

**WHOLE LANGUAGE VERSUS SYLLABLES READING METHODS
(Experiment in Indonesian Young Children)**

Siti Aisyah

Universitas Terbuka (Open University)

Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia

sitia@ecampus.ut.ac.id

Abstract

This research aims to obtain empirical data on the effect of reading method and thinking skills toward language skills of early childhood. This study used a treatment design by level 2 x 2. In the design, each of the independent variables are classified into two sides, includes action variable that is reading methods are classified into Whole Language and Syllables Method. Whereas moderator variables that is thinking skills, are classified based on high and low level into high-level thinking skills and low-level thinking skills.

ANOVA calculation results showed that language skills of children who followed reading activities by using whole language method is higher than the language skills of children who attend reading activities by using Syllables method. Thus, there is the effect of the application of the Big Book method and Syllables methods toward language skills of children.

Based on observations in the field that was continued by assessment to know the use of the whole language method in improving linguistic intelligence, data showed that in the two schools, the group of children who use whole language, their linguistic intelligence significantly developed.

Their linguistic Intelligence that consists of listening, talk (retelling), reading (arranging word cards) and write, showed there was an increase in the results of initial assessment with the assessment results after the action.

Key words: Whole Language Method, Syllables Method, Thinking Skills and Language Skills

THE PROCESS OF CHILDREN LEARN TO READ

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In principle, children learn to read as an adult reading. In reading, adults using three strategies related to Sentence Structure (Syntactic), Sentence Meaning (Semantic), and Lettering (Graphic). (Heather Gilmour and Don Tyrer, 1990).

Another suggestion about how children read stated by David F. Bjorklund (2005) who argued that there are two approaches (1). bottom - up process, where children learn the language components (letter introduction, letters to sounds relationship) and then interpret it, while the second is top-down process. This approach refers to the constructivist perspective based on the theory developed by Piaget. This approach teaches children by paying attention to children's interests and background knowledge already possessed, which is connected with the information to be learned from given texts. A top-down approach emphasizes the context of a meaningful process that became known as the whole-language approach.

BIG BOOK AND SYLLABLES METHOD

Big Book Method

Big Book Method is a method of learning language on the basis of Whole Language, which is teaching language with emphasis on the whole introduction of language elements (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). The use of this method by Kindergarten Ananda at Indonesia Open University began since 2005. The Big Book's are made in accordance with the themes used in Kindergarten Ananda and adapted to the culture of Indonesia. Learning activities conducted in a comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere. The application of the Big Book was held in a center and Big Book activities adapted to the center so that the activities carried out in an integrated learning in which an activity related to other activities.

Language Learning Based on the philosophy of Whole Language

Teachers, parents, and even children often wondered, why learn a language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) is sometimes so easy but sometimes is very difficult. Outside of school, learn the language is so easy while in school is so hard. All human babies learn to speak in a short time at home and the result is so incredibly good, although without formal teaching. But when they learn the language in school, many children have difficulties especially when they learn written language, although they are studying with a teacher who knows how to use learning material and activities that have been developed seriously and costly.

Learning Reading Paradigm Based on Whole Language

From the description above, we can conclude some learning paradigm that uses whole language philosophy, which is as follows.

- a. Reading is a process of making meaning rather than simply "sounds some words". Meaning is created through interactions with a useful and whole writing.
- b. Words are not studied in isolation but in the context of its use. Experience with the words in a social and functional context is very important in the study of words.
- c. Reading and writing are learned through real reading and writing (not through reading and writing exercises). Denny Setiawan in Solehuddin (2005)

Syllables Method

According to Akhadiyah (1992) there are four basic reading methods (beginning), these are Alphabet and Sounds method, Syllables Peeled-Bundle and Words-Letters, Global, and Structure, Analysis and Synthesis (SAS). These five methods are as follows.

Alphabet and Sounds method

The alphabet method is a method of reading used or intended for beginner readers who are just learning to read or recognize letters with the procedure: letters are read in the form of alphabet. Example: Letter a, b, c, d, and so on are read (in Bahasa) [a], [be], [ce], [de], and so on.

Sound method is a method of reading that is used or intended for beginner readers who are just learning to read or recognize letters by reading letters in the form of sound.

Syllables Peel-Bundle Method and Words-Letters Method.

Syllables Peel-Bundle Method is a method that is used or intended to teach the beginner reader with the procedure of parse and stringing read syllables. Readings are read in the form of syllables, e.g. (in Bahasa): bo – la (ball) , bu – sa (foam), and bu – ku (books).

Syllables are read by the procedure:

- a) Each syllable is parsed or read letter by letter.
- b) Letter by letter is assembled or read into syllables.

Examples (syllables in Bahasa):

bo - la (ball)	bu - sa (foam)	bu-ku (book)
b - o - l - a	b - u - s - a	b - u - k - u
bo - la	bu - sa	bu-ku

Words-Letters Method is a method that is used or intended to teach the beginner reader with the procedure of parse and compose that stringing read words.

Readings are not read in the form of syllables, but in the form of words.

For examples, the words (in Bahasa) *topi* (hat), *mata* (eyes), dan *sapu* (brooms).

These words are read by the procedure:

- a. Words are read (parsed) into syllables
- b. Syllables are read (parsed) into letters,
- c. Letters are read (stringed) into syllables,
- d. Syllables are read (stringed) into words.

THINKING SKILLS

Thinking skills is one of the most important areas of the curriculum. Helping children develop and improve the skills is a task of teachers that should not be overlooked because it is a provision for children for facing life later. Philip Adey described thinking as *something we do when we try to solve problems and allows us to take things we know or observe and turn them into new ways of understanding*" (Philip Adey in Debra McGregor)

While the understanding of thinking skills was defined by Matthew Lipman as *many cognitif functions contribute toward the accomplishment of thinking skills that is purposely invited question, task or challenge*". (Philip Adey in Debra McGregor)

Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

Laurent B. Resnick defined HOTS as follows:

*Higher Order Thinking Skills involve a cluster of elaborative mental activities requiring nuanced judgment and analysis of complex situations according to multiple criteria. The thinker's task is **to construct meaning** and impose structure on situations rather than to expect to find them already apparent.* (Laurent B. Resnick, 1987)

Thus, high order thinking skills will happen when someone links new information with already stored information in his memory and/or re-arrange and develop the information to achieve a purpose or find a solving settlement of a difficult situation.

Thomas dan Thorne said that:

"Higher Order Thinking is thinking on higher level that memorizing facts or telling something back to someone exactly the way the it was told to you. When a person memorizes and gives back the informatio without having to think about it. That's because it's much like a robot; it does what it's programmed to do, but it doesn't think for itself". (Thomas, A., and Thorne, G, 2009)

High order thinking skill is a skill that can be trained. This is similar to what presented by Resnick that *elements of thinking are clearly teachable* (Laurent B. Resnick,)

According to David R. Krathwoht, high order thinking skill essentially means thinking at higher levels of the cognitive hierarchy. Bloom's Taxonomy is a hierarchical arrangement that is widely accepted by people, and can be seen as a continuous thinking skills starting from the level of thinking "remember" up to the level of thinking "create" (David R. Krathwohl, 2002)

Benjamin Bloom created taxonomy and later was revised by David R. Krathwohl for categorizing level of questions abstraction commonly arise in the world of education. The taxonomy provides a useful structure to categorize the questions on a test.

Six categories in the opinion of Newcomb & Trefz can be divided into 2 categories: Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). "The LOTS portion of the examination was made up of remembering and processing items; HOTS scale contained the items at the creating and evaluating levels of learning "(Edwards, M. Craig & Briers, 2002).

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this study is the experimental treatment by the level of 2x2. The methods of experimental treatment by a 2x2 level is one way to see a causal relationship between two or more variables by giving treatment to the experimental group and then compare it with the control group. Mohamad Ali described that, experimental research is an experiment activities to examine an event that appears in certain conditions, and any appearance of the events observed and controlled as carefully as possible so it can be figure out a causal relationship of the appearance (Muhammad Ali, 2010)

This study used a treatment design by level 2 x 2 because there are two independent variables that affect one dependent variable, that is the method of reading and thinking skills as independent variables and language skills as dependent variable. In the design, each of the

independent variables are classified into two sides, includes action variable that is reading methods (A) are classified into the Big Book Methods (A1) and Syllables Method (A2). Whereas moderator variables that is thinking skills (B), are classified based on high and low level into high-level thinking skills (B1) and low-level thinking skills (B2). (McDavitt in King,*et al*, Dallas:Cala.fsu, 2005, h.12). Based on these explanations, the design can be seen in the following table.

The affordable population in this study is group B kindergarten in District Setu Academic Year 2013/2014, amounting to 578 children in 34 classes spread in 17 kindergarten. While the not-affordable population of the entire group are group B kindergarten in South Tangerang, amounting to 10 234 children in 602 classes spread in 298 kindergarten.

Thinking Skills	Statistic	Method		Total
		Big Book (A ₁)	Suku Kata (A ₂)	
High (B ₁)	n	16	16	32
	\bar{x}	159.44	154.19	156.81
	s	3.20	3.56	4.27
	s ²	10.26	12.70	18.22
	X _{maximal}	165	160	165
	X _{minimal}	154	146	146
Low (B ₂)	n	16	16	32
	\bar{x}	152.50	139.13	145.81
	s	4.05	3.61	7.77
	s ²	16.40	13.05	60.42
	X _{maximal}	158	146	158
	X _{minimal}	146	131	131
Total	n	32	32	64
	\bar{x}	155.97	146.66	151.31
	s	5.03	8.43	8.33

Table 1. Score Language Skills

	s^2	25.32	71.01	69.42
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DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

By using descriptive analysis, it was obtained that an average score of linguistic intelligence of children that follow reading activities by using Big Book method is different from the scores of children who took part in reading activities by using Syllables method, respectively 155.97 and 146.66. This is supported by inferential analysis that states there is a difference between linguistic intelligence that follow the reading activity using Big Book and Syllables Method.

Judging from the magnitude of the average scores generated by these two methods, it can be said that the Big Book method produced higher linguistic intelligence scores than the Syllables method. Thus, overall the Big Book method is much more effective than the Syllables method in improving linguistic intelligence, especially for they who are the subjects in this study.

These results reinforce the research result conducted by Connie and Cecilia (2000) which concluded that there are differences in language skills of children aged 4-6 years, between a class with someone reading books to the children and more opportunity for them to write than a class that less someone reading books to the children and less opportunity for them to write.

ANOVA calculation results showed that language skills of children who followed reading activities by using the Big Book method is higher

than the language skills of children who attend reading activities by using Syllables method. Thus, there is the effect of the application of the Big Book method and Syllables methods toward language skills of children.

In addition, this study also tried to assess, by observation, of how large the extent of improvement of the child's language ability in a group of children who used the Big Book method. It also proves the opinion of M. Smith Cohran in his book "Reading to Children: A Model for Understanding Text" that is argued that the use of the Big Book develop kids' basic skills in all aspects of the language namely speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Based on observations in the field that was continued by assessment to know the use of the Big Book method in improving linguistic intelligence, data showed that in the two schools, the group of children who use the Big Book, their linguistic intelligence significantly developed.

Their linguistic Intelligence that consists of listening, talk (retelling), reading (arranging word cards) and write, showed there was an increase in the results of initial assessment with the assessment results after the action. Observations were carried out for 3 weeks or 12 times by using sequentially 3 Big Book with the Title Watching Circus, Due Rido is Lazy and Mr. Diran's Garden. Observations were carried out using the following symbols.

O = unable

✓ = able with help

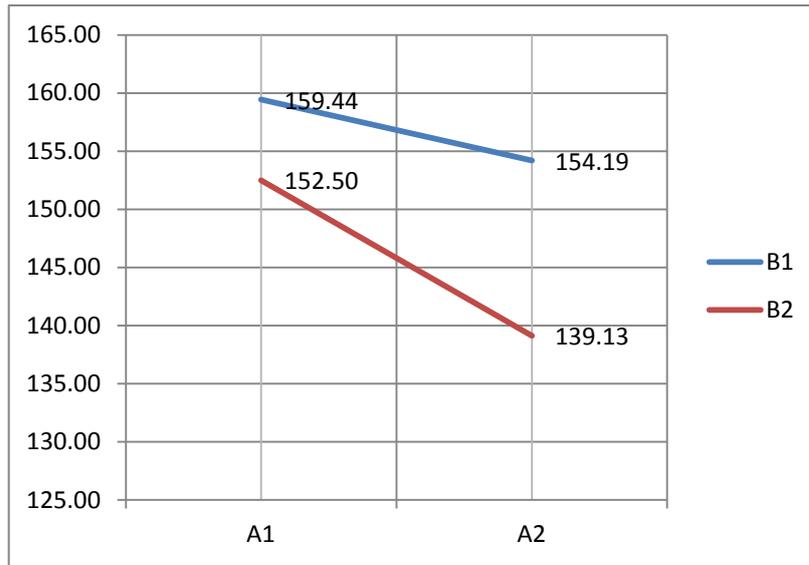
• = able

The result showed that there was an increase in the intelligence of the child's language on aspects of listening (listening) talk (retelling), read (arranging word cards) and writing.

Deviation standard produced by the Big Book and Syllables Method are respectively 5:03 and 8:43, the figure shows that the Big Book method produces a smaller deviation standard than the Syllables method. It can be interpreted that linguistic intelligence scores generated by the Big Book method has a more homogeneous variation of value than the Syllables method.

In the group with high thinking skills, through descriptive statistical approaches provides the difference in average language skills scores between the group of children with the Big Book reading method and the group of children treated with the Syllables reading method. The magnitude of the average score were 156.81 and 145.81. Both differences descriptively indicate they are different.

The results of hypothesis testing strengthen the difference, namely there is a difference between the linguistic intelligence of children who were given the Big Book method and the children who were given the Syllables method. Thus it can be said that, for children with higher thinking skills, the Big Book method is better than the Syllables method in improving linguistic intelligence. Visualisation between two methods describe below.



Picture 1. Visualisation between two methods

Based on table 1 it can be concluded that the average of linguistic intelligence score of children who followed reading activities with the Big Book with a high propensity high order thinking skills was higher than the group of children who attend the Syllables method with high order thinking skills (159.44 > 154.19).

The average linguistic intelligence scores of children who attend reading activities with the Big Book with a tendency to have high thinking skills was higher than the group of children who follow the reading activities with the Big Book method with low thinking skills (159.44 > 152.50).

The average linguistic intelligence scores of children who attend reading activities with Syllables Method with a tendency to have low thinking skills was lower than the group of children who follow reading activities with the Big Book method with low thinking skills (139.13 < 152.50).

The average language skills scores of children between lines for high thinking skills and low thinking skills showed diversity, high thinking skills, was higher than low thinking skills. (156.8 > 145.82).

The average linguistic intelligence scores of children between columns, the Big Book method was higher than Syllables Method (155.97 > 146.66).

CONCLUSION

In general it can be concluded that, using the Big Book method can improve language skills of children. In order to obtain the optimal linguistic intelligence, the thinking skills should be considered. For children who have high thinking intelligence, the Big Book method gives a higher linguistic intelligence than the Syllables method. However, the results of this study also showed that for children with low levels of thinking intelligence, Big Book method gives a higher linguistic intelligence than Syllables method.

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