

Introduction to English Vocabulary in Children with The Singing Method at Taman Firdaus Karanganyar Kindergarten

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Abstract

This study endeavours to enhance children's English vocabulary acquisition through singing activities. The impetus for this research stemmed from the prevalent challenge of impediments encountered in mastering vocabulary among children, particularly in the realm of memorising multi-syllabic English words imparted by educators. Additionally, it addresses the issue of errors or inaccuracies in comprehending the intended meaning during English language learning sessions. This research adopts a classroom action methodology executed across three phases: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The research cohort comprises 14 participants from Group A. Data collection methodologies encompassed the compilation of field notes, interview transcripts, and photographic documentation of the activities. Employing the singing method for English language acquisition proves to be a straightforward pedagogical approach, facilitating ease of vocabulary retention among children. Through this method, children can articulate their thoughts and emotions via melodic tones and expressions. Singing activities serve as a conduit to ignite children's enthusiasm for learning, seamlessly integrating with the foundational principles of kindergarten education. The outcomes of this study reveal a notable enhancement in children's English vocabulary proficiency. Progression is evident across the three stages of the intervention: from an initial attainment of 39% in stage I to 78% in stage II, and culminating in a substantial improvement to 91% in stage III. Thus, it can be inferred that the singing method constitutes an efficacious means to bolster children's English vocabulary skills.

Introduction Section

Language development in humans is paramount, as it enables individuals to articulate thoughts and ideas fluently, fostering effective communication with others (Sabaniah, Ramdhan, & Rohmah, 2021). Mastery of language, from the pronunciation of basic words to the construction of coherent sentences, is crucial for individuals to be comprehensible to their interlocutors. The process of language development predominantly engages the left hemisphere of the human brain, underscoring the significance of language and speech in human cognition (Pagarwati & Rohman, 2020). Language proficiency is a vital tool for effective communication, conferring a distinct advantage on children who can communicate fluently. Conversely, inadequate proficiency in a language can impede social interaction within one's immediate environment.

While English is considered a foreign language in Indonesia, its significance cannot be understated, given its status as a global lingua franca (Oktaria & Putra, 2020). Early exposure to English language instruction is therefore deemed imperative, as it equips children with the means to navigate communication beyond Indonesia's borders. Consequently, many formal educational institutions for young children have integrated early language stimulation activities into their curriculum, encompassing vocabulary acquisition and introduction to basic concepts such as fruits, alphabets, and numerical symbols (Pangastuti, 2020). English, as a globally recognised international language, holds significant importance in facilitating communication among individuals, both domestically and internationally (Qadafi, 2020). Proficiency in English is deemed essential for individuals across various contexts.

Early childhood education shapes children's communicative abilities and overall development. While children may not yet achieve full fluency in English at this stage, consistent exposure and regular instruction can yield positive outcomes. It is crucial to make learning engaging and enjoyable for young learners, as their limited attention span necessitates innovative approaches to maintain their interest (Ulfa & Na'imah, 2020). Introducing English to children during their formative years aligns with the principles outlined by Penfield in the theory of brain mechanism, which posits that early childhood represents an opportune phase for language stimulation beyond the native tongue (Dewi, 2020). Given the receptivity of young minds to stimuli, early interventions are instrumental in honing language skills and fostering holistic child development (Umi, Karmila, Guru, Anak, & Dini, 2020).

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However, concerns regarding the potential negative impact of introducing English early are not uncommon, particularly in play-based learning environments (Satrianingrum, 2021). Parents and educators must devise strategic approaches to English language development conducive to children's learning without overwhelming their cognitive capacities (Huda & Munastiwi, 2020). Effective stimulation strategies implemented judiciously from an early age can optimise language acquisition without imposing undue strain on children's cognitive faculties. Various methods can be employed to introduce or teach English vocabulary to children, taking into account the unique characteristics of early childhood development. One such characteristic, as noted by Wiyani (2012), is the predisposition of children to gravitate towards engaging and innovative stimuli. Additionally, Suryana (2013) highlights the limited concentration span typical of early childhood.

Guided by these characteristics, it becomes imperative to devise learning methods or mediums for teaching English that capture children's attention and facilitate vocabulary development. Consequently, researchers devised a singing method to introduce English vocabulary to 4-5-year-old children at Taman Firdaus Islamic Kindergarten. Singing is a particularly apt medium for this purpose, as it inherently evokes joy and interest among children. The singing method aligns well with the characteristics of early childhood, as it incorporates elements of both singing and musical play. Moreover, music is significant in kindergarten settings, serving as a medium for artistic expression, play, and education.

Fundamentally, singing represents a natural talent inherent in individuals, serving to express thoughts and emotions. As articulated by Kamtini (cited in Sabil, 2016), singing holds paramount importance in children's education, offering both enjoyment and a platform for emotional expression. Children derive immense satisfaction from singing, finding joy in the act, and using it to convey their innermost feelings. Singing entails vocalizing words with a specific rhythm and tone, resonating deeply with children's innate joy (Suyanto, 2015, p.114). It serves as a medium closely intertwined with everyday life experiences. Through singing, teachers can engage students in activities that reflect real-life contexts, fostering a deeper connection with the learning process.

Given its intrinsic appeal, singing becomes a favoured activity among children, offering a platform for emotional expression and linguistic exploration. As children engage in singing, they experience happiness and find an outlet to articulate their innermost thoughts and feelings while engaging their bodies in rhythmic movement. Within the framework of singing activities, children are entertained and allowed to expand their vocabulary and repertoire of songs.

Methodology

This study employs the methodology of classroom action research (PTK), with its focus on Group A children, aged 4-5 years, comprising 14 students at Taman Firdaus Karanganyar Kindergarten. As elucidated by Arikunto (2016), classroom action research delineates the causal relationships between interventions and outcomes, encapsulating the entire process from treatment initiation to its resultant impact. Within the framework of this study, collaborative action research is employed, as elucidated by Suhardjono (2015), wherein practitioners, namely teachers, collaborate with researchers in executing the research agenda. Here, researchers assume the role of observers, while teachers serve as implementers of the interventions. The primary objective of this classroom action research is to enhance children's vocabulary, with a specific focus on animal names, through montage activities.

The research design adheres to the model proposed by Kemmis and Taggart, structured across three cycles, each comprising three actions or meetings. These cycles encompass planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. To facilitate data collection and analysis, an array of instruments are utilised, including assessment sheets in the form of checklists, interview transcripts, field notes, and documentation. Quantitative data analysis is the cornerstone of this research endeavour, enabling a systematic evaluation of the interventions' efficacy.

Results and Discussions

This study's methodology employed to enhance children's vocabulary involved implementing singing methods across three sequential stages. Vocabulary expansion was assessed through a single indicator, specifically, the ability to articulate English vocabulary, mainly animal names. Researchers utilised videos and English songs to implement the singing methods. In the initial stage, the thematic focus centred on animal names. Following discussions on this theme, children were exposed to English songs via videos, subsequently integrating these songs into singing activities. Observations conducted during this initial stage revealed that some children necessitated teacher assistance during singing sessions, exhibited reluctance to engage in physical movements associated with certain songs, and displayed a tendency towards playful behaviour during singing activities.

Table 1. Child Observation Sheet Phase 1 (Clinical)

Child Name	Chicken	Fish	Rabbit	Cat
ABL	0	0	0	0
ADB	v	v	v	v
ALG	0	0	0	v
ARF	v	v	0	0

ATH	0	0	0	0
AZK	0	v	v	v
AZI	v	0	0	0
ARY	0	0	0	v
DSA	v	v	0	0
GZA	0	0	0	v
LTF	0	0	0	0
KSW	0	0	0	0
SYA	0	0	0	v
ZZM	v	0	v	0
VOLUME	6	5	4	7

Based on the data presented in the table, it is evident that in Stage 1, only 39% of children achieved mastery of vocabulary, with 2 students meeting the predetermined success criteria out of 14. However, subsequent observations and learning outcomes in Stage 2 indicated improvements in children's performance.

During Stage 2, researchers introduced animated videos featuring animals such as chickens, fish, rabbits, and cats as part of the learning process. This intervention made notable progress in developing children's English vocabulary at Taman Firdaus Kindergarten in Karanganyar Regency. The results demonstrated that while some children initially struggled to engage in singing English songs and interpreting English vocabulary, there was a noticeable improvement in their participation during this stage.

Specifically, in Stage 2, researchers observed an increase in the number of children actively participating in singing activities, with four additional children demonstrating the ability to follow along. This signifies a positive shift from Stage 1, where only 2 children could actively participate. Consequently, the number of children meeting the success criteria increased from 2 in Stage 1 to 6 in Stage 2, highlighting the interventions' efficacy.

Table 2. Child Observation Sheet Phase II

Child Name	Chicken	Fish	Rabbit	Cat
ABL	v	v	v	v
ADB	v	v	v	v
ALG	v	v	0	v
ARF	v	v	v	v
ATH	v	v	v	0
AZK	0	v	v	v
AZI	v	v	v	v
ARY	v	0	0	v
DSA	v	v	0	v
GZA	v	0	v	v
LTF	0	0	0	0
KSW	v	v	v	v
SYA	v	v	0	v
ZZM	v	v	v	v
VOLUME	12	11	9	12

Based on the observations recorded in Stage II, children's proficiency in English vocabulary reached 78%. This indicates a substantial improvement, with a 39% increase in vocabulary ability following the implementation of interventions. Notably, 6 out of 14 students achieved the predetermined success indicators, marking a positive outcome.

Reflecting on the findings of this study, researchers observed better results at this stage. However, despite the notable progress, it is evident that the overall percentage of 78% falls short of achieving the specified success indicators for all students. Therefore, it is imperative to undertake further improvements in Stage III to address the remaining challenges and enhance children's English vocabulary acquisition.

Table 3. Child Observation Sheet Phase III (Clinical)

Child Name	Chicken	Fish	Rabbit	Cat
ABL	v	v	v	v
ADB	v	v	v	v
ALG	v	v	v	v
ARF	v	v	v	v
ATH	v	v	v	0
AZK	v	v	v	v
AZI	v	v	v	v
ARY	v	v	0	v

DSA	v	v	v	v
GZA	v	0	v	v
LTF	v	v	0	v
KSW	v	v	v	v
SYA	v	v	0	v
ZZM	v	v	v	v
VOLUME	14	13	11	13

Based on the successful implementation of learning activities in Stage II, Stage III proceeded smoothly, resulting in further improvements. Among the 14 students, the number of children reaching the predetermined indicator increased to 3, leaving only 5 students who had not yet mastered English vocabulary. This progression is evident in the comparison between Stage I and II, where the percentage increased from 39% to 78%, and from Stage II to III, reaching 91%.

Upon careful consideration of the outcomes and in collaboration with stakeholders, it was decided to conclude the research at Stage III. The significant improvement in children's English vocabulary development, from 39% in Stage I to 91% in Stage III, indicated the effectiveness of the singing method in facilitating vocabulary acquisition among 4-5-year-old children at Taman Firdaus Karanganyar Kindergarten. The findings underscore the importance of employing singing methods in English language learning, as it enhances vocabulary comprehension and serves as a means of emotional expression and enjoyment for children. The success of this approach highlights its potential to unlock children's linguistic capabilities and foster a positive learning experience.

Results and Discussions

In this study, children's vocabulary was enhanced by implementing singing methods across three distinct stages. The evaluation of children's vocabulary proficiency focused on a singular indicator: the ability to articulate English vocabulary, specifically animal names.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and subsequent discussions, it can be concluded that singing methods among children aged 4-5 years at Taman Firdaus Karanganyar Kindergarten have yielded notable improvements in their English vocabulary acquisition. Initially, 14 children struggled to mention, comprehend, or understand English vocabulary. However, following the implementation of singing activities, there was a marked enhancement in their English vocabulary skills, demonstrating significant developmental progress.

The success of the intervention is evident across the three stages of implementation: Stage I witnessed a 39% participation rate in singing activities aimed at improving English vocabulary. At the same time, Stage II saw a notable increase to 78%. Finally, Stage III culminated in a remarkable success rate of 91%. These results affirm the hypothesis that the implementation of the singing method significantly enhances the development of English vocabulary among children aged 4-5 years. Moreover, the findings underscore the importance of well-prepared learning media to sustain children's interest and engagement in educational activities.

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