

The Effect of Religious Stories and the Traditional Congklak Game on the Development of Honesty among Young Children in the fifth grade

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of reflective narrative storytelling in enhancing the comprehension of the concept of faith for children with learning disabilities at the level of Malinau Selatan Hilir 2 State Elementary School. In the context of Christian Religious Education, children with learning disabilities often feel incapable of understanding the concept of faith being taught, which causes them to feel insecure and unable to develop a strong faith. Therefore, an effective and engaging learning method is required to improve the comprehension of the concept of faith for children with learning disabilities. This study employed a classroom action research design. To take a descriptive qualitative data analysis and descriptive quantitative data analysis. Classroom action research (CAR) is reflective in nature. The research was conducted at Malinau Selatan Hilir 2 State Elementary School, Malinau Regency, located in Setulang Village. The research timeframe was carried out during the second semester of the 2025–2026 academic year, specifically conducted from March to June 2026. This study utilized instruments in the form of observation sheets, interview guides, field notes, documentation, and tests. The results of the study indicate that the learning method utilizing reflective narrative storytelling helps students with learning disabilities comprehend and understand the learning theme regarding faith better. These results are evident from the test scores of students categorized with learning disabilities, who obtain scores below the minimum mastery standard on the pre-test results; after utilizing reflective narrative storytelling in cycle I, they experience an increase in scores but remain below the mastery standard, and at the cycle II stage, all of them possess scores above the minimum mastery standard. The research results also demonstrate that the three students categorized as having learning disabilities are capable of reflecting on their real lives as a form of faith they trust

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in God. Based on the results, the classroom action research demonstrates that the reflective narrative storytelling learning method provided to students with learning disabilities at Malinau Selatan Hilir 2 State Elementary School is capable of increasing students' ability to know and understand the learning of the concept of faith.

Keywords: *Narrative Reflective Story, Learning Difficulties, Faith of Concept*

INTRODUCTION

Christian Religious Education helps form students' character and identity from the elementary school level. This learning not only instills moral and spiritual values but also strengthens national attitudes and spirit. Narrative learning is essentially learning through experience stories originating from one's personal life, the lives of others, as well as the stories of biblical figures linked to everyday life situations. Sidjabat (1994: 17) emphasizes that stories are the most effective means of conveying messages because they are liked by almost all age groups, are non-coercive, entertaining, full of messages, and easy to remember. Faith plays an important role in human life, especially for children who are forming their character and identity (Satria, 2023). Children with specific learning difficulties generally attend inclusive classes, although some also study in regular schools. Teachers need to master appropriate strategies to be able to adapt the learning process to their needs (Pujaningsih, 2011). Religious education in Indonesia still rarely utilizes reflective narrative stories. This study examines the application of this method to strengthen the understanding of the concept of faith in children with learning difficulties at SDN 002 Malinau Selatan Hilir.

Learning is a process that encourages changes in student behavior through interaction with the environment. Chauhan (1979, in Sunhaji, 2014) explains that learning takes place through the provision of stimuli, direction, assistance, and motivation so that students are able to learn. This view is in line with Wardah (2011, in Hermanto, 2024), who emphasizes the importance of adjusting education to the character of each student. According to Piaget (in Schunk, 2017: 332–335), the ages of 7–12 years belong to the concrete operational stage, which is characterized by rapid cognitive ability growth and becomes an important period in school education. Constructivist theory applies student-oriented learning that focuses on the student, with the teacher acting as a mediator and facilitator. Yamin (2017: 15, citing Taker) explains the three main elements of this theory, namely student activeness in forming meaningful knowledge, the interconnectedness of ideas during the process of constructing understanding, and the



relationship between old insights and new information. Schunk (2017: 231) explains that this view influences curriculum development and the teaching process. Yamin (2017: 10) explains that constructivist learning builds knowledge through experience, social relationships, and real conditions.

Sulistyorini (2017: 7) explains that elementary school-age children have a high curiosity about their environment, begin to be able to act independently, like useful activities, can compete healthily, and begin to understand themselves. In line with Mansur (2015: 6), effective learning makes it easier for students to understand material in a fun way while achieving the goals designed by the educator. Paolini (2015: 20) emphasizes the need for a positive relationship between educators and students inside and outside the classroom, prompt delivery of feedback, and student participation in group activities. Ansari and Malik (2018: 61) view the teacher as a facilitator throughout the learning process, while Hao and Liu (2018: 84) emphasize the educator's ability to encourage student activeness and improve academic achievement. Carpenter (2016: 13) also asserts the need to create learning centered on student participation. This opinion is reinforced by Lee (in Gurney, 2017: 90), who explains that effective teachers need to direct goals toward student achievement, master pedagogical competencies, connect the school with the environment, and utilize every learning opportunity efficiently. This concept is rooted in the principles of Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) and various other inclusive teaching models aimed at creating an educational environment accessible to all parties (Matthew, 2014). The presence of inclusive classes ensures that every student, regardless of background or ability, receives equal educational opportunities (Kershner, 2008). Cozza (2022) asserts that second language learning, the implementation of inclusion, and social change need to be adapted to the students' backgrounds.

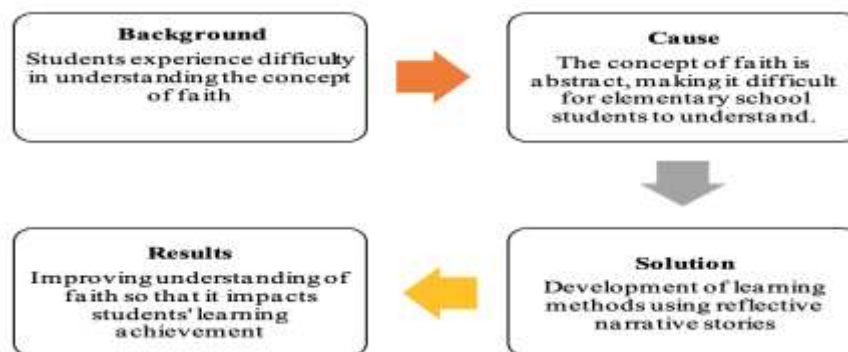


Figure 1. Research Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The selected research type is classroom action research, which is reflective and focuses on real problems during learning activities. The teacher and students identify the problem, analyze the causes, determine alternative solutions, and then apply them through actions that are designed and measured systematically (Sutama, 2011: 134). The implementation uses the Kemmis and Taggart model, which consists of planning, action, observation, and reflection (Sukardi, 2011: 212–213). Findings in the first cycle become the material for improvement for the execution of the next cycle until the research objectives are successfully achieved (Arikunto, 2018: 16).

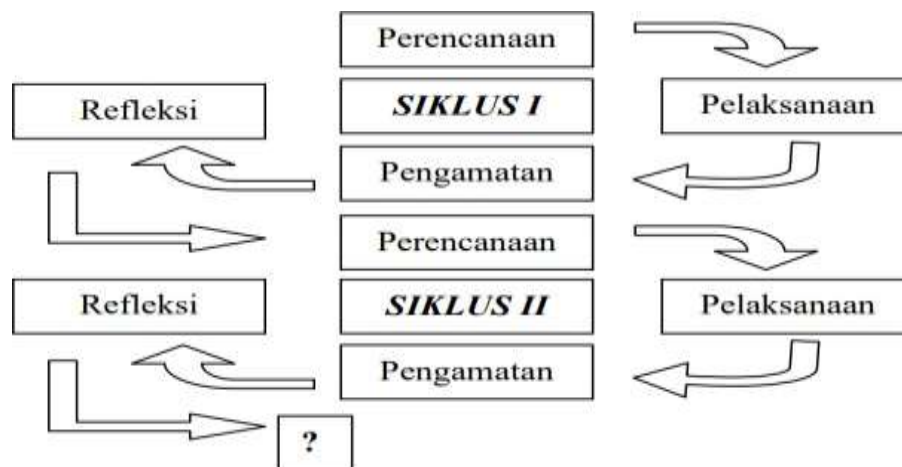


Figure 2. Kemmis and Taggart Classroom Action Research Design Model

The location chosen is SDN 002 Malinau Selatan Hilir District, Malinau Regency, located in Setulang Village. The research activity takes place in the second semester of the 2025–2026 academic year, from March to June 2026. The research subjects consist of three grade IV students taking the Protestant Christian Religion subject who experience learning difficulties. The research is divided into three stages: pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II, where each cycle has four main steps adjusting to field conditions. Based on problem identification, the researcher and the teacher as a collaborator selected reflective narrative stories as an effort to improve the understanding of the concept of faith.

Data collection is carried out through observation and tests. Observation is implemented by observing student activities during the implementation of the research action using an open observation type modified with score assessments (Hopkins in Wiriaatmadja, 2017: 110). The test

uses an oral test in the form of simple dialogues regarding faith referencing the Christian religious textbook to assess learning success. The data is then analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis taken from the observation sheet in each meeting to examine behavioral changes and student contributions. Furthermore, quantitative descriptive analysis is utilized to measure the development of faith concept understanding by comparing scores from the pre-test, cycle I test, and cycle II test.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Description of the Initial Ability of Children with Learning Difficulties in Understanding the Concept of Faith

Before applying reflective narrative stories, observations and assessments were conducted to evaluate the initial ability of children with learning difficulties in understanding the concept of faith. The activity involved three students as research subjects, namely VR, YN, and DI. Observations during Christian Religious Education learning showed that the three students had not understood the concept of faith well. Interviews with the class teacher showed that students had difficulty understanding abstract material, including the concept of faith, and the dominant implementation of the lecture method resulted in their inability to comprehend and capture the meaning of the material.

Table 1. Initial Test Results for Faith Concept Understanding

No	Subject Name	Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM)	Score
1	DI	75	47
2	VR	75	46
3	YN	75	56
Average		75	49.7

Table 1 explains that the average score for understanding the concept of faith before the action reached 49.67, which is still lower than the school's KKM of 75. Students' answers regarding the understanding of faith were still dominated by memorization, they had difficulty mentioning concrete forms of applying faith, and they could not yet connect the moral messages of Bible stories with their respective life experiences.



Description of the Implementation of Cycle I Action

The planning of Cycle I was structured based on the initial observation and assessment, leading the researcher and class teacher to design learning using reflective narrative stories so that the concept of faith could be understood more concretely and meaningfully. In the core activity of the first meeting, the teacher conveyed a reflective narrative story from the Bible about Abraham, who remained obedient when his faith was tested (Genesis 22:1-19). The story was packaged in simple language to make it easily understood by students with learning difficulties. The second meeting of Cycle I was conducted to strengthen students' understanding of faith through the story of David's courage in facing Goliath due to his belief in God (1 Samuel 17:40-58). The story was delivered interactively by involving students through simple questions and using image media of biblical figures.

Description of Cycle I Post-Action Test Results

The researcher administered a post-action test to the three students to determine the development of their understanding of the concept of faith after the implementation of Cycle I.

Table 2. Cycle I Post-Action Test Results

No	Name	KKM	Score
1	VR	75	62
2	YN	75	71
3	DI	75	64
Average		75	65.67

The use of reflective narrative stories in Cycle I increased the scores of the three students experiencing learning difficulties, with the average learning outcome rising from 49.67 to 65.67. However, all students still had not reached the school's KKM of 75. Based on the reflection, obstacles found included students still having difficulty understanding the abstract concept of faith, limited ability to connect story content with personal experiences, and the need for more time to understand the storyline and message.

DISCUSSIONS

Planning of Cycle II Action

The preparation of the Cycle II planning was based on the reflection results from Cycle I.



The researcher and the teacher then perfected the learning process by improving understanding and learning outcomes. The activities in the Cycle II planning stage included:

1. Perfecting the Lesson Plan (RPP) based on the reflection results of Cycle I.
2. Preparing media, teaching aids, and teaching materials that are more interesting and easier to understand.
3. Designing Student Worksheets (LKPD) according to the learning material.
4. Preparing instruments to observe the activities of the teacher and students during learning.
5. Formulating evaluation questions to assess learning outcomes at the end of Cycle II.
6. Determining more varied strategies that encourage active student involvement.

Implementation of Cycle II Action

The first meeting was initiated in mid-April with the material arranged in the Lesson Plan. In the core activity, the teacher delivered the material using more engaging and easily understood media, specifically image media used to support story delivery. The teacher also provided examples close to everyday life so that the learning concepts were more easily received. Students were guided to actively discuss, answer questions, and complete tasks. When facing difficulties or illness, they began to understand that faith can be manifested through prayer; although the prayers uttered were still simple, this ability indicated a significant change for children with learning difficulties. In the second meeting, students were observed to be more active compared to Cycle I, becoming more courageous in expressing opinions, answering questions, and cooperating while completing tasks.

Description of Cycle II Action Observation Results

Teacher activities showed development during the learning process, with the use of media becoming more optimal, assistance given more directionally, and the learning atmosphere becoming active and enjoyable. Student activities also showed quite good improvement, as they were more focused on paying attention to explanations, actively asking and answering, and engaging in discussions and task completion. Courage and self-confidence also developed compared to Cycle I.

Cycle II Post-Action Test Results

The test at the end of Cycle II demonstrated an improvement in learning outcomes. All



students obtained scores above the KKM of 75, meaning the action in Cycle II successfully strengthened the understanding and learning outcomes of the taught material.

Table 3. Cycle II Post-Action Test Results

No	Name	KKM	Score	Note
1	VR	75	79	Completed
2	YN	75	81	Completed
3	DI	75	80	Completed
Average		75	80	Completed

Overall, the Cycle II action was implemented well. The research objective to improve student learning outcomes achieved satisfactory results, and these findings became the basis for conducting reflection and formulating research conclusions. The application of Reflective Narrative Stories in Christian Religious Education learning is proven to improve the understanding of the concept of faith in children with learning difficulties at SDN 002 Malinau Selatan Hilir.

Research Limitations

This study has several limitations when interpreting its results. First, the study applied a classroom action research design with subjects consisting of only three elementary school students with learning difficulties, making the results contextual and not intended to represent a broader population. Second, the action was only carried out in two cycles, meaning the study has not yet measured the sustainability of these changes in the long term.

CONCLUSION

Reflective narrative stories serve as an alternative learning method capable of helping children with learning difficulties understand the concept of faith. Through storytelling activities, personal experiences, and reflection, students find it easier to internalize faith values and implement them in their daily lives. Research results demonstrate that reflective narrative stories make it easier for students to understand faith material, as true stories of biblical figures are connected to students' experiences so they can recognize God's love, help, and intervention in their lives. Based on these findings, the application of the reflective narrative story method to students with learning difficulties at SDN 002 Malinau Selatan Hilir is able to improve their ability to recognize and understand the concept of faith.



The classroom action research, which was divided into two cycles, showed an improvement in test results for the three students with learning difficulties. The initial test and Cycle I scores still did not meet the completeness standard, but after participating in the learning process in Cycle II, all students obtained an average score of 80 and successfully exceeded the completeness limit. Changes were not only seen in the test results, as the three students began to have the courage to express their opinions and share the faith experiences they encountered when facing various difficulties. They were also able to connect God's help with real events as a form of the belief they possess.

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