

## The Use of Fairy Tales in Developing Early Childhood Characters at Raudhatul Athfal (RA) Arafah

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out how fairy tales are used to develop the character of early childhood and how the character of early childhood develops after using fairy tales. Location This research was carried out at RA Arafah, in the 2023/2024 academic year in the even semester. Early childhood education is the key to shaping children's personalities and preparing them for the next level of school. Therefore, children's education must start from an early age, including for the formation of children's character, because the most important thing in a child's development is the child's character. This research uses a qualitative type of research with the research subjects being school principals, teachers and students. Data collection tools used in this research are observation, interviews and documentation. The research results obtained by researchers were by using storytelling media or telling Fable to children as a learning tool to shape children's characters. This can be seen from the results of children's development after implementing the learning method through Fable in the classroom, then in implementing Fable you must also have techniques such as storytelling places, sitting positions, fairy tale language, teacher intonation, display of emotions, avoiding spontaneous words and ending Fable. This aims to be a supporting factor in developing the character of early childhood students. Then, after everything is implemented, the children begin to receive moral messages and stimulate a sense of responsibility in children, further increasing religious values, hard work, mutual help, cooperation and mutual cooperation at Ra Arafah. So that everything is applied to students using the fairy tale method as well as character building for young children. In this way, children will become more educated in the future because the use of Fable is very effective in character building and in the future can improve the morals and ethics of early childhood at RA Arafah.

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### INTRODUCTION

Education is a place for children to develop various aspects of child development and reflect the child's early personality. This is in accordance with the opinion of Aras in Dini et al. (2023: 375) Early childhood education is the key to developing children's personalities and preparing them to enter the next level of school. Therefore, children's education must begin from an early age, including

the development of children's character, because the most important thing in children's development is the development of children's character. Early childhood education takes place before children start elementary education.

According to Hasnawati (2019: 22), children in the golden age are the beginning of the development of character, because the most important thing to be developed first is a child's character. Through fairy tales we can develop children's characters, especially if we use fairy tales in real story telling, children will feel happy and will not be confused. So children will focus on listening to what we say, and with different intonations of voice, children will feel curious about how the real story ends. With fairy tale fairy tales in developing the characters of early childhood children, it is hoped that they will be able to encourage educators to easily develop the characters of early childhood children.

At the age of children who are still considered golden age (maturity period), children are still easy to imitate what is done and easy to absorb what is conveyed. Montessori in Ariyanti et al (2016: 50) stated that in the age range from birth to 6 years, children experience a period of maturity (golden age) which is a period where children begin to be sensitive to receive various stimuli. The maturity period referred to here is the maturity of the child's physical and psychological functions and is ready to respond to the stimulation given by the people around them, including advice in developing the child's character. It is during this period that children can absorb all information through words or behavior of the people around them.

Early childhood education plays an important role in developing children's character. One effective way to develop the character of early childhood is by implementing fairy tales in the learning process. Fairy tales are one of the media that have great potential in helping children's development, both in terms of morals, cognitive, and emotional. Fairy tales bring moral messages, teach values, and help children understand the difference between right and wrong. Good character, such as strong morals, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking skills, are the foundations that are very necessary in individual development. One of the models that is considered effective in developing the character of early childhood is through the use of fairy tales in the learning process. Especially in Islamic education, the fairy tales that are developed must include Islamic values, this is in line with the vision and mission of the Islamic study program, whose vision and mission are "Organizing superior and innovative early childhood education that is characterized by Islam and rooted in the character of early childhood education". (PIAUID Stain Madina: 2019)

Based on the results of initial observations conducted on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, located on Jalan Belmulla VI Sipolul-polul, Panyabulngan District, Mandailing Natal Regency. R.A Arafah was found to be one of the old R.A in Panyabulngan. The learning that took place at R.A. had often used the method of listening to music activities, when the learning process at R.A. Arafah was carried out using coffee cups and straws, some of the children did not want to listen, ran back and forth to the cupboard, and some sat on the table. Based on this background, the researcher is interested in conducting research at R.A Arafah which is located in Panyabulngan because Rauldhatull Athfal is considered a strategic location to be used as a research site, another reason is that in R.A Arafah, there is often a model of storytelling activities in developing children's characters. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting research entitled "The Use of Fairy Tales in Developing the Character of Early Childhood Children".

## **METHOD**

Researchers want to reveal or describe the use of fable stories through the development of early childhood characters. Using qualitative research, qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena of what is experienced by the research subjects, for example behavior, perception, motivation, actions, etc., holistically, and in a descriptive way in words and language. researchers conducted a survey of teachers and students to find out how the use of fable stories can affect the development of early childhood characters. This study was carried out as part of a normal study, conditions and circumstances were not manipulated to draw conclusions. The existing conclusions are used as reference materials and we see how natural materials affect children's creativity. This research was conducted at RA Arafah located on Jl. Bermulla VI, Sipolu-polu, Panyabulngan District,

Kota, which has been established for 9 years since 2014 with a total of 7 groups with 1 principal who also serves as a class leader at RA Arafah, 6 class teachers and 2 assistant teachers.

## RESULTS

### a. Use of fairy tales in developing the character of early childhood

In the learning process for young children at RA Arafah, Gulrul has implemented the use of fairy tales for young children at school and has been completed with what has been observed by researchers, young children who are students who are studying and are still at an age can listen and play.

At the age of children who are classified as golden age, children are still able to imitate what is done and are able to absorb what is conveyed, Hasnawati also said that children in the golden age period are the beginning of the beginning of character formation, because the most important thing to be formed first is the character of a child, therefore, this is when the researcher conducted an interview with the principal and the head of RA Arafah who implemented the use of fairy tales in the learning process. The head of RA Arafah said:

“The use of fairy tales contributes to the development of children's character and social values. In many fairy tales, there are moral messages or values that can be applied in children's daily lives. In addition, fairy tales also help in the development of students' language skills and reading comprehension. When mothers present fairy tales, mothers choose stories that are appropriate to their level of understanding, so that they not only listen, but also actively understand the plot, characters, and moral values contained in the story they tell” (W.K.S 10-06-2042)

This is in line with the opinion of Gulrul Kellompok Jannatul Naim who said:

“The use of fairy tales is not only a powerful tool to convey lessons, but also a window into the world of imagination and creativity that helps children develop their minds in unique and interesting ways. entertain”(W.G.K 05-06-2024)

Thus, the researcher can conclude that the use of Fairy Tales in the learning process for early childhood at RA Arafah is very easy for children to understand, therefore the researcher assumes that the implementation of fairy tales in the classroom will reflect the character of each student.

### b. Early Childhood Character Development

The character of young children is very important to be developed from an early age because this period is a critical period in the formation of personality and character. Character education cannot be separated from basic values that are considered good. Therefore, we must take advantage of the golden age as a period of instilling character values, coaching, direction, guidance and character development of young children. Therefore, the researcher conducted observations in the formation of the character of young children by using fairy tales carried out in the classroom. Kelmudia Pelnelliti collected data through interviews with the head mother Ra "One of my favorite fairy tales is "Si Kancil yang Cerdik." In this fairy tale, I teach the value of honesty and cleverness. Si Kancil often uses his intelligence to solve problems, but also learns the importance of not leaving his friends. Children really enjoy this story and can learn a lot from Si Kancil's behavior which is very effective because it has its own appeal to children. Through interesting stories and inspiring characters, children can learn various character values such as honesty, courage, and cooperation.”

Supporting factors in the development of the character of early childhood children Melnulrult Fariq (2021) said that environmental factors of family and society towards children's education greatly influence their development. This is in line with the opinion of the Head of RA Arafah regarding the development of character values for early childhood, Melnulrult said:

“I observe the behavior of children every day in class and how they interact with their friends. In addition, I also often discuss with parents to find out what positive changes are happening at home. If children show improvements in the character values that are taught, I consider it a success.” (W.K.S 10-06-2042)

Thus, the researcher concluded that the character values of young children are very important in shaping their personality and attitudes that will reflect their behavior in the future. In early childhood, children are in a very sensitive development phase and are able to absorb various values taught through daily experiences, social interactions, and educational activities such as listening to fairy tales.

## DISCUSSION

The essence of fairy tales is communication. Communicating a story about things that are entertaining for children. Therefore, for children, fairy tales are entertainment. Fairy tales forget stories that are not considered to have really happened. Fairy tales are told with the aim of entertaining, conveying truth, lessons (morals) and satire. In essence, fairy tales have opening and closing sentences that are clichéd in nature, such as the sentence at the beginning. Character is the nature or nature or things that are very basic in a person. Character can be found in attitudes. After the desired data has been obtained from the results of interviews, observations, and documentation, the researcher will analyze the findings of the research on the use of fairy tales in developing the character of early childhood children at R.A. Arafah. As explained in the research data analysis technique, through storytelling activities in 5-6 year old children at R.A Arafah, the use of fairy tales has an impact on children's character. Through storytelling, children can develop their character in accordance with the character values contained in the theoretical studies in the previous chapter, that character is a nature or trait or very basic things that exist in a person. According to Poelwadarmita (2017), character is interpreted as a nature, personality, mental traits, morals or morals that distinguish a person from others. Fairy tales also have benefits for early childhood in terms of teaching morals, increasing literacy, and developing children's imagination. From the points discussed, it is clear that research conducted through fairy tales on the development of children's character is very effective and efficient and can be channeled into external and internal environments.

According to Nulryanto (2016), when storytelling, storytellers can choose techniques that are considered appropriate and interesting so that the message in the fairy tale can be conveyed well. This opinion is in accordance with the use of fairy tales in RA Arafah where the use of fairy tales has a very mature preparation by the teacher starting from the selection of fairy tale types, storytelling techniques, so that children are able to understand and become a pulse of attention when the teacher is storytelling. Because if the preparation in storytelling is perfect and right, then the implementation of the learning process in the classroom will be very easy to apply. In storytelling, the child must also be able to find a comfortable position when storytelling, such as outside the classroom or inside the classroom. Then the child must also be able to adjust the position of the child in storytelling because by finding a comfortable position, the children will be more observant and pay attention. However, before starting the story, the child must start from standing so that the children can see the pulse of direct attention to the child. If the children have started to be quiet and pay attention, the child is allowed to continue the story in a lying position.

Then the language of the fairy tale must also be chosen through a language that is easy for children to understand and comprehend the story of the fairy tale being conveyed, according to Helrul (2022) that fairy tales are a world of words. The use of language that is easy for children to understand will also help children in collecting vocabulary, because according to what Helrul said that where children aged 5-6 years are still children who collect words.

In the midst of the story telling, the teacher must be able to describe the characters or characters in the story, the teacher must also be able to explain the nature of the characters in the story itself so that children are able to distinguish who the antagonist and protagonist are in the story itself. In the emergence of characters, the teacher must also describe the physical description and characteristics of the characters in the story, both in terms of speaking, character, and behavior. Because children will easily understand and understand how the story of the story ends until the end. This is in line with what Fitroh (2015) said, where through the fairy tale model, children can directly capture moral messages that make children want to imitate and emulate the characters in the fairy tale.

In reading fairy tales, the teacher also has several messages that must be conveyed to children, including moral messages from the contents of the fairy tale itself, so that the teacher must develop

a strategy after reading the story to ensure that children understand the story being conveyed. And in the end, the teacher makes an agreement with the child so that young children will practice good morals based on the fairy tale characters that are conveyed. The benefits of using fairy tales also provide complete benefits in the pattern of child mind development, not only the mind can be honed but also the behavior that the child has, therefore the character of the child is reflected through literacy, imagination and moral growth. In this understanding, the attitude and behavior of children must be considered and encouraged from an early age so that in the future children will have knowledge and moral ethics in creating a generation of future generations.

This is in line with Pulspitasari (2018), who said that through storytelling we are able to shape the character of a child. The storytelling activities carried out in the classroom have many variations, starting from the selection of fairy tales such as "the prayer of the sun asking for rain and the prophet Solomon", the presentation of fairy tales to children to the selection of moral points that are taught to children until the end of the storytelling activities for early childhood must always be applied, because the researchers think this model is very good for teaching in the classroom in developing the character of early childhood children. And storytelling activities are also often carried out at RA Arafah and this activity also greatly influences the development of the character of early childhood children at RA Arafah. Creative teachers have many ideas in developing children's characters and in carrying out learning, teachers must prepare RPPH (Daily Learning Program Design) so that the learning objectives can be achieved. It is often used in the teaching and learning process, as well as the use of storytelling in developing children's characters.

according to Cakra (2013) said that there must be preparation so that the desired goal can be achieved optimally, and this is in line with the teacher having skills and preparation related to what fairy tales will be brought so that children can easily understand the moral values contained in the fairy tale itself. Then after the teacher has made preparations, the teacher must have storytelling techniques such as first reflecting where a comfortable place is for children to carry out storytelling activities, after that the teacher reflects a comfortable position for children to listen to fairy tales. The language used must also be paid attention to by teachers because children aged 5-6 are still in the stage of accumulating vocabulary, therefore teachers must use vocabulary that is easy for children to understand.

This is in accordance with the discussion of the problem of the use of fairy tales and the development of the character of early childhood children. The use of fairy tales in elementary school is able to provide moral messages to children and how to develop the character of their eighth-grade children. And in accordance with previous research by Siti Aisyah (2013) where one of the effective ways to teach morals to children is through storytelling activities. The use of fairy tales in RA Arafah is an effective model for developing various aspects of the character of early childhood children. This helps them to grow into religious, hard-working, helpful, cooperative, mutually supportive and responsible individuals.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on the use of Fairy Tales in developing early childhood at RA Arafah, the use of Fairy Tales shows good results, through the use of Fairy Tales it provides a good influence on the development of the character of early childhood at RA Arafah. The use of Fairy Tales is very important because through Fairy Tales the character of children can develop better through the moral messages delivered by Gulrul.

1. The use of fairy tales for young children in schools and has been in accordance with what has been observed by researchers, young children are students who are studying and are still at an age of listening and playing. Teachers need to make preparations before carrying out storytelling activities in the classroom. Preparations carried out by teachers such as reviewing the contents of the story that will be delivered. Then, choosing the type of story is carried out by teachers after the preparation is complete before carrying out storytelling activities. Teachers choose the type of story that is suitable to be delivered to children. Teachers also choose stories that attract children's attention so that children's characters can be developed because with the children's interest in listening to the

story that is delivered, children will be able to apply the contents of the moral message. telrkandung in fairy tales telrselbult.

2. The development of the character of early childhood children shows positive changes. Children show an increase in understanding and application of moral values such as religion, hard work, helping each other, cooperation, mutual assistance, and responsibility. They are better able to recognize and distinguish between good and bad behavior and understand the consequences of their actions. Children become more sensitive to social values such as cooperation, helping each other, and respecting differences. Melrelka is better able to interact with fellow teammates, show empathy, and work better in a team.

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