CJPE: *Cokroaminoto Journal of Primary Education*
https://e-journal.my.id/cjpe
Volume 9 | Nomor 4 | December |2026
e-ISSN: 2654-6434 dan p-ISSN: 2654-6426

Improving Listening Skills Through the Read Aloud Method Using Local Culture-Based Storybooks for Children Aged 5-6 Years

Zeyyin Ramadhani [1*], Firman Ashadi [2], Hendrik Siswono [3]

Corespondensi Author
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education / Universitas PGRI Argopuro Jember, Indonesia

Email:
zayyinramadhani19@gmail.com
blueisfirman@gmail.com
hendriksiswono87@gmail.com

Keywords *:*
Listening Skills,
Read Aloud,
Local Culture-Based Storybooks,
Early Childhood,
Classroom Action Research.

Abstract: *The urgency of this study lies in the need to strengthen young children's listening skills through engaging read-aloud activities that incorporate culturally relevant storybooks.. Thereby, this study aimed to improve children's listening skills through the read-aloud method using local culture-based storybooks. This study employed Classroom Action Research using the Kemmis and McTaggart model, consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection, conducted in two cycles. The population and subjects comprised 10 children aged 5–6 years at SPS Durian 14, Cumedak Village, Sumberjambe District, Jember Regency, comprising of 4 boys and 6 girls. The examination instruments included observation sheets, listening-skills assessment sheets, documentation tools, and local culture-based storybooks. Data were collected through direct observation and documentation during learning activities. Data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis and quantitative percentage analysis to determine changes in children's listening-skill achievement across the cycles. The achievement standard was established at a minimum of 80% of children achieving the Developing as Expected (BSH) or Very Well Developed (BSB) classifications. The output implemented an improvement in listening skills from 30% of children achieving the expected segments in the pre-cycle to 60% in Cycle I and 80% in Cycle II. The improvement was reflected in children's capability to maintain attention, grasp story's meaning, respond to inquiries, identify characters and events, and retell stories using simple sentences. The study concludes that the read-aloud method using local culture-based storybooks effectively improves the auditory proficiency of children aged 5–6 years and grants engaging, contextual, and meaningful learning experiences while simultaneously supporting early language development and appreciation of local culture. The implications of these findings indicate that the read-aloud method using local culture-based storybooks can be utilized as an effective and contextual learning strategy for developing listening skills in early childhood education.*

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

Introduction

Education is an essential process in human development that involves teaching and learning activities involving teachers and students (Li, 2021). In this sequences, teachers have an crucial role in providing knowledge, guidance, and meaningful learning experiences, while students are expected to actively listen, understand, and respond to the learning delivered by teachers (Zeinstra et al., 2023). The success of schooling is thereby closely relevant to the effectiveness of the interaction between teachers and students (Miao et al., 2022). When students are unable to understand the learning material presented by the teacher, it may indicate that the learning process has not been implemented optimally (Ong & Quek, 2023). At the same time, students also need to participate actively by paying attention and listening to the explanations grantd by their teachers (Kang et al., 2023; Maulana et al., 2025).

From a holistic view, education can be comprehended as an integrated system comprising of several interconnected components that work together to obtain educational goals (Bozkurt & Bozkurt, 2024). Within the education system, a transformation process takes place in which students are transformed from inputs into educated individuals as the desired outputs of education (Lavi & Bertel, 2024). Each component of education is expected to perform its function effectively and maintain relationships with other components to obtain the intended educational objectives. Education is also a humanistic process aimed at helping individuals develop their potential (Southerland, 2022; Risna et al., 2024). Since humans cannot be separated from their social and environmental contexts, education should consider the relationship between learners and their surrounding environment. One approach that can grant a comprehensive understanding of education is the systems approach, which seeks to improve the achievement of preestablishd educational objectives.

Ki Hajar Dewantara, a prominent Indonesian educational figure, described education as guidance for the growth and development of children (Ferary, 2021). According to his educational philosophy, education should guide the natural potential possessed by children so that they can obtain the greatest possible safeguard, well-being, and joy as persons and belongers of public. Education is thereby not merely a means of information transmission moreover a humanistic means of developing individuals as whole human beings (Wiryanto & Anggraini, 2022). Students should not be treated as passive objects or machines that can simply be controlled according to the wishes of adults. Instead, they are individuals who require support, attention, and guidance throughout their development so that they can become independent, critical, responsible, and morally well-developed individuals (Sofiani et al., 2025).

Early childhood education is particularly important because early childhood represents a fundamental period for establishing the roots of children's somatic, neurocognitive, language, social-emotional, moral, and artistic development (Chapman & O'Gorman, 2022). At this stage, children require adequate stimulation and learning experiences that correspond to their developmental characteristics. Education for young children should thereby not focus solely on intellectual and neurocognitive abilities but should facilitate the development of children's diverse potentials (Finders et al., 2023). This principle is consistent with Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which identifies preprimary years learning as an effort to provide guidance to children from birth to six years of age through educational stimulation to support their physical and psychological growth and development and prepare them for

further education and life (Apriyansyah et al., 2024).

Children aged zero to six years are generally considered to be in a critical period of development. This period is widely recognized as the *golden age* because children display remarkable developmental accelerations and are highly responsive to various forms of stimulation. Adequate nutrition and adequate stimulation are essential for supporting children's development during this period. Consequently, learning activities for young children should be designed to grant meaningful experiences that encourage them to explore, interact, and develop their curiosity. Children across birth and six years of age experience a period of sensitivity in which they are particularly receptive to stimulation from their environment. This period serves as an important root for the development of neurocognitive, language, motor, and socio-emotional abilities.

One important aspect of language development in early childhood is listening ability. Listening is a fundamental language skill because it enables children to receive information, understand messages, and develop effective communication (Hogan et al., 2022). Listening capability includes the capacity to pay attention, understand, remember, and respond to information delivered through spoken language. On the other hand, listening skills require adequate support. They need to be cultivated by means of engaging learning lessons that are adequate to children's developmental characteristics (Bierman et al., 2023). In practice, some young children still experience difficulties in listening activities. They may have difficulty maintaining attention when the teacher tells a story, become easily distracted, fail to grasp the meaning of a story, or be unable to retell information that they have encountered (Cabell et al., 2024).

One learning method that can be used to develop children's listening skills is the *read-aloud* method (Blewitt et al., 2022). *Read aloud* combines the words *read*, meaning to read, and *aloud*, meaning to read using a clearly audible voice. It refers to the activity of reading stories aloud to children using adequate pronunciation, intonation, expression, and interaction. Through this method, teachers can attract children's attention, stimulate their curiosity, encourage questions, and create opportunities for discussion (Hindman et al., 2022). In early childhood education, teachers may also use large picture books or illustrated storybooks that can be viewed collectively by the children. Thus, *read aloud* grants children with opportunities to listen actively while simultaneously developing their language abilities through meaningful story experiences (Wasik et al., 2023).

The implementation of the *read-aloud* method using local culture-based storybooks offers an additional learning benefit. Local culture-based storybooks contain values, traditions, language, customs, and aspects of everyday life that are familiar to children. Through these stories, children can develop their listening skills while simultaneously being introduced to the cultural environment in which they live. Stories that are closely relevant to children's experiences and surroundings can make learning more meaningful, contextual, and engaging. In addition to supporting language development, local culture-centered stories can contribute to children's character development, cultural awareness, feeling of inclusion, and appreciation of local usages.

Previous research has demonstrated the chances of the *read-aloud* method to improve children listening abilities (Surifah & Rolina, 2025). The previous studied found that the implementation of the *read-aloud* method could improve the listening ability of children aged four to five years. Furthermore, the use of the *read-aloud* method can promote growth of both comprehension and production language skills in early through

the use of illustrated stories (Hindman et al., 2024). Through repeated listening, interaction, questioning, and responses, children can become more attentive, grasp story's meaning more effectively, expand their vocabulary, and improve their capability to communicate their ideas (Olszewski & Hood, 2023).

The integration of local culture into early childhood learning is also conforms with the principles of contextual training. Learning becomes more meaningful when the content is connected to children's everyday experiences and social environments. Children are generally more interested in stories that involve familiar people, places, traditions, objects, and activities. Thereby, the use of local culture-based storybooks in *read-aloud* activities has the potential to grant both linguistic and cultural benefits. It can create an enjoyable learning environment while helping children establish an early connection with their cultural identity. However, a clear research gap can be identified from the previous studies.

Although previous research has demonstrated the effectiveness of the read-aloud method in improving children's listening and language abilities, most studies have focused on the use of general storybooks or illustrated storybooks and have not specifically examined the integration of local culture-based storybooks within read-aloud activities. In addition, there is still limited empirical research investigating the effectiveness of this integrated approach in improving the listening skills of children aged 5–6 years, particularly in early childhood education settings in Kalisat, Jember Regency. Previous studies have also tended to emphasize language development outcomes without simultaneously examining the potential of culturally relevant story content to support children's listening abilities and introduce local cultural values. Therefore, there is a need for research that specifically combines the read-aloud method with local culture-based storybooks to provide contextual, meaningful, and culturally relevant learning experiences for young children. The present study addresses this gap by investigating the implementation of the read-aloud method using local culture-based storybooks to improve the listening skills of children aged 5–6 years at SPS Durian 14 Cumedak, Sumberjambe, Jember Regency.

Thus, this research not only extends previous findings concerning the use of read-aloud methods for language development but also contributes a local cultural perspective that has received limited attention in previous research. Based on preliminary observations pursued at SPS Durian 14 Cumedak, Sumberjambe, the listening abilities of children aged five to six years still require improvement. During storytelling activities, six out of ten children were observed to have difficulty paying sustained priority given to teacher, understanding the content of the story, and answering basic prompt relevant to the story. These findings indicate the need for an instructional method that is enjoyable, interactive, and capable of maintaining children's attention during learning activities. The *read-aloud* method supported by local culture-based storybooks is considered relevant because it combines storytelling, listening, visual stimulation, teacher-child interaction, and cultural content within a single learning activity.

Basis of the foregoing explanation, this analysist purpose to improve the listening abilities of children aged five to six years by means of the conduct of the *read-aloud* method using local culture-based storybooks at SPS Durian 14 Cumedak, Sumberjambe. findings are expected to support the advancement of engaging and effective learning practices in early childhood education, particularly in supporting children's listening and language development. In addition, the use of local culture-based stories is expected

to grant meaningful learning experiences that not only strengthen children's listening abilities moreover introduce them to the cultural values and traditions of their local environment. Thereby, the present study is entitled "Improving Listening Skills through the Read-Aloud Method Using Local Culture-Based Storybooks for Childs in 5–6 Years from SPS Durian 14 Cumedak, Sumberjambe."

Originality of this analysist derives from the integration of the read-aloud mechanism with local culture-based storybooks to improve the auditory proficiency of children aged 5–6 years. Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on read-aloud activities using general or illustrated storybooks, this study incorporates local cultural content that is closely relevant to children's everyday environment. This approach is expected to foster meaningful learning contextual, engaging, and Impactful as simultaneously developing children's listening abilities and introducing local cultural values from an early age. The novelty of this study lies in integrating the read-aloud method with local culture-based storybooks specifically to strengthen listening skills among children aged 5–6 years, combining language development with culturally relevant learning experiences. Previous studies have examined read-aloud for receptive language and listening development, while this study emphasizes the use of local cultural content as a meaningful context for improving young children's listening skills

Method

The research design utilized throughout the research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). Classroom Action Research is a type of research pursued by teachers or researchers within school settings through specific actions aimed at improving the learning environment and continuously enhancing academic performance (Arikunto, 2021). This study was pursued at SPS Durian 14, located in Sumber Balin Hamlet, RT 003/RW 002, Cumedak Village, Sumberjambe District, Jember Regency, East Java, Indonesia. This investigation was conducted during the second semester of the 2025–2026 educational period, from May to July 2026. The variables of the assessment were all children aged 4–6 years at SPS Durian 14, comprising 10 children: 4 boys and 6 girls. The participants were selected in light of the evidence from preliminary observations, which indicated that there was still a need to enhance children's listening capabilities.

Difficulties observed included a lack of focus while listening to stories, difficulty answering questions, and an inability to retell the story content effectively. The classroom action research (CAR) design generally adopts the scheme developed by Kemmis and McTaggart, which consists of four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. These four stages are conducted in recurring cycles until the research success parameters are obtained. The research procedure began with a preliminary observation (pre-cycle) to identify children's initial listening abilities and the learning problems encountered during storytelling activities.

The researcher then prepared the learning plans, local culture-based storybooks, observation sheets, and listening-skills assessment instruments for the first cycle. In the planning stage, the learning activities and assessment procedures were systematically prepared according to the children's developmental characteristics. In the acting stage, the teacher implemented the read-aloud method using local culture-based storybooks through storytelling, expressive reading, questions and answers, and opportunities for children to respond and retell the stories. In the observing stage, the researcher directly observed children's attention, comprehension, responses, identification of characters and events, and ability to retell stories using simple sentences. The results of the

observations and assessments were then analyzed in the reflecting stage to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the learning process and determine the improvements required for the following cycle. The same procedure was subsequently implemented in Cycle II with improvements based on the reflection from Cycle I.

Evidences gathering techniques be associated the methods used by researchers to obtain the data required for a study. In this classroom action research, data were collected systematically to identify educational processes and its outcomes of the actions implemented, which then served as a basis for representation and design subsequent cycles. The techniques used observation and documentation method. Observation was pursued directly to examine the implementation of the read-aloud method and the development of listening skills among children aged 4–6 years during the learning activities. Supporting documents were utilized to supplement evidence the observation data through school profiles, student lists, lesson plans, photographs of learning activities, observation sheets, and children's assessment results. These techniques were expected to grant accurate, comprehensive, and accountable data aligned with the objectives of the analysis.

The research tools and instruments used in this study included local culture-based storybooks as learning media, observation sheets, interview guidelines, documentation devices such as cameras or mobile phones, and learning materials such as Teaching Modules or Daily Learning Implementation Plans (RPPH). An observation protocol was applied to observe teacher and children's practices throughout the classroom process, particularly the implementation of the read-aloud method and the development of listening skills among children aged 4–6 years. Documentation was used to collect supporting data, including photographs, school profiles, student lists, learning materials, and assessment records. In addition, a listening skills assessment sheet was used to evaluate children's capability to pay attention to stories, grasp story's meaning, respond to inquiries, identify characters or events, and retell stories in simple sentences. The assessment engaged a four-point scale: 1 (Not Yet Developed/BB), 2 (Beginning to Develop/MB), 3 (Developing as Expected/BSH), and 4 (Very Well Developed/BSB), based on preestablished parameters of listening capability.

Data analysis in this classroom action research used qualitative and quantitative descriptive techniques. Qualitative data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation were used to describe the implementation of the read-aloud method using local culture-based storybooks, while quantitative data from children's assessment results were used to measure improvements in listening skills during each research cycle. The assessment focused on the capacity to sustain concentration on stories, grasp story's meaning, respond to inquiries, identify characters or events, and retell stories in simple sentences. The criterion for mastery was established at a minimum of 80% of the children achieving the Developing as Expected (BSH) or Very Well Developed (BSB) category. Thus, the research was considered successful when at least 8 out of 10 children, equivalent to 80% of the participants, reached the BSH or BSB classification. If the percentage of children achieving BSH or BSB was below 80%, the learning process was considered not to have reached the predetermined mastery criterion, and improvements were implemented in the subsequent cycle. The research was considered successful when at least 80% of the children achieved the Developing as Expected (BSH) or Very Well Developed (BSB) category.

The study used Classroom Action Research based on the Kemmis and McTaggart scheme, comprising of design, acting, observing, and reflecting. The research was

pursued in two cycles using the read-aloud method with local-culture-based storybooks. Data were collected through observation and documentation to assess children's listening skills during learning activities. Each cycle consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The reflection stage was used to evaluate children's listening-skill achievements and the effectiveness of the implemented learning activities. The results of Cycle I were used as the basis for improving the planning and implementation of Cycle II. The research was terminated when the predetermined success criterion was achieved, namely when at least 80% of the children reached the BSH or BSB category. Each cycle was evaluated through reflection to improve the next cycle and obtain the expected learning outcomes. Data were collected through observation and documentation. Observation was conducted directly to assess the implementation of the read-aloud method and the development of listening skills among children aged 4–6 years during learning activities. Documentation was used to support the observation data through school profiles, student lists, lesson plans, observation sheets, photographs of learning activities, and children's assessment results.

The research instruments consisted of a local-culture-based storybook as the learning medium, observation sheets, documentation tools, and a listening-skills assessment sheet. The observation and assessment instruments measured children's capability to respond to inquiries, identify characters, and retell stories using a four-point scale from Not Yet Developing (BB) to Very Well Developing (BSB). Data were scrutinized using qualitative descriptive analysis to describe the implementation of the read-aloud method and quantitative analysis through percentage calculations to establish improvements in children's listening skills in each cycle. The mastery criterion was explicitly determined as a minimum achievement of 80% of the total participants reaching the BSH or BSB categories. With 10 children participating in the study, this criterion was achieved when at least 8 children obtained a BSH or BSB classification. The percentage of mastery was calculated by dividing the number of children who achieved BSH or BSB by the total number of children and multiplying the result by 100%. The research was considered successful when at least 80% of children achieved the BSH or BSB segments.

Results and Discussion

Description of Research Findings

The Classroom Action Research (CAR) was pursued at SPS Durian 14, Cumedak Village, Sumberjambe District, involving children aged 5–6 years to improve their listening skills through a local-culture-based *read-aloud* method. The objective was pursued in two cycles, each comprising of design, action, observation, and representation stages. During the design stage, the researcher pursued an initial observation, prepared learning materials and research instruments, and selected local-culture-based storybooks as learning media. In Cycle I, the *read-aloud* method was implemented through storytelling activities preceded by stimulating questions and listening lessons. Throughout the learning experiences, the researcher observed the children's listening skills, capability to respond to inquiries, and attention. Representation on Cycle I revealed that some children were still less active, less confident, and not fully engaged in the activities, leading to improvements in guidance and classroom management in Cycle II.

Cycle II was conducted by implementing the improved *read-aloud* method In light of

the evidences of the Cycle I representation. The teacher grantd more intensive guidance and used better intonation and expression when reading local-culture-based stories. The observation output implemented improvements in children's participation and listening capacities, as indicated by increased attention, confidence in answering questions, and involvement during learning activities. An evaluation was pursued after the action to assess the development of children's listening competences. The representation results of Cycle II indicated that the implementation of the local-culture-based *read-aloud* method improved the auditory proficiency and engagement of children aged 5–6 years, suggest evidence that analysist objectives had been achieved

Observation Results of Student Activities in Cycle I

Table 1. *Calculation Results and Percentages of Observation Results*

Stage	Children Who Achieved Success	Percentage	Description
Pre-Cycle	3 children	30%	Not yet successful
Cycle I	6 children	60%	Not yet successful

In Cycle I, the children's listening skills improved benchmarked against with the pre-cycle stage. Of the 10 children, 6 children (60%) obtained the Meeting Developmental Expectations (BSH) and Very Well Developed (BSB) segments, while 4 children (40%) remained in the Beginning to Develop (MB) segments. Since the achievement percentage had not yet reached the successful research outcomes criterion of 80%, the intervention was continued into Cycle II

Results of Cycle I Observation

Table 2. *Observation Scores for Cycle I*

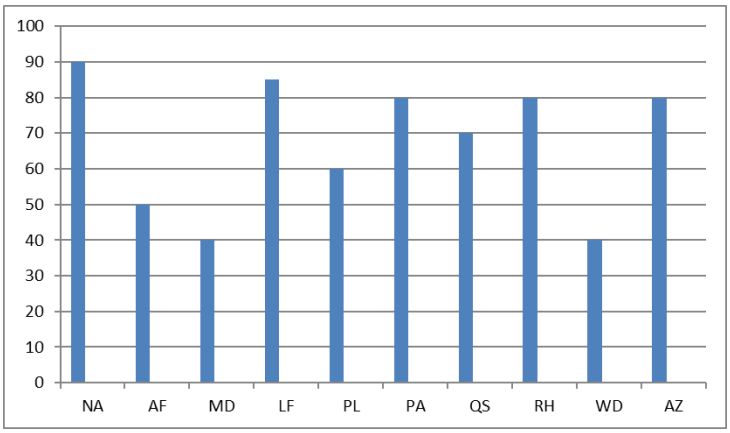
No.	Name Code	Score	Category
1	NA	90	BSH
2	AF	50	MB
3	MD	40	MB
4	LF	85	BSH
5	PL	60	MB
6	PA	80	BSH
7	QS	70	BSH
8	RH	80	BSH
9	WD	40	MB
10	AZ	80	BSH

Berdasarkan Table 2, hasil observasi pada Cycle I menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan anak dalam kegiatan pembelajaran masih berada pada tingkat perkembangan yang beragam. Dari 10 children observed, sebanyak 6 children memperoleh category BSH (Berkembang Sesuai Harapan), yaitu NA dengan a score of 90, LF with 85, PA with 80, QS with 70, RH with 80, and AZ with 80. Meanwhile, 4 children were categorized as MB (Mulai Berkembang), namely AF with a score of 50, MD with 40, PL with 60, and WD with 40. The highest score was obtained by NA with a score of 90, while the lowest scores were obtained by MD and WD, each with a score of 40. These results indicate that most children had demonstrated the expected level of development, although several children still required further stimulation and guidance.

The distribution of scores also indicates that the learning activities implemented in Cycle I had begun to support children's development, but the results had not yet been optimal for all children. The six children in the BSH category demonstrated relatively good achievement, with scores ranging from 70 to 90. However, the presence of four children in the MB category suggests that some children still experienced difficulties in

achieving the expected indicators. In particular, the scores of 40 obtained by MD and WD indicate that these children needed more intensive assistance, repeated practice, and learning activities that were appropriate to their individual needs. Therefore, the findings from Cycle I can be used as an important basis for evaluating and improving the learning process in the subsequent cycle.

Overall, the observation results in Cycle I show that 60% of children were categorized as BSH, while 40% were categorized as MB. The average observation score was 67.5, indicating that the overall achievement had not yet reached a consistently high level. Consequently, improvements in the learning strategy, media utilization, teacher guidance, and opportunities for active participation were still needed in Cycle II. The reflection on Cycle I should focus particularly on children in the MB category so that they receive more structured stimulation and repeated learning experiences. Through these improvements, it is expected that children's achievement will increase and that more children will reach the BSH category in the following cycle.



. Throughout the learning experiences, most children showed enthusiasm and attention during the *read aloud* activity, with several children able to respond to inquiries, identify story characters, and recall parts of the storyline. On the other hand, some children still had difficulty maintaining concentration, were hesitant to respond to inquiries, and were unable to retell the story coherently. Based on these findings, improvements were planned for Cycle II by using more varied intonation and expressions, encouraging active participation, providing simpler and more interactive questions, and optimizing the use of illustrations in local culture-based storybooks to improve children's attention and comprehension. These improvements were expected to increase listening skills and obtain the achievement standard of at least 80% of children attaining the BSH and BSB segments.

Results of Cycle II Activity Observation

In Cycle II, a substantial optimization was observed benchmarked against with Cycle I. A total of 8 children (80%) achieved the BSH and BSB segments, while 2 children (20%) remained in the MB category. Thus, the successful research outcomes criterion was achieved, as at least 80% of the children reached the BSH and BSB segments.

Results of Cycle II Observation

Table 3. *Observation Results for Cycle II*

No.	Name Identity	Score	Category
1	NA	90	BSB
2	FA	0	BSH
3	MD	90	BSB

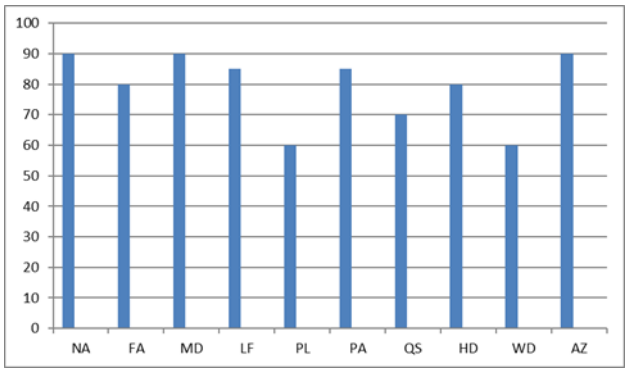
No.	Name Identity	Score	Category
4	LF	85	BSH
5	PL	60	MB
6	PA	85	BSH
7	QS	70	BSH
8	HD	80	BSH
9	WD	60	MB
10	AZ	90	BSB

Based on Table 3, the observation results in Cycle II show an improvement in children's achievement compared with Cycle I. Of the 10 children observed, 3 children achieved the BSB (Berkembang Sangat Baik) category, namely NA with a score of 90, MD with a score of 90, and AZ with a score of 90. Meanwhile, 5 children were categorized as BSH (Berkembang Sesuai Harapan), namely LF with a score of 85, PA with 85, QS with 70, HD with 80, and FA with a score of 0. In addition, 2 children remained in the MB (Mulai Berkembang) category, namely PL with a score of 60 and WD with a score of 60. The highest score was 90, obtained by NA, MD, and AZ, while FA obtained a score of 0.

The results indicate that the learning process in Cycle II generally demonstrated better achievement, particularly in the number of children reaching the BSB and BSH categories. Three children achieved the BSB category, indicating that they had demonstrated very good development in accordance with the observed indicators. Furthermore, five children reached the BSH category, suggesting that most children had achieved the expected level of development. However, two children remained in the MB category, indicating that they still required additional stimulation, guidance, and repeated learning experiences. Therefore, although the overall results improved, individualized assistance remained necessary for children who had not yet reached the expected level.

When compared with Cycle I, the results of Cycle II demonstrate a positive shift in children's achievement. In Cycle I, there were 6 children in the BSH category and 4 children in the MB category, whereas in Cycle II there were 3 children in the BSB category, 5 children in the BSH category, and 2 children in the MB category. This shift indicates that some children who previously demonstrated achievement at the BSH level progressed to the BSB level, while the number of children in the MB category decreased from four to two. Thus, the implementation of improvements following the reflection on Cycle I appears to have contributed to better learning outcomes in Cycle II. These findings suggest that the learning intervention was increasingly effective in supporting children's development, although further attention was still required for children who remained in the MB category.

However, there is one important data issue that should be corrected before publication: FA has a score of 0 but is classified as BSH. This classification is mathematically and conceptually inconsistent unless there is a specific scoring rule explaining why a score of 0 corresponds to BSH. The scoring criteria used to determine MB, BSH, and BSB should therefore be stated explicitly, and the category assigned to FA should be rechecked.



In light of the evidences of the intervention in Cycle II, the implementation of the *read aloud* method using local culture-based storybooks showed a greater improvement in children's listening skills benchmarked against with Cycle I. A total of 8 out of 10 children (80%) achieved the Developing as Expected (BSH) and Very Well Developed (BSB) segments, while 2 children (20%) remained in the Beginning to Develop (MB) category. The improvement was reflected in the children's capability to pay priority given to story until the end, respond to inquiries, identify characters and events, and retell the story using simple sentences. The use of varied intonation, facial expressions, gestures, and interactive questions also made the learning activities more engaging and encouraged active participation. Although 2 children had not yet reached the BSH category, this was relevant to differences in individual abilities, concentration, and confidence. Thereby, continued guidance and practice are still needed. Holistic, the results of Cycle II indicate that the *read aloud* method using local culture-based storybooks was effective in improving the auditory proficiency of children aged 5–6 years at SPS Durian 14. Since the achievement standard of 80% was achieved, the research was considered successful and concluded at Cycle II.

Discussion

In light of the evidences of the classroom action research pursued over two cycles, the implementation of the *read aloud* method using local culture-based storybooks was found to improve the auditory proficiency of children aged 4–6 years at SPS Durian 14. The improvement in listening skills was evident from the observation results pursued in each cycle. In the initial condition (pre-cycle), only 2 out of 10 children (20%) achieved the Developing as Expected (BSH) and Very Well Developed (BSB) segments. After the *read aloud* method was implemented in Cycle I, this number increased to 6 children (60%), and then increased further to 8 children (80%) in Cycle II. Thus, the successful research outcomes criterion, namely that at least 80% of the children obtain the BSH and BSB segments, was successfully achieved.

The mastery criterion in this study was established at a minimum of 80% of the children achieving the Developing as Expected (BSH) or Very Well Developed (BSB) categories. With a total of 10 children participating in the study, the research was considered successful when at least 8 children, or 80% of the participants, achieved the BSH or BSB categories. Based on the research findings, the percentage of children who had not achieved mastery decreased progressively throughout the research. In the pre-cycle, 70% of the children had not achieved the expected level of listening skills, while 40% remained below the mastery criterion in Cycle I. Following improvements in the learning process, the percentage decreased to 20% in Cycle II, indicating that the predetermined mastery criterion had been achieved. The children who had not achieved mastery generally experienced difficulties in maintaining attention throughout the

storytelling activity, understanding the meaning and sequence of the story, responding to the teacher's questions, identifying characters and events, and retelling the story using simple sentences.

These difficulties were also influenced by differences in children's concentration, confidence, participation, and individual developmental abilities. Some children were still hesitant to express their answers and required additional stimulation and teacher guidance to understand and respond to the story. Therefore, the reflection process in Cycle I focused on improving the teacher's intonation and facial expressions, providing simpler and more interactive questions, increasing opportunities for children to participate, and optimizing the use of illustrations in the local culture-based storybooks. The decrease in the percentage of children who had not achieved mastery from 70% in the pre-cycle to 40% in Cycle I and finally to 20% in Cycle II demonstrates that the improvements implemented during the research contributed positively to children's listening development. Although two children remained in the MB category in Cycle II, their achievement did not prevent the research from reaching the predetermined mastery criterion because 8 out of 10 children had already achieved the BSH or BSB categories. Nevertheless, these children still require continuous stimulation, individualized guidance, repeated listening activities, and opportunities to respond and retell stories according to their developmental abilities.

The improvement in listening skills indicates that the *read aloud* method can create engaging and enjoyable learning activities for children. When the teacher read the story aloud using a clear voice, varied intonation, adequate facial expressions, and illustrations from the storybook, the children’s attention became more focused on the story. They found it easier to grasp the meaning of the story, identify characters, remember the sequence of events, and respond to inquiries grant by the teacher. This demonstrates that read-aloud activities grant children with an active and meaningful learning experience. The use of local culture-based storybooks also contributed to the increase of children’s listening skills. Stories containing elements of the children’s local culture and environment made it easier for them to relate the content of the story to their everyday experiences. The close connection between the story context and the children’s lives stimulated their curiosity and increased their motivation to listen until the story was completed. In addition to improving listening skills, local culture-based stories also helped children become familiar with cultural values, character development, and local wisdom from an early age.

In Cycle I, the research output implemented that the achievement percentage had only reached 60%, which did not yet meet the achievement standard. This was caused by several obstacles, including some children having difficulty maintaining focus while listening to the story, being hesitant to respond to inquiries, and being unable to retell the story in a coherent sequence. In addition, the teacher still needed to improve the use of intonation, facial expressions, and interaction with the children during the *read aloud* activities. Based on the reflection results from Cycle I, several improvements were implemented in Cycle II. The teacher read the stories using more engaging intonation and expressions, grantd opportunities for all children to respond to inquiries, encouraged children to participate in discussions during the reading activity, and more frequently used the illustrations in the storybook. These improvements had a positive impact on the children’s learning activities. The children became more active, more confident in answering questions, and better able to retell the stories. As a result, the achievement percentage increased to 80%, suggest evidence that successful research

outcomes criterion had been achieved.

The results of this study are consistent with the research of previous studied, which concluded that the *read aloud* method can improve early childhood literacy development through interactive read-aloud activities (Wardani & Syamsiah, 2022). Their study showed that children became more active in listening, acquired new vocabulary, and developed greater interest in reading activities. Similarly the previous studied found that the *read aloud* method using storybook media was effective in improving the receptive and expressive language skills of young children (Endahwati, 2022). These findings strengthen the results of the present study, demonstrating that the *read aloud* method not only improves language skills moreover specifically enhances children's listening abilities.

The findings are also consistent with the previous studied theory, which states that listening is a means of paying close attention to spoken messages in order to understand and obtain information (Tarigan, 2016). Through the *read aloud* method, children have opportunities to actively listen to stories, thereby developing their capability to comprehend story content. Likewise, the another studied stated that *read aloud* activities can improve early literacy skills, enrich vocabulary, increase concentration, and develop reading comprehension through interaction between teachers and children (Rahayu & Mustadi, 2022).

Thereby, it can be concluded that the implementation of the *read aloud* method using local culture-based storybooks is an effective learning strategy for improving the auditory proficiency of children aged 4–6 years. This method creates an active, enjoyable, and meaningful learning environment, enabling children to grasp story's meaning more easily and confidently express information they have encountered. The results demonstrate that combining the *read aloud* method with local culture-based storybooks can provide an effective alternative for developing children's listening skills at SPS Durian 14.

Conclusion

Based on a holistic analysis of the data, classroom observations, and discussion results, the implementation of the read-aloud method using local culture-based storybooks was found to be effective in improving the listening skills of children aged 5–6 years at SPS Durian 14 Cumedak, Sumberjambe, Jember. The improvement was evident both quantitatively and qualitatively. The children became more attentive to the stories, were able to understand the main ideas and moral messages, acquired new vocabulary, responded to questions more confidently, and increasingly demonstrated the ability to retell stories using their own words. The integration of local cultural elements also made the learning process more contextual, meaningful, and enjoyable, as the story settings, characters, traditions, and cultural values were closely related to the children's everyday environment. The achievement level increased consistently across each research cycle and reached the predetermined achievement standard of at least 80%, with the children progressing toward the BSH (Developing as Expected) and BSB (Very Well Developed) categories.

The findings imply that the read-aloud method using local culture-based storybooks can effectively support children's listening and early literacy development through meaningful and contextual learning. However, the study was limited by its small number of participants, specific research setting, and short intervention period, which may limit

the generalizability of the findings. Future research should involve larger and more diverse groups of participants, longer intervention periods, and comparisons with other storytelling or literacy methods. Further studies could also examine the effectiveness of different local cultural themes and digital storybook formats to determine their potential for strengthening children's listening skills, engagement, vocabulary, comprehension, and storytelling abilities across various early childhood educational contexts.

References

Apriyansyah, C., Tjalla, A., Saptono, A., Hartati, S., Jalal, F., Sukatmi, S., Ismail, M., & Kurniawaty, L. (2024). Early childhood education: Integrative holistic early childhood development program implementation. *Child Education Journal, 6*(2), 76–87. https://doi.org/10.33086/cej.v6i2.5990

Bierman, K. L., Heinrichs, B. S., & Welsh, J. A. (2023). Promoting young children's language and literacy development through classroom-based interventions. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 62*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2022.08.005

Blewitt, C., O'Connor, A., Morris, H., Mousa, A., Green, R., Ifanti, A., & Skouteris, H. (2022). Social and emotional learning in early childhood education and care: A systematic review. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 50*, 859–873. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-021-01213-9

Bozkurt, N. O., & Bozkurt, E. (2024). Systems thinking in education: A bibliometric analysis. *Education and Science, 49*(218), 205–231. https://doi.org/10.15390/EB.2024.12634

Cabell, S. Q., Zucker, T. A., DeCoster, J., & McCall, R. B. (2024). Teacher-child interactions and preschool children's language and literacy development. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 67*, 89–101. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2023.10.006

Chapman, S. N., & O'Gorman, L. (2022). Transforming learning environments in early childhood contexts through the arts: Responding to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. *International Journal of Early Childhood, 54*, 33–50. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-022-00320-3

Endahwati, M., Bachri, B. S., & Izzati, U. A. (2022). The effectiveness of the read-aloud learning method using a series of illustrated storybooks in improving receptive and expressive language skills in early childhood. *Jurnal PAJAR (Pendidikan dan Pengajaran), 6*(1), 163–174. https://doi.org/10.33578/pjr.v6i1.8496

Ferary, D. (2021). On Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophy of education. *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education, 5*(2), 65–78. https://doi.org/10.7577/njcie.4156

Finders, J., Wilson, E., & Duncan, R. (2023). Early childhood education language environments: Considerations for research and practice. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*, 1202819. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1202819

Hindman, A. H., Wasik, B. A., & Snell, E. K. (2022). Closing the 30-million-word gap: Next steps in designing research-based interventions for young children. *Early*

Childhood Research Quarterly, 58, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2021.08.007

Hindman, A. H., Wasik, B. A., & Snell, E. K. (2024). The effects of a science and social studies content-rich shared reading intervention on the vocabulary learning of preschool dual language learners. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 66*, 34–47. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2023.08.011

Hogan, T. P., Adlof, S. M., & Alonzo, C. N. (2022). On the importance of listening and oral language for early literacy development. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 53*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1044/2021_LSHSS-21-00112

Kang, D., Stough, L. M., Yoon, M., & Liew, J. (2023). The association between teacher–student relationships and school engagement: An investigation of gender differences. *Educational Psychology, 43*(6), 623–642. https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2023.2225816

Lavi, R., & Bertel, L. B. (2024). The system architecture-function-outcome framework for fostering and assessing systems thinking in first-year STEM education and its potential applications in case-based learning. *Education Sciences, 14*(7), 720. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14070720

Li, R. (2021). The role of teacher-student interpersonal relations in flipped learning on student engagement. *Frontiers in Psychology, 12*, 741810. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.741810

Maulana, R., Saepullah, D. R., & Adestya, A. I. (2025). The use of flannel board media to improve story-listening skills among first-grade elementary school students. *Cokroaminoto Journal of Primary Education, 8*(4), 1424–1440. https://doi.org/10.30605/cjpe.8.4.2025.6819

Miao, J., Chang, J., & Ma, L. (2022). Teacher–student interaction, student–student interaction and social presence: Their impacts on learning engagement in online learning environments. *The Journal of Genetic Psychology, 183*(6), 514–526. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221325.2022.2094211

Olszewski, A., & Hood, R. L. (2023). Parents' vocabulary instruction with preschoolers during shared book reading. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy, 39*(1), 38–52. https://doi.org/10.1177/02656590231151662

Ong, S. G. T., & Quek, G. C. L. (2023). Enhancing teacher–student interactions and student online engagement in an online learning environment. *Learning Environments Research*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-022-09447-5

Rahayu, E. W., & Mustadi, A. (2022). The read-aloud method to develop reading literacy at school's educational park. *Jurnal Prima Edukasia, 10*(2), 104–113. https://doi.org/10.21831/jpe.v10i2.47331

Risna, R., Rahmat, R., & Mahyuddin, M. J. (2024). Improving listening skills using the Total Physical Response approach among fifth-grade students at SDN Pinrang. *Cokroaminoto Journal of Primary Education, 7*(2). https://doi.org/10.30605/cjpe.7.2.2024.4581

Sofiani, I. K., Roinah, Nurhalin, Ruzaini, & F. (2025). Islamic education values in Ki Hajar Dewantara's concept of education. *Journal of Educational Sciences, 9*(1), 438–454. https://doi.org/10.31258/jes.9.1.p.438-454

Southerland, S. A. (2022). Humanistic science education: Updating our collective consciousness and offering fresh consideration. *Science Education*. https://doi.org/10.1002/sce.21715

Surifah, J., & Rolina, N. (2025). The influence of the dialogic reading method with PEER-CROWD techniques on the listening and speaking skills of preschool children: A quasi-experimental study. *Jurnal Pendidikan Usia Dini, 19*(1). https://doi.org/10.21009/jpud.v19i1.50476

Tarigan, H. G. (2016). *Listening as a language skill*. Angkasa.

Wardani, E., & Syamsiah, A. A. (2022). The implementation of the read-aloud method in developing early childhood literacy at Kober Miftahul Hidayah Bayongbong Garut. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini (Anaking), 1*(1), 60–67. https://doi.org/10.37968/anaking.v1i1.256

Wasik, B. A., Hindman, A. H., & Snell, E. K. (2023). Book reading and language development in early childhood: The role of teacher-child interaction and instructional quality. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 62*, 190–202. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2022.09.004

Wiryanto, W., & Anggraini, G. O. (2022). An analysis of Ki Hajar Dewantara's humanistic education in the concept of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Pendidikan, 15*(1), 33–45. https://doi.org/10.21831/jpipfip.v15i1.41549

Zeinstra, L., Kupers, E., Loopers, J., & de Boer, A. (2023). Real-time teacher-student interactions: The dynamic interplay between need supportive teaching and student engagement over the course of one school year. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 121*, 103906. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103906