

English Vocabulary Mastery In Preschoolers Using Games and Songs To Develop Speaking Skills

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ABSTRACT

Published: December, 27, 2024 *The purpose of this research was to evaluate "English Vocabulary*

Keywords: Vocabulary Mastery, *Speaking Skills*". This study used qualitative descriptive research Preschoolers, Games and Songs, *design to analyze children's vocabulary mastery through game and song activities in developing their speaking skills. Grounded in Language Development, Speaking Skills.*

theories of language development and interactive learning, it emphasizes the benefits of physical movement, repetition, and interactive media in children's language acquisition. Data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with teachers and parents, and documentation of activities. Content analysis by Krippendorff was applied to categorize and assess the frequency and context of new vocabulary usage. An interview with a preschool teacher revealed that games like "Simon Says" and songs such as "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" effectively enhance vocabulary retention through engagement, repetition, and contextbased learning. Teachers observed noticeable improvements in children's vocabulary memory, confidence, and willingness to participate. The study highlighted that integrating games and songs not only boosts language development but also promotes social interaction, collaborative play, and active learning, resulting in increased student enthusiasm and better communication skills. Challenges in addressing diverse skill levels were mitigated through differentiated activities. These findings indicate that interactive methods like games and songs create a dynamic learning environment, fostering significant gains in language and social development for preschoolers.

Introduction

In essence, every child who is born into this world has the potential that exists within them. Every child has a unique potential within themselves that has been there since they were born. Optimizing children's potential is a main responsibility for parents and teachers. Recognizing a child's talents and interests can provide opportunities for learning and exploration as well as help parents and teachers identify what potential the child has. Children have cognitive potential that grows through various stages of development, which are sensorimotor stage, preoperational stage, concrete operational stage, and formal

operational stage. Children's intellectual potential increases in line with the experience gained and their interaction with the surrounding environment. It can emphasize the importance of providing a learning environment that is able to stimulate children's cognitive exploration process (Jean Piaget, 1964). The potential possessed in children can be optimized during the golden age where at this time the cognitive and physical growth and development in children takes place optimally which they can grow and develop as well as absorb various information optimally.

Early Childhood Education is the earliest teaching in a child's educational journey where at this level the child begins to be introduced to various things and taught various things before the child steps into a higher level of education. Learning at this level is centered on cognitive, physical, and motor development in children that is centered on the learner. Based on *Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional* (The Indonesian National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003) early childhood education is defined as a form of educational efforts aimed at children from birth up to six years of age. This education is provided through stimulation in the areas of education that helps the child's physical and mental growth and development, so that they are ready to enter further levels of education. Early Childhood Education has a fundamental role in developing a child's personality, character and potential to achieve optimal development as an adult. This education involves preschool and informal education at home or in their environment.

Foreign language learning in early childhood can help children develop their foreign language in addition to their mother tongue. English learning is considered necessary to be introduced from an early age because at this age children are able to absorb information quickly. Furthermore, English is also considered as one of the important languages to learn because it is a universal language that can connect every citizen from any country. However, behind the numerous benefits of learning English at an early age, this is often debated because having many languages that children learn at an early age can cause delays in speaking due to the large number of vocabulary possessed from various languages, causing confusion in children which is often found in some cases of bilingual children. The rising demand for English, combined with parents' belief that proficiency in English offers their children improved educational prospects, has resulted in a growing number of early English learners which has two major reasons such as the value for education and employment, and the benefits of early language learning. Young learner programs can start at any primary grade, with the frequency and duration of classes differing widely. Some programs offer 20–30 minute sessions once a week, while others may provide daily 30-minute classes. In other cases, English is used as the medium of instruction for subjects like science or mathematics, with children engaging in full-day lessons. With such varying exposure to English, children who start learning at age 6 or 7 may not reach bilingual proficiency by age 12. However, those studying multiple subjects in English are likely to develop a much higher level of fluency (Shin J.K & Crandall J, 2014).

Based on the theory proposed by Vygotsky, early childhood can usually have a vocabulary of around 2000 - 2500 vocabulary. At the age of 4 to 5 years, children are usually able to string together longer and more complete sentences. According to Vygotsky, the social environment plays a significant role in the development of children's language skills, especially through interactions with adults and peers. Children learn language through conversations and experiences with others, which will accelerate their vocabulary development. The introduction of foreign languages at home and at school can also improve vocabulary acquisition in early childhood.

Learning media has an important role in improving English vocabulary in early childhood. Children at this age tend to learn through visual, auditory and direct interaction. Utilizing various learning media in early childhood at school can effectively improve their understanding and remembering of new English vocabulary. Implementing English language learning media using games and songs has become something that is often done by preschool teachers in any institution. Increasing English vocabulary in

early childhood through games and songs can make it easier for children to remember some English words such as animal names, fruits, parts of the body and so on.

The use of learning methods through songs has many benefits in learning English to pre-school children. By using the song learning method for pre-school children in English learning, it can effectively fulfill the auditory and kinesthetic learning styles of children by pre-school teachers which usually consists of improving vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, and other aspects involved as a whole. In addition, interactive and fun song learning can support children's cognitive and memory development and enhance positive values in language development. The application of several suggested techniques such as contextualized song choice, and interactive participation can significantly increase the effectiveness of using songs in English language education for preschoolers. In general, the use of English language learning methods through songs can help preschool children's language development as well as create a fun and effective learning environment to be implemented in learning, especially in preschool children who are focused on age-appropriate fun learning.

The effectiveness of using game methods in learning English in pre-school children is the right method to use in learning English in pre-school children. The game method can be a perfect learning process for pre-school children who prioritize a fun learning process. This interactive approach not only keeps pre-school children engaged and motivated in the learning process, but can also motivate language acquisition through repetition and play, and provide a social context in the learning process. Educational theorists such as Brewster, Ellis and Girard (2002), Cameron (2001), Vygotsky (1978) and Piaget (1964) have observed how important play is in language learning for young children. This learning method has benefits such as stimulating interest, helping to maintain focus, and enhancing social and cognitive development. Learning games that involve vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, social development, emotional development, cognitive development, and problem solving are important components in the effectiveness of language learning in pre-school children. Games such as picture matching, movement games and story games are helpful for preschoolers in learning English. Matching games strengthen vocabulary acquisition, motion games support learning through movement, and story games help children understand English words and phrases in a real context. Integrating these types of games in learning has benefits that are not only visible in children's language development but are also aligned with educational theories and principles of early childhood education, making it a valuable and interesting approach for preschool teachers and their students. The learning media chosen by the teacher has an important role in the learning process besides that this also helps the teacher in maximizing learning with the goals to be achieved in students, especially early childhood.

The aspect that distinguishes this research from previous research lies in the differences in the methods used and the place where the research was conducted, while previous studies discussed, "*Peran Lagu Anak Berbasis Tematik dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Anak TK A*", "*Penggunaan Media Lagu Anak-Anak Dalam Mengembangkan Kemampuan Kosakata Bahasa Inggris Siswa di PAUD*", "*Pengembangan Metode Permainan dan Lagu di PAUD/TK Rinjani Universitas Mataram*". The difference between this research and previous research is the focus of the research object, objectives, and data findings resulting from this research.

This paper focuses on the role of song and game methods in improving the mastery of English vocabulary in pre-school children. How is the effectiveness of using the method of games and songs in improving the mastery of English vocabulary in pre-school children and the extent to which the method of games and songs on the understanding of English vocabulary in pre-school children. The purpose of this study is to determine the effective use of the song and game method in understanding English vocabulary in pre-school children and the impact of this method on understanding English vocabulary in pre-school children. The limitation of the problem in this study is limited to the object of research which is a pre-school child aged around 3-5 years at KB ISLAMI MANDIRI consisting of 20 children. This study will evaluate only the mastery of basic vocabulary in English that is appropriate for the age

of pre-school children, such as names of animals, plants, color, numbers, names of days, and parts of the body using the method of songs and games that are commonly used among pre-school educators.

METHOD

This study used qualitative descriptive research design to analyze children's vocabulary mastery through game and song activities in developing their speaking skills. The analysis is based on language development theories emphasizing the importance of interactive media in children's language learning processes (Vygotsky, 1978) and the concept of learning through physical movement and repetition (Asher, 1969). The descriptive qualitative approach is applied in line with Creswell's (2012) explanation.

This study gathers information on vocabulary mastery and speaking abilities in children involved in game and song activities, then interprets the information according to the stages of language development described in child language development theory. The research focuses on children aged 3-5 years at early childhood education institutions (PAUD) or preschool. The primary sources of information are direct observations of play and singing activities, involving basic vocabulary in the chosen language. For selecting information sources, the researcher chooses activities based on relevance and repetition to ensure consistency and accuracy of information.

Data collection in this study is conducted through participatory observation, in-depth interviews with teachers or parents, and documentation. Each relevant game and song activity is observed and recorded. Identified activities are then categorized and documented. The researcher classifies these activities based on the vocabulary development stage and children's speaking skills, according to language development theory. The theoretical framework is used to determine the language development stages for each observed activity. Categories are based on definitions and descriptions of vocabulary development stages in children.

Content analysis is the research technique used to draw replicable and substantive conclusions from text or other meaningful items regarding their context of use (Krippendorff, 2004). Content analysis of game and song activities allows the researcher to categorize and count the frequency of new vocabulary usage and understand children's communication patterns.

The results are compared to the theoretical framework to ensure accuracy. In this study, the researcher develops a checklist based on language development theory. This checklist is reviewed before the research implementation and revised if necessary to ensure accuracy. The results are presented in a table with information on learning outcomes, examples of activities, and relevant keywords from vocabulary development theory, which serves as an analysis tool to examine vocabulary and speaking skills development in children.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Integrating games and songs into the preschool curriculum is a dynamic approach to enhancing English vocabulary mastery and developing speaking skills. The method of adding English vocabulary and speaking to preschool curriculum using games and songs is a great way. To gain insight into the practical application of using games and songs to enhance vocabulary mastery and speaking skills in preschoolers, we conducted an interview with a dedicated preschool teacher known for her innovative approaches. Her experiences offer valuable perspectives on why this method works wonders in the classroom. Here are teacher responses to the interview questions.

Questions	Responses
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<p>Can you tell us about your experience with using games and songs in your classroom?</p>	<p>Using games and songs has transformed my classroom environment. The children are more engaged, excited, and willing to participate when they know we will be singing or playing a game related to our vocabulary lessons.</p>
<p>Which specific games and songs do you find most effective for teaching vocabulary?</p>	<p>I often use songs like 'Head, Shoulders Knees and Toes' to introduce the name of body parts, 'Old MacDonald Had a Farm' to teach animal vocabulary, 'If You're Happy and You Know It' song to teach movement. Some games also used in my classroom, like 'Simon Says' to introduce action verbs, Puppet Show and Storytelling. I incorporate group games also during the class. These activities are not only fun but also help children remember words better through repetition, movement and creativity.</p>
<p>How do you typically integrate these activities into your lesson plans?</p>	<p>"I plan my lessons around themes, such as animals or seasons, and I incorporate a relevant song at the start to introduce new vocabulary. We then play interactive games that allow them to use those words in context, followed by a closing song that reinforces what we've learned."</p>
<p>Have you seen any noticeable changes in your students' vocabulary and speaking skills since starting this approach? If so, could you elaborate?</p>	<p>My kids' vocabulary memory has significantly improved since I started using these strategies. They are more comfortable speaking English and have significantly enhanced word memory during talks.</p>
<p>How do you measure whether these methods are working effectively for your students? Are there any particular metrics or assessments you rely on?</p>	<p>I use informal assessments like observation checklists during activities to see how well students engage with the material. After classes, I also give them little quizzes or exit ticket to see how well they understand the new words.</p>
<p>Are there any challenges you've encountered while using this approach, and if so, how did you overcome them?</p>	<p>One challenge is dealing with the different skill levels in the class; some children learn vocabulary quickly, while others have difficulty. To address this, I differentiate activities by offering more help to those who need support, while allowing more advanced learners to explore new words independently.</p>

Do you notice any differences between how students respond to learning through games/songs versus traditional methods? Can you give examples?	The reaction is entirely positive! Students said they prefer learning through games and songs to traditional memorization. Since they enjoy these kinds of activities, they frequently request more.
Is there anything remarkable or heartwarming that stands out from your experience with this technique? Perhaps something that surprised even yourself?	One of my students, who was initially very shy when it came to speaking English, became one of the loudest during our singing lessons. He now confidently uses new words he learned in our songs in everyday conversations with his friends..

The findings obtained in this interview underline the positive effects of the use of games and songs in preschool education on vocabulary mastery and speaking skills (Saputri.et al, 2024). The teacher's experiences reflect a broader trend in early childhood education in which interactive learning methods significantly increase young learners' engagement, retention and overall language development (Setyowati.et al, 2024).

Our qualitative analysis focused on the interview result. Based on the interview result, teachers stated higher levels of engagement among students when using game-based activities compared to traditional teaching methods (Widiyanto, 2022). The children enjoy singing along with the teacher which makes them eager to participate in class discussions. The teacher also mentioned this method can improve social interaction among peers through collaborative play and song performances. The children demonstrated better communication by sharing ideas and expressing opinions clearly during group activities.

The existing literature provides the basis for how different methods such as games and songs support vocabulary acquisition. However, some areas in this field have not been sufficiently investigated or addressed (Wibowo et al, 20200). Previous research by Miranti has highlighted the effectiveness of games and songs in teaching basic vocabulary only, there is a lack of research focusing on more complex vocabulary types or thematic vocabulary relevant to children's everyday experiences and integration with other learning domains. Investigating how different categories of vocabulary impact language development could provide valuable insights into effective teaching strategies tailored to preschoolers' needs. In this study, researchers investigated how games and songs can help link English vocabulary with other learning areas such as social-emotional learning or cognitive development. The interaction between language acquisition and other developmental stages is crucial for a well-rounded education. Wellrounded education strategies that promote the child's overall development can be developed by integrating vocabulary acquisition with social skills development through cooperative games, as is being investigated. By applying this gap from the article, future research can provide a more holistic understanding of the benefits and limitations of using children's songs in early childhood English education.

CONCLUSION

The study explores the integration of games and songs into preschool education as an innovative approach to enhancing English vocabulary mastery and developing speaking skills. Insights were gathered through an interview with a preschool teacher experienced in using these methods. The teacher reported a significant increase in student engagement and vocabulary retention due to the use of interactive activities, such as themed songs and games like "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes"

and "Simon Says." These activities not only reinforce vocabulary but also encourage social interaction, collaborative learning, and active participation. The teacher highlighted positive changes in students' confidence and communication skills, especially among those initially hesitant to speak. Informal assessments, such as observation checklists and quizzes, were used to measure effectiveness. Despite some challenges, like varying skill levels among students, differentiated activities proved successful. The findings suggest that incorporating games and songs fosters a supportive and dynamic learning environment, leading to improved language development and student enthusiasm.

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