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# THE EFFECT OF THE CHAIN WHISPER GAME ON CHILDREN'S RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE SKILLS

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**Abstract:** This study aims to investigate the effect of the chain whisper game on children's receptive language skills. This study used a quasy-experimental design. The population in this study was all the students at Teratai Integrated Preschool in Makassar. With purposive sampling technique, the sample of this study was 12 students that were divided into 6 students in the experimental group and 6 students in the control group. The data was collected by conducting observations, tests, and documentation and then analyzed using descriptive statistical and nonparametric statistical methods. The results showed that the value of  $Asym(2\text{-tailed})$  was  $0.005 < 0.05$ , meaning that  $H_1$  was accepted and  $H_0$  was rejected and indicating that there were differences in receptive language skills between the experimental group and the control group. These results suggest that the chain whisper game has a significant effect on young children's receptive language skills.

**Keywords:** chain whisper, receptive language, early childhood education

## INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (ECE) aims to facilitate child development from an early age. ECE provides educational stimuli to aid in children's growth and development in various domains, such as religion, morality, physical-motor, cognitive, social-emotional, language, and communication, as well as physical and spiritual, which can prepare children for the subsequent stage. ECE is critical for children as it can help them grow and develop according to the development stages. Mulyasa (2014) suggested that young children undergo rapid growth and development during early childhood, which is often said as a developmental leap.

ECE is also considered crucial as it is a basis for children's personality development. A form of education that can be given during ECE is play. Play for children is a fun activity that brings joy and functions as a place for them to express their feelings. Semiawan (2008) stated that play is various activities designed to help children improve abilities based on the learning experiences they obtain.

Ardy (2016) argued that early childhood is very valuable for children's next stage as intellectual development at this period is growing rapidly and remarkably. This period is also known as the golden age where children are experiencing a sensitive period that allows them to grow and develop their potential properly.

Children highly need an environment that can provide stimuli at this time.

Furthermore, Herlina & Amal, A. (2016) stated that early childhood is a phase of life with unique characteristics for each child physically, psychologically, social-emotionally and morally. Thus, children need guidance in learning through the provision of educational stimuli to promote their physical and mental growth and development. Guidance is given in order to prepare children for further education and available opportunities during their growth and development process.

All aspects of child development will develop satisfactorily when children are stimulated. The golden age is a fundamental period that determines the development of cognitive, motor, and social-emotional skills as well as religion, morality and language. Language ability is important to be developed. Language is an important means of communication between humans. Language is unique and universal for humans. Language variations are needed to be used in an amusing way and adapted to children's situations and conditions. Learning through play needs to be designed creatively and innovatively so that children can experience enjoyable games.

Musi & Winata (2017) argued that language learning can be adapted and modified based on how language is taught. Ilyas & Asti (2021) stated that children learn to recognize and speak a language after listening to examples of the language used in everyday life. This is subsequently followed by the development of reading and writing skills, which are crucial milestones in a child's life.

Language for young children is very important because through language children can understand what their friends and other people communicate to them. Without good language skills, children will not be able to communicate and understand information. The way people use language will affect children's language or communication skills at a later stage of development. It can be said that language development is very important for young children as language is a tool that helps children obtain information more easily from other people they communicate or interact with.

Receptive language is a process of a person receiving and understanding a message conveyed

by another person. Fitriani et al. (2019) suggested that receptive language skills include children's abilities to understand teacher's classroom rules, orders, and explanations. Additionally, well-developed receptive language skills allow children to understand words, sentences, stories and rules. Language skills consist of four components; one of which is listening skill.

Zubaidah (2013) claimed that listening skill is vital as it will affect other language skills, such as speaking, writing and reading. Likewise, Subana (2009) stated that good listening skills are children's key to acquiring and expanding knowledge in the future. Given the important role of listening, concentration is necessary while listening.

The results of observations of a total of 12 children in Group B at Teratai Integrated Preschool, consisting of 4 girls and 8 boys during learning with the teacher showed that listening skills had not yet developed optimally as indicated by the children's inability to respond to other people's conversations, to perform instructions given by other people, and to retell sentences that they had heard in front of the teacher and peers. During the learning process, some children had difficulties and reluctance in answering the teacher's questions. Also, some children did not complete tasks as instructed by the teacher. Some children could not focus their attention entirely on the teacher as they were seen to do other activities during the learning process. In order to improve children's oral communication, the chain whisper game was implemented.

Naisaban (2002) claimed that chain whisper can amuse children and sharpen their intelligence. Budinuryanta (2008) suggested that chain whisper is a language activity that translates experiences into whispered messages. In this game, children whisper a message to their friends. <sup>9</sup> The first child whispers a message to the second child. Then, the second child whispers the message to the third child And passes it further until it reaches the final child. The last child mentions the message loudly in front of their friends.

This is in line with the study by Rahayu (2020) who found that children's listening skills increased after chain message game was adopted. A similar finding was found by Hardianti (2019). Her study involved a collaboration with the Class

B-2 teacher and two cycles were conducted. The results showed that the receptive language skills of the children in Class B-2 at Abdul Azis Lambada Lhok Kindergarten increased gradually. The whisper game can increase children's active participation during the teaching and learning process, improve language skills, spark children's interest in learning, and bring joy to children.

A similar finding was also found by Suryadi (2020). The results of his study showed that there was an increase in receptive language skills through the chain whisper game among Group A Students at Uminda Islamic Kindergarten, Makassar.

Previously, Fauziah (2015) conducted a research using a quasi-experimental research method in SDN (Public Elementary School) Pekasi Jaya II. The sample in this study was 25 students in the experimental group and 25 students in the control group. The experimental group carried out Indonesian language learning by playing chain whisper, while the control group carried out Indonesian language learning without playing chain whisper. The instrument used in the study was a *pantun* listening test. The study found significant differences in learning Indonesian between the experimental group and the control group.

Another research conducted by Irania (2016) found that there was a positive and very strong correlation between the chain whisper game and oral communication among Class B children at Uswatun Hasanah Menako Preschool, Bandar Lampung. This is evidenced from the results of data analysis using the Spearman rank correlation test, which generated a positive value and indicated a very strong level of closeness according to the correlation coefficient interpretation guideline table. Thus, it is concluded in the study that oral communication skills of the children who were involved in playing chain whisper can develop better.

Based on the aforementioned discussion, a research on the effect of the chain whisper game on receptive language skills of the children in Group B at Teratai Integrated Preschool in Makassar was conducted.

## METHOD

This study employed quasi-experimental design. and compared groups to identify changes

caused by the treatment. In this study, the subjects were divided into the experimental group that received treatment and the control group that did not receive treatment. The experimental research design used in this study was the nonequivalent control group design (Sugiyono, 2013).

Group	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Experimental	O <sub>1</sub>	X	O <sub>2</sub>
Control	O <sub>3</sub>		O <sub>4</sub>

This study design required one experimental group and one control group and assessment was done before and after the treatment was given. The research paradigm can be described as follows:

Description:

O<sub>1</sub> and O<sub>3</sub>: Results of observations of receptive language skills before the implementation of chain whisper as the treatment

O<sub>2</sub>: Results of observations of receptive language skills after the implementation of chain whisper as the treatment

X : The chain whisper game as the treatment

O<sub>4</sub> : Results of observations of receptive language skills without the treatment of chain whisper.

This study examined two variables: the independent variable and the dependent variable. The independent variable or the variable that influences another variable in this study was the chain whisper game, while the dependent variable or the variable that is influenced by another variable in this study was the children's receptive language.

Population is a general group consisting of subjects who have certain qualities and characteristics determined by the researchers to be studied and about which conclusions are drawn. The population in this study was students at Terpadu Teratai Preschool in Makassar.

The sample, however, was 12 children in Group B1, divided into 6 children in the control group and 6 children in the experimental group. Sampling was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, which means taking samples based on specific criteria.

Data collection techniques are deemed necessary in research because they can determine the fruitfulness of a study. This study, however,

employed observations and tests as data collection techniques. Observation is a complex process comprised of biological and psychological processes. In this study, observations aimed to obtain data on students while playing chain whisper by systematically recording the phenomena that occurred during the game. Meanwhile, the test was in the form of a treatment to identify the children's receptive language skills before and after playing chain whisper. The treatment was given to the experimental group and the results were then compared to the control group which was not given any treatment.

The data analysis technique adopted in this study was descriptive analysis, aiming to describe the data that had been collected as it was without any intentions to make conclusions or generalizations. Data was also analyzed using non-parametric statistical test called the Wilcoxon sign rank test and the SPSS application version 16.

The decision criteria of the test are as follows:  $H_0$  is accepted if the Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05, meaning that the chain whisper game had no effect on receptive language skills.  $H_1$  is accepted if the Sig. (2-Tailed)  $\leq$  0.05, meaning that the chain whisper game had an effect on receptive language skills.

## RESULTS

The following are the results of the study conducted on 12 children in the experimental and control groups.

**Table 1. Results of Descriptive Analysis of the Expressive Language Skills of the Children in the Control Group**

	Report	
	Pretest	Posttest
Mean	5.34	6.00
N	6	6
Range	6.00	6.00
Std. Deviation	1.67	1.89
Minimum	3.00	3.00
Maximum	8.00	9.00
Variance	3.35	3.60

The table above shows that the pretest score of the children in the control group was 5.34

on average, while the posttest score was 6.00 on average. On the one hand, the minimum pretest score in the control group was 3.00, while the maximum score was 8.00. On the other hand, the minimum posttest score was 3.00, while the maximum score was 9.00. These results showed that there was no significant increase in receptive language skills of the children in the control group.

**Table 2. Results of Descriptive Analysis of the Expressive Language Skills of the Children in the Experimental Group**

	Report	
	Pretest	Posttest
Mean	5.52	9.33
N	6	6
Range	6.00	6.00
Std. Deviation	1.73	2.07
Minimum	3.00	6.00
Maximum	9.00	12.00
Variance	3.31	4.27

The table above shows that the pretest score of the children in the experimental group was 5.52 on average, while the posttest score was 9.33 on average. On the one hand, the minimum pretest score in the experimental group was 3.00, while the maximum score was 9.00. On the other hand, the minimum posttest score was 6.00, while the maximum score was 12.00. These results showed that there was significant increase in receptive language skills of the children in the experimental group. Furthermore, a non-parametric analysis was performed to test the hypothesis if there is an effect of the chain whisper game on receptive language skills of the children at Teratai Integrated Preschool in Makassar.

**Table 3. Results of the Wilcoxon Test on the Control Group**

	Posttest-Pretest
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	-1.732 <sup>a</sup> .083

a. Based on negative ranks

b. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

The table above shows that the Asymp Sig (2-tailed) value obtained was 0.083 > 0.05, meaning that  $H_1$  was rejected and  $H_0$  was accepted. These results indicate that there is no

effect of the storytelling method on children's receptive language skills.

**Table 4. Results of the Wilcoxon Test on the Experimental Group**

	Posttest-Pretest
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	-2.812 <sup>a</sup> .005

a. Based on negative ranks

b. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

The table above shows that the Asymp Sig (2-tailed) value obtained was  $0.005 < 0.05$ , meaning that  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_1$  was accepted. These results indicate that the storytelling method has an effect on children's receptive language skills.

## Discussion

The results of the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test using the SPSS application showed that the Asymp Sig (2-tailed) value obtained was  $0.005 < 0.05$ , meaning that  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_1$  was accepted and indicating that storytelling affects children's receptive language skills. These results suggest that receptive language skills of the children who performed the chain whisper game are better than children who performed storytelling.

In order to improve children's receptive language, the chain whisper game does not bore the children because they can play while learning. In addition, chain whisper is an interesting, effective and fun activity that can facilitate various aspects of early childhood development. Sakti & Roesminingsih (2017) stated that chain whisper is a group game performed by whispering a message from one person to another. Before the game begins, the teacher and children make an agreement to make the game run properly. The chain whisper game can train children's memory, concentration and listening skills.

Fitriani et al. (2019) suggested that receptive language skills include children's abilities to understand teacher's classroom rules, orders, and explanations. Furthermore, well-developed receptive language skills can help children understand words, sentences, stories and rules. Chaer (2003) argued that receptive language involves a listener who receives meaningful and useful language codes through

the organ of hearing conveyed by a speaker through articulation.

During the study, the children were instructed to sit neatly, informed about the theme that would be learned that day, and asked to sing together according to the sub-theme to increase their enthusiasm. The sentences to be whispered were prepared and the children's sitting positions were adjusted. Afterwards, the steps of the chain whisper game were briefly explained to the children. The children were divided into several groups and asked to stand in line. After the children's positions were settled, the teacher asked the group representative to whisper a few words according to the theme. Another child received the message and relayed it to next child, and so on until it reached the final child. The final child spoke what he heard out loud in front of his friends. The group that obtained the best score was awarded by the teacher. The researchers also asked the children to stand up to retell the message or sentence with limited vocabulary.

Based on the results of the study, it can be seen that the chain whisper game is very effective in developing children's receptive language skills. This is evident from the results of hypothesis testing using descriptive statistical test calculations and non-parametric statistical tests. The results showed that the receptive language skills of the children treated with the storytelling method obtained the Asym (2-tailed) score of 0.083, while the receptive language skills in children after being treated with the chain whisper game obtained the Asym (2-tailed) score of 0.005. After playing chain whisper, the children in the experimental group experienced more significant increase in receptive language skills than those in the control group. These results also suggest that the chain whisper game has an effect on the development of receptive language skills of the children in Teratai Integrated Preschool in Makassar.

The results of the current study are in line with those of the study by Hardianti (2019) who adopted a method called Classroom Action. The results of her study with the collaboration with the Class B-2 teacher and the implementation of two cycles showed that the receptive language skills of the children in Class B-2 at Abdul Azis Lambada Lhok Kindergarten increased gradually. The chain whisper game can increase children's active participation during the teaching and learning process, improve language skills,

spark children's interest in learning, and bring joy to children.

Another study that employed a quasi-experimental design was conducted by Fauziah (2015). It was conducted in SDN Bekasi Jaya II and the sample in this study was 25 students put in the experimental group and 25 students put in the control group. The experimental group carried out Indonesian language learning by playing chain whisper, while the control group carried out Indonesian language learning without playing chain whisper. The instrument used in the study was a *pantun* listening test.

According to the results of the current study and of previous studies, it can be inferred that the chain whisper game has an effect on receptive language skills of the children aged 5-6 years at Teratai Integrated Preschool in Makassar.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, some conclusions can be drawn. The score of receptive language skills of the children in the control group before being given the chain whisper game treatment was 5.34 on average and in the experimental group was 5.52 on average. In the control group, there were 2 children (33%) in the Undeveloped (BB) category, 4 children (67%) in the Beginning to Develop (MB) category, and no children both in the Developed as Expected (BSH) and the Very Well-Developed (BSB) categories. Meanwhile, in the experimental group, there were 2 children (33%) in the Undeveloped (BB) category, 3 children (50%) in

the Beginning to Develop (MB) category, 1 child (17%) in the Very Well-Developed (BSH) category, and no children in the Very Well-Developed (BSB) category. After being given the chain whisper game treatment, the score of receptive language skills of the children in the control group was 6.00 on average, while in the experimental group was 9.33 on average. In the control group, there was 1 child (17%) in the Undeveloped (BB) category, 4 children (67%) in the Beginning to Develop (MB) category, 1 child (17%) in the Developed as Expected (BSH) category, and no children in the Very-Well Developed (BSB) category. In the experimental group, however, there was 1 child (17%) in the Undeveloped (BB) category, 1 child (17%) in the Beginning to Develop (MB) category, 3 children (50%) in the Developed as Expected (BSH) category, and no children in the Very-Well Developed (BSB) category. There is a significant influence of the chain whisper game on receptive language skills of the children aged 5-6 years at Teratai Integrated Preschool in Makassar. It can be seen from the results showing that the Asym (2-tailed) value of the control group was 0.083, while the Asym (2-tailed) value of the experimental group was 0.005.

Based on the aforementioned conclusions, some suggestions are formulated. Teachers should enhance the use of the chain whisper game to effectively develop children's receptive language skills and create fun learning situations for students. Future researchers should examine the child development aspects that can be stimulated by the chain whisper game.

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