

# The role of parents in improving children's Indonesian language skills through the cartoons Nussa and Rara

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## ABSTRACT

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This study aims to determine the role of parents in improving Indonesian language skills so that it makes it easier for children to communicate with others. This study uses a qualitative research approach with a phenomenological type. The subjects in this study consisted of four parents who had children at the early age category. The research was conducted in Ploso hamlet, Segunung village, Mojokerto district. Data collection techniques used in this study were interviews and documentation. The data in this study were analyzed using data reduction stages, then describing the data into scientific data, and concluding based on the data description. The results of this study indicate that there has been an effective increase in the use of Indonesian in communication and the addition of new vocabulary after watching the Nussa and Rara cartoons so that this is effective to apply with the help of parents and educators.

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## 1. Introduction

In golden age, according to Sahayu et al. (2022) is the most important and basic initial period throughout the span of human growth and development. That's because at this age they have the potential to develop rapidly. Children are excellent imitators, they can absorb and capture whatever is around them, so they need more in-depth attention regarding children's development so that it is more optimal.

Among the various aspects of child development that need to be optimized is language development. According to the Nativist theory, language ability is an innate ability, this is also supported Bakala et al. (2021), who argues that language ability is an ability possessed by a person based on initial knowledge obtained biologically. According to several theories, it is argued that children's language skills have existed since birth, so parents play a role in helping children develop the language they have.

Language acquisition or *iktisab al lughah* is a process of mastering a language that is obtained by someone unconsciously, implicitly, and informally. Alfonso & Lonigan (2021) states that what is meant by language acquisition is the language used by humans without any process qualifications that produce language knowledge, and without being formally learned by speakers. Based on the opinion above, the acquisition of children's language is obtained unconsciously, parents develop and enrich children's language in various ways, namely by inviting children to tell stories, reading story books, or listening to audio-visual children who can develop their language (McDonald et al., 2019; Panesi & Morra, 2022).

It is important to teach Indonesian to children from an early age so that it makes it easier for children to communicate with other people from various regions when they are adults (Masek et al., 2021). Acquisition of Indonesian is a necessity for children while attending education in formal institutions (Sahayu et al., 2022). Teachers use Indonesian when teaching in class and outside the classroom, teachers use Indonesian to communicate with children and vice versa, and children use Indonesian with other children. Communication activities carried out by teachers and children are the basis for children to meet the needs of learning a second language while studying in formal institutions.

Learning Indonesian can be interpreted as learning to improve children's ability to communicate in both spoken and written language (Riza et al., 2021). The importance of improving children's Indonesian language skills is to make it easier for children to communicate both orally and in writing, so parents need to teach Indonesian to their children too (Gladfelter et al., 2019). At the beginning of development, the child does acquire the mother tongue, usually the child acquires the mother tongue according to the area where he comes from, if he comes from Java the child will get Javanese as his mother tongue.

Indonesian is the language of unity which was born because of a decision and planning. When the independence of the Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed on August 17, 1945, Indonesian officially became the national language in its truest sense. Indonesian is designated as the language of government and administration which is used in formal situations such as speech, writing and language in official mass media such as television, radio, newspapers, and magazines as well as books. The formal language is also the language used as a medium of communication in schools and universities as well as other official events. Indonesian is the main medium of communication for Indonesian people. This is the importance of parents teaching their children Indonesian from an early age as the national language.

Parents, especially mothers, have a role in optimizing various privileges in early childhood. Mother is the first school for her child. In Islam, children are born in a state of *fitriah* (holy), they are born with great potential that is in them. Children need direction and guidance from adults to hone their potential. So that in this case, it is important for parents to accompany the development of their children in the future so that they can develop as expected.

Family is the first and most important center of education (Hasniati, 2022; Hémar-Nicolas et al., 2021). The role of parents in children's education is to provide basic education, attitudes, and basic skills, such as religious education, manners, manners, aesthetics, affection, a sense of security, basics for obeying rules, and instilling good habits. In this study, children's language development focuses on the role of parents in children's language development, because parents are their children's first

education. The role of parents greatly determines the development of children's language at home before entering formal education.

Mothers who do not play a role in meeting the basic needs of children have an impact on children's development, namely the disruption of children's language development for the next stage. Parents (mothers) are the first to invite children to communicate, so that children understand how to interact with other people using language. Environment (family) is one of the factors that influence the growth and development of children.

In the Ploso hamlet, Mojokerto district, researchers found that there were still children who were in the area who were unable to use Indonesian to communicate, so that when invited to communicate they did not understand and were just silent and then turned their faces in the other direction. After finding out the causes of the parents and the people around them, the researchers found that from a young age the people around them were accustomed to speaking Javanese so that Indonesian was considered a new language even though Indonesian was the national language.

There needs to be a solution to the problems that occur in the hamlet of Ploso, Mojokerto district. One form of effort that can be done to improve Indonesian language skills in early childhood is through social media. At this time the media is developing very rapidly so that access to find anything becomes wider, so that social media is one of the solutions that can be used by parents to improve their children's Indonesian language skills. Over the past 5 years, the development of social media has been very rapid, especially YouTube. Through YouTube, everyone is competing to create content that is interesting, entertaining, and educational.

In this study, parents were involved in improving Indonesian language skills in early childhood through the Nussa and Rara cartoon films, so that parents could optimize their children's Indonesian language development. This is in line with the opinion which states that at an early age is the golden age for children to learn a language, so the role of the people around them is very helpful in acquiring and mastering children's language (Dewi et al., 2022). Cartoon films have long been

a content that is attractive to children, apart from being packaged with an attractive appearance, the language used is also simpler, so that it is easier for children to digest and understand the intent of the contents of the content. The cartoon film Nussa and Rara is one of the Islamic cartoons that is presented about daily life to audiences that are popular from childhood to adulthood, because there are many aspects of development that children can develop through these cartoons.

This Nussa and Rara cartoon film can educate children not only on the development of religious and moral values, but also language because this cartoon shows how to speak properly and correctly. Besides being able to add to the child's vocabulary, it also teaches children how to speak properly and politely and respect elders.

In this study, the authors are interested in examining the role of parents in improving Indonesian language skills in early childhood in Ploso Hamlet, Mojokerto Regency, because after children acquire their mother tongue by their parents, namely using the regional language (Javanese language) as everyday language, children so they don't know how to use Indonesian in communicating, so when a child is invited to communicate by someone from a different city he doesn't understand the meaning of the conversation. In essence, we are Indonesians, it is important for children to know how to communicate using Indonesian as the national language.

This research is in line with research that has been conducted with the title *Growing Good and Correct Indonesian in Education and Teaching* (Pierucci et al., 2023). This research has similarities with the research which revealed that it is important to teach children Indonesian as the national language. Indonesian serves as a communication tool and has a role as a transmitter of information. Under certain conditions, namely in formal situations, the correct use of Indonesian is a top priority. Indonesian is also a language capable of bridging the communication gap between tribes who have different regional languages. The main means of realizing and maintaining *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

Steps taken in cultivating good and correct Indonesian in education and teaching are to avoid using slang, it is necessary to make efforts at this time to instill and develop understanding and love in the nation's generation for Indonesian as the national language, to make people aware that Indonesian is the national language. Indonesia as the national language, instills a spirit of unity and oneness within the nation's generation, the Indonesian government must emphasize the use of Indonesian in

Indonesian-produced films, increase the teaching of Indonesian in schools and in universities, while efforts to foster a positive attitude towards Indonesian are carried

out with the mass media path and the leadership path.

As a support and reinforcement in this study, it is necessary to have a theory related to the concept being studied. The theory used in this research is the role of parents, the concept of using Indonesian from an early age, the concept of the Nussa and Rara cartoon films. The role of parents includes the understanding and role of parents. Indonesian language concepts in early childhood include understanding, urgency, steps for developing children's language, functions. While the concept of the Nussa and Rara cartoon films includes understanding, history, film background, advantages, and disadvantages.

Based on the problems that occurred in the Ploso hamlet, a problem was formulated to answer the gaps in the field, namely what are the stages of the development of Indonesian language skills for early childhood? and what is the role of parents in improving early childhood Indonesian language skills through the cartoons Nussa and Rara? The researcher hopes that through this research the children in Ploso hamlet can use Indonesian properly when communicating and understand the meaning of other people's conversations so that they are able to provide feedback when speaking.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Types of Research

This research is field research using qualitative research, as a research procedure that produces descriptive data, in the form of written or spoken words from people or behaviors that can be observed in these heirs who take their own part in Mattoanging Village and ownership status in Islamic law (Crabtree & Miller, 2022; Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Finn et al., 2022; Köhler et al., 2022).

### 2.2. Research Instrument

Data collection techniques were carried out by interview and observation methods. Data collection instruments on Indonesian language skills in early childhood were obtained from the results of the children's abilities before and after watching the cartoons Nussa and Rara.

### 2.3. Research Procedures

In this study, 4 parents and 4 early childhood children were involved as data collection objects. The data collection technique was carried out with parents by conducting interviews and observing children during the process of watching the Nussa and Rara cartoon films and after watching the film.

### 2.4. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching for and compiling what is obtained from interviews, field notes, and other materials, so that it can be easily understood, and of course it can be informed to others. The data analysis technique in this study was carried out by data reduction, then describing the data into scientific data, and concluding based on the data description.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Result

Based on the research that has been done by the researcher, the researcher can describe the results of this study in the description attached below. The role of parents in improving children's Indonesian language skills through the cartoons Nussa and Rara in this study showed interesting results. The results of this study show that there is an increase in Indonesian language skills shown by children after watching the Nussa and Rara cartoon films.

In the first stage, the children sat together and watched the Nussa and Rara cartoons in the episode "Tolerance". In this episode, it tells the story of a courier who is repairing his luggage to be sent to the destination address immediately. But suddenly one of the rope hooks released and caused the item to fall. Nussa and Rara that day were playing in the garden around their house when they saw the courier who was having trouble. They immediately approached the courier:

*"we will help you sis" said Nussa "Come on ra, a little more" continued Nussa.*

*“Thank you, kids, these kids are great,” said the courier.  
“Thank God, you're welcome sis, we're also happy to be able to help” said Nussa  
“I hope it's okay sis”*

continued Rarathat.

*“We sincerely help brother, the important thing is that all of your belongings are safe,” said Nussa  
“praise God, may God bless you, thank you again,” said the courier  
“You're welcome sis, be careful,” said Nussa and Rara*

Based on the results of the interview what was done to AR's parents regarding this Tolerance episode showed the results:

*“Every day my child speaks Javanese, but after watching this Nussa and Rara cartoon, his vocabulary increases in speaking Indonesian to me, for example he says 'thank you mom ' as I gave him a glass of milk. I was surprised because usually he spoke Javanese, but suddenly he spoke Indonesian after watching the Nussa and Rara cartoons. Even though he still uses Javanese more often, he can still speak Indonesian”*

Based on the results of interviews conducted with AZA's parents regarding the Tolerance episode, the results show:

*“My child really enjoys watching the Nussa and Rara cartoons and he enjoys repeating the cartoons. AZA got a lot of new Indonesian vocabulary like where to go?, want that, play around, go there. AZA uses Indonesian mixed with Javanese every day, because at school he still speaks Indonesian occasionally when talking to his teacher. But when he is at home he speaks Javanese more often, because at home all family members speak Javanese”*

Based on the results of interviews conducted with WI's parents regarding the Tolerance episode, the results show:

*“I also now enjoy watching the Nussa and Rara cartoons, almost every day. He watches Nussa and Rara using youtube kids stories about tolerance. He didn't just watch please and thank you. WI is not fluent in Indonesian, because everyday at home we speak Javanese. But if asked to speak Indonesian, he also understands, even though he can't say it directly”*

Based on the results of interviews conducted with EK's parents regarding this Tolerance episode, the results show:

*“EK plays with gadgets every day, he also likes watching cartoons on his cell phone. Not only Nussa and Rara, but he also enjoys watching Upin and Ipin cartoons. Indonesian is rarely used at home. Everyday we speak Javanese more often because the environment and family members also speak Javanese more often. EK is a shy child, he rarely interacts with other people except playing with WI. If the mother has never spoken to EK in Indonesian but doesn't know how to play, because EK and WI are also in the same school, at school the children usually speak Indonesian with the teacher. But EK also understands if we speak Indonesian when we talk to him”*

In the second stage, the children sat down together and watched the Nussa and Rara cartoons in the episode "My Neighbors are Great". In this episode, it tells about a girl named Syifa, Nussa and Rara's new neighbor. One afternoon, Nussa and Abdul were playing football in a park. When Abdul kicked the ball, the ball then hit the trash cans around the park so that the trash inside was scattered.

*“Oops, so messy ...” said Nussa and Abdul  
“Come on, let's clean it up” Nussa continued. said a girl  
“whose ball is this again?” continued  
Nussa and Abdul, who had wanted to clean up the trash, then stopped.  
“why stop first?” said Nussa*

*"Isn't someone already cleaned it too... (while chuckling)" Abdul replied  
"I'm embarrassed ah that girl looks like she's grumpy" continued Abdul  
"Do you really know her?" asked Nussa  
"no... hihi" Abdul replied.*

At that time Rara had just returned from school, on the way she had to pass through a busy highway with vehicles, she was confused and afraid if she had to cross alone. Suddenly there was a girl who wanted to cross and offered help to Rara.

*"Hello deck, do you want to cross? Let's just be together," said the girl.  
"Well, it's safe... hold my hand, okay ..." he continued  
"Thank God ... thank you sis ..." Said Rara*

Umma, who also just arrived home when she was about to return from shopping. He was also helped by a daughter, he helped Umma bring her groceries to the house.

*"Thank God, I arrived home, thank you very much for bringing Umma's groceries home"  
Umma said  
"yes... you're welcome, Auntie. I'm also happy to be able to help" answered the girl*

Umma, who had just arrived at the house, then opened the door and greeted her. Nussa, Rara and also Abdul who was inside also answered the greeting. Immediately they were surprised by the arrival of the girl earlier.

*"Assalamualaikum everyone, introduce me to Syifa," said the girl named Syifa.  
"Thank you, sis, for helping Rara cross earlier," Rara said after answering greetings.  
"Hey Syifa, I'm Nussa and this is Abdul" Syifa replied  
"Hi Nussa, hi Abdul" he replied.  
"Yes, mysterious woman, uh I mean Syifa .... (while scratching her head embarrassed)" said Abdul*

Syifa who saw Abdul holding a ball felt familiar to see her. Abdul then admitted that it was his ball and told the incident while playing ball. He then apologized and hoped that Syifa would not be angry. Suddenly Syifa frowned.

*"I'm really fierce huh" said Syifa*

Rara thought that Syifa was angry and then teased Abdul and Nussa. Abdul again apologized to Syifa about the incident earlier. Seeing Nussa and Abdul's expressions, Syifa immediately laughed at him and replied that it was okay.

Umma then came from inside and saw that they all knew each other and were familiar. Syifa turns out to be their new neighbor. Nussa and Syifa, who already understand the knowledge of neighborly etiquette, also relate the hadiths they have memorized to each other. Umma then gave a box of vegetable soup to Syifa to give to her mother, Umma also gave it to Abdul. After that, Syifa said goodbye to go home because her moving truck would be arriving soon. Nussa then offered to help Syifa tidy up the house, they asked Umma's permission and then said goodbye too. They then went together to Shiva's house. Based on the results of interviews conducted with AR's parents regarding their opinion in this episode:

*"I found that AR did not only increase in terms of vocabulary, even though Javanese cannot be separated in daily conversations with people around him. However, his ability to speak Indonesian has improved quite a bit. On the first day I was surprised he said 'thank you' to me. During his introduction at school, he was able to introduce himself to Indonesian by saying 'my name is AR' I live in plosa"*

In the opinion of AZA's parents, he said that:

*"even though AZA still uses Javanese every day, he understands when he talks to other people who speak Indonesian. Occasionally he also uses Indonesian, but still uses a lot of everyday"*

*Javanese. I also often invite AZA to speak in Indonesian so that he can use Indonesian well in the future”*

Meanwhile, according to WI's parents, he said that:

*“Since WI often watch Nussa and Rara cartoons he is slowly able to speak Indonesian, like thank you, where are you going? that's a word WI can pronounce, though not continuously. That word is sometimes said again in Javanese like maturuwun and nandi?”*

Meanwhile, in the opinion of EK's parents, he said that:

*“Since watching the Nussa and Rara cartoons, I saw EK say thank you in Indonesian to me. EK, who usually speaks Javanese every day at home, even when playing, rarely speaks Indonesian. Thank you is the first word I hear from EK at home”*

### 3.2. Discussion

Based on the standard reference for early childhood education, No. 58 of 2009, when a child enters kindergarten (TK), there are three stages in developing a child's language, namely (1) receiving language, (2) expressing language, and (3) literacy (Panasi & Morra, 2022). Based on several parents' opinions in the first stage it can be concluded that children experience stages of language development in accordance with early childhood education standards through the Nussa and Rara cartoon films, namely children receive language, by watching Nussa and Rara cartoon films the child's vocabulary increases. The increased vocabulary is then used by the child when talking to other people, in this case the child can express the language he knows to other people, even though in daily use they still use Javanese more often.

This can be seen when researchers make observations. When WI and EK played together at Ms. NI's house, researchers saw WI and EK occasionally use Indonesian when playing, such as “that's my pencil,” WI said, then EK answered “not that your pencil, it's on the side”. Even though they use Indonesian mixed with Javanese, in fact they are capable and understand their conversation. Researchers also saw AR thanking AZA for lending a pencil. The results of the observations made showed that there was an addition to the Indonesian language vocabulary for children after watching the Nussa and Rara cartoon films.

In line with behavioristic theory, Skinner revealed that speaking and understanding language are obtained through environmental stimulation, namely about a learning theory called operant conditioning, therefore Skinner believes that verbal behavior is behavior that is desired is behavior that is controlled by its consequences (Masek et al., 2021; Riza et al., 2021). This also affects AR, AZA, WI, and EK in Indonesian, the stimulation from the environment through the Nussa and Rara cartoons given by parents to children shows an increase in the use of Indonesian in children. The habituation given continuously through the Nussa and Rara cartoons will provide a more significant increase in the use of Indonesian in everyday life.

The presence of parents in children's language development cannot be ignored. According to Papalia, et. al, that parents play an important role in every language development. The results of Riza et al. (2021) describe that the intensity of parents who invite their children to talk is an important determinant for stimulating the development of children's language skills. As someone who is responsible for the growth and development of children, parents are expected to be sensitive and active in helping children complete one of their developmental tasks, namely honing language skills.

This is in line with Panasi & Morra (2022) that children learn grammar more easily by listening to short sentences. Therefore, the golden age phase must really be utilized by parents, because the best period for acquiring language for children is at that stage. Touch, attention, guidance, and togetherness between mother and child are the main factors in providing stimulation.

Based on the opinion of parents in the second stage, it can be concluded that children are able to understand Indonesian if they speak with other people with the help and role of parents in it. The increase in the use of Indonesian was quite good after watching the Nussa and Rara cartoons in the second stage, this was seen when the researchers saw WI and EK playing in front of the house. They

use Indonesian quite well rather than Javanese, even though they speak a mixture of Indonesian and Javanese simultaneously.

Even so, AR and AZA also experienced a pretty good improvement in their use of Indonesian, because after using the word thank you, researchers also saw AR apologize to AZA when he accidentally spilled water on his study table. After the researchers observed and found out about this, the increase in the use of WI, EK, AR, and AZA Indonesian which was quite good was due to the help of their parents too, by occasionally inviting them to speak Indonesian such as, say sorry, please and thank you. Not only the stimulus through the Nussa and Rara cartoon films, but also the support of their parents in helping children use Indonesian well in everyday life.

After conducting interviews and observations made on parents and children above, it can be concluded that the role of parents in improving Indonesian language skills in early childhood through the cartoons Nussa and Rara is quite effective to be applied so that the stages of children's abilities develop well, being able to add the child's vocabulary and makes the child use Indonesian in speaking with other people and understanding the meaning of the conversation. This can be seen from the support of parents for children in improving Indonesian language skills in children watching the cartoons Nussa and Rara on episodes of tolerance and great neighbors as well as observations made after children watch.

#### 4. Conclusion

Researchers found that the role of parents in improving Indonesian language skills in young children through the cartoons Nussa and Rara was quite effective. This can be seen in the results of research that was conducted for two days watching Nussa and Rara cartoons. The changes seen after watching provide evidence of an increase in speaking Indonesian in early childhood. It is also effective not only because of the cartoons watched by young children. However, there is the role of parents in supporting children to use Indonesian properly and correctly. Even though Javanese cannot be lost from children's everyday language, through this cartoon, Nussa and Rara teaches children to continue to speak Indonesian in everyday life as the national language.

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