



Improving Fine Motor Skills in Early Childhood Through the Art of Paper Folding at Ananda Muara Jangga Early Childhood Education Center Inong

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ABSTRACT

Motor development refers to the meaning of physical development, where physical development means that the child has achieved some ability in self-control. The importance of paper folding exercises for early childhood is to develop and improve fine motor skills, train children's memory, and increase imagination. And most importantly, it trains independence. This research is included in action research that focuses on situations. With the research design using action research with steps of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The results of the study showed that the increase in children's abilities from each meeting in cycle I and cycle II attended by 15 children. In cycle I, of the 15 students who showed Very Good Development (BSB) at the first meeting was 13%, and at the second meeting was 20%. In cycle II, there was also a very good increase, of the 15 students who showed Very Good Development (BSB) at the first meeting was 20%, and at the second meeting was 33%.

Keywords: fine motor skills; children; early childhood; art; paper folding.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is a stage of life marked by rapid growth and development. This period, known as the "golden age," spans ages 0–6, during which children undergo rapid development in various areas, including physical, cognitive, social-emotional, and motor skills.^[1]

Motoricity development is the developmental process of controlling physical movement, which involves the coordination of both large muscles (gross motor skills) and small muscles (fine motor skills). Therefore, appropriate stimulation during this period will have a significant impact on a child's future skills.^[2]

From the explanation of the law, it can be concluded that early childhood education is the foundation for every child's life. Early

childhood education not only instills knowledge but also shapes character and prepares children for the next stage of education. Therefore, the stimulation provided to young children must be in line with child development concepts.^[3]

Fine motor skills can be defined as skills that require strong muscle control, particularly those involving hand-eye coordination and skills that require a high degree of precision, such as writing, drawing, buttoning a shirt, and cutting with scissors. These activities are important because they provide sensory feedback to the fingers, allowing children to feel control over their fingers and develop a concept of movement.^[4]

Motor skills provide ample opportunities for movement; learning experiences involving sensory-motor activities—which

include the use of large and small muscles—enable children to achieve their perceptual-motor development. Motor development refers to physical development, which means that children have acquired certain abilities to control their own bodies.^[5]

The factors underlying the delay in the development of fine motor skills include a lack of opportunities for early environmental exploration, parenting styles that tend to be overprotective and inconsistent in providing learning stimuli, failing to encourage children to perform activities on their own, and not encouraging children to feed themselves, resulting in underdeveloped flexibility in their hands and fingers.^[6]

Most children have already been taught how to make various origami creations. The variety of colors—red, yellow, orange, purple, and green—captures young children's attention and encourages them to try making different shapes, such as boats, hats, butterflies, pinwheels, and airplanes. In its country of origin, origami is also used when teaching children in early childhood education programs—even those who usually can't sit still in class become very enthusiastic when following the steps to make these origami creations. The children diligently follow the instructions given by the teacher while performing the folding movements, which helps develop their creativity. This activity also helps develop their motor skills. In this context, what deserves special attention regarding the significance of playing with origami is that it is an activity undertaken for the sake of enjoyment.^[7]

Using origami paper to improve fine motor skills can enhance fine motor skills; paper-folding activities can also improve hand-eye coordination and concentration, as shown in previous research on the use of origami paper to improve fine motor skills.^[8]

Folding is an art and craft technique typically performed on paper to create various forms of toys, decorations, functional objects, teaching aids, and other creations. Through folding activities, children can develop their cognitive skills, imagination, artistic sensibility, and practical skills.^[9]

Folding involves shaping paper according to one's imagination into forms such as triangles, rectangles, trapezoids, and others. Folding is, of course, done by following a step-by-step procedure to produce the desired shape or model. To make folding easier, it's important to pay attention to the basics of folding, folding techniques, and the stages of folding so that the folds turn out neat.^[10]

The importance of paper folding exercises for young children lies in developing and improving their fine motor skills, training their memory, and fostering their imagination. Most importantly, these exercises help children develop independence, which will serve as a foundation for their future. By starting paper folding exercises early, children will eventually be able to independently undertake activities such as folding their own clothes, folding mats, or creating origami crafts.^[11]

To improve children's fine motor skills, teachers must plan learning activities by formulating competency standards and core competencies in the form of a Daily Activity Plan (RKH). Subsequently, the plans that have been developed can be implemented systematically; teachers can link learning materials between themes and activities such as folding paper or fabric. These learning activities actively engage children in using their small muscles, such as those in their hands. This is what prompted the researcher to investigate the efforts made by teachers to improve fine motor skills through folding activities.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study is classified as a situation-focused action research. The research design employs an action research approach consisting of the following stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The subjects of this study were 15 students at the Ananda Muara Jangga Early Childhood Education Center.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the observations showed that, out of 15 students, only 1 student was able to improve their fine motor skills—as evidenced by the child’s ability to fold paper neatly or show significant improvement. Meanwhile, 1 student developed as expected, 3 students began to show improvement, and 10 students had not yet shown any improvement. The study was conducted with the aim of improving the students’ skills through a series of cycles, each consisting of 2 sessions.

Cycle I, Session I

Opening Activities:

1. Greetings and a prayer before the activity begins
2. Have the children take attendance of their classmates
3. The children are able to talk about sea animals

Main Activity:

1. The teacher explains what the children will be making out of paper
2. The teacher distributes the materials to be used
3. The teacher demonstrates how to fold the shape
4. The children can fold the paper into a neat crab shape
5. The children can glue the folded crab shape onto the paper
6. Afterward, the children are asked to write the word “crab”

Closing:

1. The teacher asks the children how they felt during the activity
2. Reviews today’s activities
3. Reinforces the children’s behavior
4. Connects the activity to tomorrow’s activities
5. Pray, say goodbye, and line up neatly

The results of our reflection on the first meeting of Cycle I show that only a few children have made significant progress, while several issues have emerged. Specifically, the teacher has not yet been able to effectively manage Class B; this is evident from the children’s lack of concentration during lessons, the fact that some children are

still playing on their own in the classroom, and the children’s lack of independence during the paper-folding activity. The students are not yet accustomed to the method being used, so they tend to be nervous and do not fully understand the instructions given. The children are not yet able to make neat folds, and they are not yet independent when folding paper.

Cycle I, Session II

Opening Activities:

1. Greetings and a prayer before the activity begins
2. Have the children take attendance of their classmates
3. The children are able to talk about sea animals

Main Activity:

1. The teacher explains what the children will be making out of paper
2. The teacher distributes the materials to be used
3. The teacher demonstrates how to fold the shape
4. The children can fold the paper into a fish shape neatly
5. The children can glue the folded fish shape onto the paper

After that, the children are asked to draw and color the water for the fish, the sky, the clouds, and the surrounding scenery

Closing:

1. The teacher asks the children how they felt during the activity
2. Reviews today’s activities
3. Reinforces the children’s behavior
4. Connects the activity to tomorrow’s activities
5. Pray, say goodbye, and line up neatly

The results of our reflection on the second session of Cycle I show that the folds created were not yet as expected, but some students have already begun to neatly form each fold. The students’ enthusiasm for participating in the learning activities is starting to show, but it is not yet at its full potential because they are not focused.

Table 1. Improvements in Cycle I

NO	BB	MB	BSH	BSB
1	53 %	13%	20%	13%
2	40 %	26%	14%	20%
Average	47 %	20 %	17 %	17 %

Description:

BB : Not Yet Developing. If the student has not yet shown early signs of the behavior described in the indicators; score 50–59

MB : Beginning to Develop. If the student has begun to show early signs of the behavior described in the indicators but is not yet consistent; score 60–69

BSH : Developing as Expected. If the student has begun to show various signs of the behavior described in the indicator and is beginning to demonstrate it consistently, score 70–79

BSB : Developing Very Well. If the student consistently demonstrates the behavior described in the indicator or has internalized it, score 80–100, a passing grade is given

Cycle II, Session I

Opening Activities:

1. Greetings and a prayer before the activity begins
2. Have the children take attendance of their classmates
3. The Children are able to talk about pets

Main Activity:

1. The teacher explains what the children will be making out of paper
2. The teacher distributes the materials to be used
3. The teacher demonstrates how to fold a cat shape
4. The children can neatly fold the paper into the shape of a cat
5. The children can glue the folded cat shape onto the paper
6. After that, children are asked to write the word “cat.”

Closing:

1. The teacher asks the children how they felt during the activity
2. Reviews today’s activities

3. Reinforces the children’s behavior
4. Connects the activity to tomorrow’s activities
5. Pray, say goodbye, and line up neatly

The results of our reflection on the first meeting of Cycle II show that the learning process has been quite good, as evidenced by the fact that some students have begun to focus, time management has been quite optimal, and students have become enthusiastic about learning through the art of paper folding.

Cycle II Session II

Opening Activities:

1. Greetings and a prayer before the activity begins
2. Have the children take attendance of their classmates
3. The children is able to talk about animals that fly

Main Activity:

1. The teacher explains what the children will be making out of paper
2. The teacher distributes the materials to be used
3. The teacher demonstrates how to fold a bird shape
4. The children can neatly fold paper into the shape of a bird
5. The children can glue the folded bird shape onto paper
6. After that, the children are asked to draw and color

Closing:

1. The teacher asks the children how they felt during the activity
2. Reviews today’s activities
3. Reinforces the children’s behavior
4. Connects the activity to tomorrow’s activities
5. Pray, say goodbye, and line up neatly

The results of our reflection on the second meeting of Cycle II show that the learning process has been quite good. This is evident from the fact that students have begun to focus on the paper-folding activities, time has been used quite effectively, students are becoming more

independent in folding paper, and they are producing fairly neat folds and showing enthusiasm for learning through the art of paper folding.

Table 2. Improvements in Cycle II

NO	BB	MB	BSB	BSH
1	20 %	33 %	27 %	20 %
2	7 %	33 %	27 %	33 %
Average	13 %	33 %	27 %	27 %

Description:

BB : Not Yet Developing. If the student has not yet shown early signs of the behavior described in the indicators; score 50–59

MB : Beginning to Develop. If the student has begun to show early signs of the behavior described in the indicators but is not yet consistent; score 60–69

BSH : Developing as Expected. If the student has begun to show various signs of the behavior described in the indicator and is beginning to demonstrate it consistently, score 70–79

BSB : Developing Very Well. If the student consistently demonstrates the behavior described in the indicator or has internalized it, score 80–100, a passing grade is given

The implementation of Cycle I, which consisted of two learning sessions, revealed several obstacles and weaknesses. Among these was the children's lack of interest in participating in the paper-folding activities; they found it difficult because they had rarely engaged in paper-folding activities before. Consequently, during Cycle I, their interest and motivation to learn were not yet satisfactory. The implementation of Cycle II showed a significant improvement over the previous cycle.

Improving children's fine motor skills through paper folding plays a crucial role in enhancing fine motor skills in early childhood. Through the art of paper folding, children can optimally develop their fine motor skills, and from these folding

activities, they can learn several educational concepts.

SUMMARY

The research results show that the children's abilities improved with each session in Cycle I and Cycle II, which were attended by 15 children. In Cycle I, of the 15 students, 13% showed "Very Good Progress" (BSB) in the first session, and 20% in the second session. Cycle II also showed a very significant improvement: of the 15 students, 20% showed "Very Good Progress" (BSB) in the first session, and 33% in the second session.

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