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# Improving Reading Ability In Early Childhood Through Flashcards Media (A Case Study In Paud Al-Hikmah Graha Lestari - Citra Raya Tangerang)

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine how to improve reading skills in early childhood through flashcards. This type of research is a classroom action research. Data collection techniques by interview, observation and documentation study. The data analysis technique used the Kemmis and Mc Taggart spiral model through 2 cycles, each of which consisted of 4 stages, namely planning, implementing, observing and reflecting. The research achievement indicator is the ability to read in early childhood can increase and get an average percentage of more than 80%. The results of this study indicate an increase in reading skills in early childhood which can achieve a predetermined indicator, namely the acquisition of an average percentage of more than 80%. At the time of doing the Cycle I action, the child had an average percentage of 38.75% with the criteria of starting to develop. Cycle II actions were carried out. The average percentage of children's reading ability increased to 82.50% in the Very Good Developing criteria. Increasing the ability of teachers in designing and using flashcard media has begun to develop. Research steps to improve reading skills in early childhood through flashcard media, namely: 1) The teacher designs and prepares flashcard media; 2) The teacher uses flashcard media in the learning process by showing the media to the child at chest height; 3) Children pay attention to and follow the teacher's directions in mentioning letters; 4) Children say words with the help of the teacher; 5) Accompany and motivate children when someone is having difficulties.

Keywords: Reading Ability, Early Childhood Education, Flashcard Media, Teacher

#### 1. PRELIMINARY

Education is a conscious and planned effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by themselves, society, nation and state. Through education, humans experience changes in behavior from not knowing to knowing. Education can also influence human development in all aspects, both aspects of personality and aspects of life. Education is also influential and has a dynamic force in human life in the future.

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Early childhood education is the level of education before entering the basic education level which is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth to the age of six which is carried out through providing educational stimuli to assist physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness to enter more education continued, which was held in formal, non-formal, and informal channels. Currently, pre-primary education requirements such as early childhood education are highly recommended and there are policies in the Indonesian education system. Education should be done from an early age which can be done within the family, school, and community. Efforts for prescribed guidance to children from birth to six years of age are carried out by providing stimuli to assist in the development and growth of children.

Early Childhood Education Programs (PAUD) is organized based on age groups and types of services. Children from birth to six years of age consist of a Child Care Park and a similar PAUD Unit (SPS). 2-4 years old consists of Playgroup and 4-6 years old consists of Kindergarten/Raudhatul Athfal/Bustanul Athfal. This is in line with Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System as mentioned above, which basically states that early childhood education is held before basic education.

In the learning process in Early Childhood Education, it is very necessary to develop all aspects of development in children, both cognitive, language, physical-motor, religious and moral, art, as well as social and emotional aspects. One aspect of development that must be developed in children is the aspect of language development. Language is the ability to communicate with other people. This includes all the procedures for communicating, mentioning the contents of thoughts and feelings expressed in symbols or symbols to express an understanding using spoken language, written, signs, numbers, paintings, and facial expressions.

Based on the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 58 of 2009 concerning Early Childhood Education Standards in Permendiknas No.58 of 2009, it is stated that at the level of achievement of language aspects of early childhood education related to early reading skills, children must be able to communicate verbally. have a vocabulary, as well as recognize symbols for reading preparation, mention simple letter symbols known to children, recognize the initial sound of the names of objects around them, mention pictorial groups that have the same initial sound / letter, understand the relationship between sounds and letterforms, read your own name and write your own name. At this time many students in Early Childhood Education still have difficulty reading simple words so that children need help from the teacher to read these words. Even though at this age the child is ready to continue their education to primary school. Many elementary schools implement new student admissions according to the students' reading ability. Children can be directly involved in the game through the means or media of their symbols or symbols, for example by using picture cards there are various media that can be used to develop children's reading skills, one of which is using flashcards or better known as picture word cards. Flashcards are small cards containing images of text, or design symbols

Flashcards are usually 8 x 12 cm in size, or can be adjusted according to the size of the class being faced. Alphabet cards, for example, can be used for fluent spelling practice (in Arabic or English). Cards containing pictures (objects, animals, etc.) can be used to train students to spell and increase vocabulary. Flashcards are given to children as a game to recognize letters and words. These cards are given attractive pictures and are around the child, and have bright and striking colors that are liked by the child so that the teacher can teach children to have fun, play and learn in a simple way. In learning at school, the teacher is still rarely used

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Flashcards because it requires skills in making and also requires a strong desire from within the teacher to create a pleasant learning atmosphere by using picture word cards.

According to the results of observations in PAUD Al-Hikmah, there are some children who still have difficulty reading, the cause of their lack of optimism in reading because the child does not pay attention to the teacher's explanation. The lack of attention is caused by the lack of learning media used by teachers in the learning process. All teachers in PAUD Al-Hikmah who only use conventional teaching methods of reading, such as the teacher writing down some alphabets on the blackboard and showing the shape of the letters then the teacher pronounces them, this is done every time they enter the class the children take turns writing letters or reading letters with the help of the teacher. Based on the description above, researchers feel the need to make efforts to improve children's early reading skills by using flashcards in the hope that children's early reading skills can develop properly.

The aim of this research is to find out how to improve reading ability in early childhood through class flashcard media at PAUD Al-Hikmah Graha Lestari Citra Raya, Tangerang Banten.

#### 2. METHOD

This research is a qualitative participant Classroom Action Research (CAR). Classroom action research is an examination of learning activities in the form of an action, which is deliberately carried out in a class together. These actions are given by the teacher or with directions from the teacher carried out by students. The model used in this research is Kemmis and Mc Taggart's spiral model by going through several cycles of action as shown in the picture:

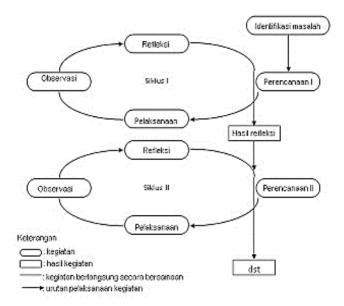


Figure 1. Model Spiral Kemmis and Mc. Taggart

The achievement indicators in this study will be reflected in a significant increase in reading ability in early childhood. This research is considered successful if 80% or more of the students at PAUD Al-Hikmah can pronounce the sound of letters, distinguish letters, say nouns that have the same initial sound, understand the relationship between sounds and letters (connect writing with symbols that symbolize it), mention words who have the same

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beginning and say the word clearly. In other words, the media used has an effect on improving reading skills in early childhood in PAUD Al-Hikmah.

The subjects of this classroom action research were 15 students at PAUD Al-Hikmah Graha Lestari Citra Raya - Tangerang consisting of 10 boys and 5 girls. Meanwhile, the object of this research is the ability to read in early childhood. Data collection techniques are carried out by 1) observation, namely collecting data regarding the implementation of learning activities and learning assessments, as well as observing what obstacles are encountered during the learning process, 2) interviewing techniques, namely interviewing all teachers in PAUD Al- The lesson for obtaining data about how to use learning media in the learning process in class runs effectively.

The data analysis technique used was Kemmis and Mc Taggart's spiral model through several cycles. In this study, 2 cycles will be carried out but if the success criteria have not been achieved, it is expected that it will add to the next cycle until the predetermined achievement indicators can be achieved. Each cycle consists of 4 steps, namely planning, implementing, observing and reflecting. These parts are related to one another. Learning activities in cycle I can be used as an illustration to move towards cycle II so that it can be improved even better.

#### 3. RESULT

## 3.1. Initial Condition Description

The initial condition of the child before the action almost every morning before entering into learning activities, all students of PAUD Al-Hikmah one by one recite iqra with the guidance of the teacher. Then sing a song before starting the learning process and recite daily prayers such as praying for parents, study prayers, hadith to enter heaven, riding a vehicle, entering or leaving the toilet, and so on and reciting short letters in the Al-Qur'an. The teacher also asked how he was and did absent to find out the number of children who entered that day. After that the teacher asks the day, date, month and year of that day and together mentions the letters in the word one by one then the teacher writes them on the blackboard.

The learning process carried out at PAUD Al-Hikmah is good enough. However, learning to read is still lacking because it is teacher-centered, does not apply the principles of learning for early childhood, namely, learning while playing and not utilizing learning media, because teachers often use blackboard media and markers or by working on LKA (Children's Worksheets). . So that the teacher becomes the center of learning and the children just sit in their respective chairs. During the learning process to read on the blackboard, the teacher writes a few words on the blackboard and the child is asked to spell or read by letter then read them. Sometimes the teacher writes on the blackboard to read together and after that the children write in their own notebooks. During this activity, there were still some children who did not pay attention, felt bored with sleeping around by putting their heads on the table, disturbing their classmates, and missed writing.

During the learning process to read using the LKA (Children's Worksheet) media, children are asked to connect pictures with writing or rewrite the words or sentences that are dotted lines in the LKA (Children's Work Sheet). Before the children do this, the teacher explains and gives examples first, but there are still many children who are confused so they often ask the teacher. Some children ask the teacher simultaneously, so that the class atmosphere becomes crowded and affects the concentration of children who are working on others. There are some children who do not pay attention when the teacher explains in front of the class, there are children who talk to their friends by themselves, disturb their friends and some even go out to play with pencils.

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In the pre-action research, the child's ability to read was still minimal so that when the observation was made, the child with the ability to pronounce the sound of letters had a percentage of 25.00%. The ability of children to distinguish letters has a percentage of 25.00%. And the ability of children to read words has a percentage of 25.00%. So that in the pre-action research or the initial condition of the child before the study was carried out, the criteria had not yet developed (BB) with an average percentage of 0% - 25%.

The teacher always tries to calm the atmosphere back in the classroom, as well as motivate and help if there are children who are still having difficulty or are left behind in doing LKA (Children's Worksheets), or reading on blackboard media. During the learning process children who have difficulty in recognizing letters, reading words, mentioning objects that start with the same sound or letter and often do not finish working on LKA (Children's Work Sheet).

# 3.2. Research Implementation Cycle I

# 1. Planning Stage

Researchers compile an action plan in Cycle I by providing reading actions using flashcard media. At the planning stage the researcher determines the theme, sub-themes of learning, plans the learning contained in the RKH, determines success indicators, compiles the implementation plan of the learning process and monitors classroom action research for classroom teachers / collaborators, prepares facilities and infrastructure for reading learning process activities, prepares Learning media in the form of flashcard media, as well as preparing cameras to take pictures of children and teachers during the learning process as documentation to support research, preparing assessment instruments in the form of observation sheets to record the improvement in reading skills during the learning process.

## 2. Implementation Stage

At this stage, the researcher carries out the learning process according to the previously designed RKH. This implementation stage is flexible and open to changes according to what happens in class. In the first cycle of action, the theme used is the animals that live on land. The steps taken in the learning process using flashcard media are:

- a. Apperception Activity
- 1) Designing the RKH according to the theme to be used
- 2) Prepare learning media and condition children to be ready to follow the learning process
- 3) Invite the children to sing, clap their hands and read prayers or other short letters
- 4) Asking about the day, date, month and year before the learning process starts.

#### b. Core activities

- 1) Describe the activities that will be carried out on this day
- 2) Introducing to children about flashcard media
- 3) List the letters on the flahscard card one by one
- 4) Randomly choosing one letter to ask the child and the child mentions the selected letter
- 5) Invite the child to guess the word starting with the selected letter by mentioning the characteristics of the animal referred to on the flashcard
- 6) Children say different letters fluently and with the help of researchers
- 7) The child spells the words on the flashcard with the help of the researcher
- 8) The child observes and mentions pictures and reads words aloud and aloud on the flashcard shown by the researcher
- 9) Children have a turn to say letters and read words in turn to find out their abilities.

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#### c. Closing Activities

- 1) After the break, the children are gathered again to get ready to go home
- 2) Before leaving, they were asked what activities were carried out on this day
- 3) Remarks randomly selected letters and shows the child to guess what letter is shown
- 4) The child is asked whether he likes it or not in participating in the learning process today.
- 5) After singing together, do a prayer together, greetings and conclusions.

#### 3. Observation Stage

Observations are made simultaneously with the ongoing learning process. Observation of the learning process consists of the involvement and interest of children in activities that have been designed and observing children's development, especially in the development of reading skills.

During the observation, the learning process in Cycle I went well and smoothly even though there were still some obstacles. On the first day, the children were enthusiastic and very happy because learning to read using flashcards was a new activity. This fashcard card has a variety of images, is colorful and is accompanied by the relevant word with an attractive image so that it can attract children's attention because usually children only use children's worksheets and blackboard media and markers in the learning process.

During the learning process, mentioning the sound of letters, differentiating letters and mentioning words, the children were very excited and enthusiastic. All the children came to the front and tried to pronounce the letters on the selected flashcard and were willing to distinguish letters well even though there were some children who had to be guided and motivated. During the activity of mentioning the names of objects that have the same initial sound, the children were also excited to be able to say them. However, there were some children who talked to their friends by themselves, bothered their friends so that the teacher had to reprimand them several times to be able to concentrate back into the learning process. During the learning process there were still children who exemplified their friends because they were still confused and still had difficulty reading. Meanwhile, at the time of learning, they said that the word had the same initial letter and pronounced the pronounced word clearly, the children were also very enthusiastic, although there were still some children who were shy and pronounced the word slowly, too fast and unclear.

Table 1 Recapitulation of Reading Ability Data in Early Childhood Cycle I

No	Achievement of the percentage of reading ability in children	Number of children	Percentage of Number of Children	Children Criteria
1	Children can say the sound of letters	15	40,00%	Start Developing
2	Children can distinguish letters	15	40,00%	Start Developing
3	Children can read words	15	38,75%	Start Developing

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the ability to read in early childhood in PAUD Al-Hikmah, after the action in cycle I is the child who can say the sound of 40% letters, the child who can distinguish the letters 40% and the child who can read the word 38, 75%. So that it is concluded that in the first cycle the child is included in the Start Development criteria with a percentage of 26% - 50% in reading ability in early childhood.

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The ability to read at this time using flashcard media is good enough because there is an increase in children's reading skills in the learning process. However, in cycle I there were still some children who were still confused and there were still children who had difficulty recognizing some letters, they were still not focused when the researcher pointed to the letters and the children paid less attention to the learning process.

There are still some children who are shy and still find it difficult to mention, so they have to give directions first. There are some children who are still assisted by their friends in answering and still have difficulty reading words. And there are also children who make low voices and have difficulty pronouncing some letters.

Based on these data, it can be concluded that the child's ability to read using flashcards has not reached the specified achievement indicators. Researchers and class teachers must conduct an evaluation on the action research cycle I. Therefore, it is necessary to continue and make improvements in the next cycle in order to achieve the expected and planned learning completeness.

4. Reflection Stage

Table 2 Comparison of the Percentage of Reading Ability Improvement in Early Childhood

No	Action	Percentage
1	Pre Action	25,00%
2	Cycle I	38,75%
	Enhancement	13,75%

The solution to some of the problems in cycle 1 is:

- 1) During the learning process, the sitting position of the child is brought together and tidied up, so that the child who is obstructed by his friend is not disturbed anymore. And when the child will mention the researcher approaches the flashcard with the child so that the child can clearly say letters and words. On the flashcard, enlarge it again so that children who cannot be seen can see clearly after the card is enlarged.
- 2) During the learning process using flashcard media, by closing the image first so that the child can spell and not only read the picture, so that the child becomes more enthusiastic and there is an increase in activeness in following learning activities in the next cycle.
- 3) During the learning process using flashcard media, teachers and researchers pay attention and motivate children to be more confident, so that children are able to speak well and do not disturb friends.

Based on the results of the reflection above, the researchers planned to re-plan the learning action to increase reading ability in early childhood using flashcard media for Cycle II. This cycle will optimize the improvement of reading skills in early childhood using the flahscard media until the achievement indicators have been determined.

## 3.3. Research Implementation Cycle II

## 1. Planning Stage

The action plan that will be carried out in Cycle II is by tidying up the sitting position of the child so that the child can see clearly. Flashcards that have been prepared and made enlarged so that they can be used in the learning process. In the use of flashcard media by closing the image first so that the child spells and not only reading the picture, the implementation of activities to improve reading skills in early childhood using flashcard media is supported by a comfortable place, not bored and the child's concentration is not disturbed. Researchers and

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teachers must give more attention and motivation to children who are still shy so that the children are able to say well and do not make noise and disturb their friends.

In Cycle II, researchers and teachers tried to create a more comfortable and enjoyable learning atmosphere. The theme of learning activities in Cycle II is Water Animals. Before carrying out activities using flashcard media, researchers and teachers make children enthusiastic and more comfortable by doing brain exercises so that children can concentrate well

#### 2. Implementation Stage

Action research in Cycle II with the theme of learning aquatic animals and sub-themes of the kinds of animals that live in water.

# a. Apperception Activity

- 1) Designing the RKH according to the theme that will be used
- 2) Prepare learning media that have been enlarged and condition the child to be ready to take part in the learning process
- 3) Invite the children to sing, clap their hands and read prayers or other short letters
- 4) Asking about the day, date, month and year before the learning process starts.

#### b. Core activities

- 1) Explain again about the activities that will be carried out today
- 2) Introduce to children about the themes that will be discussed on this day
- 3) Then the researcher mentions back one by one the letters on the flahscard card
- 4) Randomly choosing one letter to ask the child and the child mentions the selected letter
- 5) Invite the child to guess the word starting with the selected letter by mentioning the characteristics of the animal referred to on the flashcard
- 6) Children say different letters fluently and with the help of researchers
- 7) Close the picture contained in the flahscard card and the child observes the word listed under the picture.
- 8) The child spells the words on the flashcard with the help of the researcher
- 9) Then the child observes and mentions pictures and reads the words aloud and loudly on the flashcard shown by the researcher
- 10) Children have a turn to say letters and read words in turn to find out how their abilities have improved.

#### c. Closing Activities

- 1) After the break, the children are gathered again to get ready to go home
- 2) Before going home, the researcher asked what activities were being carried out on this day
- 3) Remarks randomly selected letters and shows the child to guess what letters the researcher shows
- 4) Asking about the child's feelings whether they are happy or not in following the learning process today.
- 5) After that the researcher and the children sing, pray together, greetings and conclude.

# 3. Observation Stage

During the learning process to increase reading skills in early childhood using flashcard media, researchers and teachers observe the course of the activity, note the actions that have been taken, both actions that are in accordance with the plan and actions that have changed or been added to those that have been planned. Observations are carried out simultaneously with mentoring learning process activities. During the learning process, the improvement of reading skills in early childhood using flashcard media from Cycle I to Cycle II went well

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and smoothly according to plan. The child who used to be rowdy and often annoys friends starts to get enthusiastic and pay attention to the teacher.

The results of observations on the implementation of the action in Cycle II can be said that there is a significant increase in reading ability in early childhood and children feel enthusiastic, happy and able to work together. This can be seen when the learning process in Cycle II becomes more enthusiastic, not ashamed to move forward, louder when mentioning letters, children who used to make noise and disturb friends become enthusiastic and want to pay attention. Children are happier because learning to improve reading skills in early childhood is interesting by using children's flashcard media that can play an active role and not only use children's worksheets or blackboard media.

In Cycle II action research, there was an increase from Cycle I action, because in Cycle II action research the classroom atmosphere was more conducive and the child became calmer so that the learning process of increasing reading ability in early childhood went smoothly.

Table 3 Recapitulation of Reading Ability Data in Early Childhood Cycle II

No	Achievement of the percentage of reading ability in children	Number of children	Percentage of Number of Children	Children Criteria
1	Children can say the sound of letters	15	85,00%	Very Well Developed
2	Children can distinguish letters	15	85,00%	Very Well Developed
3	Children can read words	15	82,50%	Very Well Developed

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that the ability to read in early childhood at PAUD Al-Hikmah after the second cycle is carried out, namely children who can say the sound of letters get a percentage of 85.00%, children who can distinguish letters get a percentage achievement of 85.00% and children who can read words get a percentage achievement of 82.50%. So that in cycle II children have started to develop and fall into the Very Good Developing criteria with the achievement of a percentage of 76% -100% in reading ability in early childhood from 15 people.

The percentage achieved has been very good. Some children are already fluent and memorized in pronouncing the sounds of letters and children are able to read without looking at pictures. In the ability to distinguish letters, the child is able to distinguish letters well when the teacher points to the letters randomly on the card and the child mentions the sound of the letters. Children also begin to understand how to say words that have the same initial letter. Many children are able to say more than 3. While the indicators understand the sound of letters and can distinguish letters so they can read the words on the flashcard. Children are also more confident so they don't copy their friends' work.

Based on these data, it can be concluded that the child's ability to read using flashcards in Cycle II action research has reached indicators of success. The percentage achieved has exceeded the success indicator 76% -100%. Children are on the criteria of Very Well Developed.

4. Reflection Stage

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Table 4 Comparison of the Percentage Improvement in Reading Ability in Early Childhood

No	Action	Percentage
1	Pre Action	25,00%
2	Cycle I	38,75%
3	Cycle II	82,50%

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there is an increase from before the implementation of Cycle I action research and an increase in Cycle II. In the initial condition of the child before the implementation of the action research, the child obtained an average percentage of 25.00% and was included in the Undeveloped criteria. In the first cycle of action research, children obtained an average percentage of 38.75% and were included in the Start Developing criteria. In the second cycle action, the child obtained an average percentage of 82.50% and was included in the Very Good Developing criteria.

In accordance with the concept of learning in PAUD, namely learning while playing, so that by using flashcard media children can play cards while learning to read the letters and words on the flashcard, so that the learning process becomes easier, more enjoyable and more attractive to children. Based on the results of reflection, the researcher and the teacher stopped the action of learning to increase reading ability in early childhood using flashcard media in PAUD Al-Hikmah, because it had reached the achievement indicators that had been planned before.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

In Cycle II, most of the children had reached the success criteria in early childhood reading ability. Even though there are some children who have not achieved the success criteria because they do not have interest or readiness in following the learning process, so they do not pay attention to the teacher and often daydream by themselves. The child annoys friends more often and it is still difficult to concentrate.

This is because the techniques use to improve the early reading skills has already designed for children with difficulties and delays of reading, one of them is proposed by implementing flashcards. Flashcards are more attractive to children so that they feel comfortable while learning

These results are in accordance with several factors that affect reading ability in early childhood, namely psychological factors and reading material. In terms of psychological factors and reading materials, the existence of children's motivation and readiness in the learning process without coercion from others, the children will be able to increase their enthusiasm to continue learning to read reading materials that are easy to understand and can attract children's attention.

Children have no difficulty in pronouncing letters, distinguishing letters and reading words clearly, because children are more confident in moving forward, so they can see flashcard media more clearly. Flashcard media has a form that can attract children's attention in the learning process, because flashcard media is in accordance with the child's world, flahscard cards have attractive and colorful images. Besides the children being clearer when reading the letters on the flashcard, the children also became more active and provided variations in the teacher's learning process.

The results of this study are in line with (Nuligar Hatiningsih and Putri Adriyati) which states that, The intervention provided in the form of flashcard learning method is a stimulus for

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children in reading skills acquisition. The symbols seen by the child will be processed into the brain to be comprehended in accordance with theory that flashcards given repeatedly will give benefits in short-term memory, and if it is repeated from short-term memory, it can be further a long-term memory.

This result is in accordance with the opinion (Nurbiana Dhieni, et al. 2008) which states that using media can overcome the passive attitude of children so that children do not only listen to the teacher but also observe and do and the media can provide variations in the learning process. The media used should be in accordance with the needs of the child. Flashcard media should be made in large sizes, making it easier for children to learn to read.

The results of research at PAUD Al-Hikmah show that this flashcard media is very effective for teachers and children. Teachers can find it easier to teach children to read and children are more interested and easier to understand what is taught by the teacher. This statement is in line with (Mashburn et. Al, 2009) which states that the choice of learning methods is one of the most important factors in influencing children's early reading skills

The process of learning to improve reading in early childhood using flashcard media has been made different in use by closing pictures while playing, so that children become more excited. The classroom atmosphere becomes more conducive and comfortable, so that children can concentrate on the learning process. This result is in accordance with the opinion (Indriana 2011) which states that the use of flashcard media is combined with creative games. Because the flashcard media consists of interesting and colorful words and images, so that it can attract children's attention in the learning process of improvement.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The learning process using flashcard media can improve reading skills in early childhood at PAUD Al-Hikmah. During the learning process the teacher can use learning media optimally. As in designing flashcard media, teachers can prepare simple tools needed to make flashcard media. Then the teacher can use flashcard media in improving reading skills in early childhood by implementing learning while playing with the media to be used. So that children become enthusiastic and motivated to take part in the ongoing learning process.

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