

The Effect of the Sociodrama Learning Method on the Storytelling Skills of Children Aged 5–6 Years at TK

Miftahul Ulum Gresik

Ainnun Rohma¹, Umi Masturoh², Mustain³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Al Azhar Menganti, Gresik, Indonesia

e-mail: *1ainnur17@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of the sociodrama learning method on the storytelling skills of children aged 5–6 years at TK Miftahul Ulum Tlogobedah, Menganti, Gresik. Storytelling skills constitute an important foundation for the development of literacy, communication, and creativity in early childhood. A quasi-experimental design with a nonequivalent control group design was employed. The study population comprised all students in Group B (aged 5–6 years), consisting of two classes with 20 children in each class. Class B1 served as the experimental group receiving the sociodrama learning method, while Class B2 served as the control group using the question-and-answer method. Data were collected through a performance test consisting of six storytelling indicators and analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test due to the non-normal distribution of the pretest data. The results indicated that the experimental group improved by an average of 12.20 points (from 20.05 to 32.25, or 80.63%, categorized as "Very Good"), whereas the control group improved

by only 2.40 points (from 18.10 to 20.50, or 62.12%, categorized as "Good"). Hypothesis testing yielded a Sig. (2-tailed) value of $0.000 < \alpha = 0.05$, leading to the rejection of H_0 and acceptance of H_a . It can therefore be concluded that the sociodrama learning method has a significant effect on the storytelling skills of children aged 5–6 years at TK Miftahul Ulum, Menganti, Gresik.

Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE) constitutes the initial stage in shaping children's personality and character, serving as the foundation for all subsequent developmental processes (Hartati et al., 2021; Ramadhania et al., 2025). Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemdikbud, 2003) emphasizes that education is a conscious and well-planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process that enable students to actively develop their potential. Within the context of ECE, the Indonesian curriculum prioritizes play-based learning through a holistic-integrative approach encompassing six aspects of child development, namely religious and moral values, cognitive development, language development, social-emotional development, physical-motor development, and Pancasila values (Kholila et al., 2023; Siliviyana et al., 2023).

One of the essential aspects of ECE is the development of language skills, particularly storytelling skills (Rafiola et al., 2022). Storytelling

skills provide an important foundation for children's literacy, communication, and creativity (Afdalipah et al., 2020). Global studies, such as the PISA Early Childhood Indonesia (2018), reveal that children in countries implementing interactive learning approaches tend to demonstrate superior oral narrative abilities. However, classroom realities indicate the dominance of academic-oriented approaches that have shifted the essence of ECE away from play-based learning and exploration. Consequently, non-academic aspects, such as storytelling skills, have not been optimally developed (Afdalipah et al., 2020).

A preliminary observation conducted at TK Miftahul Ulum Tlogobedah, Menganti, Gresik, on June 14, 2025, revealed that the majority of children aged 5–6 years were not yet able to construct coherent and expressive narratives. The children demonstrated hesitation when beginning to tell stories, as evidenced by behaviors such as remaining silent, staring blankly, or murmuring softly. They relied heavily on scaffolding in the form of prompting questions from the teacher and were unable to initiate storytelling independently. This condition occurred because teachers more frequently employed one-way instructional methods, such as dictating stories or asking children to memorize them, without involving interaction or creative learning media (Rohma, 2025).

One instructional approach considered capable of addressing this issue is the sociodrama learning method. Sociodrama is defined as a social simulation-based instructional method in which children engage

in role-playing based on particular social situations to portray characters in a story, engage in dialogue, and interact with their peers (Fikriyah et al., 2023; Rafaiyah & Erfantinni, 2025). This method is grounded in Jean Piaget's constructivist theory, which asserts that children construct knowledge through active experiences, as well as Lev Vygotsky's theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning, including the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Hamal, 2023).

Numerous previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the sociodrama method in improving young children's verbal communication skills and vocabulary acquisition (Aini, 2021; Fauziah et al., 2020; Fitria & Adewiyah, 2020; Hafsari, 2018; Wahyuni & Hasanah, 2023). Nevertheless, the majority of these studies have primarily focused on general speaking ability and have not examined storytelling skills as a multidimensional construct encompassing clarity, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, expression, and self-confidence (Brodie, 2023). Furthermore, no similar study has been conducted within a local educational setting characterized by a pesantren-based learning environment implementing the Wahidiyah Sholawat Approach, such as TK Miftahul Ulum Tlogobedah. Therefore, this study aims to fill this research gap by employing a rigorous quantitative experimental design to measure multidimensional storytelling skills within an institutional context that has not previously been explored.

Based on the aforementioned problems, this study aims to: (1)

determine the storytelling skills of children taught using the sociodrama learning method; (2) determine the storytelling skills of children taught using the question-and-answer method; and (3) examine whether there is a significant effect of the sociodrama learning method on the storytelling skills of children aged 5–6 years at TK Miftahul Ulum Tlogobedah, Menganti, Gresik.

Methods

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental design, specifically the pretest–posttest nonequivalent control group design. The study population consisted of all children in Group B (aged 5–6 years) at TK Miftahul Ulum Tlogobedah, Gresik. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, assigning Class B1 (20 children) as the experimental group, which received the sociodrama learning method, and Class B2 (20 children) as the control group, which was taught using the question-and-answer method. The research design is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Design

Group	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Experimental Group (B1)	O ₁	X ₁ (Sociodrama)	O ₂
Control Group (B2)	O ₁	X ₂ (Question-and-Answer Method)	O ₂

Data were collected through performance tests, consisting of

pretests and posttests, as well as supporting documentation in the form of instructional materials and photographs of learning activities (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The research instrument consisted of a performance test rubric covering six aspects of storytelling skills, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Blueprint of the Storytelling Skills Performance Test (Pretest & Posttest)

No	Aspect	Indicator	Score
1	Pronunciation Clarity	The child is able to tell a story using a clear voice and appropriate intonation.	1-4
2	Speaking Fluency	The child is able to tell a story fluently with minimal pauses or word repetition.	1-4
3	Accuracy	The child is able to tell a story using appropriate grammar and pronunciation.	1-4
4	Vocabulary	The child uses appropriate and varied vocabulary according to the context of the story.	1-4
5	Expression	The child is able to tell a story using facial expressions and body movements that correspond to the content of the story.	1-4
6	Self-Confidence	The child is willing to tell a story without teacher coercion, maintains eye contact with the audience, and remains calm	1-4

		while speaking.	
Scoring Criteria:			
1 : Poor		3 : Good	
2 : Fair		4 : Very Good	

The feasibility of the instrument was established through expert validity testing conducted by an Early Childhood Education practitioner lecturer and was further validated empirically using the Pearson Product–Moment correlation. The instrument was also proven to be reliable, with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.923. All data were analyzed using IBM SPSS software. Descriptive statistical analysis was performed by calculating the mean, which was interpreted according to the interval criteria proposed by Azwar (2012), as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Storytelling Skills Interval and Criteria According to Azwar (2012)

Mean Score Range	Category
10–20	Low
21–30	Moderate
31–40	High

Storytelling skills were considered to have developed when the average score reached ≥ 21 (Moderate category), indicating that children had begun to tell stories using a simple sequence and directed language. Scores below this threshold indicated that the children's storytelling ability had not yet achieved the expected level of development.

After the assumptions of normality (Shapiro–Wilk Test) and

homogeneity (Levene's Test) had been examined, hypothesis testing was conducted using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for paired data and the Independent Samples t-Test at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, with the decision criteria that H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted when the Sig. (2-tailed) value was less than 0.05.

Result and Discussions

The study was conducted at TK Miftahul Ulum Tlogobedah, Menganti, Gresik, involving children aged 5–6 years (Group B), who were divided into Class B1 as the experimental group and Class B2 as the control group, with 20 children in each group. Data on children's storytelling skills were obtained through pretest and posttest performance tests, which were assessed using the rubric presented in Table 2. The results of the descriptive statistical analysis using IBM SPSS are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Group	N	Min	Maks	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental Pretest	20	11	33	20,05	7,619
Experimental Posttest	20	24	40	32,25	4,644
Control Pretest	20	10	27	18,10	6,299
Control Posttest	20	10	33	20,50	5,996

Prior to hypothesis testing, instrument testing and assumption tests were conducted. The evaluation of the 10 storytelling skill instrument items showed that all indicators were declared valid, with calculated r-

values ranging from 0.522 to 0.843, exceeding the r-table value of 0.263 at the 0.05 significance level. The instrument was also found to be reliable, with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.923. Furthermore, the results of the prerequisite tests indicated that the posttest data from both groups were normally distributed based on the Shapiro–Wilk Test ($p > 0.05$) and had homogeneous variances according to Levene's Test ($p > 0.05$). The fulfillment of these assumptions justified the continuation of the analysis using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for the pretest–posttest data that were not normally distributed and the Independent Samples t-Test for comparing the final achievement between the two groups.

Table 5. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test Results for the Experimental Group

Wilcoxon Test Statistics	Experimental Group (Posttest – Pretest)
Z	–3,830
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000

To determine the difference in effectiveness between the two instructional methods, an Independent Samples t-Test was performed on the posttest scores of the experimental and control groups.

Table 6. Group Statistics for the Independent Samples t-Test

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental Posttest	20	32,2500	4,64390	1,03841

Control Posttest	20	20,5000	5,99561	1,34066
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Based on the summary statistics presented in Table 6, inferential analysis was continued using the Independent Samples t-Test to test the comparative hypothesis regarding the two instructional methods. The analysis yielded a t-value of 6.929 with 38 degrees of freedom (df) and a Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. These findings indicate a statistically significant difference in the mean storytelling skills between the experimental and control groups, confirming that the sociodrama learning method was empirically more effective than the conventional question-and-answer method in improving the storytelling skills of children aged 5–6 years.

Based on the results of the data analysis, a significant improvement in storytelling skills was observed in the experimental group after receiving the sociodrama learning intervention. These findings confirm that children's active involvement in portraying characters and collaboratively constructing narratives with their peers effectively stimulates their linguistic and expressive abilities (Rafaiyah & Erfantinni, 2025). This success is consistent with Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, which states that children's cognitive and language functions develop optimally through meaningful social interaction within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Pentimonti et al., 2017).

More specifically, the greatest improvement was observed in the aspects of expression and self-confidence during storytelling. Through

the sociodrama method, children did not merely memorize words but also internalized the emotions of the characters they portrayed (Hartinah et al., 2020). This process of imitation and character adaptation required children to coordinate verbal communication with facial expressions and body movements, which indirectly reduced feelings of anxiety or shyness when speaking before an audience (Rahman, 2020). These findings further support Piaget's theory of the preoperational stage, which explains that young children understand the world around them through symbols and role-playing activities (Hamal, 2023).

In contrast, the limited improvement observed in the control group highlights a fundamental weakness of the conventional question-and-answer method when used as the sole approach for developing language skills. Although this method helps children respond to stimuli, its predominantly teacher-centered and one-way nature provides limited opportunities for children to explore language freely (Aprilina, 2022).

Children in the control group remained highly dependent on scaffolding through prompting questions and experienced difficulty constructing narratives independently. This condition reinforces the essential principle of early childhood education that play is learning. Without play-based stimulation that fosters emotional engagement and provides equal opportunities for peer interaction, children tend to become passive, resulting in less optimal development of complex

storytelling abilities such as fluency and narrative organization (Wahyuni & Hasanah, 2023).

The hypothesis testing further strengthened these descriptive findings. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test produced a Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000 (< 0.05), indicating that the increase in the experimental group's posttest scores was not due to chance but rather constituted scientific evidence that the sociodrama method significantly influenced children's storytelling skills. These findings were further supported by the Independent Samples t-Test, which demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups ($t = 6.929$; Sig. = 0.000), confirming the superiority of the sociodrama method over the conventional question-and-answer method.

These findings are consistent with previous studies demonstrating that the sociodrama method effectively improves the speaking skills of children aged 5–6 years, particularly in terms of vocabulary development, confidence, and fluency (Fauziah et al., 2020), while also helping children organize ideas systematically and enhance their verbal communication competence (Fitria & Adewiyah, 2020).

Furthermore, this method has been shown to effectively improve children's prosocial skills through folklore-based sociodrama (Khairiah & Jumanti, 2022) and to promote the development of early literacy (Yusria, 2021). The success of the sociodrama method also confirms its relevance to the principles of holistic, play-based learning, which constitute a fundamental pillar of Indonesia's Early Childhood

Education curriculum, where cognitive, language, and socio-emotional development can be integrated within a single dynamic learning activity.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the sociodrama learning method has a significant effect on improving the storytelling skills of children aged 5–6 years at TK Miftahul Ulum Gresik. The implementation of this social simulation- and role-playing-based learning method has been empirically proven to be more effective than the conventional question-and-answer method. Through the sociodrama intervention, children were able to develop their storytelling skills in a multidimensional manner, achieving a high level of performance, with the most notable improvements observed in facial expressions, body gestures, and self-confidence. In contrast, the conventional question-and-answer approach produced only limited improvement, causing children's language skills to remain relatively stagnant due to the lack of opportunities to actively and independently explore and construct narratives.

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