



## **Implementation of Natural Phenomena Theme Collage Activities in Early Childhood Learning**

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### **Abstract**

Early childhood is a sensitive period in which the process of child growth and development will also affect the next period. One form of stimulation that can be given by teachers in early childhood is through natural environment materials, such as the introduction of natural phenomena both naturally and as a result of humans. The introduction of natural phenomena at an early age can be done by making learning themes and formulating several related materials and sub-themes. One of them is the volcano sub-theme through collage activities. The purpose of this study was to describe the implementation of collage activities on the theme of natural phenomena in early childhood learning. The method used in this study was a qualitative descriptive with the subject of the study, namely the teacher of class B RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya. Data collection techniques used observation and interview techniques. The results of the study showed that the collage activity consists of several stages, including planning the image to be made, preparing tools and materials, introducing equipment and techniques, providing guidance to children, and explaining the position when pasting, and repeating the exercise. This activity can also introduce natural phenomena to children in a simple way, foster children's interest in the world of science, train children's awareness of emergencies, and develop other various aspects of child development.

**Keywords:** collage activities, natural phenomena, early childhood

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## **A. Introduction**

Early childhood is the period from 0 to 6 years old. During that period, a child is at the golden age (Efendi, 2020) because the period of fundamental formation and basis of the child's personality in the early days will have a major influence in the future. Hurlock expressed that the early stages of life have an impact on a person's tendencies and behavior throughout his or her life. Early childhood has a unique and different character compared to adults. Children also have high enthusiasm and big curiosity about everything, so that all activities that children get will help to develop and shape their personality (Hurlock, 1998).

Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 137 of 2014 concerning National Standards for Early Childhood Education, there are six aspects that must be developed in early childhood education. They are the aspects of religious and moral development, physical-motoric, cognitive, language, social and emotional, and art. Early childhood education also aims to put the groundwork in developing attitudes, behavior, recognition, skills and creativity which will be needed for the growth and development of children (Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2014).

One of the materials that can be used to stimulate children's development is science. Science has advantages for technological progress and society. On the other hand, contextually human life also has interactions with scientific phenomena. Therefore, science can be basically introduced from an early age. This is in line with the development and formation of children's intelligence which skyrockets at this age (Izzuddin, 2019; Saepudin, 2011). Early introduction to science can also introduce the scope of science and use the aspects of science in solving problems (Mirawati and Nugraha, 2017). The similar thing was expressed by Izuddin (2019), learning science for early childhood means the process of understanding science in a simple way and based on children's development. On the other hand, introducing science will stimulate children to create ideas, increase creativity and think logically. Rahmi also revealed that learning science can develop children's cognitive abilities (Rahmi, 2019).

Among the scope of science is the science of the earth and the environment. In this material, the teacher can introduce children to the natural environment around them. This also includes natural phenomena that occur naturally or as a result of humans (Muhammad, 2020; Rahma, 2020), that is volcanic eruptions. Volcanic eruptions are natural disasters that are marked by the presence of magma that comes out of the belly of the mountain. The eruption is a volcanic activity called an eruption (Nurjanah et al., 2012). Basically this material can be delivered using the experimental method, so that children can get a contextual learning experience. In addition, the introduction of natural phenomena from an early age can be done by making learning themes and formulating several related materials and sub-themes. One of them is the volcano sub-theme through collage activities.

There are several previous research results that are significant with this study. Among them, according to Muharrar and Verayanti collage is a sticking technique using media of images or patterns that can produce a work of art (Muharrar & Verayanti, 2019). In addition, Puspitasari in her research also said that through collage activities children are able to practice fine motor skills, such as: finger flexibility, hand coordination and eye and hand coordination. In addition, collage activities help children to learn patience, accuracy, concentration and coordination between hand, eye and brain movements (Puspitasari, 2017).

Furthermore, the thesis written by Salmia Saragih (2018) entitled "Implementation of Natural Phenomena Learning for Children at an Early Age of 5-6 at RA Al-Mukhlisin Darma Bahkti Jl. Karya Ujung Dusun I Helvetia at the 2017/2018 academic year". The results of this study are learning planning in accordance with the 2013 curriculum, the socialization of the curriculum to teachers, preparing annual programs, semester programs, RPPM, and RPPH. In addition, monitoring the performance of teachers, the existence of supporting factors that affect the learning of natural phenomena, and implementing comfortable and fun learning for children.

Another study conducted by Royani, et al (2015) entitled "Improving the Introduction to the Concept of Natural Phenomena to Children through Experimental Methods at BTK Aisyiyah Kadipiro 1 Surakarta in the 2013/2014 Academic Year", showed an increase in children's ability to understand natural phenomena using experimental methods. Then the research conducted by Kurniasih, et al (2021) entitled "Basis of Needs for Development of Alternative Assessments in Science Games Sub-theme of Natural Phenomena to Facilitate Children's Social Skills in Group B" showed the need for the development of assessments and science games in developing children's social skills.

Based on some of the literature reviews that have been described above, the distinction in this study is more focused on qualitatively describing the collage activities on the theme of natural phenomena for early childhood. Collage activities not only can develop and stimulate children's fine motor skills and creativity, but also are used as a means to introduce natural phenomena with volcanic materials for early childhood. The similarities between this study and previous studies are that they both study collage activities for early childhood learning and natural phenomena.

Based on the results of initial observations, RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya has carried out various learning activities, one of them is a collage activity with volcano learning materials. Volcanic collage is a collage activity that includes pasting activities, arranging different materials or a new work with a pattern to form a volcano. This activity was chosen because children would be introduced to natural phenomena from an early age so that they know the causes and effects of phenomena that occur on earth. On the other hand, it is also a form of gratitude for God's creation. The purpose of this study was to describe the implementation of collage activities on the theme of natural phenomena in early childhood.

## **B. Literature Review**

### **1. Collage Activities for Early Childhood**

The Indonesian word "*Kolase*" in English is called "collage" comes from the word "coller" which means "gluing". Collage is a technique of sticking various media and materials such as paper, cloth, glass, metal, and so on. Collage can also be interpreted as a technique of sticking using various elements in a pattern so that it becomes another work of art (Destiana, 2018). Fazira, et al (2018) revealed that collage activities contain a technique that can optimize all parts of the media used so that they become a complete work. In addition, collages can also use various other materials, such as: natural materials, paper and artificial materials. In collage activities, children will be given the freedom to be creative and explore to choose the appropriate materials. Some of the activities in the collage include cutting, tearing, snipping, and rolling (Hasanah, Mappapoleonro, & Yudha 2019). Collage for early childhood is an art activity that combines painting techniques and techniques for compiling and gluing patterns on images (Primayana, 2020).

According to Hendrayana, et al (2021), collage activities can be divided into several types, including:

a. *According to Function*

Based on its function, collages are categorized into two types, those are fine art and applied art. Fine art is a work of art created to fulfill artistic needs. Applied art is a work of art that is viewed functionally.

b. *According to Dimension*

Based on the dimensions, collages are divided into two, namely two-dimensional collages (*dwimatra*) and three-dimensional collages (*trimatra*).

c. *According to Pattern*

According to the Pattern or style, collages are divided into two types, they are representative and non-representative. Representative means describing a real form that shape is still recognizable. While non-representative, it is made without showing its original form and tends to be abstract.

d. *According to Material*

According to the material, the collage can be used on various materials. The most important thing in making it is that collages can be arranged into unique and interesting compositions. In general, collage materials are from natural materials and synthetic materials.

Nurjatmika (2012) said there are several benefits of collage activities for children, including developing motor skills, increasing creativity, practicing concentration, recognizing colors and shapes, and developing problem-solving skills. This is in line with several previous studies, such as conducted by Afni, et al (2017) entitled "Use of Grain Collage Learning Media to Develop Fine Motor Skill for Early Childhood in PAUD Nurul Hidayah, Lampuk Village, Aceh Besar". The results showed that the use of learning media of grain collage influenced children's learning outcomes. A similar study was conducted by Oktarina, et al (2020) entitled "Use of Collage Media in Developing Fine Motor Skills for Children aged 5-6 Years". In this study, it was found that the teachers at Dharma Wanita Kindergarten were appropriate and successful in teaching collage media for children aged 5-6 years.

The article written by Wandu & Mayar (2020) entitled "Analysis of Fine Motor Skills and Creativity in Early Childhood through Collage Activities", showed that there are several aspects that children need to do and master when doing collage activities, such as: the activities of arranging, cutting, and pasting. The results of this study are reinforced by research from Palintan & Saria (2018) entitled "Use of Collage Media in Improving Children's Creativity" showing that there is an increase in children's creativity through collages activities with very well developed criteria. The activities are carried out using paper, coconut pulp, various materials and colors that are suitable for sticking.

## **2. Introduction of Natural Phenomena for Early Childhood**

According to Kurniawati (2015), natural phenomena for early childhood can be viewed from two concepts. They are: concepts with specific meanings and concepts that can be described through certain characteristics based on the classification of objects, phenomena and events. Based on these two concepts, the introduction of natural phenomena can be interpreted as knowledge of events caused by nature, both disasters and non-disasters. The introduction of natural phenomena for early childhood will help children to recognize and understand the facts and signs that occur in nature (Saragih 2018).

The introduction to natural phenomena in early childhood is part of learning science at an early age. In addition, science can also be used by children to get to know themselves and the world around them. According to Wijaya & Dewi (2021), there are several principles in early childhood science learning. Science should be fun, nature-based, and develop scientific thinking and processing skills. On the other hand, science also has several objectives, such as: 1) Helping children recognize and cultivate a sense of love to the natural surroundings and realize God's creation; 2) fostering children's interest in studying natural objects and events; 3) introducing children to scientific processing skills; 4) helping children to use simple technology and science in their daily life; 5) developing the basic attitude of science; and 6) helping children recognize simple science through exploration and experimentation activities (Muhammad 2020).

### **C. Method**

The method used in the research is descriptive qualitative by describing data narratively based on the research objectives. The research was conducted at RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya. The subject of the research was the B class teacher of RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya. Data collection techniques used observation and interview techniques, in order to obtain data on collage activities on the theme of natural phenomena to children. The data analysis stage used 3 stages, namely: data condensation, data presentation, and data verification (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana 2014).

### **D. Findings and Discussion**

#### **1. Implementation of Collage Activities in Introducing Natural Phenomena**

Based on the results of observations and interviews with teacher at RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya, the school has implemented collage activities on the theme of natural phenomena. One of them is on the sub-theme of volcanoes. There are several stages in the collage activity that has been carried out by the Class B teacher at RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya, those are:

*a. Planning the image to be made*

In the first stage, the teacher showed and gave examples of volcanic collage work. Because learning was still carried out online, the teacher could only send photos of the collage work to the children's parents via WhatsApp group.

*b. Preparing tools and materials*

Next, the teacher informed the parents the materials needed to make a collage of volcanoes. Such as: plasticine, HVS paper or picture books and newsprint. The tools used are pencils or pens, scissors, erasers and glue.

*c. Explaining and introducing equipment and techniques to be used*

In this collage activity on the theme of volcanoes, which was held at RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya, several techniques were combined. Among them was a newsprint that was kneaded first so that it became the shape of small balls. Next there was a toy candle or flattened plasticine as a burst of color from the volcano.

*d. Providing guidance to children to paste the pattern on the image that have been provided and explain the position when pasting the pattern*

At this stage, the teacher would usually send a video tutorial or send photos of the collage stages to children with the assistance of parents. In addition, parents were also asked to be able to look for collage tutorial

references through the YouTube application. As for before the pandemic, the teacher could directly explain and give examples of the stages of sticking to this picture pattern. In collage activities, children of class B of RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya were still being assisted and exemplified in doing collage activities well. In addition, there were still many children who were less active in doing these activities.

e. *Exercise repetition*

The last stage is repetition of the exercise. At this stage, the teacher would ask the parents for help from each child to provide assistance when doing school assignments.

In this activity it can also be observed that children can do the tasks given by the teacher well. Children can do collage activities and imitate the collage technique given by the teacher. Through collage activities, children gain new knowledge about the process of volcanic eruptions in a simple way. In addition, this activity will provide knowledge about the causes and effects of natural phenomena. Children can also increase their creativity. Through materials, tools and techniques that have been exemplified by the teacher, children will be helped to come up with creative ideas. This activity can also stimulate children's fine motor skills. Such as: children are able to cut, tear, squeeze, play with plasticine, stick and arrange newsprint neatly on a volcanic pattern. This finding is in line with research conducted by Hasanah, et al (2019) and Primayana (2020), that learning through collage activities can also stimulate children's fine motor development. Hendrayana, et al (2021) in their research also showed the existence of fine motor development with collage activities in the developing as expected (BSH) category with a range of 52.5-72.5%. Research conducted by Wandu & Mayar (2020) entitled "Analysis of Fine Motor Ability and Creativity in Early Childhood Through Collage Activities" showed that one of the things needed in the development of fine motor skills and creativity in children is eye and hand coordination which can be done with collage activities. In this activity children will learn to arrange, tear, and paste. Khasanah & Ichsan (2019) stated that collage activities can increase children's creativity.

The existence of this volcanic collage activity also trains children's concentration when sticking to patterns and requires good body coordination. In addition, children will be taught to solve problems in compiling the collages that have been provided to become a new form of work. Collage activities do not only stimulate children's physical development, but also children's brain development which functions to think about how to decorate and arrange materials so that they can form a work. Children can also recognize the properties of the materials used. For example, in making a collage of a volcano, the materials used are newsprint and plasticine. The two materials have different characteristics. Newsprint has the characteristics of being light, easy to tear, easy to cut, easy to shape, can be glued together with glue, and can be folded. Meanwhile, plasticine or wax is rubbery, soft, easy to shape, easy to blend, and has a distinctive smell.

On the other hand, collage activities also contain elements of art when viewed based on the materials used so as to make a work with an interesting composition (Hendrayana et al. 2021). In a collage of volcanoes, a collection of torn newspaper pieces depicts a mountain. Then, a green candle depicts the grass under the foot of the mountain. Mixed red and yellow candles represent fire or hot lava coming out.

A mixture of candles of various colors to produce a brown color describes a puff of smoke or volcanic ash.

Meanwhile, children need to be given an explanation in advance about natural phenomena and their causes and effects as it has been done by the Class B teacher RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya. Teachers must simplify the material presented and adapted to the child's age. This is as revealed by Saragih (2018) that in introducing concepts for early childhood, the age and level of development and abilities of children must be considered. This collage activity also involves good interaction between teachers and children with assistance from parents. Through this activity, it can also train children's awareness in case of an emergency and dangerous situation. Another thing that is more important is that children can know Allah's creation and always remember Allah SWT. This condition is in line with the opinion expressed by Putra (2013) that there are several goals in introducing natural phenomena to early childhood. Among them: children will acquire scientific knowledge of science. This activity can also encourage children's interest in the world of science that they find in the natural environment. In addition, it can sharpen other developments such as children's psychomotor, foster creativity and critical thinking skills.

## **2. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Collage Activities**

There are several supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of collage activities at RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya. Among these supporting factors, namely the existence of adequate supporting facilities and infrastructure. Learning could be carried out by utilizing materials that are around, and the interaction between teachers and parents in planning activities. The inhibiting factors were limited network access, lack of children's participation due to parental assistance in doing assignments, lack of monitoring of child development due to limited situations and conditions, and monotonous learning guidance. In this case, collage activities should be done in an interesting way so that children are enthusiastic about doing activities because collage activities have various benefits that are good for the development and growth of children in the future.

## **E. Conclusion**

One of the collage activities on the theme of natural phenomena at RA Al-Muslimun Nurul Islam Palangka Raya was carried out on the volcano sub-theme. There are several stages in the collage activity, namely: planning the image to be made, preparing tools and materials, introducing equipment and techniques, providing guidance to children, explaining the position when pasting, and repeating the exercise. In collage activities, children can use the techniques that have been exemplified by the teacher. Children also gain new knowledge about the simple process of volcanic eruptions, the causes and effects of natural phenomena, and train children to be alert in case of an emergency and dangerous situation.

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