

# USING ENGLISH SONGS TO INCREASE EARLY STUDENTS' VOCABULARY

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## Abstract

Early childhood is a child in the age of 0-6 years. In this age, the development and growth of physical and mental of children develop rapidly. Meanwhile, the aspects developed in early childhood education are: religious and moral values, physical (consisting of gross motor, fine motor and physical health), cognitive (consisting of general knowledge and science, concepts, shapes, colors, sizes and patterns, number concepts, symbols of numbers and letters), language (consisting of accepting language, expressing language and script) and emotional social. Language skills are one of the aspects which are developed at this age. Therefore, researchers intend to examine the level of mastery of the language of children through the song. This study aims to improve the vocabulary of early childhood, where this result affects the children's ability to speak a foreign language in the future. This study is a Classroom Action Research, which aims to improve the ability of children English by using songs on the student group B TK Takrimah Tungkob Aceh Besar. This classroom action research is conducted in three cycles; each cycle consists of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Moreover, in analyzing the data, the researcher used descriptive method, that is analyzed data implemented since learning and developed during the process of reflection until process of report preparation. Data collection techniques used in this study include: interview, and observation of teaching and learning activities. Data analysis techniques consisted of three activities, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing. The results showed that 64% of students can mentioned correctly alphabet in English in the first cycle. Furthermore, 80% of students have known and can properly name a few nouns in English in the second cycle. Furthermore, in the third cycle, 88% of students have been able to use the noun in the form of a simple sentence. Based on the results of this study, it is very important for Kindergarten teachers to create an atmosphere of learning that makes students motivated and eager in learning such as the use of video media in learning so that automatically can improve students' abilities and achievement.

**Keywords:** *Early Childhood, English Vocabulary*

## INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth up to the age of six that is done through the provision of educational stimuli to help growth and physical and spiritual development so that children are ready in entering further education. Kindergarten is one form of early childhood education unit in the formal education that organizes

educational programs for children aged four years to six years.

The National Education System Act in article 1, paragraph 14, states that, early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed to children from birth up to the age of six that is done through the provision of educational stimuli to help the growth and development of physical and spiritual so that children have readiness to enter further education.

Meanwhile, the aspects developed in Early Childhood Education are: religious and moral values, physical (consisting of gross motor, fine motor and physical health), cognitive (consisting of general knowledge and science, concepts, shapes, colors, sizes and patterns, the concept of numbers, the symbols of numbers and letters), language (consisting of accepting language, expressing language and script) and emotional social. Concerning to the development of early childhood, the need for an educational program was designed in accordance with the level of child development. Early childhood is a person who is undergoing a process of rapid development and this age is very fundamental to the next life.

One aspect that needs to be developed in early age is language. Early childhood is the golden period or the most ideal age for learning a language beside the mother tongue (first language). The child's brain is still flexible, so the process of language absorption runs more smoothly. Moreover, the language absorption power in children works automatically. According Hurlock (1990) age 1-5 years is a time of rapid development of children's ability to speak such as adding vocabulary, mastering the pronunciation of words and combining in sentences. Children's ability in mastering vocabulary will increase rapidly as he learns new words and new meanings in everyday life.

Pulukadang, Wiwy Triyanty & Abdul Rahmat (2011: 1) argues that, language has a central role in the intellectual, social, and emotional development of learners and language is a tool in studying all areas of study. Language learning is expected to help

children recognize themselves, their culture, and the culture of others. Language skills are learned and earned early childhood naturally to adapt to their environment. Experts say that children learn language faster than adults. Therefore for early childhood, it is very important to be taught a variety of languages in order to enrich their insight in the language.

In addition DEPDIKNAS (2000) describes the function of developing language skills for early childhood, among others: 1. Language is as a tool to communicate with the environment 2. Language is as a tool to develop the intellectual ability of children 3. Language is as a tool to develop the child's expression 4. Language is as a tool for expressing feelings and thoughts to others.

English in early childhood can be taught in several ways such as using games, singing, and storytelling. However, in its application, there are still found many obstacles in teaching English in early childhood, for example in term of: teacher competence, methods used, and media available so that the learning objectives are not achieved properly. English teachers lack using media during learning process. Teachers convey the materials or draw the object on the blackboard. The use of song media in English teaching is considered as a problem solving in helping to increase students' vocabulary.

Murphey (1992) describes singing can improve the ability of hearing and pronunciation; therefore this can improve students' speaking ability. He further added that song media in learning can be used to teach vocabulary, sentence structure and

sentence patterns (Murphey, 1992). There are some advantages of using media in teaching, 1. Using of song will motivate children to eager in learning English. 2. By singing, the children become happy and it makes them easier in understanding the material presented. 3. Through varied songs and learning activities, educators can cultivate children's interests to be happier and more active in learning; even the using of song can facilitate children in understanding the teaching materials that are delivered. 4. The use of songs makes the children happy, not bored, and interested in following the learning process.

Based on the results of pre-observations in kindergarten RA Takrimah Tungkob, researcher found that teaching English in kindergarten is still using traditional methods. The teachers say English words and students repeat it. Furthermore, teachers at TK Takrimah Tungkob kindergarten did not use the media as a teaching aid, so the students seemed bored and late in receiving the subject matter. This certainly has a negative impact on the development of children language in the future, especially foreign languages. Therefore, researcher is interested to conduct research in improving English vocabulary of students by using the song.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The meaning of early childhood according to experts is a group of children who are in the unique process of growth and development, in other words, the children in the sense of having a pattern of growth and motor development, intelligence (thinking power, creativity, emotional intelligence,

spiritual intelligence), social emotional (attitudes and behaviors and religion), language and communication specific to the child's growth and development (Mansur, 2005). This period is a golden age for a child, where growth and development occur so quickly both physically and mentally. Therefore it is necessary for children to get education and proper coaching.

According to Wahyuti (2012: 2), early childhood has characteristics: a) has a great curiosity, b) is a unique person, c) likes to fantasize and imagine, d) the most potential age for learning, e) shows egocentric attitudes, f) has a short concentration, g) as part of a social being.

Ministry of National Education (2000: 8), explains the function of developing language skills for early childhood, among others: (a) as a means of communicating with the environment, (b) as a tool for developing children's intellectual ability, (c) child expression, (d) as a means of expressing feelings and thoughts to others.

Songs is appropriate medium used in teaching English. In addition, the use of songs can motivate students to be more eager to follow the learning process because the sound of songs and energetic music can evoke students' spirit. When children like the songs that teachers teach, they will be happy and enthusiastic to follow, so unconsciously children are doing learning activities while singing at the same time. This is one activity that can make children not feel bored and depressed while learning.

The advantage of teaching English using songs in Early Childhood as a learning resource has many benefits, according to Brewster et al (2002: 162) among the

benefits are: first, the song is a linguistic resource. In this case the song became a medium of introduction of new languages, as well as media for the reinforcement of grammar and vocabulary. The song also presents the recognizable language of the student in a new and fun form. The song also allows the occurrence of language repetition naturally and fun. Songs can be used to develop all integrative language skills, including improving students' pronunciation skills. Second, the song is an affective / psychological resource. Besides to have fun, the song is also able to motivate students as well as foster positive attitude towards the English language. Songs are not a scary or threatening thing for students. Even songs can help improve students' self-confidence. Third, the song is a cognitive resource. Songs help to create memory, concentration and coordination. Students become more sensitive to rhyme as a tool to interpret meaning.

One component of language learning is the understanding of English vocabulary itself, besides the other components. Vocabulary is a set of words known to a person or another entity, or is part of a particular language. A person's vocabulary is defined as the set of all words the person understands or any words that the person might use to construct a new sentence. The wealth of a person's vocabulary is generally considered to be a picture of his intelligence or level of education. The vocabulary function for students who are just beginning to learn English is very important because students will be able to understand the meaning of English if they have sufficient and adequate vocabulary. Kridalaksana

Harimurti (1984) states that vocabulary is a wealthy possessed by a person. The richness of the vocabulary is in children's memory, which will promptly react when they heard or read.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The type of research used in this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR) with descriptive method. Classroom action research is a study in which a group of teachers can organize the conditions of their learning practices such as the methods, materials and media used, and learn from their own experiences through the learning process that has been implemented. Then they can try out an idea of improvement in their learning practices, and see the real effect of that effort (Wiriaatmadja, 2012: 13). While descriptive method is research including activities such as describing, recording, analyzing and interpreting current conditions, so that the researcher found relation which may occur among variables.

The research setting of this research is Kindergarten RA Takrimah Tungkob in Aceh Besar district. This kindergarten is one of the best kindergartens in Aceh Besar. It has many achievements and successes that have been achieved by this kindergarten either the achievements obtained by students or by the kindergarten teacher itself.

Moreover, the researcher took 25 students and 2 teachers as the subject of research. The use of this media will involve kindergarten teachers in applying the song media in learning. Data collections which are used in this research consisted of observation sheet, interview guide and documentation. While techniques in analysis data used by

researcher are: data reduction, data display and conclusion.

In analyzing the students learning result, the researcher used success indicators as follow:

1. Children are able to mimic some of the English vocabulary spoken by the teacher
2. Children are able to name objects and verbs in English
3. Children are able to name the objects in English along with the meaning of the Indonesian language
4. Children are able to sing songs in English as a whole and true
5. Children are able to use English vocabulary into simple sentences

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### ***Data from first cycle***

The first cycle was conducted on 10, 12 and 14 May 2016, and was conducted in three meetings. The data of research results include: planning, action, observation and reflection. Data in planning stage is the programs or steps in solving the problem during the teaching progress, while the data of action stage consists of activities undertaken by teachers and students in the classroom. Stages of action and observation are done simultaneously in the teaching process. Thus, there will be valid data on the advantages and disadvantages of each cycle. In addition, data derived from the action stage is used to reflect and analyze whether actions taken during the teaching process have been successful or not.

At the first meeting, the teacher introduced an English alphabet song using video. The image on the video is reflected to the board by using the projector.

Furthermore, the teacher also uses the loudspeaker to make the spoken letters clearly audible. After all the gear and preparation is enough, then the teacher plays an alphabetical video song over and over again. At the beginning of using video playback in teaching, students cannot remember and pronounce the letters of the alphabet as a whole. They can only remember some of them. The teacher helps by repeating the letter per letter with the students. When the learning process takes place, students look very excited, enthusiastic and play an active role in following the learning process. They follow the rhythm of the song played and follow repeated letters spoken in the video.

At the second meeting, the teacher returned to play the alphabet song using the video. Teacher repeats the first 10 letters of the alphabet in order to be memorized easily by the students. Based on the observations, students sometimes say alphabet letters in Indonesian spelling. Therefore, the teacher then distinguishes the sound of alphabet in English and Indonesian letter by letter with the aim that students can distinguish and pronounce the English alphabet and the sound of alphabet in the Indonesian.

Subsequently, at the third meeting, the teacher replays the entire alphabetical song video, students begun to enjoy and pronounce each letter correctly. At this meeting, teachers assess students' ability one by one by asking the sound of the letters in English. Many of the students can answer every question asked correctly.

During the alphabet learning process using the media songs and video, students look very enthusiastic and eager to follow the

learning stages presented by teachers at the first, second and third meeting. In addition, students are able to hear directly English pronunciation said by native speakers, students can also see the images of alphabet letters that move to the rhythm of music. For young children, this is certainly very fun and can draw their attention to learn. In addition, students can easily learn a foreign language without feeling overwhelmed as they enjoy learning by using the songs.

The minimum score criteria used in this assessment is 70. If the student has reached a score of 70, then it is meant that he or she has achieved a minimum of mastery criteria. Based on observation and test conducted during teaching learning process, the data shows that 16 students in the first cycle have reached a minimum score of 70. In other words, 64% of students have attained KKM. This shows that the first cycle has not been successful because students who achieve KKM scores are less than 70%.

### ***Data from Second Cycle***

The second cycle is held in three meetings on 23, 25 and 27 May 2016. The material presented in this second cycle is development materials in the first cycle. If in the first cycle students only learn the sounds of alphabet letters, then in this second cycle students are taught of alphabet letter and the objects used the letters that are around them. So they can know the letters and the object at the same time.

The second cycle is conducted in three meetings. Since the alphabet letters are 26 letters, the teacher taught 13 letters and objects in the first meeting and 13 letters and the next in the second meeting. The teacher

then repeats all the letters and objects in the third meeting.

At the first meeting, the teacher explained the activities to be undertaken during the learning process to all students. Then the teacher prepares the equipment such as laptops, projectors, and loudspeakers to display songs by using video. After all the equipment is finished, the teacher divided the students into groups, where each group consists of 5 students. Furthermore, the teacher began to play the English song video in which the material at this meeting is to study the alphabet letter along with the objects that follow it. At the beginning of stages, the teacher played the song three times. Then, the teacher plays a half-track so that students can remember the letters along with the objects that follow, starting from the letter A to the letter M. every single letter was sung, the teacher stops the video to be repeated together. Such activities were repeated until the letter M.

Then after the 13 letters were studied together, the teacher began to ask each group about the meaning of the noun they had learned randomly. Students are asked to remember the meaning of every object that has been learned. There are some students who can answer the questions correctly and there are also some students who cannot remember correctly the objects that have been studied. After the teacher asked questions in the group, the teacher then asked the students to listen back to the song that was played before. So, they can better understand the subject matter given. At the end of the meeting, the teacher again repeated letters along with objects that have been studied together.

Furthermore, at the second meeting, the teacher continued the unfinished material at the first meeting. The teacher continued playing the song from the letter N to the letter Z. But before doing that, the teacher made apperception by repeating 13 letters and their objects learned in the previous meeting. When finished repeating together the first 13 letters, the teacher continued with the next 13 letters. The teaching method used is the same as the teaching method used at the first meeting, the teacher plays the video and stops it on every new letter learned.

At the third meeting, the teacher first plays the alphabetical song and the items that follow from beginning to end. Then, the teacher asked the students to sit in pairs, after that the teacher gives instructions about the activities that would be performed. After sitting in pairs and facing each other, the teacher asked student A to mention the letters he liked and student B mentioned the name of the object started by that letter and its meaning. After student A was given opportunity to mention letters, then turn student B was asked to mention letters and students A answered it by mentioning the name of the object and its meaning according to the alphabet mentioned. At this meeting there were three students who are absent, so students could learn in pairs.

In this cycle, students are more eager to learn the letters of the alphabet and the objects that follow. This is because students could see things directly like balls, animals, sun and other objects directly and followed by the sound of these objects that can be sung directly by students and the teachers together.

In addition, in this cycle, teachers gave students more time to repeat words they

have learned either in groups or in pairs. So students who are slow in remembering materials have more time to repeat a noun that they have not remembered. Teachers also stated that teaching English vocabulary for early childhood with song and video makes it easy for teachers to transfer subject matter and also to inspire children's learning motivation.

in the second cycle there are 5 items analyzed, namely (1) the student is able to pronounce the name of the object in English correctly, (2) the student is able to remember the object based on each letter of the alphabet, (3) the student can remember the name of the object and its meaning, 4) students can sing the whole song, (5) students are able to mention objects according to alphabet letter. Based on the observation and test result, the data showed that there are 20 students have successfully reached KKM. In other words, 80% of students have succeeded in achieving a minimum score of standard competence, so that learning in this second cycle is considered successful.

#### ***Data from the third cycle***

The third cycle is the last cycle in the study of improving English vocabulary in early childhood by using the media song and video. This study was conducted on June 6 and 9, 2017. The material to be presented in this cycle is the development of the material in the previous second cycle. If in the second cycle students study the alphabet and objects that use the alphabet, in this cycle, students learn to use these words in simple English sentences. At the first meeting, the teacher performs a material apperception in

the form of repetition of alphabet letters and objects preceded by alphabet letters. Then the teacher starts to play the alphabet song along with the object that follows it. Each new item is displayed, the teacher stopped the video and utters a simple sentence, for example: on the video is pronounced, "A is for Apple," then the teacher says. "I like Apple." repeatedly. Then the teacher asked the students to repeat it together. The teacher did not forget to translate every simple sentence she introduced.

At first the students feel awkward with the new sentence that is spoken, but after they repeated several times the new sentences, the sentences are spoken more fluent and fluent. The teacher then asked the students to remember each new word they have learned so that it can be used on other objects. The teacher applied this method to every object studied.

In the next activity, the teacher asked the students to combine the new noun with a new verb that has been memorized. Students can use new verbs alternately. For example, teachers teach nouns (like) and (eat). Then students can use the word interchangeably, like I like apple or I eat apple.

In the second meeting, the teacher continued unfinished lessons at previous meetings with the same materials and methods, and played video of other English songs that added to the cheerfulness and enthusiasm of the students in learning English.

In this third cycle, there are 5 items of analysis used to determine the success of students in learning English, the items of analysis includes: (1) The child is able to simulate some English vocabulary spoken by

the teacher (2) The child is able to name the objects and verbs in English (3) Child is able to name the objects in English along with the meaning of Indonesia (4) The child is able to sing the whole songs in English (5) The child is able to use English vocabulary into simple sentences. Based on the observation and test result, the data showed that students who achieved KKM score is 22 students. In other words, students who achieved KKM scores is 88%. Of course this result was increase significantly in the third cycle.

The interview was conducted at the end of the third cycle, the researchers asked some questions to the teachers of RA Takrimah related to the learning that has been done. According to the teacher of B4 class, this is the first time they used the media songs and videos in learning, especially in language teaching. In teaching English before, teachers only use mobile phone so that children can listen to songs spoken native speakers. Of course, if using a mobile phone there are many obstacles faced by the teachers and the students, besides the sound that is less clear, students are also not able to see the image clearly so that this situation will make noise in the classroom. Furthermore, the teachers stated that they were very happy to teach students by using the songs and videos simultaneously, because besides to facilitate students learning, the media also makes students excited and enthusiastic in learning. This inspired the kindergarten teacher to use videos and songs in different types of teaching.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research that has been presented, there are the conclusions

that can be drawn about improving the vocabulary of early childhood English using the song media are as follows:

1. Teaching English by using the song as media is done in three cycles. Each cycle has different material, but the material is mutually sustainable and in form of material development from previous materials.
2. The first cycle is done in three meetings, the first cycle is held on 10, 12, and 14 May 2017. The material taught in the first cycle is the introduction of alphabet letters in English. The teacher taught students the difference in the sounds of Indonesian alphabet letters with the sounds of the alphabet letters in English. To facilitate the teaching of English, teachers use song and video as media so that students can learn and listen directly to the sounds of letters spoken by native speakers. At the first meeting, students are taught 13 letters of the alphabet; in the second meeting the teachers taught the next 13 alphabet letters, and in the third meeting, teachers repeated the whole letter together with the students. Based on the observations during the learning process, the researchers saw that the students were very enthusiastic and enthusiastic in following the lessons using video. Furthermore, 60% of students in this cycle have reached the criteria minimum standard.
3. The Second Cycle is held on 23, 25 and 27 May 2016. This cycle is held in three meetings. Materials given is the development of the previous material, the teacher played the alphabet song video and the noun proceeded by the alphabet

letters. Students were very happy to learn English objects using songs; this is evidenced by the increase in the value of students in this cycle to 80%.

4. The third cycle is held in two meetings, on June 1 and 3, 2016. The material taught is the development of material in the second cycle, where students are asked to make simple sentences using basic verbs. In this cycle students have been more proficient in English. This is based on the test result that increase become 88% in student grades.

### **SUGGESTION**

Based on the conclusions above, the researchers suggest several things, including:

1. The material taught should be expanded, so as to increase knowledge of early childhood in learning English
2. Teachers should be more careful in choosing an English song video, so that students do not feel bored because the video is monotonous and unpleasant.
3. Avoid songs that are too long and complicated pronunciation, so that learning does not seem boring.

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