

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN ACCOMPANYING KIDS LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH MONKEY STORIES APPLICATION DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

Ni Komang Purwaningsih¹, Si Putu Agung Ayu Pertiwi Dewi²,
Ni Putu Lindawati³

¹⁾²⁾ STIKES Bina Usada Bali

³⁾ Akademi Komunitas Manajemen Perhotelan Indonesia
purwacham89@gmail.com

Abstrak

Coronavirus disease 19 which has changed every aspect in the world, especially in education aspect brought a significant impact. One of them is changing the learning system at schools. Teaching and learning process turn to use online platforms as a form of learning method online way. Therefore parents and teachers are passionately looking for best ways to facilitate online learning, one of them is by applying monkey stories to introduce English for the kids. This study aimed at determining the parental engagement in accompanying kids learning English through monkey stories application during covid-19 lockdown. This study was a qualitative research by using observation, interview, and documentation as data collection techniques. This study found four themes including: 1) activities followed by the kids using monkey stories application, 2) description of parenting patterns applied at home, 3) the role of parents in assisting the use of monkey stories application, and 4) the effect of monkey stories application on kids' ability in comprehending English. This study is expected had a fruitful meaning for parents in assist their kids during study at home therefore the kids still feel the school circumstances at home and parents can be active and creative learning partners for their kids at home

Keywords: parental engagement, monkey stories, learning English, online

I. Introduction

Corona virus disease 19 (Covid-19) which first appeared in Wuhan has infected 127.349.248 people, resulting in 2.787.593 deaths worldwide (WHO, 2021). It changes everything in all aspects in the world like health, work, financial, and education sectors. Especially in educational aspect, it has brought a significant impact like school enclosure or global lockdown of schools made by policymakers in order to minimize the spread of the virus, reduce contact and save the kids' life.

The government's decision to close school institutions simultaneously has an impact on changing the learning system at schools. Almost all educational institutions in Indonesia implement policies to study at home. Kids are not sent to school anymore. A different way of teaching and learning arises. Teaching and learning process turn to new method by using online platforms as a form of learning method online way. This certainly makes school institutions, especially teachers, should have good communication and

cooperation with parents related to the learning process at home.

In Indonesia, physical distancing which started in February 2020 requires all students study at home. The change of learning activities from classroom to home bring new challenge which force all the elements from teacher, students and parents should be ready to force it (Novianti & Garzia, 2020). Therefore, parental involvement when accompanying children has a major role in the success of learning during this one year. Basically every kid has unlimited potential. But there are several factors that can influence whether they ultimately meet that potential. Experts believe that the role of parents in kid' lives has broad impact (Utami, 2020). Parental involvement is very important for children to excel in school. This can reduce anxiety in children, be more productive, and reduce the use of the internet and computers to play games.

According to study conducted by Lepicnik-Vodopivec & Samec (2013) identified that parents with higher education level have more possibility to improve the kids learning competencies, language development, self-expression, and social competencies. Kids are considered need active learning to support their competencies including visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile. The skills which already designed at school must be transferred at home by the parents especially their language skills.

The ability of kids in understanding language like English, despite of their mother tongue is highly needed recently. Due to pandemic condition, parents who have a role as teacher at home should prepare themselves well in order to be a good learning partner for their kids. As the sophisticated technology growth well now, parents should consider the best learning technology software to support learning activities at home. It forces parents to be able to use technology because parents will teach the technology to their kids. Parents must be creative and innovative in preparing the implementation of online learning and provide guidance to kids so that they can take advantage of access modern technology in the learning process which will also improve the quality of the kid itself (Prasojo & Riyanto, 2011).

One of the learning applications used in improving kids' language is by applying monkey stories. Monkey stories is the application for kids aged 0-10 which provides vast interactive collection and leveled picture stories, guided lessons, and audio books with new content added weekly. It guarantees that children will be more interested in learning English and develop essential skills for higher English levels. It offers learning new words like providing stories and audio which help us to read it with good pronunciation. Kids can hear and repeat the word, recognize and also trace the letter.

Kids can explore themselves through interactive activities with beautiful illustrations, and games that can develop their language skills. It also offers the unique way for kids to interact with the story like touching the different items on the page and the name of the touched objects or characters displayed. It gives animated effect which help kids to learn vocabulary easily and understand the plot of the story.

Based on the results of an interview with one of the kindergarten school teachers, that teaching and learning activities meetings during the COVID-19 period were carried out via online. During online teaching and learning activities, parents are required to accompany their children, especially in operating technological tools such as computers, tablets, mobile phones. But it won't be effective if the parents can not create good circumstances during accompanying their kids study at home. Therefore teacher and parents try to adapt the use of monkey stories application. Then, based on interviews with parents conducted by researchers on April 10th, 2021 in Kerobokan Village who accompany children to study from home, researchers found the fact that parents gave their children using gadgets or laptop to use this monkey stories application in order to learn English, therefore researchers are interested in taking the title "Parental Engagement in

Accompanying Kids Learning English through Monkey Stories Application during Covid-19 Lockdown". Parental engagement in this study means how the parents play their role in accompanying and actively involved in the learning process and experience about kids (Jeynes, 2005).

Based on the background above, the problems in this paper can be formulated, as follows:

1. What kind of activities followed by the kids using monkey stories application?
2. What are the patterns of parenting applied at home?
3. What are the roles of parents in assisting the use of monkey stories application?
4. How does it affect kids' ability in comprehending English?

Following the formulation of the problem, this paper was created with the following objectives:

1. To know activities followed by the kids using monkey stories application.
2. To identified the pattern of parenting applied at home.
3. To investigates the roles of parents in assisting the use of monkey stories application.
4. To determine the effect of monkey stories application on kids' ability in comprehending English.

II. Research Methods

This study was a qualitative research. This study was conducted by researchers with natural objects, namely objects that developed as they

were not manipulated by researchers and the presence of researchers did not affect the object under study. Researchers conducted research with a transcendental phenomenological approach, which did not focus on the researcher's interpretation but prioritized an explanation of the participant's experience. The researcher used observation, interview, and documentation as data collection techniques.

Observation is an activity carried out by researchers to obtain useful information in order to fulfill and support the research process. It can also be used as an evaluation tool to measure certain aspects that already exist in the hypothesis. Observations result can be in the form of events, conditions, and other things according to research (Sujarweni, 2014:75).

The next data collection technique was interview. Interview according to Sujarweni (2014:31) is an activity to get information that has been studied or prepared beforehand by various techniques. There are two techniques, namely: face-to-face or using the media (not directly). This interview activity is carried out more deeply, so that the information can be obtained completely valid and in accordance with the circumstances. In order to facilitate research data, the data collection is assisted by taking note technique. In this study, it was noted that important things related to the scope of research.

The data collected from interviews, observations and

documents were analyzed using thematic, namely analytical techniques that refer to the research questions that have been determined, so that the themes were arranged according to the research questions and be a reference in explaining the phenomena that occur in this case students learn from home.

The validity of the data carried out in this study through several ways:

- a. Extension of the researcher's participation in conducting interviews.
- b. Persistence of researchers' observations on conditions and behavior and the problems studied and the forms of support provided by parents or family.
- c. Triangulation of data by comparing the data results interviews and observation data with the data obtained from outside other sources.

The participants involved were six parents (mothers) who have children aged 3-5 years who often used monkey stories in order to introduce English language to their kids. The participants were those who had bachelor degree educational background and active working in order to check whether it was right or not that parents with higher education level have more desire and ways to improve their kids' ability. The data that had been collected from each subject was not generalized because each subject represented their respective conditions. The data collection

technique used was in-depth interview and documentation. The data that had been collected was

then analyzed using the Phenomenological Analysis method (See Figure 1).

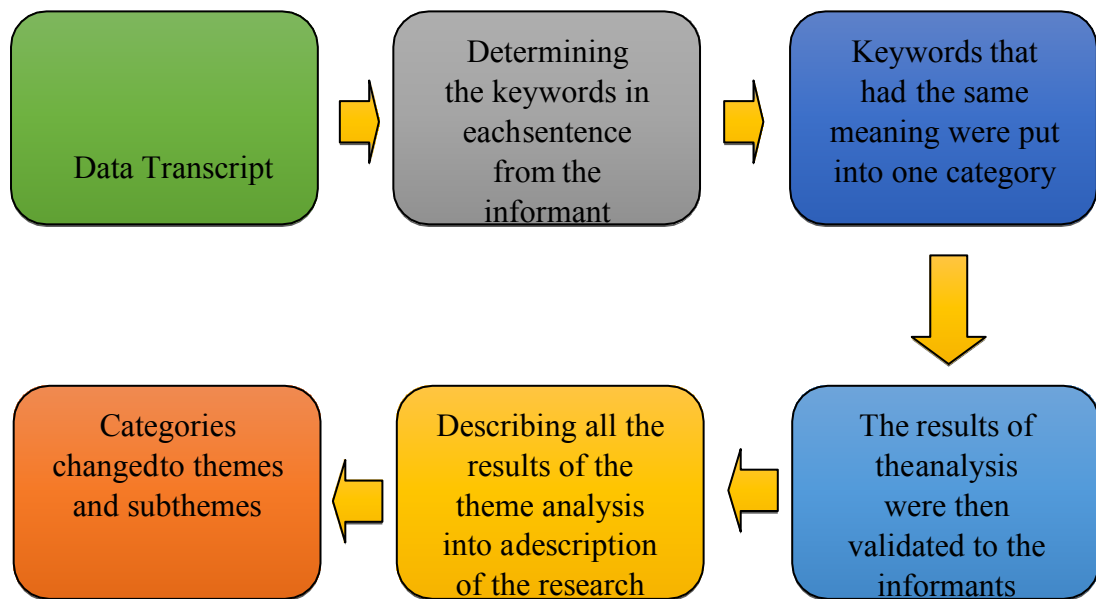


Figure 1. Research Data Analysis Techniques

III. Results and Discussion

After conducting research through the interview, observation and documentation process with all participants supported by field notes and literature review, this study obtained four themes that describe parental engagement in accompanying kids learning English through monkey stories application during Covid-19 lockdown. These themes including: 1) activities followed by the kids using monkey stories application, 2) description of parenting patterns at home, 3) the role of parents in assisting the use of monkey stories application, 4) the effect of monkey stories application on kids' ability in comprehending English.

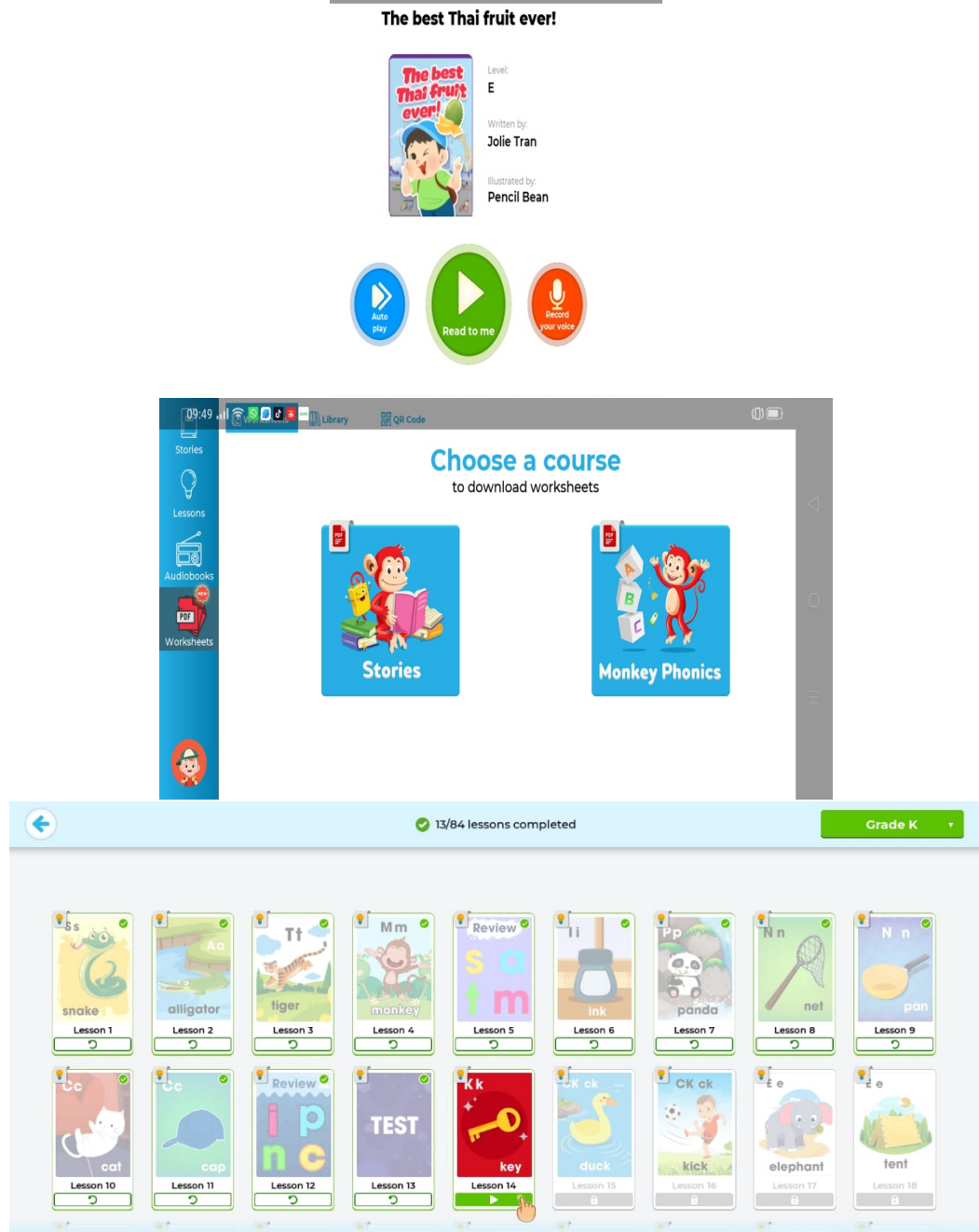
1. Activities Followed by the Kids Using Monkey Stories Application

Monkey stories provide more activities for the kids. The parents can choose the activities based on the kids' ages. There were several grades offered like pre K, kindergarten, grade 1 and 2. Some fiturs offered by monkey stories including: stories, lessons (reading and monkey phonics lesson), audiobooks, worksheets and report for parents.

In stories fitur, there were 3 activities offered like read to me where we can listen to audio and picture while story is readed, then we can record our voice. In reading, the kids can leard 39 lessons and the kids can listen the story from the simpler one. There are six activities offered in reading such as quiz, mazes, read story, sing/learn vocabulary and speaking which emphasize to the pronunciation. Then in monkey phonics there were 84 lesson which

consists of six activities too including introduction, sound discrimination, letter formation, sound isolation, learn sight words, and vocabulary. If the parents are busy to work, the parents can know the kids' result from the

students' report. Moreover, the parents also can download the PDF worksheet from the application and can print them out. They can give it as an additional exercise to the kids. The feature can be seen in pictures below.



Picture 1. Fitur and Activities Provided in Monkey Stories Application

Here are some interviews conducted to the participants.

Ya...saya tidak begitu bisa berbicara bahasa Inggris dengan pengucapan yang benar. Tapi saat saya melihat iklan penawaran program ini, kemudian saya tertarik dan saya merasa sangat terbantu dalam memperkenalkan bahasa Inggris kepada anak saya. Di dalamnya ada banyak program yang biasa dipelajari dan anak saya merasa bermain sambil belajar (P1)

Awalnya anak saya kecanduan gadget. Untuk mengalihkan agar anak tidak terfokus pada game, jadi saya memperkenalkan monkey stories dimana anak saya merasa selalu bermain tapi dia sudah bisa berbicara sedikit kosa kata dalam bahasa Inggris. (P5)

Based on the report obtained, it showed that most parents feel that activities offered by monkey stories is really helpful to help kids learn English through interactive way.

2. Pattern of Parenting at home

The results of the study found that parenting at home was categorized as authoritarian and democratic as expressed by participant P1 and P6 as follow:

Saya agak keras, saya menyuruh anak saya belajar bahasa Inggris dan berbicara dengan saya. Meskipun terkadang menangis, tetapi ini untuk kebajikannya karena hal itu yang diajarkan orang tua saya dulu sehingga saya menjadi bisa. (P2)

Saya lebih membebaskan anak untuk memilih apa yang mereka inginkan, kami hanya menyediakan yang sesuai dengan kebutuhan anak saya. (P6)

Saya sering meminta info kepada teman-teman saya cara belajar dengan anak. Kemudian saya mendownload aplikasi yang ada di playstore hp saya serta membeli aplikasi yang cocok untuk membantu meningkatkan minat belajarnya dan saya juga mendampingi sembari saya belajar juga. Jadi saat anak saya tidak memainkan hpnya, saya bisa mengulang kembali apa yang mereka pelajari sambil bermain. (P4)

Saya sibuk bekerja jadi saya hanya memberikan hp kepada anak saya. (P2)

From the interview conducted above we know that parents applied authoritarian, authoritative, and neglectful parenting. Parents who applied authoritarian parenting felt that all their wishes must be obeyed by the kids, feel that they were always right, and limit the kids' space for movement. The impact of this parenting pattern is that kids will grow up to be aggressive and prone to having conflicts with other people. Having too strict rules may also be great liars because they are used to harsh punishments from their parents.

Parents who were rarely or even not involved in kids' care applied neglectful parenting, usually because parents had to work day and night so they rarely communicate with their children. As a result of this parenting pattern, it creates a distance between children and their parents, as well as the possibility that the child will grow up to be a happy person and lack self-confidence.

Parents who applied authoritative parenting provided support for the choices made by kids, as a result, children were more confident. It would also be easier for them to express their own opinions because they were not hindered by parental coercion. Kids raised with this parenting pattern were likely to grow up to be law-abiding figures without coercion. They also felt confident and comfortable in expressing their opinions, and kids will grow up to be happy and wise in making decisions. This parenting pattern was also considered as one of the parenting patterns that give birth to the most successful children as adults.

3. The Role of Parents in Assisting the Use of Monkey Stories Application

The role of parents is very important for their kids. The main goal is for kids to continue to get a good education even in the midst of current conditions. The existence of Covid-19 demands maximum role of parents in kids' education. Parents are required being able to adapt and also be active in supporting activities learning from home. The role of parents is absolutely influenced by their roles or other busyness. For example, a mother who is busy with her work will be different from the full role of mother concentrate on household matters. Even with full busy parents still take the time to accompany their children who study from home or online.

In general, the emerging roles are as a companion, supervisors, motivators and educators in terms of child discipline during carry out online learning at home. Specifically the role what emerges are: taking care of and assisting children in doing their work schoolwork, doing activities together while at home, creating a comfortable environment for kids, establish good communication with kids, provide guidance and motivate children. The role of parents as supervisors is where parents supervise activities carried out by kids effectively both in everyday life or in society, because the growth and development of kids is influenced by the environment where the kids are and this of course greatly affects the condition kids when learning from home.

The role of parents itself can affect the development of children in cognitive, affective, and psychomotoric aspect. According to Lestari (2012: 153) the role of parents is the method used by parents with regard to the view of the tasks that must be carried out in raising children. Parents or child caretakers must be more active in providing assistance and building positive communication with children when using this application.

Saya tidak begitu bisa bahasa Inggris. Oleh karena itu saya menggunakan aplikasi ini karena anak bisa mendengarkan pengucapan yang benar dalam aplikasi ini. Cara saya memberikan motivasi ketika anak kurang semangat dalam belajar dengan cara mendampingi dia belajar, menemani mengerjakan pekerjaan rumah (PR) dan selalu memberikan pujian saat anak mendapatkan nilai tertinggi agar anak lebih semangat lagi dalam belajar (P1).

Saat saya pulang bekerja, saya memberikan waktu anak saya menonton monkey stories selama sejam. Kemudian saya mendownload worksheet yang disediakan dan menemani anak saya belajar sehingga anak saya tidak terlalu lama focus menggunakan hp. Awal belajar anak saya terlihat kurang begitu focus, tapi lama-kelamaan dia bisa mengucapkan kata-kata yang dipelajari di monkey stories dan menyelipkan saat dia berbicara. Jadi sebagai orang tua saya hanya bisa memfasiliasi saja. (P6)

Jika saya menemani anak belajar, anak saya akan lebih focus dan disiplin. Terlebih saat dia bisa menjawab dengan benar, meskipun ada sound effect tapi jika saya juga menyemangati dan memuji keberhasilannya, anak saya tambah senang dan semakin semangat belajarnya. (P3)

Saat saya sibuk bekerja, dan saya memberikan kesempatan anak saya belajar di rumah dengan pembantu saya. Saya bisa melihat hasil belajar anak saya yang dikirimkan melalui email. Ini sangat membantu saya melihat perkembangan anak saya. (P2)

From the interview report above, it can be concluded that learning achievement with a

learning system from home is more determined by the role of parents. Parents can be partner for kids to practice what they have learned before. Responding to this, parents must be able to give their full role best. For example, scheduling in learning, applying more discipline. Give a reward if the child succeeds in doing the task well. In addition, doing an evaluation, how the kids' learning outcomes are also good.

5. The Effect of Monkey Stories Application on Kids' Ability in Comprehending English

Early introduction to English helps kids' language development to be more familiar with English. The more familiar with English the easier it is for the child to continue the foreign language at a higher level. In addition, the child will become more confident because not all children have abilities that are easy to develop. If they are proficient in English, they will be able to communicate more easily with the world community in their careers. So, apart from using their mother tongue, there is nothing wrong with learning local languages, Indonesian and foreign languages, including learning English from an early age.

A: Apakah bapak/ibu berbicara bahasa Inggris di rumah?

B: Tidak full tapi saya menyelipkan beberapa kata-kata dalam bahasa inggris yang sudah dipelajari supaya anak saya terbiasa (P6)

C: *Ya, saya berbicara menggunakan bahasa Inggris di rumah. Meskipun anak saya belum begitu bisa meresponnya tetapi dia sudah bisa melakukan apa yang saya instruksikan dalam bahasa Inggris (P2)*

Based on the data above, it is known that in interviews with 6 parents, some of them speak English at home while the other only try to introduce new vocabulary at all

A: *Setelah belajar menggunakan monkey stories, apa yang bapak/ibu rasakan?*

B: *Saya merasa anak saya lebih cepat mengenal angka dan warna dalam bahasa Inggris setelah belajar menggunakan monkey stories. Secara tidak langsung saat aktivitas mewarnai di rumah, dia langsung mengambil warna dan menyebutkannya menggunakan bahasa Inggris (P3)*

C: *Anak saya saat melakukan sesuatu, langsung menggunakan instruksi "Let's go", dan setelah mengerjakan aktivitasnya selalu mengucapkan "good job", "marvelous" seperti apa yang telah ditontonnya. (P5)*

Based on the interview above, it can be concluded that indirectly kids can produce language based on what they see.

Their experience teaches them a lot.

A: *Apakah ini membantu anak dalam meningkatkan minat belajarnya?*

B: *Pastinya (P1)*

C: *Tentu saja (P4)*

Based on the interview above, it can be concluded that kids are motivated in learning English because they can play while learning. The animated picture showed gave desire to kids to learn English.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the result and discussion, most of the parents are engaged in children online learning activities through monkey stories. Parents are the most instrumental person in the kid's learning activities. From the finding above, there four themes obtained including: 1) activities followed by the kids using monkey stories application, 2) description of parenting patterns at home, 3) the role of parents in assisting the use of monkey stories application, 4) the effect of monkey stories application on kids' ability in comprehending English.

Audiovisual aids such as songs, stories, picture games and other activities can support smooth communication and can be an effective way to promote language development in early childhood. Based on the research that had been carried out, the authors advice parents to always supervise and control their kids so that there are still limits and can have a positive influence from the

media they watch, so that there is no bad influence.

Bibliography

- Jeynes, W. H. (2005). The Effects of Parental Involvement on the Academic Achievement of African American Youth. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 260–274.
- Lepicnik-Vodopivec, J., & Samec, P. (2013). Communication Technology in the Home Environment of Four-year-old Children (Slovenia). *Comunicar: Revista Científica de Comunicación y Educación*, 20(40), 119-126.
- Novianti & Garzia. (2020). Parental Engagement in Children's Online Learning During COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Teaching and Learning in Elementary Education (JTLEE)*, 117-131.
- Prasojo, Lantip Diat, & Riyanto. (2011). *Teknologi Informasi Pendidikan*. Yogyakarta: Gava Media.
- Sujarweni. (2014). *Metodologi Penelitian*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Baru Press.
- Utami (2020). Kendala dan Peran Orangtua dalam Pembelajaran Daring pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pascasarjana UNNES*
- WHO. (2021). WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard. <https://covid19.who.int/>