

Teachers' Perception of Singing Activities in Early Childhood Education

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Abstract—The purpose of this study was to determine the teacher's perception of singing activities in learning process in Early Childhood Education (ECE). This type of research was a qualitative research. Data collection techniques were literature study and Focus Group Discussion ((FGD) with 29 ECE educators in Banguntapan District, Bantul. Literature studies were conducted to develop an FGD guideline instrument. The instruments used in the FGD were FGD Guidelines as a guide for facilitators. Data analysis techniques used interactive method. The results of the study showed: 1) The highest teacher's perception was the singing activities could advance the art aspect of the children's development (n = 26); 2) There were high necessity for theme adjustment of singing activities (n =25); 3) The highest impact of singing activities was children became more energetic (n = 7); 4) The most popular media used in singing activities was the audio visual media (n = 12); 5) The two highest aims of singing activities were to train child's expression and to assess child's development; and 6) There was high necessity of achievement indicators of singing activities (n = 27).

Keywords—*teacher's perception; singing activity; early childhood education*

I. INTRODUCTION

Learning, according to Slameto [1], is a process that is carried out by a person to obtain a whole new behavior change as a result of his own experience in interacting with the environment. Learning will make a person know, understand, be able to implement, and be able to create learning outcomes. By learning, one can achieve various kinds of knowledge, competence, skills and attitudes.

Learning is a process that continues to occur throughout human life. Learning for children is the result of various daily activities. The characteristics of children aged 0-6 years who are still ego-centrism make the foundation of early childhood

learning use behavioral and constructivist learning theory [2]. Behavioral learning theory focuses on stimulus and response. Stimulus can be given by the teachers, parents, peers, or others; while the response will be raised by the child himself. Constructivist theory can be seen from the meaning that arises as a result of the learning process.

Piaget and Vygotsky argued that learning is a process actively carried out by children to develop new ideas or concepts based on knowledge or experience [2]. Thus, children must be given the freedom and opportunity to explore themselves and their environment in order to obtain their own understanding. The research results of Christianti, Hayati, and Fatimaningrum [3] showed that early childhood requires continuous strengthening of adults in the process of expressing their experiences. In the learning process in kindergarten, the teacher acts as a model to introduce various knowledge to children.

Teacher refers to Content Standards [4] to conduct the learning process in Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions. In Article 9, it is explained that ECE learning is carried out to develop elements of Religious and Moral Values, Physical-Motorist, Cognitive, Language, Social-Emotional, and Art Appreciation. Various activities are carried out to develop these elements.

One of the activities carried out in ECE learning is through singing activities. Singing is one interesting and fun method for children. Singing is an activity of sounds expressions that usually accompanied by pat, movement, or musical accompaniment. Through singing activities, children can recognize rhythm, understand a concept according to the content of lyrics, express themselves, and many more [5].

The results of interviews and observations of kindergarten teachers in Kecamatan Berbah, Sleman on October 2-10, 2017

showed that: 1) singing activities were often carried out at the beginning, core, and closing activities of learning in ECE although not specifically aimed at developing children's artistic appreciation; 2) an assessment indicator of the development of musical art is only seen from the tone accuracy and the children's ability to memorize song lyrics; 3) singing while moving is an indicator of musical activity, but often not assessed; 4) singing according to song lyrics and or accompaniment is still considered as one of the stimulation activities of musical art development; 5) singing is often done only as an ice breaking; and 6) assessment of singing activities related to expressions of sounds produced by children, which are sometimes even different from the songs they should. Based on the facts, it can be seen if the activities in ECE learning process are strongly influenced by the teacher's role. One of the things that influence is the teacher's perception.

Perception is one part that reflects human behavior. Azwar [2] stated that human behavior reflects various psychologies, such as knowledge, desire, interest, emotion, will, thinking, motivation, perception, attitude, reaction and so on. Kartono [7] argued that individual behavior is influenced by perceptions about an object, vulnerability, socio-psychological factors, demographic factors, mass media, recommendations of others, and calculation of profit and loss from the practice.

Solso [5] explains that perception is related to receiving information in the five senses. This condition shows that the initial acceptance or detection of stimulation is part of sensation, while perception refers to the interpretation of things that are accepted by the senses. Interpretation is the result of giving an impression, opinion, or theoretical view of something. Thus, the process of interpretation in human perception is closely related to cognitive aspects.

From the description and problems that have been revealed previously, this study aims to find out how teachers' perceptions of singing activities in early childhood learning, especially those related to cognitive aspects of teacher perceptions. With the disclosure of the cognitive aspects of teacher perceptions, in the future it will be used to unravel the problems of learning art, especially the music art that has occurred so far. Thus, singing activities are expected to be carried out in accordance with the level of achievement of child development and optimizing early childhood development.

In Section 2, we describe the literature review that related with this research. Section 3 describes the research material and methodology. Next Section 4 describes the results and discussion. Finally, we describe conclusion and future work in Section 5.

Slameto [1] describes the notion of perception as a process that is related to the entry of messages or information into the human brain, through human perceptions constantly contacting their environment. This relationship is done through the senses, namely the sense of sight, hearing, touching, tasting, and confusion. According to Ali and Asrori [1], perception is an individual process in interpreting, organizing, and giving meaning to a stimulus that comes from the environment in which the individual is located as the result of the learning process and experience. In the sense of perception there are two important elements, namely interpretation and organization.

Interpretation is an attempt to understand from the information obtained by individuals. While organization is the process of managing certain information in order to have meaning.

The human process of interpretation is divided into two main theories related to the way humans understand the world [5]. Both theories can be explained as follows:

- Constructive perception (constructive perception). Constructive perception theory is structured based on the assumption that during perception, individuals form, and test hypotheses related to perception based on what is perceived and known. Perception is an effect of a combination of information received by the sensory system and the experience and knowledge learned about the world. Thus, perception is a process in which humans construct perceptions by actively choosing stimuli and combining sensations with memory.
- Direct perception (direct perception). Direct perception theory states that information in stimulus is an important element in perception and that learning, and cognition are not important in perception because the environment contains enough information that can be used for interpretation. Thus, perceptions are formed from obtaining information directly from the environment.

Both theories show different stages in the perception process. Where perception theory directly helps in understanding the initial perception process of sensory impressions, constructive perspective theory helps in understanding how sensory impressions are understood by the brain. This process that occurs in the brain involves cognitive aspects in individual perceptions.

Art expands a child's ability to interact with the world around them. Art also provides a new set of skills for self-expression and communication. Not only does art help to develop the right side of the brain, it also cultivates important skills that benefit a child's development [9]. The arts have been classified as seven branch, which are: painting, architecture, sculpture, literature, cinema, performing, and music. Singing is part of music that mixed with literature and voice [10].

Singing is one of the activities of developing music art in early childhood learning [11]. Aspects of Art in the Standards of Child Development Achievement Levels [12] can be interpreted that through singing, children can explore and express themselves, build imagination with movements, music, drama, and various other art fields (painting, fine arts, crafts), as well as able to appreciate artwork. Both opinions can be used as a reference that singing activities are not just activities that enliven the atmosphere but are activities that are full of purpose and meaning.

The purpose of early childhood education as stated in the 2013 ECE Curriculum [11] is one way to assess the skills of students is to show things that are known, felt, needed, and thought through language, music, movements, and work productively and creative, and reflects the behavior of noble children. Singing activities that can be interpreted as one of the

musical art activities can be used as a benchmark for knowing individual skills after obtaining prior information.

II. METHODS

This research approach is qualitative. Qualitative research is a research method that focuses on obtaining data through open-ended and conversational communication. This method is not only about “what” people think but also “why” they think so. The qualitative research method allows for in-depth and further probing and questioning of respondents based on their responses, where the researcher also tries to understand their motivation and feelings.

The data collection technique was literature study and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) which was assisted by the instrument using an open-ended question questionnaire to be discussed. The source of the research data is 29 ECE teachers in Banguntapan District, Bantul. The research was conducted in April 2018. The research procedure included reviewing theories about teacher perceptions, formulating conceptual and operational definitions, developing behavioral indicators and teacher perceptions of singing activities in ECE learning, compiling instruments, collecting data, reducing data tabulation, analyzing descriptive data qualitative, and draw conclusions.

Data analysis technique used interactive technique from Miles and Huberman [4]. The technique done through elaborating data, grouping data, interpreting data from the perspective of perception theory on singing activities, and inferring research data.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study revealed the cognitive aspects of teacher perceptions in child singing activities in ECE. The cognitive aspects of the teacher's perception can be seen from the teacher's answers related to the following six parts:

1) *Child's development aspects in ECE:* This part is intended to determine teacher perceptions related to aspects of child development in learning in ECE. The results can be seen in Figure 1 below:

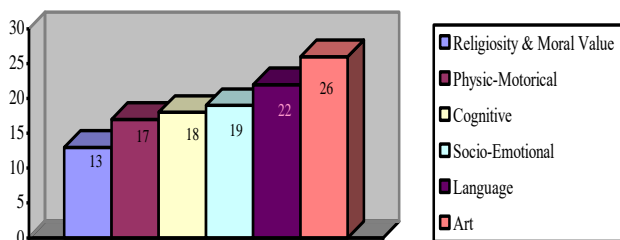


Fig. 1. Child's developmental aspects of singing activity

From Figure 1 singing activities according to teacher's perceptions mostly develop art field (26 people) and language field (22 people). For physical-motor aspects, cognitive aspects, and social emotional aspects look quite evenly distributed. The lowest score showed on religious and moral

values, that only 13 people choose it. Thus, less than half of the subjects who perceive that singing activities can develop aspects of religious and moral values. This is because many aspects of religious and moral values are carried out with the practice of prayer, worship, and stories that contain elements of the value of religion and moral.

2) *Theme related necessity if singing activities:* The results showed that most teachers (25 people) had a perception that singing activities in learning in kindergarten needed to be adjusted to the theme. Only 1 teacher has a perception that singing activities do not need to be adjusted to the theme and 3 teachers have the perception that singing activities really need to be adjusted to the theme. More complete data can be observed in Figure 2 below:

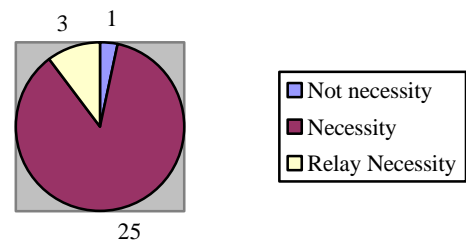


Fig. 2. Theme related necessity of singing activities

3) *The impact of singin activities:* The teacher's perspective shows that singing activities need to be done at the beginning and end of activities. Singing activities at the beginning of the activity can also be used as a theme apperception that will be conveyed to arouse children's enthusiasm. Through singing activities, children become energetic, happy, and not bored, making it easy to receive information in learning. Singing activities can also express children's expressions, strengthen relationships between teachers with children, and children with other children. Singing also needs to be done at the end of the activity as a closing learning activity so that children remember the material that has been taught. The clearer picture can be seen in Figure 3 below:

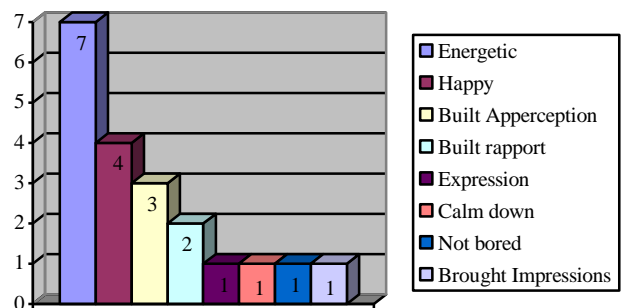


Fig. 3. Singing activities impact for children

On the Figure 3 could be seen that teachers mostly perceived that singing activity could affect the children to be more energetic. Besides that, some teachers perceived that children would be happy, able to build apperception, and built rapport through singing activity during the learning processes. That also could be seen that only 1 teacher each that perceived that singing activity could stimulate children’s expression, soothing or calm down the children, bring entertainment so the children would not be bored, and brought impressions.

4) *Media usages:* Teachers' perceptions of singing activities require audio visual media such as LCDs, cell phones, TVs, laptops, tape recorders, DVDs, used goods, musical instruments, eductivity games kit, objects around children, and body parts. If described in graphical form, it looks like Figure 4 below:

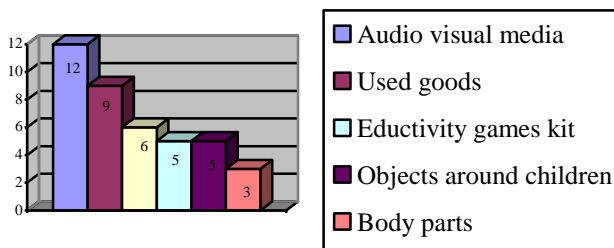


Fig. 4. Singing activities’ learning media

Most of the teachers (12 people) used audio visual media to use during singing activity. The second media that mostly used by teachers (9 people) were used goods. Besides that, teachers also used music instruments, eductivity games kit, and objects around environment. The last one is only 3 teachers used body parts as the media during the singing activity.

5) *Singing activities’ assessment aims:* Data in the field showed that teachers (all respondents) have a perception that singing activities need to be assessed. The aims of singing activities’ assessment could be seen in Figure 5 below:

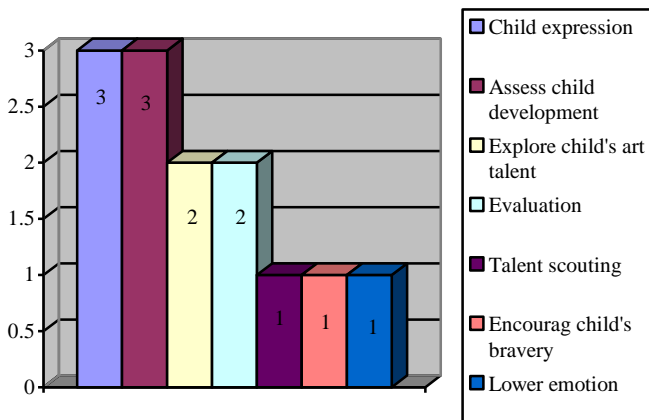


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6) *Singing activities’ assessment necessity:* Data in the field shows that most (27) teachers have a perception that an indicator of the achievement of art development is needed in singing activities. This is needed to see the extent of the child's development and facilitate assessment. Two (2) teachers states that it is not necessary because singing activities are not the main thing and that only the level of singing ability needs to be assessed. Graph of teacher opinion can be seen in Figure 6:

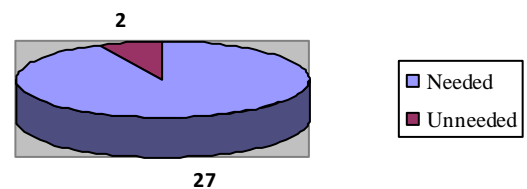


Fig 6. Singing activities’ assessment necessity

Based on the results of research in the field, teachers have the perception that singing activities can stimulate aspects of child development. As we know before, singing is part of music that mixed with literature and voice [10]. Children found singing as fun and relaxing activities, which makes them not realize that they actually learning a lot through exploring the arts and doing art activities. Children will gain useful life skills through art, such as communication skills, problem-solving skills, social-emotional skills, fine motor skills, also self-expression and creativity [9].

Through singing activities children can know God and His creation and get moral messages about good and bad behavior (Religiosity and Moral Value), children can move according to the rhythm of the song (Physical-Motorist), children can recognize vocabulary and express their feelings (Language). By singing children can recognize objects around them, recognize numbers, letters (Cognitive), children can learn to empathize with others (Social-emotional), and recognize the beauty and neatness in the aspects of art. This is consistent with the opinion of Wulandari [11] that song is an effort to build and develop children's character education.

The teacher has the perception that songs need to be adapted to the theme so that learning is more meaningful and easier for children to understand. Singing activities also need to be done at the beginning and the end of learning activities to make it easier for teachers to convey messages and inspire

children. This is in line with the opinion of Piaget and Vygotsky that learning is a process that children actively do to build new ideas or concepts based on their knowledge or experience [2]. Thus, the moral message of the song related to the theme of learning becomes easier to internalize the child.

The results also show that teachers need to assess singing activities and use indicators of the achievement of aspects of art development. This needs to be done so that the teacher has an objective perception in assessing the child's ability. In accordance with the opinion of Slameto [1] that perception as a process related to the entry of messages or information into the human brain, through human perception continues to contact its environment. Thus, the teacher will assess the ability of students in accordance with the indicators that appear.

IV. CONCLUSION

Singing activities are almost done every day, both during the opening, core and closing activities in early childhood learning so that children do not get bored of learning. But some teachers have not invited children to sing according to the theme of learning. Singing performed by children both individually and in groups and singing activities can be used as a basis for assessing the child's learning process when the child is able to show behavior changes. Teacher's perception of singing activities is categorized by the knowledge that the teacher has about singing, which has been done so far.

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