



Teachers' Strategies for Introducing Deaf Children's Oral Language

Dayang Astri Fitriani^{1✉}, Sofie Aulia Az Zahrah², Alifia Nur Elga Saputri³, Indah Salsabila Firdausia⁴, Wilda Isna Kartika⁵, Adharina Dian Pertiwi⁶

^{1,2,3,4,5,6}Departement of Early Childhood Education, Universitas Mulawarman, Samarinda, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the strategies used by teachers in working on spoken language in deaf children at SLB Negeri Samarinda. The approach used is qualitative with descriptive methods, through direct observation and interviews with teachers as the main data source. Hearing loss is often an obstacle in communication skills, especially spoken language. The results show that teachers use various methods, such as lip reading, articulation exercises with the help of a mirror, and the use of visual media. In addition, a total communication approach combining sign language, spoken language and audio-visual technology is applied to help students understand and produce language more easily. Teachers also use games and educational songs to attract students' interest in learning. The role of parents is very important, especially through language practice at home. Active participation of parents in daily learning can accelerate the development of children's language skills. In addition, collaboration with therapists strengthens the learning process, as it is designed according to the specific needs of the child with the role of parents is very important, especially through language practice at home accelerates the development of language skills in conclusion, a combination of methods, family involvement, and an integrated approach can improve deaf children's spoken language skills, making them more confident and independent in their daily communication.

INTRODUCTION

Deafness is a condition in which a person loses the ability to hear, so they are unable to respond to sounds or stimuli that would otherwise be received through the sense of hearing. Juherna et al., (2021), which results in delays in academic development due to the child's limited ability to communicate. (Siti, 2018). According to Nurwidyayanti, (2022) Deaf people are commonly referred to as speech impaired because they have hearing loss as well as language impairment. Communication with individuals is done through sign language. Although the finger alphabet is internationally recognized, sign language varies by country. Some schools are now developing a total communication approach, which combines spoken language, sign language and body language. People with hearing loss often face difficulties in understanding abstract concepts. Hearing loss itself can be categorized based on the level of frequency and intensity. With audiometry, we can measure the extent of a person's hearing sensitivity, both in terms of frequency and intensity of sounds that can be heard. cps (cycles per second) or hertz (Hz). A person with normal hearing can hear in frequencies of 18-18,000 Hertz, where ordinary speech is at 100-10,000 Hertz. Intensity, on the other hand, is measured in decibels (dB), and a value of 0 dB does not mean that the sound cannot be heard, but rather

that the sound corresponds to the benchmark. So a 60 dB sound means that it is 60 dB higher than what the benchmark should be. All this is measured with an audiometer and recorded on an audiogram.

Growth and development in children occur gradually and comprehensively, meaning that growth and development encompass not only biological, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects (Alfiyah, Fitri, & Novitasari, 2023). Children who are deaf can occur before birth (prenatal), during birth (natal), and after birth (postnatal) caused by various factors related to genetic conditions, environment, social factors, pregnancy infection and health factors. Understanding the factors that cause deafness is very important for proper handling and early intervention, which can help these children to reach their maximum potential, Sardjono in (Rahmah, 2018). Early childhood is an individual in the age range of 0-8 years who is undergoing a rapid development process. This development involves changes in behavior from an immature stage to a more mature stage, from simple to more complex. Winangun, (2020) states this process includes increased abilities in movement, thinking, feeling, as well as social interaction with others and the surrounding environment. Children learn to master more complex abilities in various aspects such as physical, cognitive, emotional, and social, which become the basis for future independence.

Deaf children often face barriers in the development of intelligence. These barriers are caused by limited language and speech skills, which ultimately affect their ability to communicate effectively with their surroundings. Deaf children cannot acquire language or speech skills in the same way as hearing children. Their first language acquisition can be done through a total communication approach. This method is considered the most effective because it combines oral communication such as speaking, reading, and writing, with sign language. (Haliza, Kuntarto, & Kusmana, 2020). Sign language, although it has variations in different regions, has standards such as the Indonesian Sign Language System (SIBI). The ability to understand speech in deaf children is usually achieved through lip reading. This becomes the basis of their internal language, which replaces vowel sounds, consonants, and intonation as in hearing children. Similarly, before deaf children can express language orally, they need receptive language experiences first. Consistent interaction, especially with parents or caregivers, is an important factor in their language development. Through therapeutic exercises, children with special needs can develop their communication by perceiving sounds and rhythms and pronouncing phonemes, words, and simple sentences. (Rokhmah, 2023). Therefore, special services are needed to help deaf children develop language skills that suit their needs, both receptively and expressively, to support them in communicating optimally.

Oral language learning in deaf children requires special strategies that can help children to develop their ability to speak and understand language optimally. There are several teacher strategies in learning children's spoken language, including using lip reading strategies, lip reading can help children understand how sound is produced by looking at mouth and lip movements but educators need to speak clearly, slow down the tempo, and use facial expressions to reinforce the message conveyed. (Asiva Noor Rachmayani, 2015). Creating a supportive learning environment, a safe, fun and distraction-free atmosphere is very important for deaf children to focus on understanding learning, besides that teachers can use learning media in the form of audio-visual by explaining vocabulary material related to learning, and with the use of hearing devices can help children in receiving sound stimuli. (Arumsari, 2022).

Fadilah et al., 2016 states that the Think Talk Write strategy involves three stages, Think, the child is invited to think about the idea to be conveyed, Talk, the idea is expressed through oral or gesture, Write, the expression is written in writing. This strategy is proven to be able to improve listening, speaking, and writing skills in deaf children with research results that show an increase when implementing it in deaf children. According to viranti (2021) applying a total communication model for deaf children that combines oral communication, speech, speech reading, lip reading, total manual communication, gestures, finger spelling, facial expressions, graphical tota communication, pictures, photos, symbols, and real objects. from the results of research that has been researched by using the total communication method for deaf children is less effective. According to Zulmiyetri (2017) deaf children often feel difficulties in oral language due to limited vocabulary. to overcome this, the Material Reflection Method (MMR) is used with the aim of helping children understand and use basic vocabulary. from the results of oral language research using the Material Reflection Method (MMR) and interesting media individually for deaf children can make improvements in the child's spoken language.

Some previous studies have examined learning strategies for deaf children, for example Juherna et al. (2021) showed that the use of visual media can improve children's ability to understand new vocabulary. In addition, Putri & Purbaningrum (2020) showed the effectiveness of auditory verbal therapy in developing verbal communication skills in deaf children. However, these studies have not specifically examined a combination of methods involving simple technology, hearing aids, and parental involvement as was done in this study. Although there are many studies that only discuss learning strategies for deaf children, most of them only focus on individual uses such as total communication or visual media. This research adds a study of a combination of methods, including simple methods such as the use of mirrors, audio-visual technology, and collaboration with parents and therapists, which has not been discussed much before, thereby making a new contribution to understanding more holistic strategies for improving deaf children's spoken language skills.

Historically, enhancing reading skills in children who are deaf or hard of hearing has posed significant challenges for educators and researchers (Ge & Hildren, n.d.) Research has largely concentrated on specific variables within distinct domains, such as text (e.g., word recognition, vocabulary knowledge, syntax), reader (e.g., prior knowledge, metacognition), task (e.g., type of assessment employed), and context (e.g., purpose of reading), as well as the interactions between two or more of these domains. Progress in understanding literacy variables has been achieved in areas such as phonemic awareness and phonics.

METHODS

The research method carried out by the author in this study is qualitative research with descriptive methods. The place of this research was carried out in grade 1 elementary school, which is located in SLB Negri Samarinda in November 2024. Sources of data in the study were obtained through observation and interviews with one of the educators at SLB Negri Samarinda, as well as literature or articles relevant to the topic of this research. Data collection techniques used in this study are interviews with educators to explore how educators' strategies in introducing spoken language to deaf children.

RESULTS

Children who are deaf in SLB negri are three children, each child is 7-8 years old, these children are deaf from the womb or from birth due to abnormalities in the child's hearing organs, children born prematurely, and mothers who consume hard drugs which result in the three children experiencing moderate deafness (40-60 dB) but children can still hear using hearing aids, eye aids and can learn to speak with hearing aids. SLBN Samarinda educators introduce spoken language to deaf children through the pronunciation of vowels (a, i, u, e, o) then teach the pronunciation of consonant letters, but in the articulation class the pronunciation of language sounds is in accordance with the standard. Articulation classes usually involve the five senses such as the tongue, lips and eyes. Although there is an articulation class, educators in the classroom still teach a few words to children so that they are not rigid in their pronunciation. Sometimes before entering the learning topic, students are trained in pronunciation so that they are not rigid (mouth, jaw, tongue) so that the child can pronounce a word even though only the lips are formed or the sound of the word does not come out, because deaf children are difficult to form lips. Usually educators also teach spoken language to deaf children using a mirror, such as the teacher's lips must be aligned with the child's lips with the aim of the child knowing when pronouncing letters or words correctly or incorrectly in pronunciation through the mirror. In addition to using mirrors, educators also use the method of sound perception and rhythm.

Deaf children in SLBN samarinda use hearing aids, it is very effective if the educator says the word or calls the child with a slightly loud voice that makes the child can immediately respond to the sound. Introducing spoken language to deaf children educators also need to speak and use all body language such as "get the item" and the child understands what the educator ordered, but communicating with deaf children must face in front of him, if the child is difficult to pronounce a word or sentence usually the educator will write the word or sentence on the board by giving examples of gestures to the child so that the child can understand the word. In the process of developing children's spoken language at home, educators call parents one by one to discuss children's development, besides that educators sometimes also communicate with parents via whatsapp chat and give notes in the book every day so that parents can guide and repeat learning at school. In addition to support from parents, educators must also master methods and techniques in introducing deaf children's spoken language to be more effective in delivering learning.

Educators at SLBN Samarinda use a combination of various methods including spoken language, signs, body language, visuals, and hearing aids. Educators also adjust the methods used to the needs and abilities of children. In every lesson, educators always prepare pictures or photos that can help children to understand words and connect them with spoken or sign language. According to educators, audio-visual technology is the most supportive means, it can make children to speak educators only direct it, but because educators are still lacking in using technology so that learning the introduction of spoken language in the classroom still uses simple methods such as writing a word then the child imitates in front of the mirror with the educator.

Educators at SLBN Samarinda introduce new vocabulary by showing concrete images so that children understand what educators mean, for example, such as introducing Pancasila to children where educators have prepared symbols of Pancasila images such as stars, chains,

banyan trees, bull heads, rice and cotton, after which the child is asked to pair which one matches the symbol of the precepts, after which the child is asked to imitate spoken language with the educator. With that educators can ensure that children are able to understand in using everyday vocabulary, it can be seen from the child's development when parents are called and notified and then parents have guided the child by showing the child's progress, by using everyday language at home using mother tongue or language that children create themselves but if they are at school children simultaneously use CIBI language.

DISCUSSION

Children with deafness in SLB negri amount to three children, each child is 7-8 years old, children aged 7-8 years are still in the early childhood category in line with theory Sholihah & Rakhmawati, (2019) Early childhood is a time when a person experiences rapid growth and development. Children aged 0-8 years are considered early childhood. Children need sufficient and appropriate stimulus to improve their growth and development characteristics. The home environment, communal environment, and educational environment can all provide such stimuli. The educator's strategy in teaching spoken language to deaf children at SLBN samarinda, uses an approach method by focusing on articulation by involving various senses, such as the tongue, lips and eyes, with which deaf children need practice to understand conversation through observing lip movements and utilizing their sense of sight. This method is in line with the theory according to Rahmadhani & Z, (2023) Articulation ability is a skill in conveying sound symbols that help children to communicate more easily, inability to articulate can have a direct impact on the ability of deaf people to communicate. This habituation is done to deaf children by repeating the lessons that have been conveyed such as writing the symbols of Pancasila then the child is asked to imitate what the educator says from these symbols. In addition, educators at SLB negri samarinda also accustom children to say goodbye to educators before going home by shaking hands and saying "i-bu, e-lis ma-u pu-la-ng" guided by educators. This is in line with the theory Suhaemi, Putri, & Juwandani, (2022) reflective material (MMR) which can help improve children's oral language skills and the oral method with lip reading techniques by teaching children to use visualization of the other person's lip movements. In addition, PKPBI (Communication Development Training for Sound and Rhythm Perception) can help deaf children understand and recognize sounds in a directed way. The program aims to make use of their residual hearing, vibration and physical contact in order to adapt to a sound environment. With this training, children are expected to develop more optimally and not be completely dependent on their vision. Utari in (Elyondri & Azizah, 2023).

Deaf children in SLB negri Samarinda use hearing aids that are privately owned, because before entering the SLB school the child has done a therapist first, hearing aids are very effective for supporting spoken language development, because with hearing aids deaf children can be more sensitive to surrounding sounds according to Widagda, Suhaedi, Adesfar, Wahyudin, & Vahlevi, (2021) The type of hearing aid a child uses is a Behind The Ear (BTE) worn behind the ear, with a tube that connects into the ear. Hearing aids are crucial devices for deaf children to improve their listening and communication skills, in the context of education and social development, hearing aids help them interact with their surroundings and support the learning process. In addition, the Auditory Verbal Therapy (AVT) approach also strongly

supports the use of hearing aids. Heriyanti, (2020) said that the AVT approach aims to enable children to contribute verbally (speech and hearing) and to grow and learn in the school environment and to participate more actively in the surrounding environment. However, AVT must be facilitated by hearing amplification either through implants as an asset to gain auditory access. AVT can help parents to model language and speech development. Parental involvement can improve deaf children's language skills. (Putri & Purbaningrum, 2020), such as calling parents one by one in addition to calling parents directly, educators also communicate with parents through private whatsapp chats and give notes in the child's book every day so that parents can guide and repeat children's learning in recognizing spoken language. Not a few parents complain that their children do not want to be invited to study here, educators provide a solution, namely learning while playing.

Educators at SLB Negeri Samarinda use a combination of methods such as spoken language, signs, body language, and hearing aids. The combination is in accordance with the inclusive approach that adapts to the needs of deaf children such as educators asking children to get things by saying "get the book" while pointing towards the book, if the child does not understand the command of spoken language as well as body language, then the educator uses sign language. In this study, educators said that audio-visual technology is the most effective support tool to encourage children to speak. According to Adi, (2020) Audio-visual media has the advantage of adjusting to the characteristics and needs of deaf children so that educators can convey the material optimally. This method helps children to understand instructions more easily because it provides concrete media. However, educators' limitations in the use of technology hinder implementation, so educators at SLB Negeri Samarinda still use simple methods, such as asking children to imitate words in front of a mirror. This approach remains relevant because it allows children to see their own lip movements (speech reading) and expressions. Speech reading is a component of deaf children's language learning that aims to enable children to understand what other people are saying orally. In using the speech language method, educators should use words that are easily understood by the daughter in her speech. (Tat, Hudin, & Nardi, 2021).

Educators at SLBN Samarinda introduce new vocabulary by showing concrete images so that children understand what the educator means, this is in line with the theory according to the indra in Jumiatur, Pendidikan, Biasa, & Yogyakarta, (2017) There are several methods that can be used in introducing spoken language concretely to deaf children, namely flashcard media is a game of recognizing letters and words. Attractive flashcard images with a variety of colors will be liked by children so that teachers and parents can invite children to be happy, play while learning in a simple way, Flashcards are an interesting visual medium in conveying information about vocabulary, this media can help deaf children in understanding the material to be delivered by educators. According to Sugiarti, (2015) The use of concrete image media can make children interested in the learning. So that children more easily understand and remember vocabulary with visual media such as images related to real objects.

CONCLUSIONS

Teaching spoken language to deaf children requires a diverse approach, involving the use of hearing aids, articulation methods, and visual approaches such as pictures and symbols.

The strategies implemented at SLBN Samarinda show the importance of using simple methods such as mirror practice to develop speaking skills. In addition, a total communication approach that integrates spoken language, sign, and audio-visual technology proves effective in supporting learning. Parental involvement in guiding children at home is also an important factor that supports the success of the program. Parents play a role in ensuring that children can practice the vocabulary and communication they have learned at school, thus maximizing their language development. This journal confirms that the use of a combination of methods, intensive training, and collaboration between educators, parents, and therapists is essential to support the development of deaf children's communication skills.

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