

**PLAYING CHARADES TO BOOST YOUNG LEARNERS' ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE ABILITY**

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***Abstract***

*The educational environment has an important role in children's language skills, English. Schools or other educational institutions are expected to be able to cultivate, grow, and develop the language skills of their students. MI Miftahul Ulum, Sucolor, Maesan, Bondowoso is an educational institution that is aware of the importance of developing children's language skills and takes part in building the character of their students, especially in terms of language skills. MI Miftahul Ulum applies a word guessing game to each student in developing English skills. The aim of this activity is that students can at least say words or speak English.*

*This study aims to reveal and describe how the word guessing game is implemented at MI Miftahul Ulum in an effort to improve children's English skills. In addition, this study intends to find out how and to what extent the contribution of charades games can improve English skills, especially MI Miftahul Ulum students. Therefore, based on the research objectives, the researcher applied a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection techniques applied include observation, documentation, and interviews. Meanwhile, the informants in this study involved school principals, teacher boards, and MI Miftahul Ulum students.*

*From this study, the results were obtained that by implementing the word guessing game, students were able to say and even speak English (mix) well, as well as their pronunciation, now they are slowly being able to say even speak English correctly when asked. For students who can't yet, they can easily learn through what they hear when playing charades. The application of the word guessing game at MI Miftahul Ulum is used to evaluate children's ability to practice speaking English which focuses on the synergy between what is heard and the pronunciation. The game is carried out routinely, the goal is that with an intensive evaluation intensity, MI Miftahul Ulum students experience very rapid development and can mention English vocabulary in mixed English speaking.*

**Kata kunci: *Playing Charades, Learning English Language Ability***

## **Background of The Study**

Young learner education is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth to the age of six which is carried out through the provision of educational stimuli to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness to enter further education.<sup>1</sup> Young learner education is essentially education that is held with the aim of facilitating the growth and development of children as a whole or emphasizing the development of the child's personality. Therefore, young learner institution provide opportunities for children to develop their personality and potential to the fullest, consequently, young learner institution need to provide various activities that can develop various aspects of development such as: cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical and motoric.<sup>2</sup>

Young learner education, there are goals that must be achieved. In general, the purpose of young learner Education is to provide stimulation for the development of children's potential so that they become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, critical, creative, innovative, independent, confident, and become democratic and responsible.<sup>3</sup> Globalization demand the ability to interact with anyone. One of the conditions for such interaction is communication. In order to someone is able to communicate well, adequate language skills are needed, because as we know that English as an international language. If we can master English well, it means we have the opportunity to be able to face the current global conditions

Young learners have the most important period of development because it determines the next period of development, this is due to the rapid development of the brain, because significant brain development in early childhood is referred to as the golden age. In this time, the brain growth takes place at high speed and reaches the largest proportion, up to 80%.<sup>4</sup> At that time, the role of parents is needed in supervising the growth and development of the child's brain. As explained in Ki Hajar Dewantara's idea that the Tri Education Center, education takes place in three environments, namely, family, school, and community. Three of them have a role in the educational process,

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<sup>1</sup> UU No.20 tahun 2003 bab I pasal 1 ayat 14

<sup>2</sup> Suyadi, Maulidia U, Konsep Dasar PAUD, (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya offset, 2015), h.17

<sup>3</sup> Suyadi, Maulidia U, Konsep Dasar PAUD, h.19

<sup>4</sup> <https://nasional.kompas.com/>. 80 Persen Otak Anak Berkembang di Usia Emas

complement and strengthen one another.<sup>5</sup> Elementary school (MI) Miftahul Ulum is one of the schools which has a mission to help parents prepare their children to face the era of globalization, by applying the use of English in their daily lives to train their children's English skills. "Our school is not an international school, but we include English as the daily language in the learning process. So there is an evaluation as a benchmark for children's learning (Mr. Zaki Hamdani, M.Pd as the head master of MIMU)."

The schools introduce English into the curriculum very early, the aim is to introduce the language as early as possible. In addition beside the children using their mother tongue, they are also taught English from an early age. Brain mapping studies show that strong growth in brain areas connecting the linguistic cortex and the associations of the two hemispheres begins at six years old and continues until around fifteen years old.<sup>6</sup>

In an institution, the interesting variety of learning is needed to improve children's oral language skills. One of the educational games that can be used to improve spoken language skills is a guessing game. It should be noted that there are four stages of development, namely: Sensorimotor stage: from birth to two years old; Preoperational stage: from two to eight years old; Concrete operational stage: from eight to eleven years old; Formal stage: from eleven years to fifteen years or more.<sup>7</sup> As we know, some students think that learning English is very difficult to learn. So that it becomes the task of a teacher to find ways to make learning English easy to learn. At the Elementary School of Miftahul Ulum apply charades game in learning English because it is inspired by some videos on social media. The charades game was applied at the end of the learning process, students were asked to make a line and then the teacher described the name of an object and asked the students to guess the name of the object that had been described by the teacher. For example, someone who teaches at school (teacher).

Therefore educators or teachers should prepare ways to make the class active, creative, and fun teaching and learning processes. So that learners can enjoy the teaching and learning process comfortably and happily. By paying attention to these

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<sup>5</sup> Kemdikbud BP PAUD dan DIKMAS Sulawesi Utara. 28 November 2018 Tri Sentra Pendidikan Gagasan Ki Hajar Dewantara

<sup>6</sup> Thompson, P., Giedd, J. N., Woods, R. P., MacDonald, D., Evans, A. & Toga. A. W. (March 2000). 'Growth patterns in the developing human brain detected using continuum-mechanical tensor mapping'. Nature 404, 190-193. [online [www.loni.ucla.edu/~thompson/JAY/nature\\_paper.htm](http://www.loni.ucla.edu/~thompson/JAY/nature_paper.htm)]

<sup>7</sup> Piaget, J. (1969). Science of Education and the Psychology of the Child. New York: Orion.

four levels of development, we can see at which level the children are studying in the elementary schools or children in six to twelve years old. Of course they are in preoperational stage to the concrete operational stage, even to the beginning of the formal stage. Means that children of primary school age need attention according to their grade level. The child's mind develops little by little according to the development of knowledge and intellectual skills leading to a more logical and formal way of thinking. The most important thing for cognitive development is language. Talking with children in carrying out activities is a form of verbal assistance to children. This kind of helping activity is transferred to the class in speaking activities between the teacher and learners. This kind of activity is often referred as scaffolding to support the learner in learning process.

The application of this guessing word game or charades is expected to help children overcome boredom when participating teaching and learning activities in class, especially in learning English. As well as learning which only focuses on the use of Learner Worksheets. Word guessing games to improve spoken language skills have not been widely implemented by educators in other environments. However, the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Miftahul Ulum institution is determined to use this method to encourage or add insight into language by playing (marching). In this game at the end of learning (before going home from school) learners are asked to line up, then the teacher gives questions by describing a word to learners. Based on this background, the researcher is interested in conducting research on the process of implementing English learning at the institution, the aim is to describe the extent to which learners can follow the word guessing game properly and correctly.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **• Learning English Through Charades Game**

Playing is an activity that is enjoyed by the children. The world of children is a world of play. Part of the child's learning process is carried out through the games they do. Playing is one of ways for young learners to learn, because while playing, the children learn about what they want to know and what they want to be able to get all the events that are happening around them. Learning language learning through

charades, especially learning English is the activity that integrated with a game. The fundamental idea of Learning by playing is to create learning and teaching activities in our real surroundings.

Playing activities affected six aspects of the children development, including: aspects of cognition, social, emotional, communication, self-awareness and motor skills. One aspect of ability that must be developed for young learner is language skills. Playing charades is a game that has to guess a few words to be mentioned correctly. This kind of game tests the learners' reasoning power in guessing the word in question, and the participant is given a time limit, so the speed and accuracy of guessing words become the concern of the learners.<sup>8</sup>

- **Learners' language ability**

Essencely, language is teaching or spoken sound. It can be explained by using historical facts that people were able to communicate using language orally.<sup>9</sup> Children's language skills learned and acquired by young learners naturally to adapt in their environment as a means of communication with the interlocutor.

According to Bromley in which was written by Nurbiana, mentions four aspects of language, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Language skills are different from speaking skills. Language is a grammatical system that is relatively complicated and semantic, while speaking ability is an expression in the form of words. Language is either receptive (understood, accepted) or expressive (stated). Examples of receptive language are listening and reading information, while examples of expressive language are speaking and writing information to be communicated to others.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Said. A, Budimanjaya. A, *Strategi Mengajar Multiple Intelligences*, (Jakarta : Prenada Media Group,2015), h.68

<sup>9</sup> Yeti M, *Bahasa Indonesia*,(Tangerang Selatan:UT, 2017), h.2.3

<sup>10</sup> Nurbiana D, dkk, *Metode Pengembangan Bahasa*, (Tangerang Selatan: UT, 2015), h.1.14

Teachers can help encourage children's natural language development by providing an environment of language development opportunities. The following are some general guidelines for teachers, parents and caregivers,: first, understand any language or dialect spoken by children is useful as a valid way of communication, because it reflects the identity, values and experiences of the family and society in which they live. Second, treat your child like a proficient speaker, even though he can't speak yet. Third, encourage interaction between children. Fourth, remember that parents, caregivers and teachers are the source of children's language development. Fifth, encourage children to continue to interact with their friends when children begin to understand written language. Especially in speaking English, children must often practice so that the pronunciation in English is good and precise.

## **Research Design**

The research method used in this study is qualitative. Qualitative research aims to understand the research subject which is interpretive, means that it looks for the research findings. Qualitative research uses and relies on detailed and verbal data in various forms. Descriptive qualitative research aims to describe, summarize various conditions, various situations, or various phenomena of social reality that exist in the community which is the object of research. This method begins by collecting data, analyzing data and interpreting it. A qualitative approach is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. Researchers use a descriptive qualitative research approach, because it can facilitate researchers in making observations and analyzing the results of observations made. In this research method, researchers seek to obtain accurate data so that it can be used as a reference in the process of developing English language skills.

In the data collection process, the techniques uses documentation, observation, and interviews. Observation is a data collection technique that is carried out through an observation, accompanied by recordings of the state or behavior of the target object.<sup>11</sup>

## **Research Location**

This research was conducted at Elementary School (MI) Miftahul Ulum Sucolor, Maesan, Bondowoso. MI Miftahul Ulum is located in Dusun Kebun RT.24/ RW.06 Sucolor, Maesan, Bondowoso. The researcher chose Elementary School (MI) Miftahul Ulum Sucolor as the research location because in that village is only MI Miftahul Ulum which is under the auspices of Kementerian Agama, another of that Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Miftahul Ulum institution is the only one that implements a charades game in improving students' abilities in English language.

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<sup>11</sup> Sugiyono, Metode, h.109.

### **Informant decision technique**

The informants in this study include: the head master of Miftahul Ulum Elementary School, teachers, and students. The method of selecting informants in this study was using a purposive sampling technique, in which the selection of informants was based on several special considerations, including; Miftahul Ulum Elementary School Sucolor has implemented a Charades game to improve English language skills. The head of Elementary School, the teacher, and students agreed to conduct the research and agreed to become informants in this research.

### **Data Collection**

In the process of collecting data, the techniques used were in the form of documentation, observation, and interviews.

#### **a) Observation**

Observation is a data collection technique that is carried out through an observation, accompanied by recordings of the state or behavior of the target object<sup>12</sup>. The observation referred to in this study is a way of collecting data by observing and systematically recording the phenomena studied. This type of observation is used to make it easier for researchers to make observations. This observation involved the head master, teachers, and students. This observation needs to be done to get accurate data about the research results in the form of developing English language skills through a charades game. The activity aims to dig up information directly at the research location by observing the activities of the charades game in developing English abilities.

#### **b) Interview**

An interview is a meeting of two people to exchange information and ideas through question and answer. The interview technique used in this research is structured

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<sup>12</sup> Sugiyono, Metode, h.109.



and non-structured interviews. Structured interviews are interviews conducted using interview guidelines that have been prepared by the researcher and contain several questions related to the research theme and contain elements of 4 W (what, who, when and where) 1 H (how). While non-structured interviews are a complement/development of a question in the interview guide by not keeping information about the source confidential and also having questions that are not limited or not bound by answers. Collecting data through this interview the researcher conducted with school principals, teachers, and students.

The use of structured and non-structured interview techniques was carried out by researchers with the intention of obtaining accurate, detailed and accountable data. This technique is used by researchers to obtain data from the subjects studied, about word guessing games to improve English proficiency.

Interviews were conducted with school principals, teachers and students with the aim of gathering information, both facts and opinions needed by researchers. Then, the data that has been collected is analyzed using Miles and Huberman's theory. Data analysis based on Miles and Huberman's theory includes three main activities, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.<sup>13</sup>

#### c) Documentation

Documentation is a record what have done. Documentation can be in the form of writing, pictures or monumental works of a person. Documentation in the form of writing, for example: diaries, histories, stories, biographies, regulations, and policies. Documentation activities are intended to obtain written data about charades game in improving English abilities.

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<sup>13</sup> Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis: Second Edition*. London: SAGE Publication. hlm. 10

Documentation is carried out to collect various information needed by researcher that expressed or implied in related documents.

In this study, the discussion compiled by the researchers was to improve English language skills through a charades game that was carried out at Miftahul Ulum Bondowoso Elementary School. In this charades game activity the researcher want to know how far the young learners's English ability at MI Miftahul Ulum is by pronouncing English vocabulary properly and correctly. In order for the discussion to be more detailed and comprehensive, the researcher makes 2 sub-discussions, as follows:

First, the discussion about improving English ability. This discussion examines the process of how students can practice English properly and correctly. Furthermore, this discussion is related to and compared with other relevant theories or research results.

Second, a discussion of the charades game. In the discussion of this research, what studied by the researcher was how the word guessing game was applied to students in order to be able to improve their English skills properly and correctly. This activity trains students to do something according to the sequence.

## **Data analysis**

In this part, the researcher presents the results of research on Improving English Language skill through a Charades for young learners of MI Miftahul Ulum which has been formulated in the first chapter, at the focus of research and followed by data analysis. The data from this study were obtained from observations, interviews and documentation conducted by researcher. Some of documents were obtained from the head master of MI Miftahul Ulum, teachers and students. The following is the result of presenting the data obtained by the researcher:

- a. Implementation of Charade games in to improve English language skills for young learners.

MI Miftahul Ulum Sucolor implements charade game in improving English skills. Because this activity contain many values and very useful for young learners. By carrying out these activities ypung learners have a sense of responsibility, solemnity, obedience, and obedience.

As stated by the MI Miftahul Ulum school principal, Mr. Zaki Hamdani during an interview as follows:

“At our institution, we implement a charades game before going home from school. Because in improving students' English proficiency, there are also a lot of values contained in it. These values are very good and useful for young learners and for their future.”<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, the researcher also interviewed Mrs. Maftuhatul M, as a teacher at MI Miftahul Ulum. The instruments used in the application of charade game was the form of observation sheets and checklists that contain the ability of students to guess words for each question, which are as follows:

“This word guessing game at school is done before going home from school. In this activity students are asked to line up listening to the teacher who is describing, then

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<sup>14</sup> Zaki Hamdani, Kepala Sekolah MI Miftahul Ulum, *wawancara*,

students answer correctly. The instrument used is the observation sheet or checklist.”<sup>15</sup>

This statement from the MI Miftahul Ulum principal was reinforced by Mrs. Maftuhatul M. as a teacher/educator at MI Miftahul Ulum Sucolor. He said that:

“Our school (MI Miftahul Ulum Sucolor) implements several activities that are carried out after teaching and learning activities. Such as presentations, evaluations, question and answer and playing. But in this case to train children's English speaking abilities besides learning material we focus on guessing games which we think are very good activities to implement.”<sup>16</sup>

Based on the results of these interviews, the instrument or observation sheet used does not only contain a checklist column to evaluate students' answers and readings, but also provides a notes column for the teacher to provide comments or suggestions to students regarding what still needs to be learned more.

Based on the results of observations and interviews conducted by researcher, it can be concluded that at MI Miftahul Ulum Sucolor applied charade game because it can improve English Language skills, and it's also there are so many values in this activity. Such as responsibility, obedience, discipline, and focus.

b. The contribution of charades game in improving English Language skills at MI Miftahul Ulum Bondowoso

Furthermore, the researcher also explored and collected data on how performance assessment was able to improve English Language skills of young learners at MI Miftahul Ulum. Related to this conveyed by the head master of MI Miftahul Ulum. As follows:

“By routinely evaluating, and giving comments regarding the shortcomings of students in applying the word guessing game, students focus on what needs to be trained again and what needs to be developed. So, when playing charades again the next day, students will remember what they have learned a few days before and also what they have learned at home.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Zaki Hamdani, Kepala Sekolah MI Miftahul Ulum, *wawancara*,

<sup>16</sup> Maftuhatul M., Guru MI Miftahul Ulum, *wawancara*

<sup>17</sup> Zaki Hamdani, Kepala Sekolah MI Miftahul Ulum, *wawancara*,

One of students of MI Miftahul Ulum said, "Charades game activity was very enjoyable for me." From this statement the researcher could see that the role of the charades game was very well used by students to develop English language skills. Based on this statement it can be concluded that the evaluation which was developed by applying a guessing game contributes to improving English language skills because the indicators are listed, so that the information on the deficiencies that students have is very clear as shown by these indicators.

### **Discussions**

The urgency of training and developing young learners' English skills must be started as early as possible, one of which is when a child is already in elementary school or Islamic elementary school (MI). This is because young learner is the golden age for galvanizing all the potential that they have, be intelligence cognitively, behaviorally or affectively, as well as character or attitude, one of which is language ability. Thus, the development of English language skills should be a priority in their own environment, including the family and school. As stated by Suryono (2013) that school or education is a social institution that has a role in growing and fostering human, community and nation independence.<sup>18</sup>

The word guessing game is a game that can help improve children's ability to speak English, both orally and in writing. As has been implemented by MI Miftahul Ulum's board of teachers to their students, especially in improving English language skills, a guessing game that is packaged in observation sheets and checklists on children's ability to improve English language skills both orally and in writing is proven to be able to improve children's abilities to improve English ability. As explained by the

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<sup>18</sup> Suryono, Y. 2013. *Pudarnya Kemandirian Bangsa: Adakah Peran Pendidikan dan Ilmu Pendidikan?*. Yogyakarta: Ash-Shaff.

Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), to increase is to go up or increase, or to be able to do something better than before. Thus, MI Miftahul Ulum students can be said to be able to speak English little by little, especially in mentioning the vocabulary described by the teacher without being guided by their friends or the teacher. In line with what was conveyed by Wiyani, independence is the child's ability to carry out activities or activities on their own in various ways.<sup>19</sup> Likewise Syafri revealed that independence is an attitude and behavior that is not easily dependent on other people in completing tasks.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Wiyani, N. A. 2013. *Bina Karakter Anak Usia Dini*. Jogjakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media

<sup>20</sup> Ulil Amri Syafri. 2012. *Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Al-Quran*. Jakarta: Raja

## **Conclusion**

Training and developing young learners ability to speak English should start as early as possible. MI Miftahul Ulum is an educational environment that is also aware of the importance of constructing children's abilities in English by implementing a word guessing game. The game which is implemented at MI Miftahul Ulum is an instrument that was developed in the form of an observation sheet and is intended for English word guessing game activities, which contain a checklist when students answer a word described by a teacher.

Based on the results of interviews with the head of MI, teachers and students, the application of the word guessing game is carried out routinely before going home from school. The teacher evaluates each student in answering questions properly and correctly. At the end, the teacher also fills in the note column to comment on each student regarding the deficiencies that the student made when playing the charades game, or giving suggestions regarding what things they need to learn and strengthen in carrying out the game, with English.

Routine evaluation of each individual of charades game indirectly trains young learners to be more aware of their own deficiencies and more focus on what they need to practice and learn more. Thus, each student is automatically able to understand English properly and correctly.

Furthermore, the researcher would like to convey suggestions to related parties. For MI Miftahul Ulum, it is hoped that they will try to develop English skills in other ways or another games that can develop English skills rapidly. Then for the next or future researchers, it is hoped that they will be able to design other games for different levels, for certain types of lessons, or by implementing other research designs to

continue explore potential and find the efficiency and effectiveness of charades games in various lines of education.

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