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INTEGRATION OF LANGUAGE AND RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD IN RA BAIT QUR'ANY

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ABSTRACT

Background: Early childhood education in Islam is an effort to optimize all the potential that exists in children, as an effort to prepare children for the *tamyîz* period (children can distinguish between good and bad according to Allah and the Messenger). For this reason, in the development of children's language, it is necessary to integrate with children's religious development so that the development of children's language is good in accordance with the teachings of Islam. **Purpose:** Based on this, this study aims to find out how to integrate early childhood language and religious development in RA Bait Qur'any. **Method:** This study uses an observation method with a descriptive analysis of a qualitative approach. **Result:** The results of this study explain that the integration of children's language and religious development can be seen in each learning theme. **Conclusion:** Each theme includes religious materials such as *aqidah*, *shari'ah* and morals to develop children's language skills such as reciting, listening, reading, writing and understanding by using play, conversation, stories and tours.

A. INTRODUCTION

Maria Montessori in Britton, a well-known early childhood education figure, stated that in the range of birth to 6 years of age, children experience a golden age which is a period when children begin to be sensitive/sensitive to various stimuli. During this sensitive period, children easily receive stimuli from their environment (Lesley Britton, 1992). Early childhood is a golden age or often called the Golden Age, usually marked by rapid changes in physical, cognitive, social, language and emotional development (Imas Kurniasi, 2013). Meanwhile, according to Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education Department, early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth to the age of six years which is carried out through the provision of stimuli to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness to enter further education (Totok Isnanto, 2005).

According to Hikmah, early childhood education in Islam is an effort to optimize all the potential that exists in children, as an effort to prepare children for the *tamyîz* period. Meanwhile, the development of early childhood religious values is part of efforts to prepare children to enter the *tamyiz phase*.

The development of religious and moral values in children is also a mandate of the National Education System Law (SISDIKNAS) Number 20 of 2003 stated that education aims to develop abilities and form the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the life of the nation, aiming to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, with noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and become a responsible citizen (Ni Putu Widyasanti, 2023).

Language is the regular speech of human thoughts and feelings, which uses sound as a tool (Sri Rahayu, 2017). Language skills develop according to the developmental rate of each child, including his or her thinking ability. Understanding each child's developmental stages can help teachers to recognize what is important in the development of spoken and written language, such language skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The obligation as an adult who is fully responsible for early childhood, be it parents or teachers, is to teach children the language, this can be done in a method that attracts the interest of children and children want to listen to every thing that is conveyed and, children want to respond well to it. Language skills need to be honed and paid attention to from an early age by both parents and teachers in schools and their environment. There is a need for a special method in stimulating early childhood language there are many methods in developing early childhood language, including the following exampleal methods, habituation methods, storytelling methods, work tourism methods, assignment assignments, and question and answer methods (Tanjung, 2022 & Istanti, E., Debibik, D. N. F., & Rina, R. S., 2021).

Based on a survey conducted in Dream.co.id launched that the disorder that most often afflicts children and is rarely noticed by parents is *developmental language disorder (DLD)*, which is a language development disorder. Based on a survey conducted in a study in the *Journal of Communication Disorders by the European Co-operation in Science and Technology Action IS1406*, only 60% knew or heard the term language developmental disorder (DLD). This means that awareness about the potential for language delay in children is still minimal.

Meanwhile, several surveys state that around 5-10 percent of children in schools experience language disorders, both spoken and written. This is certainly a worrying issue in the world of children's education because children's language disorders can affect other aspects of development, such as cognitive, motor, social-emotional, religious, and moral development. Sadly, parents are often unaware of the language disorders experienced by children. In fact, some parents think that the delay in children's language is not important and will be resolved as the child gets older. In fact, it is actually the beginning of other child developmental disorders.

In today's digital era, early childhood language development is greatly influenced by social media Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and others. According to Kurniati & Nuryani, YouTube social media has a significant influence on the language acquisition of children aged 3-4 years. They see and hear various information from videos, images and sounds and then very easily they imitate and apply it in their daily lives. Based on this background, early childhood needs education so that they better understand good and correct language, gain experience with their peers and learn language development that will help early childhood in their growth and development. The purpose of early childhood learning is to stimulate or stimulate the growth of children's abilities so that they become human beings who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, critical, creative, innovative, independent, self-confident, and become a democratic and responsible society (Fathonah Wahyu Utamingtyas Fajarii, Zulkarnaen, 2023).

Early childhood language development in Islam is closely related to religious development. *The phase* that seeks to prepare children to be able to understand good and bad according to Allah and the Messenger. For this reason, the development of early childhood language can actually include religious materials such as aqidah, sharia and morals. How is the development of early childhood language which includes aqidah, morals and sharia materials; ah and how to learn to develop language that integrates with early childhood religious development.

RA Bait Qur'any is an early childhood education institution that Tahfidz Al Qur'an. This institution has characteristics in developing early childhood language. In the Qur'any verse RA, the development of early childhood language is integrated with children's religious development, so that early childhood language develops in line with religious development. Children are able to reveal religious languages both in interaction with Allah in worship and in interaction with parents, teachers and peers. This research wants to find out how language development is integrated with children's religious development after early childhood in RA Bait Qur'any.

B. METHODOLOGY

This study uses an observation method with a descriptive analysis of a qualitative approach. The qualitative method is research that uses a descriptive format in the form of written words or descriptions of people and observable behaviors. Descriptive research is research that aims to systematically describe the facts found in the field, are verbal, sentences of phenomena, and not in the form of numbers. The data obtained in the form of photo shoots, observations, interviews, document analysis, field notes, compiled by researchers at the research site, are not presented in the form of numbers. The results of the analysis are in the form of a presentation of the situation being

researched and then presented in the form of a narrative description. This description is used to find the principles and explanations that lead to conclusions.

C. DISCUSSION

Early Childhood Religious Development

The Qur'an surah Luqman/31:13-19 explains in detail the development of children's religious values which is expected to include; first, Aqidah. Children are taught not to associate with Allah (the perception of Allah).

"".And he said, 'O Messenger of Allah, do not associate others with Allah except Allah"
And (remember) when Luqman said to his son, when he was teaching him: "O my son! do not associate with Allah, indeed associating with (Allah) is indeed a great tyranny".
(Luqman/31:13).

According to Ibn Qayyim, the first sentence that should be said by a child is the sentence *laa ilaha illallah*. The aspect of faith according to Ibn Qayyim includes two things, namely strengthening faith, and obeying all the commandments of Allah and following all the instructions of the Prophet. Following the instructions of the Prophet includes two things, namely first, justifying the treatise he brought, second, carrying out all His commandments without the slightest obstruction by orgasm (Ibn Qayyim Al-Jauziyah, 1986). Thus, the religious dimension of *imaniyah* according to Ibn Qayyim includes two things, namely believing and believing and applying what is believed and believed.

Second, morality. Children are accustomed to be devoted to their parents according to the Qur'anic Signals;

,And the people of the land are the people of the world, and they are the people of the world"
"and they are the people of the world." There is no one who knows what is going on in this world, and what is the meaning of the Qur'an, and the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)
"And We command man (to do good) to his parents. His mother had conceived him in an increasingly weak state, and weaned him in two years [1180]. Give thanks to me and to your parents. Only to Me your return. And if they force you to associate Me with something that you have no knowledge of. Obey neither of them, and associate well with them in the world, and follow the path of the one who returns to Me, and to Me alone is your return, and I will tell you what you have done. (Luqman/ 31:14-15).

This verse explains that children are actually taught how to be filial to their parents.¹

Third, worship. The Qur'an hints that parents should make their children accustomed to performing prayers

O Ibn 'Umar (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and I am the Messenger of Allah"
(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and I am the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and I am the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and I am the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

¹ Imamul Jalil Al Hafidz Imadud Din 'Abdu Ismail Ibn Umar Ibn Kasir Ibn Al Bashri Ad Dimasyqi, *Lubabut Tafsir Min Ibn Katsiir*, ..., p 402-403.

"O my son! Establish prayers and tell (people) to do good deeds and prevent (them) from doing wrong deeds and be patient with what happens to you. Indeed, such is an important matter. (Luqman/31:17).

In this verse, Luqman teaches that children should be taught to pray.²

Fourth, the Qur'an encourages parents to introduce and habituate their children to goodness so that children can do good and stay away from unrighteous deeds. ³ Allah's Word:

O Ibn 'Umar (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), I am the Messenger of Allah" (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)." 16 Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "O Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and I am the ".Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)
(*Luqman said*): "*O my son! Indeed, if there is a (deed) as heavy as a mustard seed, and it is in the rock or in the sky or in the earth, Allah will surely reward it. Indeed, Allah is Subtle and All-Knowing. O my son! Establish prayers and tell (people) to do good deeds and prevent (them) from doing evil deeds and be patient with what happens to you. Indeed, such is an important matter* (*Luqman/31:16-17*).

Fourth, the Qur'an hints that every parent should teach their children not to act arrogant (to do good to fellow humans) (Djamaluddin Ancok and Fuat Nashori Suroso, 2004). The Word of God

And you will not be able to do anything about it, and you will not be able to do anything" about it, and you will not be able to do anything about it, and you will not be able to do "anything about it

"And do not turn your faces away from men (because of pride) and do not walk on the earth proudly. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are arrogant and boastful. And be

²Imamul Jalil Al Hafidz Imadud Din 'Abdu Ismail Ibn Umar Ibn Kasir Ibn Al Bashri Ad Dimasyqi, *Lubabut Tafsir Min Ibn Katsiir*, ..., p.403.

³Imamul Jalil Al Hafidz Imadud Din 'Abdu Ismail Ibn Umar Ibn Kasir Ibn Al Bashri Ad Dimasyqi, Lubabut Tafsir Min Ibn Katsiir, Mu-assasah Daar al-Hilaal Cairo, p. 403.

gentle in your walking, and soften your voice. Indeed, the worst voice is the voice of a donkey. (Luqman/31:18-19).

In several hadiths, it can be seen how the development of children's religious values includes several things; among the hadiths of the Prophet that hint at the development of children's religious values in the education of *pre-tamyiz* children is mainly carried out by the family, (Djamaluddin Ancok and Fuat Nashori Suroso, 2004), namely;

1. Educate Children to Tauhid to Allah,

".And he said, 'O Messenger of Allah, do not associate others with Allah except Allah'" "And (remember) when Luqman said to his son, when he was teaching him: "O my son! do not associate with Allah, indeed associating with (Allah) is indeed a great tyranny". (Luqman/31:13).

2. Teaching Children to Worship

Al-Hakim and Abu Daud narrated from Ibn Amr bin Al-'Ash RA, from the Prophet PBUH, he said:

'We are the Messenger of Allah (peace and :It was narrated that 'Ali ibn Hujr said blessings of Allah be upon him) and he is the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It was narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Knowledge of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

"Narrated to us Ali bin Hujri said: Narrated to us Harmalah bin Abdillah Al-A'ziiz bin Arrabi bin Sabrah Al-Juhani, from his uncle Abdulmalik bin Rabi'i bin Sabroh from his father from his grandfather said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: You should teach children to pray when they are seven years old. And beat them if they (still haven't prayed) at the age of ten." (HR. Tirmizi).

3. Teaching Adab

The Word of Allah;

And you will not be able to do anything about it, and you will not be able to do anything" about it, and you will not be able to do anything about it, and you will not be able to do ".anything about it

"And do not turn your faces away from men (because of pride) and do not walk on the earth proudly. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are arrogant and boastful. And be modest in your walking] and soften your voice. Indeed, the worst voice is the voice of a donkey. (Luqman/31:18-19).

STAGES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

According to Vygotsky in Martinis Yamin and Jamilah Sabri Sanan, there are 3 (three) stages of children's language development that determine the level of thinking development, namely external, egocentric, and internal stages, which are as follows: First, the external stage, namely: the stage of thinking with the child's source of thinking coming from outside himself. These external sources mainly come from adults who give

directions to children in a certain way. For example, an adult asks a child, "what are you doing?" and then the child imitates the question, "what?" Adults give the answer, "Jumping" Second, the egocentric stage is a stage when adult talk is no longer a requirement. In a typical voice, the child speaks like his way of thinking, for example "I jump", "this is my leg", "this is my hand", "this is my eyes". Third, the internal stage, which is the stage when the child can live the thought process, for example, a child is drawing a cat. At this stage, the child processes his thoughts with his own thoughts, "what should I draw? I know I am drawing walking feet" (Martinis Yamin and Jamilah Sabri Sanan, 2013).

According to Susanto, early childhood language development goes through several stages as follows (Ahmad Susanto, 2011):

- 1) Phase I (pre-linguistics) which is between 0-1 years.
- 2) Stage II (linguistics) which consists of stage I (holaphrastic) who is 1 year old, the child begins to have vocabulary, and stage II (phase) which is a child aged 1-2 years who has a vocabulary of less than 50-100 vocabulary.
- 3) Stage III (grammar development) is children who are 3-5 years old or pre-school, where at this stage the child can already make a sentence.
- 4) Stage IV (grammar) before adulthood, namely children aged 6-8 years where this stage the child is able to combine simple and complex sentences.

According to Jamaris in Hendra Sofyan, in children's language development, there are stages of language skill development, as follows (Hendra Sofyan, 2014):

- 1) Language development can be divided into three forms of development, namely: vocabulary development, semantics, and syntactic development, and the development of language variation and complexity.

a) Kosakata

As the child develops and his experience interacts with his environment, the child's vocabulary develops rapidly.

b) Syntax (grammar)

Although children have not learned grammar, but through examples of language that children hear and see in their environment, children have been able to use spoken language with good sentence structure. For example, "Rita feeds cats" instead of "cat Rita feeds gives".

c) Semantics

Semantics means the use of words according to their purpose. Kindergartners can already express their wants, rejections, and opinions by using the right words and sentences. For example, "unwilling" to express rejection.

- 2) Vocabulary development begins from the age of one. Starting the child's interaction with the surrounding environment, the child slowly develops the ability to understand vocabulary related to objects and events around him.
- 3) The development of semantics and syntactic structure concerns the child's ability to understand the relationships of objects and events that include actions/deeds, locations and people, the child begins to say "I am gone" or "my mother or my father"

The basic aspects or criteria for identifying language skills in early childhood are as follows (Amalia, E. R., & Hasana, 2020).

a. **Listening Skills**

Since the womb, children have acquired the ability to listen. The ability to listen begins with the activity of listening carefully and ends with an understanding of what is

being listened to (Hijriyah, U. (2016). So, the ability to listen does not only mean being able to hear, but also to understand carefully what is heard. Listening skills are a form of language skills that are receptive, which means not just listening to the sounds of language, but at the same time understanding them. The three important aspects of listening skills are as follows: Understanding Language Speech Units, Identifying Meaning and Purpose, Obtaining Information (Ilham, M., & Wijiati, I. A., 2020).

b. Reading Skills

There is a definition that *reading means gaining meaning for print, not just pronouncing the word* (which means that reading is not just saying words, but also understanding and getting meaning from a reading). In line with the above opinion, reading is a series of thinking activities that include the activity of pronouncing, understanding, telling, and interpreting the units of sound symbols with the help of the senses of sight, eye movements, inner voices, and memory. Reciting the Language Unit, the child can say sentences, for example *I like to eat*. Expressing Desires and Ideas, Children who have good speaking skills can usually tell or express their desires to others (Ilham, M., & Wijiati, I. A., 2020).

Children's ability to speak can be grouped into two categories, namely communicative and noncommunicative. Noncommunicative language is a language that is not a conversational language, this language is not addressed to the listener. There are three types of noncommunicative language

c. Writing Skills

Writing is the activity of pouring an idea into writing, both handwritten and digital. In line with that, writing is also a process, namely the process of expressing an idea or idea that is manifested in written language. In the process of improving children's writing skills, it takes the attention of teachers as teachers and the role of parents.

d. Speaking Skills

In the process of acquiring language skills, speaking skills are the second stage after listening skills. That means that listening and speaking are two things that are directly proportional, namely when they have good listening skills, children will also have good speaking skills. In line with this, there are two aspects that can be used as a reference in assessing children's speaking skills, Kurniawan, H., & Kasmiati, 2020) which are as follows:

1. Reciting the Language Unit

The child can say sentences, for example *I like to eat*. The sentence is a series of words. The sentence /me/like/eat/ means that the child likes eating. That means that the child is able to pronounce a series of letters, words, and sentences correctly so that his speaking ability can be said to be good.

2. Expressing Desires and Ideas

Children who have good speaking skills are usually able to tell or express their desires to others, including things they like. The unit of language spoken by children is not just a unit of language that has no meaning and purpose. A unit of language that can be spoken by a child for a specific purpose indicates that the child has good speaking skills.

Integration of Language Development with Religious Development in Early Childhood in RA Bait Qur'any

1. Early Childhood Language and Religious Development Planning

Aspects of early childhood language development developed with early childhood religion. Early childhood religious and language development planning is the process of preparing a design for religious and language stimulant activities that will be managed by educators to boost children's religious and language potential. Planning for the development of religion and early childhood language in the PAUD program is a very important first step to provide the right direction in the implementation of the learning process. The components in the learning plan which include the goals to be achieved, the concepts to be built, methods, facilities, and implementation time plans are references for educators in carrying out systematic learning activities.

Planning for the development of religion and early childhood language in early childhood learning should be a complete unit that refers to the Development Standards and is prepared in stages, and systematically, starting from the Annual Learning Plan (RPT), Monthly Learning Plan (RPB), Weekly Activity Plan (RKM), to Daily Activity Plan (RKH).

2. Language and Religious Development Materials

In RA, the Qur'any verse has several themes that are developed in learning, namely:

The religious material developed in each theme is aqidah, shari'ah (worship) and morals.

In each material discussed in each theme, several intelligences are developed, including language which includes listening, pronouncing and reading, reading and writing.

Both the material of aqidah, worship, and morals taught includes language skills in the form of

- a. Aqidah material, Aqidah material for developing early childhood language can be in the form of; *First*, the child listens to the material of aqidah by listening to the translation of the Qur'an, global tafsir juz 30, stories about the attributes of Allah, the power of Allah and others, listening to asma'ul husnah. *Second*, reciting (reading) or memorizing the Qur'an, Hadith, Kalimah Thoyyibah (sentences of monotheism, *shahadatain*, *hamdalah*, *tasbih*, *tahmid*, *takbir*), and prayer to start and end activities.
- b. Sharia material. Sharia material to develop early childhood language can be in the form of: *first*, children listen, read and memorize materials on how to worship, recite readings in prayer, dhikr, adhan, iqomah and others
- c. Moral material, Moral material to develop early childhood language in the form of listening, reading and telling moral material, such as honesty, sincerity, patience, gratitude and others.

3. Integration of children's religious skills and language after early in RA Bait Qur'any

The integration of children's religious skills and language after early in RA Bait Qur'any is as follows.

a. Listening Skills

In the Qur'any Temple RA, students develop listening skills with learning themes which include religious materials such as aqidah, sharia and morals. In religious material, students develop their language by listening to the reading of the Qur'an, translation of the Qur'an, tadabur verses of the Qur'an, hadiths, stories of the prophets and life stories of the Prophet Muhammad, companions and righteous people, asmaul husna, songs containing and applauding as well as yelling material of aqidah, sharia and morals

b. Reading Skills

Reading skills can be seen in the Qur'an Temple RA, being able to read the Qur'an, and books in the Indonesian language that contain aqidah, sharia and moral materials.

e. Writing Skills

The process of improving children's writing skills requires the attention of teachers as teachers and the role of parents. In the Qur'an, the teaching material contains aqidah, sharia and morality materials.

f. Tells

In RA Bait Qur'any, students are trained to tell stories around aqidah, sharia and moral materials

3 Development of Early Childhood Learning Methods

Method is a way that in its work is a tool to achieve the goals of the activity. However, not all of these methods are suitable for the implementation of early childhood language and religious development, because early childhood language and religious development has a typical model that has been designed in KBK such as the method of tours, questions and answers, conversations, storytelling, experiments, sociodrama, projects and assignments and demonstration methods. Methods of Early Childhood Language and Religious Development, namely;

a. Playing Method

Play Methods According to educators and psychologists, play is a childhood job and a mirror of a child's growth (Brown, A.L.: Campione, J.C., 1998). Playing is an activity that gives satisfaction to yourself. Through play, children gain limitations and understand life. Playing is an activity that provides pleasure and is carried out for the activity itself, which is more determined by the way it is than by the results obtained from the activity an activity that is done repeatedly for the sake of pleasure (J Paiget, J.) According to Johnson, playing is an activity that is done repeatedly for pleasure (Johnson). In the Qur'an Temple RA, early childhood language and religious development is developed by playing methods, either playing during activities before entering class, activities in KBM, break hours or waiting for pick-up. Games in KBM to develop children's language and religion can be in the form of games of patting, cards, pictures, songs, and others.

b. Method of Tourism

For early childhood children, tourism means getting the opportunity to observe, obtain information/study everything directly). Tourism also means taking early childhood to certain objects as an enrichment of teaching, providing learning experiences that are impossible for children to get in the classroom.

c. Conversational Methods

Talking means communicating thoughts and feelings with each other visually. Conversation can also be interpreted as dialogue or as the embodiment of receptive and expressive language in a situation.

Conversing has an important meaning for early childhood development because conversing can improve communication skills with people as a means of religious and moral development in early childhood. Through improving early childhood language and religious skills. Therefore, the use of conversational methods for RA children will help the development of social, emotional, and cognitive dimensions, especially language and religion.

Conversing is a form of communication between people. The two-way process of conversation requires listening and speaking skills. There are three things that listeners must do in interpersonal communication;

- a. Measure the understanding heard with certainty.
- b. If he knows that the message conveyed is unclear, he can inform the speaker. It can determine the additional information needed to receive the message.
- c. Conversing means learning to realize receptive and expressive language skills. As proof of receptive language mastery is the increasing number of new words that children have mastered that they have acquired from conversational activities.

d. Storytelling Method

Storytelling is a way to pass on the legacy from one generation to the next. Storytelling can also be a medium to convey values that apply in society. A good storyteller will make the story interesting and alive. Children's involvement in the fairy tales told will provide a fresh, interesting atmosphere and be a unique experience for children. The storytelling method is one of the methods used to develop language and religion in early childhood.

3. Early Childhood Learning Approach

a. Constructivistic Approach

The constructivist approach recognizes that heredity and the environment affect a child's development. This approach can be seen in applying how children learn by constructing understanding or knowledge by relating and harmonizing new phenomena, ideas, activities, or knowledge into the structure of knowledge that they already have (Cannella, G.S & Reiff, J.C., 1994).

Constructivism is based on the assumption that students come to school already carrying the idea of trust and knowledge. Through the learning process, students add, revise, or modify the old knowledge structure into a new structure. The teacher plays a role in facilitating the construction process by providing problems that spur students to think, conduct inquiry processes, exchange opinions and provide learning resources (Richardson, V., 1977).

In the Qur'any Temple RA, the development of language and religion using this constructivism approach can be seen in the efforts to stimulate children's potential to emerge by giving children the opportunity to experience directly each learning theme that takes place in the Qur'any Temple and tell what is being done and the teacher directs to the theme that is going on.

b. Cooperative Learning in Groups

Johnson and Johnson explained that the data from the study shows that the use of cooperative learning will encourage students to learn more of the subject matter, feel more comfortable and motivated to learn and achieve high results. According to him, there are four basic elements in cooperatives, namely; There is interdependence in the learning process, there is direct interaction between students, each student has responsibility and the appropriate use of interpersonal and small group abilities possessed by each student. In RA verse Qur'any, the approach used to develop children's language and religion is a cooperative approach, where in learning the students are grouped into several groups.

c. Contextual Learning

The *contextual teaching and learning (CTL)* approach develops from constructivism. The main idea is to relate learning activities and problems to the child's daily context. Children learn from the real world where the knowledge learned will be used.

4. Evaluation of Learning in Early Childhood Education

Evaluation of early childhood learning in language and religion aspects is a systematic process that aims to assess children's development through authentic behaviors that appear in daily interactions. This evaluation is holistic, not focused on academic results, but on the dynamics of language development, early spirituality, and habituation of religious values according to the characteristics of child development. This approach is in line with the view of early childhood education which emphasizes the integration of cognitive, social, emotional, moral, and spiritual aspects as a unit of child development⁴. Thus, the evaluation does not only look at the child's abilities at one time, but also assesses the learning process that takes place in a continuous manner.

In the aspect of language development, evaluation is directed at two main components, namely receptive language and expressive language. Receptive language is evaluated through the child's ability to understand simple instructions, respond to stories or songs, and show attention to conversations. Expressive language is evaluated through the child's ability to pronounce new vocabulary, pronounce the initial hijaiyah letters, express desires, and retell religious stories given by the teacher. This type of evaluation is done in a natural context, such as when role-playing, telling stories, singing, and when children interact with friends. Authentic evaluations like this are

⁴ Brewster, C. & Rushton, S. *Understanding the Whole Child in Early Childhood Education*. Routledge, 2019, hlm. 44-46.

important because language development is closely related to social interaction and the quality of stimulation of the learning environment⁵.

Children's religious aspects are evaluated through the habit of basic worship, manners, and spiritual responses. Habits such as greetings, daily prayers, following simple prayer movements, and eating and speaking manners are basic indicators that can be observed through children's spontaneous behavior. The teacher also assesses how the child responds to the prophet's story, shows empathy, or expresses gratitude in daily activities. Evaluation in this aspect is not directed at formal memorization, but at the internalization of religious values through direct experience, teacher example, and consistent habituation⁶ routines. This approach corresponds to the characteristics of early childhood learning through repetition, modeling, and warm emotional interactions.

To ensure that the evaluation runs effectively, teachers use various methods such as daily observations, developmental portfolios, anecdotal notes, indicator checklists, and periodic communication with parents. Daily observation is the main method because it can capture the real behavior of children in play-learning situations. The portfolio provides a track record of children's development in the form of works, photos of activities, audio recordings of prayers, or videos of children telling stories. Indicator checklists are used to assess the achievement of certain competencies, such as the ability to recognize hijaiyah letters or memorize short prayers. Meanwhile, collaboration with parents is important to see the continuity between school and home habits, so that evaluations become more comprehensive and accurate⁷.

The results of the evaluation must be followed up systematically. Teachers can design more appropriate advanced learning strategies based on children's needs, for example adding storytelling sessions to improve expressive language, increasing language play, or strengthening religious habituation rituals. If certain delays are found, teachers need to arrange individual interventions as a form of support for children's development. Evaluations also help parents understand their child's development and provide them with a home mentoring strategy. In this context, evaluation is not just an administration, but a tool of reflection to ensure that the development of children's language, morals, and spirituality develops⁸ optimally.

Evaluation of early childhood learning in language and religious aspects must be carried out in a sustainable and authentic manner so that the picture of child development becomes complete. Assessments that prioritize process, behavior, and direct experience allow teachers to understand children's development more accurately. Thus, evaluation is an important step in ensuring that children's character development and language skills run effectively and according to their developmental stages⁹.

⁵ McAfee, O., Leong, D., & Bodrova, E. *Assessing and Guiding Young Children's Development and Learning*. Pearson, 2017, hlm. 79–82.

⁶ NAEYC. *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*. NAEYC, 2020, hlm. 103–108.

⁷ Wortham, S. *Assessment in Early Childhood Education*. Pearson, 2018, hlm. 55–61.

⁸ Kostelnik, M. J., Soderman, A., & Whiren, A. *Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum*. Pearson, 2018, hlm. 122–130.

⁹ Berk, L. *Child Development*. Pearson, 2018, pp. 95–101

D.CONCLUSION

This study explains that the integration of children's language and religious development can be seen in each learning theme. Each theme includes religious materials such as aqidah, shari'ah and morals to develop children's language skills such as reciting, listening, reading, writing and storytelling by using play, conversation, storytelling and touring methods.

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