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# Variety Learning Strategies in Early Childhood Islamic Education

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**Abstract:** Learning strategy is an essential element in teaching and learning activities. The use of appropriate strategies can make students interested, not bored, and excited, if it goes well then the learning outcomes will be obtained optimally. Various learning strategies can be implemented at the tertiary level, especially in the Department of Early Childhood Islamic Education (PIAUD). This study uses a literature study approach. This article examines various strategies that are suitable for PIAUD majors, ranging from Small Group Discussion (SGD), Role-Play and Stimulation, Case Study, Discovery Learning (DL), Cooperative Learning (CL), Collaborative Learning (CbL), Contextual Instruction (CI), Project Based Learning (PjBL) and Problem Based Learning (PBLI). Various existing strategies can be used and combined by lecturers when teaching so that the strategies used are not monotonous and so that students can explore in various fun ways. These learning strategies are not centered on the lecturer, so they can build students' knowledge and creativity.

**Keywords:** Learning, Strategy, Higher Education, PIAUD.

## Introduction

The development of the era that is changing too fast makes technology develop to be more advanced. These technological developments require teachers always to think creatively and innovate. These two things certainly cannot be achieved instantly, but through a very long process, and must get support from various related parties. For students, of course, those who have the most significant impact besides the government are lecturers at universities. The curriculum designed by the government can be developed in such a way according to the state of the university. As explained by Musyahid, no matter how perfect the curriculum and educational facilities are, if it is not accompanied by the capability of lecturers in implementing learning strategies, the results obtained will be less than optimal (Musyahid, 2009)

Learning strategies in higher education, especially in the Early Childhood Islamic Education (PIAUD) study program, are expected to provide positive results for Early Childhood Education (PAUD). As is well known, early childhood is a crucial phase of individual development. So that prospective teachers need to be formed as well as possible to educate children to the maximum and print a brilliant generation. Based on these things, the author wants to explain about learning strategies that can be implemented in PIAUD. In order to be a reference for educators and prospective educators, especially in universities.

## Materials and Methods

This study uses a literature review using data sources from journals, books, and proceedings related to the research. The result obtained from these references, the researchers read carefully to explain the various learning strategies that can be implemented in universities, especially the Early Childhood Islamic Education department. An in-


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depth analysis confirmed that various learning strategies play an essential role in developing student understanding.

## Results and Discussion

First, Small Group Discussion. The learning process with Small Group Discussion (SGD) is carried out by conducting discussions in small groups that aim to increase student activity, and students can solve the problems they face (Putriawati, 2019, p. 81). SGD can maximize the potential of students. In addition, the learning process can be carried out in a fun way, and it attracts students to be active and creative. Students are stimulated to explore ideas, develop capabilities, problem-solving techniques. Students are encouraged to communicate and think effectively, improve collaboration in groups, and increase student contributions in decision making (Susanto, 2020). In the SGD the lecturer can provide topics related to a theory, for example, the theory of child development put forward by several figures. Each student is asked to examine the thoughts of one character, which will be presented later.

According to Ismail, the SGD was carried out in several steps: first, making students into small groups. Second, the lecturer provides problems that students will discuss. Third, during the discussion, students were asked to solve the problems given. Fourth, each member must take an active role. Fifth, each group appoints one representative to present the results of their discussion. Sixth, the lecturer conveys conclusions and additions (J, 2019).

SGD has the advantage of making all students take an active role in discussions, both individually and in groups. SGD also teaches students to work together and respect every opinion, develop communication skills, develop social and democratic attitudes, and develop cognition. However, SGD has drawbacks, such as taking up much time in discussions, which tends to be less efficient. There is the possibility of individuals who are not actively involved and rely on certain people, and the class climate is challenging to manage. The shortcomings in SGD can be minimized by innovations that lecturers can make as educators and assistants during the class (Susanto, 2020). Mentoring is carried out to manage the classroom climate to make it more conducive, and the discussions carried out can be effective and time-efficient.

Second, Role-Play and Simulation. Personally, role-playing can help students to find their identity, and in role-playing activities with groups of students, learn to overcome problems in groups so that there is an awareness of the diversity of each person. Role-playing or also known as one of the efforts that can be made to master teaching materials by expanding imagination and inspiration. Students are trained to carry out a role that can help them to develop themselves (Sa`diyah, 2018).

According to Shaftel, there are nine steps in doing role-play. The first is a warm-up to introduce conditions as an illustration for students regarding the role to be played. Second, determining the role to be played. Third, setting the stage. Fourth, the selection of observers. Fifth, start role-playing. Sixth, evaluation. Seventh, re-role playing. Eighth, evaluation. Ninth, conclusion. Role-playing can be a means to explore feelings, get inspiration and interpretations that can influence perceptions, values, and attitudes, develop problem-solving skills, and can explore courses in various ways. Role-play can make it easier for students when they enter the community in the future (Nurdin & Adriantoni, 2016). Its implementation in PIAUD, lecturers give microteaching assignments, in which students are asked to practice teaching. One or more people serve as teachers, and other students become students. These activities are carried out in turns until all students have experience.

Third, Case Study. Case studies or case studies focus on a case that is studied in detail so that it can recognize social relations, procedures, and groups simultaneously and can be specifically identified. Students need specific descriptions when carrying out case studies. Case studies are used to consider the focus in answering why and how (Prihatsanti et al., 2018). Case studies reveal things in-depth and reveal the meaning behind a problem or phenomenon studied with factual

conditions. The report made provides an atmosphere and thoughts that can be developed as future research studies. However, the validity, reliability, and generalizability of the case studies are questioned, and in order to get valid results, students as researchers must go directly. Case studies are carried out by selecting cases, collecting data, analyzing data, making improvements, and writing reports (Awwaabiin, 2021). In lectures, case studies provide opportunities for students to go directly to the existing problems so that students are trained to think critically and try to solve existing problems. Implementation of case studies in PIAUD can be in the form of solving problems in children's education. For example, when students find a learning model less effective in a school, students examine the case, look for the root of the problem, and then report.

Fourth, Discovery Learning (DL). Students are required to always think critically. Critical thinking skills cannot be obtained instantly but must continuously be honed and developed. Students need critical thinking to do lecture assignments, especially for the postgraduate level, where students are required to make journals. Jerome S. Bruner suggests that discovery learning consists of 6 syntaxes: stimulation, identifying problems, collecting data, processing data, verifying data, and generalizing. These six syntaxes can help students to think critically. Someone who thinks critically can think and behave systematically (Nurrohmi et al., 2017).

In the Discovery learning method, the lecturer does not deliver the material in the final form, and students get the opportunity to learn, seek and find material. Students are involved in open-ended activities by means of independent reading, group discussions, trying, and discovering independently. Discovery learning methods can help students to be able to master various skills in learning activities, gain knowledge individually, increase enthusiasm and confidence, provide flexibility to be able to develop forward in proportion to the power possessed by each student. Even so, it takes maturity and mental readiness and a longer time compared to students receiving material in the final form (Mutmainna & Ferawati, 2015).

So that it can be seen that the use of discovery learning is an exploratory activity carried out by students independently. The result is expected that students can understand and master the material studied well and be remembered easily. According to Putra and Amalia, there are seven synergistic stages in discovery learning, namely stimulation, problem statements, problem-related data searching, data processing that has been obtained, data verification, generalization, and assessment (Putra & Amalia, 2020).

Fifth, Cooperative Learning (CL). This strategy involves students in group discussions which can develop skills critical thinking and communication skills. Students can also find out, take the initiative and develop their ideas more openly (Tambunan, 2021). In line with research conducted by Herianto and Ibrahim, this strategy can develop students' skills in finding, processing, and absorbing information obtained from various sources. Students become active and responsible with group assignments, develop student learning readiness, and increase self-confidence (Herianto & Ibrahim, 2017). Furthermore, Tambak emphasized that cooperative learning can make students help each other, not only in cognitive aspects but also in affective and psychomotor aspects. Students do understand and solve problems in order to achieve the learning indicators that have been set previously. Class conditions are needed so that this learning strategy can run conducive and not cause a crowd when the discussion is taking place. The lecturer can emphasize that there is a need for cooperation and involvement of all group members. The goal is that each student can participate actively, contribute and be responsible for their duties as individuals in the learning process. a group (Tambak, 2017). Cooperative learning focuses on group unity.

Nurlaila explained, after the type of learning was determined, the next step in conducting cooperative learning was to determine the objectives and learning content, then the students were grouped into small groups consisting of 3-4 people, after the students gathered with their respective group members, the lecturer could organize the learning environment and provide facilities in learning. At the end of the lesson, the

lecturer needs to assess both from the social and academic aspects (Nurlaila, 2019). The application of cooperative learning requires students to discuss with each other, both in one group and between groups. The ideas that each student has can be mutually expressed and developed. Then if a difference of opinion is found, students can solve the problem by finding a way out. So with this method, students can understand the concept better. Good cooperation, participation, communication, and collaboration are needed to implement cooperative learning strategies and achieve learning objectives.

Sixth, Collaborative Learning (CbL). The understanding of collaborative learning sees that learning activities are a process of forming meaning from social interactions. Students build their own meaning from the process of social interaction that is based on a learning framework (Diana, 2020). According to Amiruddin. Collaborative learning or collaborative learning emphasizes each individual. Each student was directed to get various ideas from everyone in the group. Lecturers do not ask representatives from each group to present the results of their discussions. There is no need for synergy from various existing opinions to become a single unit. The characteristic of collaborative learning is the dependence between students in completing the given task because the given task will influence the value obtained by the group. The success or failure of a group depends on the participation and activity of each member. There is knowledge sharing and intensive interaction. between group members who require students to have interpersonal skills, the lecturer acts as a mediator, and then an evaluation is needed by each group (Amiruddin, 2019).

Dennis Adams and Mary Hamm describe the stages in collaborative learning with seven stages: formulating goals. Second, determine the number of groups, arrange classrooms and distribute materials. Third, explain the structure and activities. Fourth, explain the expected goals of learning, including sharing thoughts, respecting each other, asking questions, providing encouragement, staying on task, and staying in the group that has been set and not being noisy. Fifth, assign roles in each group. Sixth, monitor the course of learning and intervene if necessary. Seventh, evaluating student learning outcomes (Adams & Hamm, 2019).

Seventh, Contextual Instruction (CI). A contextual approach is a learning process that connects courses or lecture material with situations that exist in the real world. Students study theory and conduct field studies to find out whether the existing theory is relevant or not. According to Sulistiani, the contextual approach is expected to connect knowledge and its implementation in student life (Sulistuani, 2020). There are seven cores in Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL): First, the root of CTL is constructivism that students build by connecting and building knowledge, making students easier to understand the lesson. Second, inquiry. This step stimulates students to find that more significant than the skill or the cognition. Third, questions that help students to look for knowledge more deeply. Fourth, learning community. Students can take accommodation between theory and practice. Fifth, modeling. Students can get inspiration from various sources that can make more actual concepts and implementation. Sixth, reflection. Seventh, authentic assessment that assesses the extent to students' abilities during learning activities are authentic and by existing facts (Hyun et al., 2020).

Based on the explanation, it can be concluded that the contextual approach is based on constructivism theory. The knowledge gained from the theory is linked and seen directly with what happens in its application in society. There are seven cores in the application of the contextual approach, namely: building knowledge, inquiry, asking questions, learning in the community, imitating, reflection, and authentic assessment.

Eighth, Project Based Learning (PjBL). Project-Based Learning (PjBL) is a teaching and learning process that involves students doing a project directly. This model prioritizes the ability to solve problems in doing a project to produce an output. Students can make decisions regarding the topic, research, and problem-solving of a particular project. The natural products produced make

students work as if they were in the real world of work (Sari & Angreni, 2018).

Based on the research results conducted by Faridah Musa, et al., PjBL contributes to developing various soft skills, as needed and applied in the 21st century. The soft skills needed are teamwork, project management, communication skills, interpersonal skills, and problem-solving skills (Musa et al., 2012). PjBL can increase students' motivation, ability to solve problems, interact and collaborate with others, and increase students' skills in processing resources. The difficulty that can occur when conducting PjBL is determining the right project and finding relevant references. Then each course has its own difficulties. The stages in PjBL developed by the Lucas George Foundation are determining fundamental questions, designing project plans, compiling schedules, monitoring students and project progress, testing results, and evaluating experiences (Sari & Angreni, 2018).

Ninth, Problem Based Learning and Inquiry (PBLI). The inquiry method provides opportunities for students to contribute to learning activities by conducting investigations actively. The purpose of the inquiry method is that students can use their knowledge to solve problems by the facts. The stages in the inquiry method are: explaining objectives, problem orientation, formulating hypotheses, conducting research, presentations, and evaluations (Handoyono & Arifin, 2016) Problem Based Learning uses existing problems by transferring knowledge and providing opportunities for students to solve the problems they face (Efendi & Wardani, 2021).

Through Problem Based Learning and Inquiry, students are expected to build their knowledge based on the problems presented by the lecturer in lectures to develop skills to think critically. The stages in implementing the problem-based learning strategy, according to Fakhriyah, are to make preparations in the form of making learning plans and student activity plans that will be used in one semester. If the design is ready, then the next step is implementation. Finally, lecturers need to conduct assessments and reflections (Fakhriyah, 2014)

**Discussion**

This study provides additional literature related to various strategies that can be used in early childhood Islamic education. Examine in-depth the definition of each strategy, how rare its implementation is, and estimate how to anticipate the implementation of the strategy so that the learning outcomes that can be achieved are following the wishes of the lecturer. Because as is known. Higher education is a means to deepen students' abilities that can be achieved to do high school.

## Conclusions

Lecturers very much need learning strategies as educators in higher education, especially in the Department of Early Childhood Islamic Education. Because through learning at universities, students will teach at PAUD institutions in their respective regions. The quality produced can have an impact on the progress of the nation in the future. PAUD is one of the basic foundations where children are stimulated and develop their talents and abilities to take life to the next level. In addition, the strategies that have been described can also be innovated. The innovations made can provide renewal so that learning is not monotonous and can adapt to the conditions of students and the college environment.

Strategies that can be implemented are small group discussion, role-play and simulation, case study, discovery learning, cooperative learning, collaborative learning, contextual instruction, project-based learning, problem-based learning, and problem-based learning and inquiry. All strategies have different stages from one another. The results obtained will also, of course, be different. However, all of these strategies train independence and critical thinking skills, which students very much need. Some strategies also train cooperation and coordination with the environment to build a foundation for students to be more stable when entering the community.

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