is packed with fun activities such as play activities that are directed and only introduced to the basics. In addition to playing activities, there are several activities that can be applied, namely movement and humor activities, storytelling, and reading stories.

In general, the foreign languages taught in Indonesia are English and Arabic. Foreign language lessons are generally included in local content which is no less important to be considered in curriculum development. Thus, it is necessary to develop a curriculum by adjusting the aspects of children's development and abilities. An integrated curriculum with a thematic approach that relies on the development of the PAUD curriculum is expected to be able to provide a memorable and meaningful experience (Kostelknik & J, 1991).

## Understanding Interactive Read Aloud

Interactive Read Aloud is a reading aloud technique that pays attention to intonation, tone, rhythm, tempo with interesting question and answer activities to encourage students to think critically (Senawati, Arie Suwastini, Agung Sri Rwa Jayantini, Luh Putu Sri Adnyani, & Artini, 2021). The IRA method is an effort to make reading habituation a part of American culture, which is carried out in schools and families. The active role of adults is needed to encourage children to respond and interact with verbal discussions.

Jim Trelease in his book "The Handbook of Read Aloud" explains that there are only two ways to make words enter the brain, namely through sight or hearing (Trelease, 2017). Read aloud associates fun fairy tale activities with books, because that's where many interesting stories come from. Like storytelling, in read aloud communication is also needed between the storyteller and the audience.

In interactive aloud reading activities, children listen to the reading of various texts by adults (teachers or parents) then the children engage in discussions related to the texts read. The involvement of children in discussions directs children to think critically by developing their imagination and teaching them to learn various characters. So it can be said that interactive read aloud activities are reading aloud activities that organize children to think critically and can express opinions so that the general achievement is that children can understand texts and develop certain language skills.

## Components of Interactive Read Aloud Activities

IRA activities carried out in Indonesia adapt to aspects of early childhood development in Indonesia, so they cannot be exactly the same as the implementation in America. According to "Fisher et al" (Fisher et al., 2004), There are several components in IRA activities, especially for foreign language learning, including (1) text selection, (2) practice and preview, (3) Goal setting, (4) Reading fluency, (5) animation and expression, (6) follow-up : read and write independently.

The selection of texts in IRA activities needs to consider the interests and needs of the child. In addition, it should also be adjusted to the themes and sub-themes that have been determined in the learning curriculum. Different backgrounds and interests of students in an effort to address the individual needs of each child (Akrofi, Swafford, & Janisch, 2010). On the other hand, students are also given the opportunity to choose their books independently so that they can increase children's active involvement during activities.

After selecting the appropriate story text, the teacher must do exercises and previews to learn and understand the content of the text. For foreign language learning, teachers also need to learn difficult vocabularies that are found and during IRA activities, children are asked to write down difficult vocabularies in their respective notebooks. Pauses in IRA activities can be filled with question and answer activities, so the teacher needs to prepare questions that are in accordance with the text.

One of the goals of IRA activities for early childhood is to train children's confidence to express opinions, be confident, and be able to retell stories read by teachers. Based on research results of Setiasih and Komala (Paud & Siliwangi, 2021) stated that the Read aloud method can improve the linguistic ability of early childhood, with the explanation that at each age level, children have different abilities. In the age range of 2-6 years, children like to listen to stories and at the age of 4-6 years children begin to be able to retell stories that are heard well. It can be said that the main purpose of IRA activities in early childhood is to instill the activeness of children in every activity, especially in IRA activities.

The next component is the ability to read, in the context of learning a foreign language, the main key that must be considered by the teacher is fluency in pronouncing vocabulary. For the example in English, the introduction of English vocabulary for early childhood is still relatively basic. So it's not too complicated for teachers other than English teachers. However, there needs to be an emphasis on Practice to speak fluently so that it can reduce errors when reading the text.

Important aspects to note are animations and expressions. In Fisher's research (Paud & Siliwangi, 2021) It was also explained that the animations and expressions applied in IRA activities helped children to guess the meaning and the next story. Expressions that can be practiced such as changing

voices, using motion symbols, or from facial expressions. The emotions of each character also need to be applied to describe the mood of the character. Thus, the child will be more active in IRA activities.

The final component is the follow-up to the IRA method. One of the main follow-ups in this activity is for children to be able to retell stories told by the teacher in their own language. On the other hand, children's social interactions with their classmates need to be considered to motivate children's activity during the activity. Conducive interactions can enhance children's cognitive development at the same time. So that discussion activities between students by exchanging ideas can stimulate children to think more critically.

### **The Role of Interactive Read Aloud Activities to Achieve Foreign Language Development Early Paud**

The practice of imagining and listening to stories using the IRA method can attract children's interest in reading books, because the more often children interact with books, the higher their interest in reading will be. The more books a child reads, the more flexibility the child will have in increasing the vocabulary learned. The experience of listening to stories using the IRA method is one of the implementations of the Reggio Emilia approach, where early childhood has a thousand languages that must be explored with experiences that support children's growth and development.

The interactive read aloud method has a strong contribution to children's development, including (a) teachers can assess and evaluate students' reading abilities, (b) teachers as readers can develop communication skills with children while for children as listeners can develop listening skills and understand the text that is heard, (c) children can retell stories they have heard, (d) children can practice their ability to express ideas and ideas related to stories that are read (Rahim, 2018). Based on the explanation above, reading aloud has many advantages for students and teachers. Therefore, teachers need to develop effective aloud reading activities.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

The Interactive Read Aloud method in foreign language learning is still rarely applied to early childhood education because foreign language learning activities are generally packaged with movement and song activities. The foreign languages that are generally taught in PAUD are English and Arabic. The material taught is still around basic vocabulary that is often found around the child's environment. The use of the IRA method for foreign language learning is effectively applied to PAUD.

There are six general components that need to be considered in the IRA method, including (1) text selection, (2) Practice and preview, (3) Goal setting, (4) Reading fluency, (5) animation and expression, (6) follow-up . Of the six components, the main purpose of this method is to invite children to participate actively, besides that children are also given the freedom to express their opinions about the stories read by the teacher. This method can affect the cognitive development of early childhood.

## **REFERENCES**

- Akrofi, A. K., Swafford, J., & Janisch, C. (2010). Finding a Book for Jamal: Recommending Text Types for at-Home Reading of Beginning Readers Who Struggle. *Reading Psychology, 31*(4), 365–410. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02702710903054881>
- Amal, A., Musi, M. A., & Hajerah, H. (2019). Pengaruh Reggio Emilia Approach dalam Bermain Peran dan Bererita terhadap Kemampuan Bahasa Anak. *Golden Age: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, 3*(1), 48–55. <https://doi.org/10.29313/ga.v3i1.4831>
- Ariyanti, T. (2016). Pentingnya Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini Bagi Tumbuh Kembang Anak. *Dinamika:Pendidikan Dasar, 8*(1), 50–58. Retrieved from [http://digilib.unila.ac.id/4949/15/BAB II.pdf](http://digilib.unila.ac.id/4949/15/BAB%20II.pdf)
- Asmani, J. M. (n.d.). *Manajemen Strategi Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD)*. Yogyakarta: Diva Press.
- Cheriana, L., & Sumaryanto, P. (2018). PENINGKATKAN KEMAMPUAN BERBAHASA INGGRIS PADA ANAK USIA 5-6 TAHUN MELALUI METODE MONTESSORI DI TK KIDEA KELAPA

- GADING JAKARTA UTARA. *Jurnal Pendidikan : Bina Manfaat Ilmu*, 02(03), 161–170.
- Fisher, D., Flood, J., Lapp, D., & Frey, N. (2004). Interactive Read-Alouds: Is There a Common Set of Implementation Practices? *The Reading Teacher*, 58(1), 8–17. <https://doi.org/10.1598/rt.58.1.1>
- G, H. E. (2002). *Montessori untuk Anak Prasekolah*. Jakarta: Pustaka Delaprapta.
- Gulec, S., & Durmus, N. (2015). A Study Aiming to Develop Listening Skills of Elementary second Grade Students. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 191, 103–109. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.487>
- Kania, N. (2006). *Stimulasi Tumbuh Kembang Anak untuk Mencapai Tumbuh Kembang yang Optimal*. 1–10.
- Kostelknik, & J, M. (1991). *Teaching Young Children Using THEMES*. Glenview, Illinois: Good Year Books.
- Kusuma, A., Wahyuningsih, S., & Syamsuddin, M. M. (n.d.). *Efektivitas Metode Read Aloud terhadap Keterampilan Menyimak Anak Usia 5-6 Tahun*.
- Naeyc. (2022). The 10 NAEYC Program Standards. Retrieved from Naeyc annual conference website: <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/10-naeyc-program-standards>
- Nazir, M. (2005). *Metode Penelitian Survey*. Rajawali Press, Jakarta. (hal. 90).
- Paud, P. G., & Siliwangi, I. (2021). *Pembelajaran Metode Read Aloud Terhadap Kecer-*. 4(2), 193–199.
- Rahim, F. (2018). *Pengajaran Membaca di Sekolah Dasar* (2nd ed.). Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Senawati, J., Arie Suwastini, N. K., Agung Sri Rwa Jayantini, I. G., Luh Putu Sri Adnyani, L., & Artini, N. N. (2021). THE BENEFITS OF READING ALOUD FOR CHILDREN: A REVIEW IN EFL CONTEXT. *IJEE: Indonesian Journal of English Education*, 8, 80–107. <https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v8i1.19880>
- Trelease, J. (2017). *The Read-Aloud Handbook*. Bandung: Mizan Media Utama.
- Akrofi, A. K., Swafford, J., & Janisch, C. (2010). Finding a Book for Jamal: Recommending Text Types for at-Home Reading of Beginning Readers Who Struggle. *Reading Psychology*, 31(4), 365–410. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02702710903054881>
- Amal, A., Musi, M. A., & Hajerah, H. (2019). Pengaruh Reggio Emilia Approach dalam Bermain Peran dan Bererita terhadap Kemampuan Bahasa Anak. *Golden Age: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 3(1), 48–55. <https://doi.org/10.29313/ga.v3i1.4831>
- Ariyanti, T. (2016). Pentingnya Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini Bagi Tumbuh Kembang Anak. *Dinamika:Pendidikan Dasar*, 8(1), 50–58. Retrieved from [http://digilib.unila.ac.id/4949/15/BAB II.pdf](http://digilib.unila.ac.id/4949/15/BAB%20II.pdf)
- Asmani, J. M. (n.d.). *Manajemen Strategi Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD)*. Yogyakarta: Diva Press.
- Cheriana, L., & Sumaryanto, P. (2018). PENINGKATKAN KEMAMPUAN BERBAHASA INGGRIS PADA ANAK USIA 5-6 TAHUN MELALUI METODE MONTESSORI DI TK KIDEA KELAPA GADING JAKARTA UTARA. *Jurnal Pendidikan : Bina Manfaat Ilmu*, 02(03), 161–170.
- Fisher, D., Flood, J., Lapp, D., & Frey, N. (2004). Interactive Read-Alouds: Is There a Common Set of Implementation Practices? *The Reading Teacher*, 58(1), 8–17. <https://doi.org/10.1598/rt.58.1.1>
- G, H. E. (2002). *Montessori untuk Anak Prasekolah*. Jakarta: Pustaka Delaprapta.
- Gulec, S., & Durmus, N. (2015). A Study Aiming to Develop Listening Skills of Elementary second Grade Students. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 191, 103–109. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.487>
- Kania, N. (2006). *Stimulasi Tumbuh Kembang Anak untuk Mencapai Tumbuh Kembang yang Optimal*. 1–10.
- Kostelknik, & J, M. (1991). *Teaching Young Children Using THEMES*. Glenview, Illinois: Good Year Books.
- Kusuma, A., Wahyuningsih, S., & Syamsuddin, M. M. (n.d.). *Efektivitas Metode Read Aloud terhadap Keterampilan Menyimak Anak Usia 5-6 Tahun*.
- Naeyc. (2022). The 10 NAEYC Program Standards. Retrieved from Naeyc annual conference website: <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/10-naeyc-program-standards>
- Nazir, M. (2005). *Metode Penelitian Survey*. Rajawali Press, Jakarta. (hal. 90).
- Paud, P. G., & Siliwangi, I. (2021). *Pembelajaran Metode Read Aloud Terhadap Kecer-*. 4(2), 193–199.

- Rahim, F. (2018). *Pengajaran Membaca di Sekolah Dasar* (2nd ed.). Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Senawati, J., Arie Suwastini, N. K., Agung Sri Rwa Jayantini, I. G., Luh Putu Sri Adnyani, L., & Artini, N. N. (2021). THE BENEFITS OF READING ALOUD FOR CHILDREN: A REVIEW IN EFL CONTEXT. *IJEE: Indonesian Journal of English Education*, 8, 80–107. <https://doi.org/10.15408/ijee.v8i1.19880>
- Trelease, J. (2017). *The Read-Aloud Handbook*. Bandung: Mizan Media Utama.

