"Deep Learning berbasis Kearifan Lokal:
Mewujudkan Pendidikan Berdampak yang Humanis dan Visioner"

FAKULTAS KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAN
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Teacher's Perception of Using Song in Teaching English Vocabulary at MIS Mambaul Ulum Dahu Kediri

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ABSTRACT
This research aims to describe the English teacher's perception of using songs in teaching vocabulary to fifth-grade students at MIS Mambaul Ulum Dahu Kediri. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth teacher interviews, and analysis of instructional documents. The findings indicate that the teacher holds a positive perception of songs as engaging, motivating media that help students remember vocabulary more effectively through repetition and rhythm. The implementation followed three stages: introduction, practice with singing and gestures, and reinforcement activities. Challenges included selecting age-appropriate songs and addressing students' pronunciation difficulties. In conclusion, carefully chosen and well-planned song-based activities can serve as effective tools for improving English vocabulary learning among elementary students.

Keywords: Vocabulary Teaching, Songs, Teacher Perception, Young Learners

ABSTRAK
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan persepsi guru bahasa Inggris tentang penggunaan lagu dalam mengajarkan kosakata kepada siswa kelas lima di MIS Mambaul Ulum Dahu Kediri. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara mendalam dengan guru, dan analisis dokumen pembelajaran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru memiliki persepsi positif terhadap lagu sebagai media yang menarik dan memotivasi yang membantu siswa mengingat kosakata secara lebih efektif melalui pengulangan dan ritme. Pelaksanaannya mengikuti tiga tahap: pengenalan, latihan dengan nyanyian dan gerakan, dan kegiatan penguatan. Tantangan yang dihadapi adalah memilih lagu yang sesuai dengan usia siswa dan mengatasi kesulitan pengucapan siswa. Kesimpulannya, kegiatan berbasis lagu yang dipilih dengan cermat dan direncanakan dengan baik dapat menjadi alat yang efektif untuk meningkatkan pembelajaran kosakata bahasa Inggris di kalangan siswa sekolah dasar.

Kata Kunci: Kosakata, Media Audio-Visual, Pembelajar Muda

INNTRODUCTION

Vocabulary acquisition is widely acknowledged as a cornerstone of language proficiency. It plays a vital role in enabling learners to comprehend spoken and written texts and to express themselves effectively in both oral and written communication. Without a solid vocabulary base, students often struggle to achieve fluency and understanding in English. Nation (2001) emphasizes that vocabulary is not only essential for communication but also for overall language competence. For young learners, particularly those at the elementary school level, vocabulary acquisition presents unique challenges. Conventional methods such as rote memorization, dictionary work, and

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textbook drills often fall short in addressing the developmental needs of children. These traditional approaches tend to be monotonous and disengaging, which may lead to reduced motivation and poor retention. According to Cameron (2001), young learners require more interactive, engaging, and meaningful exposure to language for successful acquisition.

Songs have been identified as a powerful pedagogical tool for language instruction, especially in early education settings. Griffee (1992) and Murphey (1992) argue that songs provide rhythmic, repetitive, and contextualized language input that aligns with how children naturally acquire language. Songs also create an emotionally supportive environment by lowering the affective filter, a concept introduced by Krashen (1982), making students more receptive to learning. Despite a growing body of research supporting the use of songs in language education, there remains a gap in understanding how teachers perceive and utilize songs in real classroom settings, especially within religious-based schools in rural areas of Indonesia. Teachers' beliefs significantly influence their instructional choices (Borg, 2003), and studying these beliefs can shed light on effective pedagogical practices.

This research aims to explore the perception and practice of an English teacher at MIS Mambaul Ulum Dahu Kediri regarding the use of songs in teaching vocabulary. Specifically, it investigates how the teacher selects and integrates songs, the benefits and challenges experienced, and the extent to which songs support vocabulary learning among fifth-grade students.

METHOD

This research adopted a descriptive qualitative methodology to gain an in-depth understanding of the teacher's perceptions and instructional practices. The study was situated at MIS Mambaul Ulum Dahu Kediri, a private Islamic elementary school located in a rural area of East Java. The school serves a diverse student population with varied linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. The research was conducted during the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year.

Participant

The sole participant was the fifth-grade English teacher, selected through purposive sampling due to her active implementation of songs in vocabulary instruction. The teacher had over five years of teaching experience and frequently used music as part of her language teaching strategy.

Data Collection
Three primary techniques were employed for data collection:
Semi-structured interviews: The teacher was interviewed to explore her perceptions, experiences, and strategies related to using songs in the classroom. Interview questions covered areas such as reasons for using

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songs, criteria for song selection, observed student responses, and perceived outcomes.

Classroom observations: A series of classroom observations were conducted over four song-based lessons. The observations focused on instructional stages, student engagement, classroom dynamics, and the integration of vocabulary objectives.

Document analysis: Relevant teaching documents, including lesson plans, song lyrics, and supplementary materials, were analyzed to assess how the songs aligned with learning objectives and teaching strategies.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Triangulation of interview, observation, and document data enhanced the validity of the findings. Member checking was also performed to ensure the accuracy of the interpretations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
A. RESULT
Teacher's Positive Perception of Songs

The teacher viewed songs as a highly effective and enjoyable medium for teaching vocabulary. She believed that songs contributed to a more dynamic and student-centered learning environment. According to her, songs increased student enthusiasm, made lessons more memorable, and helped students pronounce new words correctly through repeated exposure. The teacher remarked, "When we use songs, students become more alive in class. They remember words better and are not afraid to speak up."

He also explained that songs supported emotional engagement, which is crucial for young learners. By incorporating familiar melodies and fun lyrics, the teacher created a relaxed atmosphere conducive to learning. This aligns with Krashen's (1982) notion of lowering the affective filter to facilitate language acquisition.

Classroom Implementation of Song-Based Lessons

The implementation of songs followed a structured approach inspired by Thornbury's (2002) framework:

1. Pre-teaching (Presentation): New vocabulary was introduced using flashcards, visual aids, and gestures. Students were encouraged to predict word meanings and discuss them in context. The teacher modeled pronunciation before playing the song.
2. Whilst-teaching (Practice): Students listened to the song multiple times, sang along, and performed actions related to vocabulary items. Interactive tasks such as matching pictures with words and cloze exercises were used to reinforce understanding.

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3. Post-teaching (Production): This stage included short quizzes, group chants, and vocabulary games. However, there was minimal opportunity for students to produce original sentences or engage in extended speaking tasks using the new vocabulary.

Benefits Observed in the Classroom

The teacher observed several benefits from using songs:

1. Increased student motivation**:** Students showed excitement and looked forward to song-based lessons.
2. Improved pronunciation**:** The repetitive nature of songs helped students mimic correct pronunciation patterns.
3. Enhanced memory retention**:** Vocabulary learned through songs was more easily recalled in subsequent lessons.
4. Active participation**:** Songs encouraged even shy students to participate, especially when combined with movement and group singing.

Challenges in Implementation

Despite the advantages, the teacher noted several challenges:

1. Song selection: Finding songs that matched both the curriculum and students' language levels was difficult.
2. Pronunciation difficulties: Some students struggled with certain phonemes, especially in faster-paced songs.
3. Limited production: The teacher acknowledged that while recognition and recall were strong, students rarely used vocabulary in creative or spontaneous ways.

B. DISCUSSION

The findings align with the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (1978), which emphasizes the role of social interaction and cultural tools in learning. Songs functioned as mediating tools that scaffolded students' language development within their zone of proximal development. Additionally, the use of songs addressed multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983), engaging students through auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and interpersonal modes. Such multimodal approaches are particularly effective for young learners, who benefit from varied and engaging learning experiences.

However, the study also revealed a gap between receptive and productive vocabulary skills. While students could recognize and recall vocabulary from songs, they lacked opportunities to use the vocabulary in authentic contexts. Thornbury (2002) emphasizes that productive use is essential for long-term vocabulary acquisition. Future instruction should include activities such as storytelling, sentence construction, and role-playing to promote deeper processing and active use of language.

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CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that songs are not merely supplementary media but serve as a core instructional strategy when teaching vocabulary to young learners. They contribute to both cognitive development and affective engagement. The teacher's consistent use of song-based techniques led to higher student motivation, better classroom participation, and improved vocabulary retention, particularly through structured and repetitive input. The incorporation of physical movement and interactive lyrics further enhanced multisensory learning, allowing students to grasp and remember words more naturally. However, the study also identified a lack of opportunities for students to transfer vocabulary knowledge into meaningful, original language use. Addressing this limitation could substantially improve communicative competence in the long term.

When properly integrated into the language curriculum, songs can provide consistent exposure to vocabulary in ways that are accessible, memorable, and motivating. The structured use of pre-, whilst-, and post-lesson stages supports a scaffolded learning process that accommodates the needs of young learners with varying learning styles and linguistic abilities. When integrated into structured lessons, songs support vocabulary recognition, pronunciation, and retention.

B. SUGGESTION

To further improve the effectiveness of song-based instruction in vocabulary teaching, several practical and pedagogical recommendations are proposed:
For Educators:

1. Carefully select songs that are age-appropriate, linguistically accessible, and aligned with the lesson's learning objectives. Consider cultural relevance and student interest to increase engagement.
2. Scaffold vocabulary learning by clearly structuring lessons into pre-teaching (introduction), whilst-teaching (interaction), and post-teaching (reinforcement and production) phases.
3. Integrate activities that promote active vocabulary use, such as sentence creation, short storytelling, or role-playing games. This encourages learners to internalize and apply new vocabulary beyond recognition.
4. Conduct regular formative assessments to gauge vocabulary retention and guide subsequent instruction.
5. Reflect continuously on student responses and adjust strategies to better support varied learning styles and proficiency levels.

For Future Researchers:

1. Investigate students' perceptions of using songs in vocabulary learning, especially from diverse educational and socio-cultural backgrounds.
2. Conduct comparative studies between song-based instruction and other interactive vocabulary teaching techniques to assess long-term language acquisition.
3. Explore the integration of digital tools and multimedia platforms for delivering song-based instruction, especially in resource-limited environments.

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