

An Analysis of Parenting Strategies for Children with Speech Delay

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ABSTRACT

The urgency of this study lies in the importance of the role of parents in providing appropriate stimulation, support, and communication to optimize early childhood language development. This study aims to describe parenting strategies in assisting children experiencing speech delay. The research employs a qualitative method with a case study approach. The research subjects include parents and teachers selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show that children experience articulation difficulties, speak in a low voice, and tend to use nonverbal communication due to limited verbal interaction and excessive mobile phone use. The strategies implemented include pronunciation correction, habituation of daily communication, utilization of visual media, and storytelling activities. This study contributes as a reference for parents and educators in applying language stimulation

for children.

Introduction

Early childhood education is an effort to provide guidance for children from birth to six years of age. This guidance emphasizes the development of children's characteristics in the process of adaptation and social interaction with their environment (Sheridan et al., 2010). This period is marked by rapid growth and development, resulting in a significant increase in children's curiosity. This phase, often referred to as the golden period, is a critical moment in which children tend to imitate various activities observed from parents and individuals in their surroundings (Zhou, 2017). The application of scientific approaches in parenting helps parents make wiser decisions, thereby supporting optimal child development toward becoming a well-rounded individual (Gross, 2023).

Language is a communication instrument that enables humans to socialize and adapt to their social environment. A child's language ability will develop rapidly when supported adequately by their immediate environment (Breiner et al., 2016). Vocabulary development needs to be facilitated through various daily life experiences, both within the family and the surrounding community. Delays in speech production directly impact overall developmental disturbances. When a child experiences difficulties in one developmental aspect, it can hinder other aspects of development. Speech delay problems require immediate attention as they are among the most common

developmental disorders found in children (Liang et al., 2023). Indicators of speech delay include unclear word articulation and a tendency to use gestures, making it difficult for others to understand the child's intentions.

One of the problems in early childhood development is speech and language disorders. Parenting patterns often influence speech delay conditions in children. Children with this condition generally exhibit low confidence in communication, such as inaccurate articulation and hesitation in expressing opinions. A similar phenomenon was observed in a six-year-old child in a kindergarten who showed difficulty in speaking fluently and tended to be passive in interactions with teachers and peers.

This condition is strongly suspected to be influenced by parenting patterns. Unsupportive parenting approaches, such as lack of stimulation, limited reciprocal communication, and inappropriate responses to children's speech attempts, can cause children to become less confident and less trained in expressing themselves.

However, not all parents realize that parenting patterns and communication styles at home significantly affect children's language development. Some parents may consider speech delay as a normal condition without providing adequate stimulation, even though proper support and interaction are essential for optimal development.

Based on this background, further research is needed regarding parenting strategies in dealing with children experiencing speech delay.

This study is expected to identify effective parenting approaches to support optimal language development. Proper parenting is believed to shape children into confident individuals with good communication skills. Additionally, this study aims to provide parents with an understanding of the significance of their role in stimulating children's speech abilities from an early age.

Methods

The case study approach model according to Sugiyono (2021) was used to examine in depth a particular case within a real-life context. In this study, the case investigated was the parenting strategies implemented by parents for children experiencing speech delay. Through the case study approach, researchers are able to explore comprehensively the forms of parenting, communication strategies, and the role of parents in supporting children's speech development.

The subjects of this study were children experiencing speech delay and their parents in Bajawa District, Lebijaga Village. The selection of subjects was conducted using purposive sampling, which is selection based on specific considerations—namely children who are already able to communicate relatively well and can actively participate in learning activities using picture story media.

The data collection techniques in this study were carried out through several complementary approaches to obtain comprehensive and in-depth data. First, observation was used to directly examine the behavior and interactions of parents in applying parenting patterns to

their children, allowing the researcher to gain a real picture of practices occurring in the field. Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore more deeply information related to parenting strategies implemented as well as various obstacles faced by parents. This technique allows flexibility in data exploration without deviating from the research focus. Third, documentation was used as supporting data, including photographs, field notes, and other relevant documents, thereby strengthening the results of observations and interviews that had been conducted.

Meanwhile, the data analysis technique in this study refers to the stages proposed by Miles et al., (2014) which were carried out systematically and continuously. The first stage is data reduction, namely the process of selecting, focusing, and simplifying data obtained from the field so that only data relevant to the research objectives are retained. The second stage is data display, which is the process of organizing and arranging data in the form of systematic narratives so that they are easy to understand and further analyzed. The third stage is conclusion drawing, namely the process of formulating research findings based on the results of data analysis that has been conducted, so that it can accurately and clearly answer the predetermined research questions.

Result and Discussions

Based on the data analysis approach used in this study, the analysis process was carried out in stages and systematically. The initial stage

conducted was data reduction, namely the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and abstracting data obtained from interviews and observations. This study involved one subject, a female child with the initial E, aged 6 years and approaching 7 years, who is registered as a student at TKK Satu Atap Lebijaga, located in Bajawa District, Lebijaga Village. The research data were collected based on the instruments used at the research site, then analyzed and classified into several main themes. Furthermore, the results of the data reduction were presented based on the predetermined themes.

Theme 1: Causes and Background of Speech Delay

This theme highlights family and environmental conditions that contribute to the child's communication barriers. The lack of parenting patterns and communication stimulation from biological parents within the family is the initial cause of speech delay. The biological mother has physical limitations as well as mental health disorders, while the father has left the family.

The child's daily care is predominantly taken over by the grandparents (grandfather and grandmother). The child's interaction with substitute caregivers is relatively limited because the grandparents spend most of their time working in the garden. The child often uses a mobile phone, which functions more as a means of entertainment rather than as a structured medium for language stimulation.

Theme 2: Strategies and Communication Patterns

This theme summarizes how teachers and families interact to

stimulate the child's language abilities. Teachers stimulate the child through activities such as singing, storytelling, daily question-and-answer, and repeated sentence practice. Teachers use visual and audio aids, such as letter cards, picture storybooks, and music.

At home, the family adjusts communication by using simple words and speaking slowly. Substitute caregivers often repeat vocabulary that is considered difficult so that the child can understand and imitate it. The family utilizes songs by inviting the child to sing again the songs learned at school.

Theme 3: Child Responses and Development

This theme records the progress and the current condition of the child's communication and social interaction abilities. The child shows courage to respond and begins to imitate words from adults and media, although the articulation is still unclear. There are gradual positive changes, such as the child beginning to recognize colors, although the pronunciation is not yet optimal.

At school, the child is able to socialize with peers and begins to have good self-confidence. The level of the child's confidence in communicating at home appears lower compared to when she is in the school environment.

Theme 4: External Barriers and Environmental Support

This theme explains the obstacles faced in the guidance process as well as the forms of support provided to the child. Parents at home pay less attention to the teacher's recommendations (such as the use of

children's worksheets/LKA) and rarely repeat school lessons. Substitute caregivers (grandparents) sometimes show impatience when the child has difficulty pronouncing words clearly.

The family has never consulted the child's speech delay condition with a doctor or a specialist. As a form of positive support, both teachers and the family consistently provide praise to appreciate the child's efforts in speaking. The extended family and surrounding community show considerable concern for the child's condition.

Data Display

At this stage, the data that have been reduced are presented in the form of thematic narratives so that the relationships between categories can be seen systematically. Based on the data presentation, there appears to be a relationship between: (1) parenting patterns and minimal verbal stimulation; (2) lack of intensive communication interaction; and (3) delayed speech development in the child.

However, the data presentation also shows that: (1) structured learning strategies at school; (2) increased courage and verbal responses of the child. This indicates that a supportive environment is very important in supporting early language development. Through this visualization, it can be seen that family and school factors have interconnected roles in influencing the child's speech development.

Causes and Background Factors

Based on the observation results, the child's caregiving condition shows limitations in consistent interaction within the family

environment. This is evident from communication patterns that do not occur regularly due to the grandparents' busy schedule, as most of their time is spent working in the garden.

As a result, the child tends to receive low stimulation in daily life. In addition, the child is also exposed to gadget use that is more dominantly utilized as passive entertainment, thus contributing less to active communication development.

These findings are supported by interview results that reveal dysfunction in biological parenting. The teacher stated that "the mother has mental health issues, the father is away, and the child is mostly cared for by the grandparents." This is also reinforced by the parent's statement that "the mother rarely communicates directly with the child."

Parenting Communication Strategies

In the context of communication development, observation results show that in the home environment, the child receives stimulation through repeated vocabulary carried out by family members. This becomes a form of simple communication adaptation carried out to help the child understand language gradually.

Meanwhile, based on interview results, teachers apply various verbal stimulation methods at school. The teacher explained that "through singing, it is also a form of communication with the child, as well as storytelling and asking about daily conditions." In addition, the teacher also added that "the teacher uses music." On the other hand, parents stated that they try to "invite the child to speak slowly using

simple words.”

Child Responses and Development

Observation results show that the child experiences significant development in social aspects. The child begins to establish social relationships with peers and shows openness toward new people. This change indicates an improvement in the child’s social interaction ability and self-confidence.

This finding is in line with the teacher’s statement that “the child has started to develop well; at the beginning she had difficulty communicating and was shy, now she is more confident.”

Barriers and Environmental Support

Based on observations, although there are various limitations in caregiving, the environment still provides positive support to the child, such as giving praise as reinforcement for the behavior shown. This becomes one of the factors that gradually helps the child’s development.

However, interview results show that there are barriers in synchronization between the home and school environments. The teacher stated that “parents at home should repeat what children learn at school” and added that “parents who do not pay attention to the child will automatically make the child communicate less frequently.”

In addition, the absence of professional intervention is also an obstacle, as expressed by the teacher that “there has never been consultation with teachers, doctors, or experts regarding the child’s condition.”

On the other hand, positive support from the school environment can also be seen through the teacher's strategy in providing appreciation, such as "valuing opinions, asking the child to come forward, and also the teacher must give praise."

Discussion

Based on the findings obtained, the following consistencies are identified:

- (1) The factors causing speech delay show alignment between teacher and family statements, where the lack of early communication stimulation and less supportive family conditions form the main background of the child's speech delay;
- (2) Language stimulation strategies implemented by teachers at school are proven to be more structured compared to stimulation at home. This is reinforced by observation results showing that the child is more active and responsive when in the school environment;
- (3) The child's development shows gradual progress. Observation data support the teacher's statement that the child begins to respond, imitate words, and shows improvement in social interaction; and
- (4) External barriers are also verified through differences in the consistency of assistance between school and home environments.

At home, stimulation has not been carried out optimally and there has been no consultation with professionals. Language stimulation efforts provided to the child in this study have not been fully optimal because they have not been systematically designed, continuous, and

tailored to the specific needs of children experiencing speech delay. Although the family has carried out several forms of support, such as using simple words in communication, repeating certain vocabulary, and inviting the child to sing songs obtained at school, these activities have not been carried out consistently and do not have planning directed toward specific language development targets.

The interaction patterns that occur tend to be spontaneous and depend on situations, so they have not been able to build intensive and continuous two-way communication. In addition, when the child experiences difficulty in pronouncing words clearly, the corrections given are not always carried out with appropriate and patient techniques, so the process of forming correct articulation has not developed optimally.

This condition is further reinforced by the absence of assistance from professional experts, such as developmental doctors or speech therapists, who should be able to provide comprehensive assessments and training programs appropriate to the child's level of delay. Without structured professional intervention, the stimulation provided remains general and relies more on the personal experience of teachers and families, without clear technical guidelines.

As a result, although the child's language development shows gradual progress, it proceeds more slowly and has not reached its optimal potential. Thus, all data obtained indicate a strong relationship between family factors, communication patterns, and the learning

environment in influencing the development of the child's speech ability.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that speech delay in children is influenced by various interrelated factors, particularly family conditions, parenting patterns, and the quality of communication stimulation received from an early age. The lack of consistent verbal stimulation, limitations in communication interaction within the family environment, and caregiving that is not carried out optimally are the main factors underlying delays in children's language development.

On the other hand, language stimulation strategies implemented in the school environment have been proven to make a positive contribution to the child's development. Structured approaches through activities such as singing, storytelling, question and answer, as well as the use of visual and audio media are able to gradually improve the child's courage, verbal responses, and social interaction. This indicates that a planned, supportive, and interactive learning environment plays an important role in optimizing children's communication development.

However, the development achieved by the child has not been fully optimal. This is caused by external barriers, such as the lack of synchronization between stimulation at home and at school, limited caregiver understanding in providing appropriate stimulation, and the absence of intervention from professional experts. This condition causes

the stimulation provided to be less directed and not fully aligned with the child's developmental needs.

Nevertheless, the presence of environmental support, both from teachers, family, and the surrounding community, becomes an important factor in encouraging the child's development. The provision of positive appreciation, attention, and a supportive environment has been shown to increase the child's confidence in communicating.

Thus, it can be emphasized that handling speech delay in children requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach involving the active roles of family, school, and professionals. Consistency of stimulation, quality of communication interaction, and synergy between developmental environments are the main keys in optimizing children's language abilities to the fullest.

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