

## **Interpersonal Intelligence of Students Through Thematic Learning in Raudhatul Athfal (RA) Zulhijjah Medan**

Dr. Khadijah, M.Ag<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer at PGRA Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Education, State Islamic University (UINSU/IAIN), Medan, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** *The intelligence will not develop at an early age. In its developing will rise various problems for the future. This phenomenon in Indonesia today is already fragile such as sense of social solidarity among fellow, mutual suspicion, do not respect each other, selfish, individual interests, in Indonesia today. Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with others. It is measured by the characteristics namely: know how to wait their turn when playing, dare to go to school alone, conduct using a tool or a toy according to its function, orderly and accustomed to waiting. Understand the consequences of the violation and the responsibility, ability to lead a bigger group to play (between 4-8 people), having skill to solve simple problems. Based on the data above, the average value of interpersonal children Zulhijjah Medan RA group B at initial assessment is still relatively low, it can be seen by a final score of 316 at an average value of 37.61%.*

**Keywords:** *Interpersonal Intelligence; Kindergarten; Thematic; Children*

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### **I. Introduction**

The development of interpersonal intelligence starting from an early age is beneficial for someone to be able to solve various problems in life and be able to produce goods or services that are useful in various aspects of life. So, if the intelligence does not develop at an early age, it will arise various problems for the future. This phenomenon occurs in Indonesia today which is already fragile sense of social solidarity among fellow, mutual suspicion, do not respect each other, selfish, individual interests, etc. The riot occurs among tribes, races and religions. And the riot also happens among students, among community groups, and so forth. More ironic is the moral and religious values are not used as guidelines in our daily lives.

The procedure of thematic learning in kindergarten (TK) is expressed by Rohde (1991):

- a) Define the theme
- b) Develop themes into more specific sub-themes to be used in the learning topics.
- c) Designing lesson plans in accordance with the theme.
- d) Designing a weekly activity plan.
- e) Pay attention to classroom management.
- f) Provide instructional media.
- g) Create an atmosphere of thematic.
- h) Conduct learning beyond planning.
- i) Carry out assessment of the understanding and interests of children through observation.
- j) Conduct evaluation of learning.
- k) Determine the expansion of the theme when the interests of children on the theme of the great.

Learning approach, in Zulhijjah kindergarten, uses thematic learning for the application of concept of learning by doing. So teachers need to package or stimulating learning experience that will affect the significance of student learning. Learning experience will show the link of conceptual elements to make the learning process more effective. The conceptual connection between the subjects studied and the scheme will acquire knowledge of wholeness. In addition, the application of thematic learning according to the development stage of students still see everything as a whole (holistic).

### **II. Methodology**

#### **2.1 Some Definition of Interpersonal Intelligence:**

- a. Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with others. It is measured by the characteristics proposed by Gardner (in Suyadi 2010), namely: a) Know how to wait their turn when playing,
- b. Dare to go to school alone,
- c. Conduct using a tool or a toy according to its function,
- d. orderly and accustomed to waiting,
- e. Understand the consequences of the violation and the responsibility,

- f. Ability to lead a bigger group to play (between 4-8 people),
- g. Having skill to solve simple problems.

Learning thematic is learning of how to combine various aspects of capabilities including physical, social-emotional, cognitive, language and religious values that allow students to actively seek, explore and discover the scientific concept holistically, meaningful, authentic and well-planned.

## **2.2 Subject Research**

The subjects are students of Raudhatul Athfal Zulhijjah Medan at more or less the age range of 5-6 years. In grade B (class of Abu Bakr) amounted to 10 children. This study uses classroom action research. It means research that is reflective to perform certain actions, in order to fix or improve practice in the classroom professionally. More Nc. Niff. (1992) suggested that the purpose of action research is to enhance or improve the practice of learning to be more effective.

This study is conducted using Kemmis and Taggart (1999) Models in which the procedure of the research carried out through four stages:

- a. planning
- b. action,
- c. observation and
- d. reflection

In this action, research investigators act as a developer of learning approaches, implementing measures, as well as observers in the implementation of the action. In addition, the researcher helped by one teacher as observer, to help observe the interaction between children in the learning process during the action performed, as input for the next learning process improvement.

## **2.3 Definition of Early Childhood Education**

Early childhood education, according to NAECY (in Bredekamp, 1992) is as educational services provided to children from 8 years old, both activity and a half-day or full held at the school, or other places. In line with that proposed by Jamaris (2006) that the process of early childhood education occurs since the child in womb, infancy until the child is about 8 years old. Until now, early childhood education in Indonesia (0-8) years old, has become the center of attention of parents, education experts, public and government. The results shows that at an early age is a very valuable time for children, and the right to instill the foundation of personality, so early childhood is called the golden era (Semiawan, 2004).

## **2.4 Interpersonal Intelligence of Students**

Intelligence, by Gardner (in Megawangi, 2005), is the ability to solve various problems in life and be able to produce goods or services that are useful in various aspects of life and it is the highest ability possessed by humans. The level of intelligence can help someone in dealing with various problems that arise in life. Human intelligence has been owned since birth and can continually be developed to adult. Development of intelligence would be better if it is done as early as possible by providing stimulation to the five senses. Intelligence also has benefits for self and social life in the community. Through a high level of intelligence, someone will be appreciated in society especially when he is able to take part in creating new things that are phenomenal.

Howard Earl Gardner is a professor of education at Harvard University saying that study of human intelligence discovers by nature;

- a. every human being has a spectrum of eight different intelligences and uses it in ways that are very individual;
- b. everyone can develop all of intelligence to achieve an adequate level;
- c. every intelligence cooperates with each other in complex because in every intelligence there are various ways to cultivate one aspect.

Gardner (1999) also informs that the plural intelligences (multiple Intelligences are a descriptive assessment seeing how people use their intelligence to solve problems in producing something. There are eight intelligences by Gardner (2013) includes musical intelligence, kinesthetic intelligence, logical-mathematical, linguistic, spatial, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence. Individuals who have a high interpersonal intelligence, will have different characteristics with individuals who do not have interpersonal intelligence.

Gardner (in Suyadi, 2010) states that the characteristics of early childhood 5-6 years old who have high interpersonal intelligence, namely:

- a) Knowing how to wait their turn when playing
- b) Dare to go to school without transfer  
In children this age, the child had dared to go to school without escorted by their parents or guardians, but it is only in children near his home in the school, for it is still a simple courage.
- c) Conduct a toy using tools or objects according to their function.  
Children are able to use traditional instruments to play according to their usefulness.
- d) Orderly and used to waiting their turn  
Children are able to understand the rules/disciplines so as to be orderly in following the rules that have been determined and able to be patient in waiting for their turn in all the activities undertaken.
- e) Understanding the consequences of the violation and the responsibility brave
- f) Able to lead a bigger group play a bigger (between 4-8 people) Simply put, leadership is a term that indicates the ability of commanding and assertive to arrange everything. Basically, every child has the potential to be a leader. With the leadership skills, children can understand the responsibility, perseverance, discipline and empathy for others. These skills are required for anyone who wants to achieve success in their own fields.
- g) Having skill to solve simple problems.  
In the face of interpersonal conflict, it is necessary skills in problem solving. The higher the children's ability to solve the problem, the more positive results will get from the settlement of interpersonal conflicts.

### **2.5 Factors Influencing Interpersonal Intelligence**

Interpersonal intelligence is influenced by two major factors which are interrelated according to Safaria (2005):

#### **a. Genetic Factors**

Genetics/heredity is a factor existing in intelligence because it is associated with the nerves in the brain organ. Brain speed processing or process the feedback obtained is very dependent on the conditions and the maturity of the brain. If the organ is in good condition, the treatment processes of any of the received brain will be captured properly and executed according to orders of the brain. It is confirmed by the opinion and Hidayati Mangoenprasodjo (2005) that the intelligence or capture power is strongly influenced by genetic lineages or brought from the family's father and mother.

#### **b. Environmental Factor**

In addition to genetic factors inborn, the environment leads to changes that are meaningful to the development of individual intelligence, as proposed by Mangoenprasodjo and Hidayati (2005) that a superior generation will not grow by itself, they really need a fertile environment which is deliberately created for it allowing their potential to grow optimally. The four environmental factors affect the development potential of interpersonal intelligence of students, namely: the home environment (parenting, stimulation, etc.), meaning that the family environment is an educational environment is first and foremost, because since the child in the womb until birth are in family. It is in line proposed by Santoso (2002) that family is very important in the education process to form the whole person.

The school environment is one of the neighborhoods that also cultivates the full potential of interpersonal intelligence of children. Therefore, teachers should be able to create a management learning environment that is able to stimulate their full potential, as proposed by Mariyana (2005) that the learning environment is a means by which students can devote himself to move, including performing various manipulations create a lot of things until they can be a number of new behavior of the activity.

A factor of nutrition as proposed by Mangoenprasodjo and Hidayati (2005) that good nutrition is essential for the growth of brain cells that is at the moment the brain cells are growing rapidly. Meanwhile, according to Armstrong (1994), there are three factors that influence individual brilliance that is biological, personal life history, as well as the cultural and historical background, as follows:

#### **i. Biological Factors**

Biological factors include heredity or genetics, injury to the brain before, during and after birth. Gardner (in Musfiroh, 2008) states that all indices in brain research stated the front of the brain plays a prominent role in interpersonal knowledge. If the front of the brain is damage, it will affect a person's intelligence, especially relation to others.

#### **ii. The History of Private Life**

Armstrong (1994) argues that the history of private life includes experiences with parents, teachers, peers, friends and others will build the development of intelligence. Thus the experience of childhood in play, along with peers, will give a deep impression on the basis of developments in the future. Things that should be considered in play activities for preschool children according to Soetjningsih (1995) is the extra energy, time,

game equipment, room to play, knowledge of how to play, and play with. The child should feel confident that he has a playmate when she needed, whether it is his brother, his parents or friends. Because when children play alone, then he will lose the opportunity to learn from their peers. Conversely, if too much time playing with other children, it can lead to the child can not have enough opportunities to entertain themselves and find their own needs. When you do play activities with their parents, the relationship of parent and child become familiar, and mother/father will soon find out any abnormalities occurring in their children at an early stage.

### **iii. Cultural and Historical Background**

Armstrong (1994) claims that cultural and historical background of the time and place where a person was born and raised and the nature and state of progress of culture or history.

## **2.6 Thematic Learning in PAUD**

Jamaris (2008) reveals that thematic learning is learning which is designed based on a particular theme. In its discussion, theme is revisited from a variety of development in early childhood. Thematic learning provides a breadth and depth of curriculum implementation, offers the opportunity very much on students to bring dynamism in education. Thematic unit is the epitome of the whole language learning which facilitates students to productively answer the questions raised themselves and satisfy the curiosity with a natural appreciation of the world around them.

Jamaris (2008) argues that the application of thematic learning as curriculum that integrates development efforts contained in one clump or several clumps field of early childhood development. Clumps of early childhood development are:

- a. physical development (coordination of fine and gross motor),
- b. development of intelligence (the intellect, creativity, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence), development of social-emotional (attitudes, moral, and religious ),
- c. the development of language and communication.

While Lake (in Khadijah, 2011) suggested that the thematic learning is an education preparing to children for lifelong learning. According to the integrated learning, it includes activities combine various subjects, emphasizes learning with the project, the sources that are used not only textbook, connecting various concepts, using a thematic approach as the principles of learning, having a flexible schedule and grouping of students who are flexible. Lake adds (in Khadijah, 2011) that thematic learning involved as a learning approach based on the approach "inquiry" in which children are involved in planning, exploration and ideas. Children are also encouraged to collaborate with friends and reflect on learning in their own way. Kids are empowered as learners and they are expected to be able to pursue their own learning needs through the themes designed significantly. Children will discover how to learn.

## **2.7 Principles of Thematic Learning of Webb Model**

The principles of the model of thematic learning based on the opinion of Collin and Dixson (1991) are as follows:

- a) Thematic learning aims to help early childhood actualize its potential in various forms capabilities such as:
  - i. Physical abilities (motoric crude and refined),
  - ii. The ability of intelligence (the intellect, creativity, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence),
  - iii. Social-emotional abilities (attitudes, religion and moral behavior),
  - iv. Language and communication skills.
- b) The development of a variety of potential early childhood to become the actual ability which is done through integrated learning in its implementation needs to consider:
  - i. The level of demand and development,
  - ii. Interest and,
  - iii. Changes in the growth and development of early childhood towards the better.
- c) In accordance with the paradigm of the learning process occurs in early childhood is to learn while playing at the same time need to consider the criteria of play in early childhood, namely:
  - i. The play activities arising under the motivation is intrinsic,
  - ii. Playing an activity that is fun and enjoyable for the child,
  - iii. Playing through an integrated learning needs to accommodate the play function to play for the growth and development of early childhood such as:

- Maintain physical balance, intelligence, social-emotional and language and communication,
  - Appreciate the wide range of experience gained through daily life,
  - Anticipating the role that will be executed early childhood in the future,
  - Enhance various abilities through a variety of communications intelligence capabilities
- Through social-emotional, language and communication in an integrated and holistic, positive behavioral development in a variety of habituation.

d) Implementation of an integrated learning (thematic) in early childhood needs to be designed with due regard to the elaboration of the themes in the learning plan is quarterly, weekly and daily.

e) In line with the nature of early childhood active, initiative, and creative as well as the mission of early childhood development, the learning method in integrated learning (thematic) should be emphasized on giving children the opportunity to perform exploration, inquiry, discovery, teamwork, argued opinion and the ability to listen to others.

## **2.8 Characteristics of Thematic Learning**

As a model of learning in kindergarten, thematic learning have characteristics as presented by Rohde (1991) as follows:

1. Based on students: Learning thematic centered learning (student centered), which is in line with the approach of learning modern which puts more students as a subject of study while more teachers act as facilitators that provide easiness to students for learning activities.
2. Provide direct experience: thematic learning can give students direct experience (direct experiences). By direct experience, students are exposed to something tangible (concrete) as a basis for understanding the things that are more abstract.
3. The focus of learning is directed to the discussion of the themes most closely associated with student life.
4. Presenting the concept of the various aspects of development. Thus, students are able to understand these concepts in their entirety. It is necessary to help students in solving the problems faced in everyday life.
5. Characteristically flexible: Thematic Learning is flexible (flexible) where teachers can associate teaching materials to students' lives and circumstances in which schools and students are.
6. Learning outcomes in accordance with the interests and needs of students: Students are given the opportunity to optimize their potential in accordance with the interests and needs.
7. Using the principle of learning through play and fun.

Thus, it is concluded that the above specific characteristics, distinguishing thematic learning with other learning approaches. Where the characteristics of thematic learning includes child-centered, providing direct experience, presents the concept of the various aspects of development, is flexible, learning outcomes according to their interests and needs of students, and using the principle of learning through play.

## **2.9 Procedures on Thematic Learning**

Thematic learning procedures proposed by Rohde (1991) includes:

- a) Choosing a theme is first select a theme that is close to the child's life. Then gradually go to theme a bit far with a child's life.
- b) The theme consists of sub-themes are varied ranged from 35 or even more than 100. So do not try to discuss all the sub in one week, but choose sub-themes that will be discussed be the topic of about 10 to 15 only.
- c) Design of learning related to the theme that is sure to select at least one model of learning in developing the spec-development aspect. where these activities represent a wide range of models presented a like experience, demonstrations, investigations, and discussions.
- d) Designing a weekly activity plan for preparing a theme-related activities during the week and carry out any activities in accordance with the prescribed schedule and plan of activity that is not related to the theme to fill the remaining time in learning.
- e) Noting manage things in the classroom. Such as the availability of materials, the number of students, and special events and to execute the implementation in accordance with the plan.
- f) Provide media. namely creating props / media that can be used more than one activity as a way to minimize preparation time.
- g) Create an atmosphere that is posting thematic themes associated with images that match the child's developmental level. Select the recordings, books, fiddling fingers, and songs that relate to the topic.
- h) Carry out planning which utilizes the spontaneous unplanned events to increase understanding of the child because of the concept that they will explore,
- i) The value of the level of understanding and interests of children through observation of make a note (note anecdotes).

- j) Evaluation of the implementation of the themes that has been done is evaluate the deficiencies in the learning process has been carried out and regroup weekly plan to improve the learning process.
- k) Determine the expansion of the theme when the interests of children on the theme of the great. This can be seen when children show that he understands and interested in the subject matter, then expand the additional material in the next few weeks.

Thematic learning by studying Gestalt theory (in Jamaris, 2010), emphasized the importance of the whole. That is something that exceeds the number of elements and arise earlier than its parts. Parts or elements are separated from one another, which does not have a functional relationship. According to Gestalt (in Jamaris, 2010) studied not only the association between stimulus responses that are becoming more powerful due to a variety of exercises and repetition-repetition. When that occurs when there is an understanding. This notion appears if there is someone, after a while, trying to understand a problem, lack of clarity, the relationship between the elements to one another, then understood nothing to do, and then to understand its meaning.

The principles learned the following is a summary or conclusion of the gestalt theory:

- 1) Learning starts from a whole, then new to the parts,
- 2) Overall give meaning to the parts. The sections occur within a whole. The parts that are only meaningful in the context of the whole,
- 3) Learning is the adjustment to the environment,
- 4) Learning will be successful when it achieved the maturity to obtain understanding,
- 5) Learning will be successful if there is a meaningful goal for individuals,
- 6) In the process of learning the individual is always an active organism, not a vessel to be filled by someone else.

Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with others .. Therefore learning should be designed to develop intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence learners. In the implementation of thematic learning by Collin and Dixon (1991), should start from the planning, implementation and evaluation. thematic learning based on the theory there are several things to consider teachers as planning before planning through several stages, including:

- 1) What is the importance of the concept to be learned and what the students will learn from the concept?
- 2) Why do students have to learn that concept? Is the concept of rich and important intellectual?,
- 3) What kind of learning experience that will help develop an understanding of the concept?,
- 4) What are the skills and strategies that can help develop the concept?,
- 5) Whether teachers should be setting an atmosphere that encourages the inquiry and choice?,
- 6) Do teachers have to define alternative evaluation procedure?
- 7) What is the attitude of the students should be developed?

### **III. Discussion**

PAUD in RA. Zulhijjah is under the auspices of an education foundation of Zulkifli, B, SE. Its location is in . Arafah No. 5 , AL Baroqah, Sampali, Medan Estate, Deli Serdang. Its vision and mission is to create a generation of believers, '*akhlakul karimah*', intelligent, creative and independent. At the time of this study, Raudhatul Zulhijjah Athfal is led by Dr. Hj. Khadijah. M.Ag, alumne of Tarbiyah Faculty, State University of Jakarta (UNJ) in 2011 and the teachers who teach in RA Zulhijjah are alumni of S1 PGSD State University of Medan, Tarbiyah Faculty of IAIN SU Medan, one administrative employee, and two securityguards. This school has an area of approximately 500 m with the amount of room to learn as much as two classrooms, the principal's office one room, bathroom 3 rooms. While learning model used is a group model. In Raudhatul Athfal Zulhijjah, education personnel is amounted to 2 people. Learners overall total of 14 people consisting of RA A and B, while the RA students are about 10 people.

#### **The Assessment**

The assessment conducted in classroom action research "efforts to improve interpersonal intelligence through thematic learning in Raudatul Athfal (5-6 years) Zulhijjah Medan, quantitative data obtained from the observation scale, which is filled by the observer, while the steps are carried out prior to observation, namely ; investigators and assessors, advance the perception by studying and discussing the observation guide that has been prepared, then observe the child class B (subject of study) on interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence before being implemented action. The results of the initial assessment of children after the implementation of the pre-test can be seen in the table. 3 below, as follows:

**Table. 1: Assessment Result**

Respondent Number	Value	
	Interpersonal Intelligence	Criteria
1	40	BB
2	27	BB
3	41	BB
4	39	BB
5	24	BB
6	35	BB
7	30	BB
8	28	BB
9	30	BB
10	22	BB
Total	316	BB
Means	37,61%	BB

Based on the data above, the average value of interpersonal children Zulhijjah Medan RA group B at initial assessment is still relatively low, it can be seen by a final score of 316 at an average value of 37.61%. Based on the assessment kategori specified in chapter III can be concluded that interpersonal intelligence of children at the initial assessment were on underdeveloped category (BB). Thus it can be stated that the initial capability is still low, because the ability of the child has yet to reach the target of  $\leq 80\%$ .

#### IV. Conclusion

Based on the process and results of the implementation of the action research and test results supported the effectiveness of research findings, can generally be summed up as follows: "thematic learning can improve early childhood interpersonal intelligence" in Raudatul Athfal Zulhijjah Medan. In particular, the results of this study can answer the question of the proposed research, which is as follows: Interpersonal intelligence of children increased, after the implementation of thematic learning. With activities that include the development of interpersonal intelligence Child, film media, media images and pieces of child labor, as well as the method of learning by observing the images and group work, discussion, assignment and guidance, advice, strengthening and direct practice can develop interpersonal intelligence of children, at a pre measures the average value of children's interpersonal and 37.61% in cycle.

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