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Powtoon as Learning Media to Improve Listening Skills in Children Aged 5-6 Years

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Abstract: Listening skills is the ability to understand verbal and nonverbal information. These skills form the foundation for children's language and communication development, but are often overlooked in learning, leaving children less active in processing information. The Powtoon application serves as a solution by presenting engaging and interactive learning experiences. This study aims to improve the listening skills of 5- to 6-year-old children at a kindergarten located in Colomadu, Karanganyar, by utilizing the Powtoon application as a learning medium. Classroom action research was conducted through collaboration between the researcher and the teacher up to cycle II, with each cycle consisting of three meetings. The stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection followed the Kemmis and McTaggart model. Data collection included observation, interviews, oral tests, and documentation, with both quantitative and qualitative analyses applied. Source and technique triangulations were carried out to ensure data validity. The research was guided by specific indicators, namely the ability in maintaining attention for 10–15 minutes, answering questions based on the information heard, and retelling information in the correct sequence. The research findings indicate that children's listening skills improved after utilizing the Powtoon application as a learning medium. Classical improvement progressed from 21.43% in the pre-intervention stage to 57.12% in cycle I, and reached 85.71% in cycle II. These findings demonstrate that the Powtoon application plays an important role in improving the listening skills of 5- to 6-year-old children at a kindergarten located in Colomadu, Karanganyar.

Keywords: **listening skills; powtoon application; learning media; 5- to 6-year-old children**

INTRODUCTION

Language has a very important role in the lives of young children. The use of language serves as a communication tool that supports interaction and children's desire to express their ideas (Herawati & Katoningsih, 2023). Children's language is closely linked to communication in a broad sense. Communication is a crucial factor that supports children's development (Rahmawati, 2019). The communication process serves as a means for children to learn how to convey their thoughts, understand messages from others, and build social relationships that support their development. Language, as part of communication, is divided into four key skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Kurnia, 2019). The listening skills forms the foundation for children's receptive language development before the other three skills.

Listening skills refer to an individual's ability to acquire information, which can be enhanced through particular stimuli. The listening skills process involves receiving

verbal and nonverbal information, constructing meaning, and responding to the intent of the message (Hargie, 2019). Listening skills encompass the process by which individuals process received information to interpret its meaning in their own language (Ningrum, Hafidah, & Dewi, 2021). The process of interpreting the meaning of received information makes listening skills the primary foundation for children's language acquisition.

Oduolowu and Akintemi (2014) describe listening skills as a key skill acquired by children and frequently used in daily communication or interaction. Listening skills serve as a primary foundation for children's language development, but are often overlooked. Hermawan (2012) notes that listening is a communication skills that has received insufficient attention. This situation highlights the need for greater focus on listening skills, given their significant role in children's language development. Listening skills play a crucial role in enhancing speaking, reading, and writing skills, supporting oral communication, and expanding children's knowledge and information (Juannita & Mahyuddin, 2022).

According to Bromley (as cited in Anggraini and Priyanto, 2019), there are three types of listening skills in early childhood, namely: 1) Informative listening, which aims to obtain information by identifying and remembering it, and then drawing conclusions from it. The process of informative listening can be stimulated by asking questions about the information that has been conveyed. 2) Critical listening, which involves the process of analyzing and drawing conclusions about the information that has been heard. Activities such as retelling information that has been heard and asking questions about things that follow a sequence can serve as a means to stimulate critical listening skills. 3) Appreciative listening, which is the skill of listening accompanied by the process of feeling and enjoying the information being listened to imaginatively. Children's appreciative listening skills can be stimulated through activities such as watching videos that use engaging animations and sounds.

Children are considered to possess listening skills when meeting the established indicators in accordance with their developmental stage. The indicators of listening skills for 5- to 6-year-old children in this study are maintaining attention for 10–15 minutes, answering questions based on the information heard, and retelling information in the correct sequence (Adelmann, 2012; Asmawati, 2014; Tarigan, 2015). Supporting these indicators, Wilson and Korn (2007) argue in their study that, generally speaking, the duration of focused attention under conditions of attentiveness and enthusiasm is 10–15 minutes. In line with this argument, Suryana and Mahyudin (2014) explain that focused attention occurs when a child is able to sit and pay attention to something comfortably.

Listening skills can pose a challenge in the learning process for children aged 5–6 years. This situation was observed among 5- to 6-year-old children at a kindergarten located in Colomadu, Karanganyar. During the learning process, children tend to talk with peers and focus on their own activities. Consequently, the children are unable to answer questions regarding information presented by the teacher. Children often responding with a simple smile or remaining silent. Furthermore, the information is frequently repeated in the wrong sequence or inaccurately.

Interviews with teachers revealed that the children's listening skills are not yet optimal. This situation is due to the children's lack of attention to the learning materials

presented via PowerPoint slides and printed worksheets, making innovative learning media necessary. Videos sourced from YouTube have indeed been used, but the content has not been adapted to the children's developmental stage or the focus of the lesson. As a result, the children's listening skills have not yet reached their full potential.

The appropriate use of media can be a solution to this problem. Fathonah, Wahyuningsih, and Syamsuddin (2020) suggest that the use of media is highly recommended to improve the quality of learning because children can see and hear information simultaneously. The media in question is audiovisual media. The use of audiovisual media can present sound and visuals simultaneously, thereby helping children retain new content and improve their understanding of it more effectively (Sholikhah, Dewi, & Sholeha, 2021). Supporting these findings, Fitrianingtyas, Zuhro, Jumiatmoko, Nurjanah, and Sholeha (2021) note that video in this context, audiovisual media offers various advantages, namely that the instructional content presented can be equally accessible to children, is effective in illustrating a process, overcomes spatial and temporal limitations, is more realistic, can be repeated or paused as needed, and influences children's perspectives by conveying a profound impression. Based on these various advantages, the use of audiovisual media is considered effective for improving children's listening skills.

The Powtoon application is a learning media that can produce audiovisual content. Powtoon is an online platform for creating presentations that feature various cartoon animation elements, handwritten text, and engaging transition effects, along with an easy to use timeline, making children more interested and active in the learning material (Siskawati & Rahmadani, 2022). Using the Powtoon application can stimulate children's listening skills. Basri, Fadli, and Sumargono (2021) argue that the Powtoon application can be utilized as an educational tool to boost children's motivation to learn, thereby helping to improve their listening skills due to its engaging animations. The application features elements such as scenes, backgrounds, text, characters, props, shapes, images, videos, audio, and the ability to add slides with a variety of animation types and options that can be utilized and customized to meet the needs of creating educational media, thereby capturing children's attention to engage with the learning material. Powtoon's features, which integrate visual and audio elements, align with Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. This theory explains that learning becomes more effective when information is presented through both visual and verbal means simultaneously (Mayer, 2024).

The steps for using the Powtoon application as a learning media consist of several stages, namely: 1) Planning, which includes creating a lesson plan, developing learning materials using the Powtoon application in accordance with the classroom curriculum, and preparing the tools and materials needed for the lesson. 2) Presentation, which consists of several activities, namely coordinating the children, opening the learning activity, explaining to the children the activities to be carried out and the objectives to be achieved, delivering the learning material presented using the Powtoon application as a learning medium, and conveying conclusions and messages to the children regarding the learning material that has been presented using the Powtoon application. 3) Follow-up, which involves conducting a discussion or Q&A session with the children and administering exercises or tests to the children regarding the material

that has been presented (Ermawati & Umasugi, 2021; Fitriani, 2021; Pambayun, Siswandari, & Sulistyaningrum, 2021).

The Powtoon application can also be categorized as an interactive learning medium due to the various features it offers. Interactive learning media are considered capable of actively improving children's listening skills. When using interactive learning media, children can gain a broader understanding, experience reality as it is, and become more engaged with the learning material presented by the teacher in the classroom. The use of interactive learning media makes learning more relevant, enjoyable, and engaging (Rasmani et al., 2023).

Based on these characteristics, the use of the Powtoon apaplication has the potential to support the development of listening skills in early childhood. The various features available such as animations, characters, visual illustrations, audio narration, and transition effects integrated into a single learning medium make the presentation of material more engaging and easier for children to follow. The structured presentation of information through visual and auditory means can help children focus their attention during learning activities, increase their engagement in the learning process, and facilitate their understanding of the information conveyed by the teacher. Thus, the use of the Powtoon application is expected to help improve children's listening skills. Based on this description, the aim of this research is to examine the use of the Powtoon application in improving the listening skills of 5- to 6-year-old children at a kindergarten located in Colomadu, Karanganyar.

METHOD

The study was conducted at a kindergarten located in Colomadu, Karanganyar over two cycles. This classroom action research was carried out through collaboration between the researcher and the teacher. The subjects of the study were 14 children aged 5–6 years at a kindergarten in Colomadu, Karanganyar comprising 7 boys and 7 girls, with no children identified as having special needs. The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative data focusing on the development of listening skills.

The primary data sources for this study were the teacher and 5- to 6-year-old children, while educational documents served as secondary sources. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, oral tests, and documentation. The listening skills assessment instrument was developed based on listening skill indicators for children aged 5–6 years. These indicators include maintaining attention for 10–15 minutes, answering questions based on the information heard, and retelling information in the correct sequence (Adelmann, 2012; Asmawati, 2014; Tarigan, 2015). The instrument consists of an observation sheet and an oral test with eight assessment items organized based on these indicators. The instrument has been reviewed and validated by Early Childhood Education experts to ensure the appropriateness of the indicators, the clarity of the assessment items, and alignment with the developmental characteristics of 5- to 6-year-old children.

Listening skills are assessed using developmental categories Belum Berkembang (BB; not yet developed), Mulai Berkembang (MB; beginning to develop), Berkembang Sesuai Harapan (BSH; developing as expected), and Berkembang Sangat Baik (BSB; very well developed). Scores range from 1–4 according to the assessment rubric for each indicator. For the indicator of maintaining attention for 10–15 minutes, scoring is based on the duration and consistency of the child's attention during learning. For the indicator

of answering questions based on the information heard, scoring is based on the accuracy of the child's responses to the questions asked. Meanwhile, for the indicator of retelling information in the correct order, scoring is based on the child's ability to retell the information in the correct sequence.

Data validity was assessed using source triangulation and methodological triangulation. Validity was assessed using triangulation of sources and techniques. Data analysis consisted of quantitative analysis using descriptive comparative methods and qualitative analysis using the interactive approach by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014). The analysis comprised four stages: data collection, data condensation, data display, and Conclusion Drawing/Verifying. The performance indicators established based on Tampubolon (2014) are that at least 75% of the children achieve the expected developmental level. The research procedure followed the model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1992), which consist of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages.

Data collection was conducted in accordance with the research framework that had been formulated. This framework is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Data Collection Framework for Listening Skills in Children Aged 5–6 Years

Ascpect	Indicator	Item
Listening Skills of 5- to 6-Year-Old Children	Maintaining attention for 10–15 minutes	1
	Answering questions based on the information heard	6
	Retelling information in the correct sequence	1
	Total	**8**

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of three sessions with three indicators, namely maintaining attention for 10–15 minutes, answering questions based on the information heard, and retelling information in the correct sequence. The results of the assessment analysis revealed that mastery of listening skills was achieved among children using the Powtoon learning application during the pre-intervention, Cycle I, and Cycle II. The results of listening skills mastery among 5- to 6-year-old children at a kindergarten located in Colomadu, Karanganyar, are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Classical Mastery of Listening Skills in 5- to 6-Year-Old Children

Category	Pre-intervention	Cycle I	Cycle II
Mastered	21,43%	57,14%	85,71%
Not Mastered	78,57%	42,86%	14,29%

Based on Table 2, significant improvements were observed in the children's classical listening skills from the pre-intervention phase through Cycle II with a final achievement rate of 85.71%. This achievement was due to the fact that the majority of students in a class had reached the study's achievement score threshold. Improvements

were also observed in each indicator. A comparison of these skill improvements is presented in Figure 1 below.

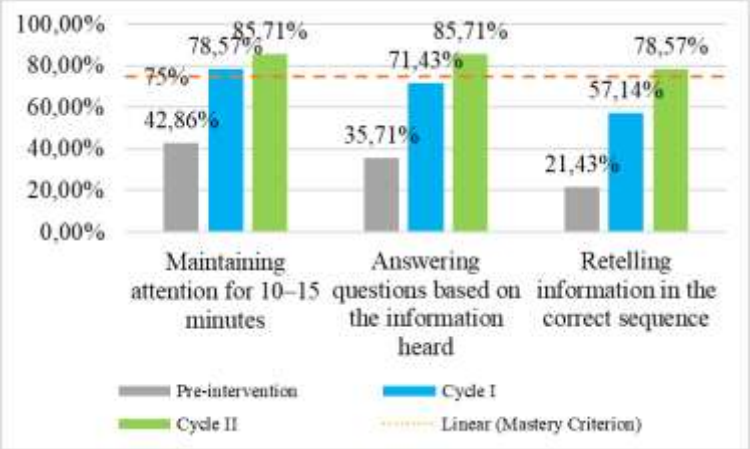

Figure 1. Comparison of Listening Skills Improvement in Children Aged 5–6 Years

Figure 1 shows a significant improvement from the pre-intervention to Cycle II in children's listening skills with a minimum mastery criterion of 75%. The pre-intervention data indicate that all three listening skills indicators fell below the study's minimum mastery threshold. These three indicators were suboptimal because the children did not pay close attention to the teacher's explanations. The children's ability to comfortably and attentively focus on the presentation of learning materials using the Powtoon application in Cycle I showed improvement. Almost all children could answer questions based on the information heard, while still struggling to restate the information in the correct sequence. In Cycle II, improvements were made to the Powtoon application.

Improvements to the Powtoon application were made by presenting the material in a more interactive manner with the addition of more engaging animation variations, both in terms of shape and color. These improvements are shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Improvements to the Powtoon Application Through the Use of Various Animations and Interactive Content

Based on the improvements made, the children's listening skills showed further improvement and successfully reached the target proficiency level. The children

demonstrated greater enthusiasm and actively engaged in the learning activities. Furthermore, their performance in answering questions reflected progress in maintaining attention. This heightened focus on the presented material subsequently enabled the children to retell the information in the correct sequence.

The finding of improved listening skills through the Powtoon application supports the arguments of Basri et al. (2021); Indriani, Ikaningrum, and Setyowati (2023); as well as Siskawati and Rahmadani (2022) that the Powtoon application can effectively enhance attention and motivation toward the learning process, thereby improving children's listening skills. The comprehensive features within the application reinforce its added value. Children's attention is captured through the presentation of content using the available features. The various features in the Powtoon application are optimally utilized to create engaging media presentations that align with the functions of educational media itself.

The Powtoon application is relevant for use in the learning process because it fulfills the functions of educational media, namely attentional, affective, cognitive, and compensatory functions (Fadhilah, 2015). Children's attentional function can be enhanced through the appeal of animated presentations, which help them retain the learning material that has been presented. The emergence of emotions and their influence on children's behavior are elements of the affective function, as stimulation is derived from the presence of illustrated text within the media. The use of the Powtoon application facilitates children's ability to interpret the intended meaning of the presented learning material. The ease of using the Powtoon application is an element of cognitive function. Compensatory function occurs because the use of the Powtoon application provides understanding for children with limitations through the text, images, animations, or audio presented. This explanation supports the argument by Maghfirah (2019) that children's listening skills are acquired through visual and verbal symbolic processes.

The Powtoon application clearly presents information and provides a visual representation of learning materials through images, sound, and animation. This application is ideal for improving the listening skills of 5- to 6-year-old children because concrete objects cannot always be used in learning. There are specific reasons for the challenges associated with using concrete objects, such as time constraints, safety concerns, and the availability of materials. This explanation supports Piaget's theory that children aged 5–6 begin to understand the difference between what they see and what is real (Papalia, Diane, Olds, & Feldman, 2009). The Powtoon application can be used as a learning media for children aged 5–6 because it presents information visually through the images and animations it contains.

The thinking process through information processing is often associated with two aspect. Hogan, Adlof, and Alonzo (2014) as well as Hafrianti, Wahyuningsih, and Sholeha (2020) explain that listening skills, which are part of the language aspect, involve children's cognitive and social-emotional development. When children listen, a thinking process occurs alongside the processing of the information being conveyed. The involvement of these two aspects is inseparable, so there is a link between listening skills and children's cognitive and social-emotional aspects.

The relationship between listening skills and these two aspects is related to the type of listening skills. Bromley (as cited in Anggraini and Priyanto, 2019) identifies three

types of listening skills, namely informative listening which involves answering questions related to information presented in a broadcast, critical listening with involves conveying information heard in a structured sequence, and appreciative listening which involves watching videos featuring engaging animations. These three types align with the listening skills indicators in this study through the activities provided using the Powtoon application.

The presentation of the learning materials was conducted using the Powtoon application with adjustments made to the content from a kindergarten located in Colomadu, Karanganyar. The activity was carried out by a teacher acting as a research collaborator, who presented the materials and provided explanations to the children in accordance with the results of coordination with the researcher. Listening skills were stimulated through the children's process of paying attention to the presentation and explanation of the learning materials in accordance with the indicators adapted in this study, namely those from Adelmann (2012), Asmawati (2014), and Tarigan (2015) during each session in each cycle. Observations and oral tests were conducted during the third session of each cycle regarding the material that had been presented using the Powtoon application, so that improvements in listening skills could be assessed.

The improvement in children's listening skills across all indicators was influenced by the use of the Powtoon application. An assessment of the indicator regarding the ability in maintaining attention for 10–15 minutes showed that the children were able to do so. Children's success is marked by active engagement in comfortably paying attention, responding, and following instructions from the presented learning materials. Children who have not yet mastered the skill are identified based on a duration of less than 10 minutes in paying attention to the learning materials. Assessment observations indicate that children are engrossed in their own activities. The research by Wilson and Korn (2007) as well as Suryana and Mahyudin (2014) aligns with the indicators in this study, namely that children aged 5–6 years can pay attention to information comfortably and attentively for a period of 10–15 minutes. Children's reactions and focus on the information they hear are forms of active listening (Ariawan, Agustin, & Rahman, 2019).

The indicator for answering questions based on the information heard showed improvement. Children were able to answer 6 questions correctly based on the material presented and some were even able to provide complete answers. Incompletion was defined as answering fewer than 6 questions correctly. According to the arguments presented by Aisyah, Tiara, and Putra (2023); Fitriyani, Kamsiyati, and Pudyaningtyas (2019); as well as Rohmah, Yulianto, and Mintowati (2019), children aged 5–6 years are already able to answer questions using the interrogative words "what," "who," "when," "why," "where," and "how." Mastery of the indicator is achieved when the child can correctly answer all 6 questions using these interrogative words in accordance with the material presented.

Children ability in retelling information related to the material in sequence indicates that mastery has been achieved for the indicator of retelling information in the correct sequence. This retelling is done by the child in their own words while still adhering to the core of the material. Not Mastered of the indicator is marked by the children's inability in retelling the information in sequence, whether the order is reversed or the child cannot provide any sequence at all. The assessment of this indicator is based

on argument by Santrock (2007) that preschool-aged children, particularly those aged 5–6 years, can understand others' language regarding the sequence or flow of the information presented.

A steady improvement was observed in listening skills across all indicators. Listening skills improved due to enhancements in the use of the Powtoon application, specifically by adding engaging animation variations and presenting learning materials in a more interactive manner. These improvements are supported by the argument put forth by Rasmani et al. (2023) that the use of interactive media enables children to understand more broadly, enjoy the learning process, experience real-world scenarios, and become more engaged with the learning materials presented by the teacher in the classroom.

Based on the researcher's review, the children's incomplete understanding occurred due to a lack of close attention to the presented learning material. This inattention subsequently affected the ability in answering questions and retelling information in the correct sequence. The argument put forward by Ariawan et al. (2019) emphasizes that children's active engagement in the listening process influences the acquisition of complete information.

Children demonstrate an understanding of answering questions and retelling information in the correct sequence when able to maintaining attention comfortably and attentively. The level of children's comprehension varies considerably. Sofwina and Dwiyanti (2023) emphasize that in addition to awareness, understanding the information presented and the ability to interpret it are factors that influence children's listening skills.

Based on the analysis of this study's data, children's listening skills which were previously incomplete have improved but not yet optimally. The review indicates that in Cycle II, children paid closer attention but for less than 10 minutes. Children also showed improvement in the number of questions they could answer correctly. Improvement occurred in the accuracy of the sequence they restated, although it was not yet entirely accurate. Based on data from the teacher, this children possessed unique characteristics compared to the other children.

According to the teacher, the first child's unique challenge which has not yet been fully resolved is the relatively lengthy process of adapting to the school environment. This child still needed to be accompanied by a parent when entering Class A. Upon entering Class B, although parental accompaniment was no longer required, the child was still unable to adapt well to the learning process. Observations indicated that this individual frequently failed to complete learning activities and often felt discouraged. Meanwhile, the unique challenge faced by the second child involves a lack of interest in academic activities. Further observation revealed that this second child prefers non-academic activities involving gross motor skills in outdoor settings.

Based on this analysis, in conjunction with theories regarding factors influencing listening skills by Bromley (as cited in Anggraini and Priyanto, 2019) as well as Sofwina and Dwiyanti (2023), it is concluded that the underachievement of the two remaining children stems from internal factors originating from the listeners themselves. These internal factors include individual characteristics and interests regarding the learning process. Consequently, specialized stimulation tailored to these traits needs to be provided to both children.

Overall, the research findings indicate that the use of the Powtoon application as a learning media is effective in improving children's listening skills and achieving the established performance indicators. This success demonstrates that Powtoon's ability to integrate visual and audio elements supports the learning process of young children. Although some children still require more specific stimulation tailored to their individual learning characteristics and interests, the majority of children showed improved listening skills following the intervention. This improvement can be explained through Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. This theory explains that learner process information through both visual and verbal channels simultaneously, which aids their understanding of the material being studied (Mayer, 2024). When information is presented through these visual and verbal channels, children find it easier to select, organize, and integrate the information they receive, thereby improving their understanding of the material.

In this study, the Powtoon application presents material through a combination of animations, images, text, and audio, allowing children to receive information through visual and verbal channels simultaneously. The engaging and integrated presentation of material helps children maintain focus while learning, understand the information presented, and better answer questions and retell the information they have heard. These conditions help children focus on the material being presented and better understand the information they hear, thereby improving their listening skills. These findings indicate that the use of the Powtoon application can support the improvement of listening skills in children aged 5 to 6 years.

Theoretically, improvements in listening skills are linked to children's cognitive and social-emotional processes. This is because listening activities involve information processing, attention focus, and interaction during learning. During the intervention, the children showed greater enthusiasm in participating in learning activities and interacting with teachers and peers. However, cognitive and socio-emotional aspects were not specifically measured in this study. Therefore, further research is needed to examine the impact of using the Powtoon application on these two aspects of development in greater depth.

CONCLUSION

The research findings show that using the Powtoon application as a learning media effectively improves the listening skills of 5- to 6-year-old children at a kindergarten in Colomadu, Karanganyar. The use of the Powtoon application can help children understand information more comprehensively through an engaging combination of visuals and audio. The step-by-step intervention process demonstrated improvements in the children's listening skills, specifically the ability in maintaining attention for 10–15 minutes, answering questions based on the information heard, and retelling information in the correct sequence. The use of the Powtoon application as a learning tool can serve as a best practice for teachers in creating innovative and enjoyable learning experiences tailored to the characteristics of young children. Schools can also maximize the use of the Powtoon application as an alternative language learning medium to support the development of children's listening skills. The improvement in listening skills observed in this study indicates that the use of Powtoon as a technology-based learning medium has the potential to create more engaging and

meaningful learning experiences for children. During the implementation of the intervention, children also gained knowledge and experience in using the Powtoon application as a learning medium.

The challenges faced in this study include differences in children's characteristics and interests regarding learning methods. Therefore, future research is recommended to better align and focus the use of the Powtoon application with each child's interests and learning characteristics. Adaptations such as combining the use of the Powtoon application with outdoor exploration activities can make the learning process more contextual and meaningful. Additionally, future studies could expand our understanding of the effectiveness of the Powtoon application by considering various factors that may influence children's listening skills, including a control group, and applying the study to a more diverse range of participants and educational settings. Cognitive and socio-emotional aspects also warrant further investigation to provide a more comprehensive picture of the benefits of using the Powtoon application in early childhood education.

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