

The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Singing Method in Improving the Language Skills of Teuku Syam Aceh Besar Kindergarten

**Kartini¹, Wahyu Khafidah^{2*}, Nadia Maulizhar³, Kaida Rahmawati⁴, Magfirah⁵,
Rajiatul Mawaddah⁶, Putri Mauliza⁷, Putri Amalia⁸, & Hilmayada⁹**

^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9}Universitas Serambi Mekkah

*Corresponding Author: Wahyu Khafidah, Email: wahyukhafidhah@serambimekkah.ac.id

Abstract

This research used qualitative research methods together information using observation, interviews and documentation. The results of the study regarding the value of the initial description of children's language development in the developing category according to expectations (BSH) 16.7% and developing very well (BSB) listening to words 10%. The ability to pronounce 30% of children's language skills at Teuku Syam Aceh Besar Kindergarten with an average completeness score of 78.9% of children's learning outcomes and is in a very well-developed category.

Keywords: *Singing, Young Learners, and Language Skills.*

1. Introduction

The Law on the National Education System in Article 1 paragraph 14 emphasizes that early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth up to the age of six which is carried out through the provision of educational stimuli to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children are ready to pursue further education level. Responding to early childhood development, it is necessary to have an educational program designed according to the child's developmental level. Language is a form of communication, whether it is in verbal, written or gestures based on a system of symbols. Language consists of words that used by the community along with rules to accommodate various variations and combination.

Language can be interpreted as a sign system, both spoken and written, and is a mutual communication between humans. Language includes new verbal communication and verbal communication, and can be studied regularly depending on maturity and learning opportunities that a person has. Likewise, language is the basis for a child to learn things. Before he learns another thing, he needs to learn the language in order to understand it well. The child will be able to develop his skills in the areas of sound pronunciation writing reading which strongly support literacy skills at a higher level. Based on the researchers' observations in teaching language to early childhood in Teuku Syam Aceh Besar Kindergarten, it is not easy. This is due to the child's language skill in Kindergarten Teuku Syam Aceh Besar is also still low, this can be seen by looking at the daily activities of the children. The activity of children in the language learning process is also still low and rather inactive, children do not respond to what is explained by the teacher, the desire to ask children is also still low.

Definition of Language

Language is a means of communication with other people. In this sense it is covered all ways of communicating, in which thoughts and feelings are expressed in

spoken, written, gesture or motion using words, symbols, symbols, pictures or paintings. Through language, every human being can know himself, each other, the natural environment, knowledge and values—moral or religious values. Language allows children to translate experiences into symbols that can be used to communicate and think. Language is intimately connected to cognitive development. Language is a tool for expressing ideas and asking questions, and language also generates concepts and categories for thinking.

The language aspect develops starting with the imitation of sounds and tapping. Subsequent developments are closely related to the development of intellectual abilities and social. Language is a tool for thinking. Thinking is a process to understand and to see the relationship. This process may not work well without aids, namely language. Language is also a means of communication with other people which then takes place in a social interaction.

Language is a system of communication, where words and various forms of written symbol combinations are arranged to produce a number of messages. Language is a means of communication, so everything related to communication cannot be separated from danger, such as thinking systematically in gaining knowledge. In other words, without having the ability to speak a person cannot carry out activities, to think systematically and regularly.

Language is a tool for communicating, expressing feelings or thoughts that contain certain meanings through speech, writing and sign language/body language. Every language has certain rules and communication is said to be effective if the person being invited to communicate understands what the source of the communication is finding. Language skills will develop according to the stage of child development. Many linguists have given their descriptions of language knowledge. Bloch and Tragerie said that language is a sound symbol used by something social groups as a means of communication. Then according to Josep Broam says that language is a structured system of arbitrary sound symbols used by members of a group as a means of getting along with one another.

Hence, in this study what is meant by language skills is the ability of an individual to make words or sounds which are combined into a complete utterance/sentence that can be understood by himself and others. Where individuals can understand the speech of the language conveyed by others and are able to show/pronounce the language to others.

Children carry out conversations to train their speech function as well as train themselves and their personality, because they are driven by a strong desire to communicate with other humans. In the process of learning to master a language, there is a period of stagnation, where the child is faced with difficulties in mastering the language and the child's progress is very slow. Some of the encouragement that causes children to want to speak, namely:

- a) Kungabe (announcement, announcement, notification) That is, there is an urge that stimulates the child to tell the contents of his inner life, namely his own thoughts, desires, hopes, fantasies and so on to others.
- b) Auslosung (release). That is, there is a strong urge for the child to release words and sentences as a result of imitation.
- c) Dorstellung (disclosure, delivery, exposure) Children want to express out everything that interests and captures their attention.

There are four language functions, namely:

- a) Exchange of information and information (Information talking).
- b) Self-directed language, this is the same as the function of expressive language, namely (mood talking)

- c) As a greeting; for the benefit of speech as an aesthetic function (Exploratory talking), and
- d) Polite speech, expressed through conversation, namely using language to facilitate social interaction and avoid conflict.

Apart from the language functions described above, there are several things that need to be considered beforehand, including research on language skills. Behaviorist theory enshrined in his book entitled *Language*, says that human language ability is a formation of nature (environment), where humans are raised. Like a blank slate, nature fills in and forms human abilities. This Bloomfield concept is known as the *tabula rasa* theory. This theory did not last long because its popularity was rivaled by the concept of generative linguistics from Noam Chomsky. Noam Chomsky's hypothesis regarding the process of language ability challenges the postulate of John Locke (a figure of empiricism) which states that all knowledge possessed by humans comes from external stimuli (experiences) captured by the human senses, thus negating *a priori* knowledge (knowledge that is directly embedded in oneself). Noam Chomsky stated that language is something that is unique and innate (instilled) in humans from birth. In particular Chomsky and Descartes stated that knowledge of language can open knowledge of the human mind.

The ability to speak in humans is not a product (setting) of nature, but rather an innate human potential. This theory as a result of the research he conducted on the language development of a child? A child can master his mother tongue easily and quickly, even that knowledge is also followed by a sense of language from that language, which is more directed at skills in grammar. He believes that this is an instinctive ability given by God to humans, so that ability is considered as the result of learning from nature or from both parents.

1. Stages of Child Language Development. Language development consists of the following stages

a. Prelinguistic speech (0-12 months). At this stage the child only starts to make sounds, not words. The first way to communicate with others is by crying, then progresses towards making sounds like "uhh", "aaa", which are referred to as "babbling" or "cooing".

b. Linguistic speech (1-6 years). At this stage the child has started to use language. Development at this stage is divided into three, namely:

1) Children say one word (1-2 years), children's desires and feelings are expressed in one word known as a holophrase which usually has more than one meaning, for example the word "mi." Has many meanings, does the child want milk to eat, or does want the toys.

2) Children form words into phrases (2-3 years), where children begin to combine 2-3 words to compose sentences Many words in sentences are missing and only the first and last words are heard or only keywords and sentences this resembles a sentence in a telegram so it is also called "telegraphic speech"

3) Children use complete sentences (over 3 years). According to Papalia, children over three years old can already form sentences consisting of six to eight words, and can use several types of connecting words such as *below*, *in front*, and *behind*.

c. Symbolic language

Every child will certainly have different stages of language development according to their abilities and development. The development of children's language is divided into several stages, where as a whole it can be seen how the process of a child understanding language. The following are the stages:

- 1) One Year Old

The child is at the very simple stage of linguistic speech and one word can represent many complete thoughts. The child can already say a word or two, but only one part, and the word can have a long meaning. For example, when a child says "bun" with the meaning of mother, it might mean, "I want to be held by mother," or "I want to go for a walk with mother."

2) Two Years Old

Almost the same as the ability at the age of one year, but at this age the child is able to combine two or more words into one meaningful and meaningful sentence. For example, "Drink milk," or "Go there," to "No milk. Just white", where this sentence could mean that the child doesn't want to drink milk but just plain water.

3) Three Years Old

Children often do things that are very interesting because they are entering the "rebellious" stage, namely doing what is forbidden and not doing what is permitted. It is not surprising that in developing their language, children like to say things that make their parents anxious and embarrassed, such as "stupid" "dead" and other harsh words; especially if it is supported by parents often forbidding children to say these words without giving proper explanation. Plus, the vocabulary that children acquire at this age is increasing and not only obtained from parents. Starting at this age, children generally make sentences that sound awkward because the wording is not exactly reversed, so what they say does not match the child's intent. This is normal for toddlers (under five years old) so parents don't need to worry, because there are several reasons causing this, namely:

- a) The first time a child can speak, connects more than one to two words to form a meaningful sentence
- b) The first-time children can communicate with other people through language that has meaning and can be understood.
- c) Children have a lot of vocabulary to make sentences that they use when communicating
- d) Children begin to acquire a lot of interesting new word and sentence information
- e) The ability to process words in the form of sentences to become a language in the brain is still very limited.
- f) Children's language experience is still very minimal.

Children's language products increase in quantity, breadth and complexity as they grow and develop. Studying language development is usually aimed at the sequence, acceleration of development and factors that influence language acquisition from infancy and in later life. There are three points that need to be discussed in discussing language development, namely:

- a) There is a difference between language and speech ability. Language is usually understood as a grammatical system that is complex and semantic in nature, while ability. Speech consists of expressions in the form of words. Language ability and speech ability are closely related, but they are different.
- b) There are two areas of language growth, namely language that is understanding/receptive and statement/expressive (producing). Understanding/receptive language (e.g. listening and reading) shows the child's ability to understand the communication addressed to the child. Statement/expressive language (speech and writing) refers to language creations that are communicated to others.
- c) Self-communication or self-talk. Children will talk to themselves when imagining, when planning to solve problems, and adapting movements to their language.

Language skills are the result of a combination of all child development systems, because language skills are sensitive to delays or damage to other systems. Language skills involve motor, psychological, emotional and social abilities. Like motor skills, children's ability to speak occurs gradually according to their age.

A child has different language development skills, starting at the age of newborn to adulthood, ranging from the simple to the most complex. The development of this language ability will increase with age and the stimulus the child gets.

Singing Ability

Singing is one of the activities carried out to stimulate children in language development and speaking. As well as increasing self-confidence in front of many people. Even more interesting, it is when singing is accompanied by musical instruments. Researchers do this accompanied by the strains of keyboard music. The songs that are sung also vary, including children's songs. Such as my balloon song, rainbows, foster mothers and many others. They will find it easier to understand the new song lessons you give.

Singing also has many benefits for children's educational practice and personal development broadly. It is further explained that singing has several benefits as follows:

- a. Singing is calming. This can be seen from the lullabies sung by a mother to her baby. Singing can have a calming effect on children.
- b. Singing can also play a role in overcoming anxiety, when a child feels uncomfortable when in a new environment. For example, a child who is entering school for the first time, the teacher can use singing to relieve the child's anxiety and replace it with a pleasant atmosphere.
- c. Singing is also a tool for expressing feelings, for example, when a child feels happy or sad, he can express it by singing. Singing can help build a child's confidence. This can be done when the teacher enters the child's name or calls the child's name in the song being sung which will make the child feel special. Singing can help develop children's memory. This can happen when the teacher invites children to memorize the songs sung. Repetition of songs allows children to store these verses in their memory.

Singing can develop a sense of humor; funny and witty poems can foster a sense of humor in children. Singing can help develop children's thinking skills by asking children to answer questions related to song lyrics, for example about animal sounds being sung. Singing can help motor development skills. This can be done by the teacher when using singing as a tool to accompany the game. Another thing that can be done is the teacher can invite children to imitate the movements mentioned in the song. Singing can increase closeness in a group. The songs sung by children together with their classmates make them feel happy to be part of a group. Singing is a fundamental musical activity, because children can hear through their senses and can voice various tones and rhythms of music. By involving children in singing activities together, we indirectly provide them with a pleasant experience. The expected goals of singing activities are as follows:

1. Children can hear and enjoy singing.
2. Children get pleasure from singing together.
3. Children can express their thoughts, feelings and moods
4. Children will enjoy singing and learning how to control their voices
5. Can add to the children's singing repertoire.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Singing Method

Besides the singing method has important benefits for students, this method also has advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of the singing method are being able to help students to develop, increase readiness and mastery of skills in cognitive processes or student recognition. In addition, the singing method can arouse students' enthusiasm for learning, provide opportunities for students to develop and progress according to their respective abilities, and be able to direct students' learning methods, so that they have more strong motivation to study harder.

Singing has advantages, among others:

- a. Can stimulate the imagination of students.
- b. Can trigger student activity.
- c. Provide a stimulus that is strong enough for the brain so that it encourages children's cognitive development quickly.

While the weakness of the singing method is that students are emphasized that they must have mental readiness and maturity to learn, students must have the courage to want to know their surroundings well. This method is only concerned with the understanding process, pays little attention to the development or formation of attitudes and skills, and if the class is too large, this method is used less effectively, and this method does not provide opportunities for creative thinking.

Not always the learning method, for example the singing method applied in large classes is less effective. As long as the teacher is able to create a conducive and enjoyable learning atmosphere in class, masters learning techniques and materials, motivates students to learn and makes learning more interesting, maintains classroom conditions and creates an atmosphere that can foster student learning enthusiasm, the learning methods applied by educators in large spaces can take place effectively and efficiently. However, by applying a variety of methods, namely the singing method, students will be excited and motivated to learn.

2. Method

This research was conducted at Teuku Syam Kindergarten, Aceh Besar. This research activity was carried out in the even semester of the 2018/2019 academic year, from February to May 2019. The timing of the research refers to the academic calendar, because PTK requires several cycles that require an effective learning process in class. In this classroom action research, the subjects of the research were the children of Teuku Syam Aceh Besar Kindergarten, totaling 30 children with a composition of 16 boys and 14 girls. To obtain data, researchers used field research methods, namely research conducted to obtain objective data in the field. The data collection techniques that researchers do are as follows: observation, interview, and documentation.

3. Results and Discussion

Teuku Syam Kindergarten (TK) is located on Jalan Banda Aceh-Medan KM. 6.5 Meunasah Krueng Village, Want Jaya District, Aceh Besar District. This school was established in 2003 with No. Establishment Permit: 207/2003 of 2003. Meanwhile, Operational Permit No. 145 of 2014. The school has private status and is headed by Mrs. Cut Elvira. The number of students enrolled in Teuku Syam Kindergarten in the last 3 years totaled 150 children. There are 1 civil servant teacher and 3 honorary teachers teaching at Teuku Syam Kindergarten. 30

Before conducting this classroom action research, the researcher made observations by collecting data and initial descriptions of the children who would be given the action, namely the children of Teuku Syam Aceh Besar Kindergarten in the 2018/2019 Academic

Year. The initial description needs to be known so that the actions to be taken are in accordance with the needs and developments in improving children's language skills through the singing method.

To find out the initial description of Teuku Syam Aceh Besar Kindergarten children for the 2018/2019 Academic Year, in making observations the researcher worked closely with the accompanying teacher. This research is planned to be carried out in 2 (two) cycles. Each cycle consists of Planning (Planning), Action (Action), Observation (Observing), and Reflection (Reflecting). Through these 2 (two) cycles, the researcher can observe an increase in language skills through the singing method.

Based on the observations of researchers in the initial description, it shows that the child's ability to speak is not in accordance with the goals set. This is because there are still many children who are embarrassed to make a sound when singing, not fluent in pronouncing words, stiff in pronouncing letters that match vowels. This shows that the child's language skills are still low.

Because of these conditions, researchers are trying to improve the level of children's language skills through the singing method by conducting classroom action research. The aim is to find out the learning methods used in learning at the time of delivery of learning and to know the individual children of the learning being delivered.

The following are the results of initial observations conducted by researchers on Teuku Syam Aceh Besar Kindergarten children in the 2018/2019 Academic Year. The results are shown in Table 4.1 below:

Table 1. Pre-cycle results

No	Name	Word listening ability				Word pronouncing ability				Word expressing ability			
		BB	MB	BSH	BSB	BB	MB	BSH	BSB	BB	MB	BSH	BSB
1.	A1		√			√							√
2.	A2	√						√				√	
3.	A3	√							√	√			
4.	A4		√				√			√			
5.	A5				√				√	√			
6.	A6			√				√			√		
7.	A7	√						√	√				
8.	A8		√					√			√		
9.	A9		√			√					√		
10.	A10				√		√						√
11.	A11	√					√						√
12.	A12			√		√							√
13.	A13		√				√			√			
14.	A14	√				√					√		
15.	A15	√							√	√			
16.	A16	√				√				√			
17.	A17	√				√							√
18.	A18	√					√					√	
19.	A19			√		√						√	
20.	A20				√		√						√
21.	A21	√				√				√			
22.	A22		√					√		√			
23.	A23			√		√							√
24.	A24	√					√			√			
25.	A25		√			√							√
26.	A26	√				√							√
27.	A27		√					√			√		
28.	A28			√		√					√		
29.	A29		√					√			√		
30.	A30		√				√				√		
Sum		12	10	5	3	12	9	4	5	10	8	7	5

Percentage (%)	40	33	17	10	40	30	13	17	33	27	23	17
----------------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Description:**BB:** Not Developed**MB:** Start Growing**BS:** Growing as Expected**BSB:** Very-Well Developed**Table 2. Initial score description before treatment**

No	Indicator	Category		Percentage (%)
		BSH	BSB	
1.	Word listening ability	5	3	8
		16.7%	10%	26.7%
2.	Word pronouncing ability	4	5	9
		13.3%	16.7%	30%
3.	Word expressing ability	7	5	12
		23.3%	16.7%	40%
Average		32.2%		

Based on the tables and graphs above, it shows that the initial description of lesson activities prior to conducting classroom action research is still low. From the observation results, it can be seen that the children's language skills in listening to words in the category not as expected were 16.7%, 10% very well developed. The child's ability to pronounce words in the not as expected category was 13.3%, very well developed 16.7%. And the child's ability to express words in the category that is not as expected is 23.3%, very well developed 16.7%, while the average completeness value is 32.2%. These results have not reached the expected completeness value. Therefore, researchers try to do a learning activity in the form of classroom action research using the singing learning method in 2 (two) cycles, and 1 (one) meeting per cycle.



Figure 1. Learning Media Used in Research

The process of learning activities in this classroom action research was carried out on Teuku Syam Kindergarten children, totaling 30 children. The research activity begins with making observations on the initial description. This activity is carried out to determine the initial abilities of children. The results of the expected learning activities in this classroom action research activity are to improve children's language skills, consisting of the ability to listen to words, the ability to say words, and the ability to express words. This classroom action research learning activity was carried out using the singing method. After doing the research, it was obtained that the average completeness score of children's learning outcomes was 78.9%, this was much increased from 32.2%. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of the singing method can improve children's language skills at Teuku Syam Aceh Besar Kindergarten with an average completeness score of 78.9% and are in the very well-developed category.

4. Conclusions

The ability to pronounce 30% of children's language skills at Teuku Syam Aceh Besar Kindergarten has an average completeness score of 78.9% of children's learning outcomes and is in a very well-developed category.

References

Hetherington, P. (2003). *Psikologi Perkembangan Anak dan Remaja Terjemahan Soemitro*. Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia

Hidayat, M. (2004). *Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*. Klaten: Citra Aji Parama

Masykur, K. (2004). *Pembelajaran Kooperatif dalam Pembelajaran Sains*. Malang: Universitas Negeri Malang.

Papalia, D. E., Old, S. W., & Feldman, R. D. (2011). *Perkembangan Manusia*. Jakarta: Salemba Humanika

Santrock, J. W. (2009). *Perkembangan Anak*. Edisi 11. Jakarta: Erlangga

Setiawan, D. (2007) *Pengembangan Bahan Ajar*. Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka.

Soemarti, P. (2003). *Pendidikan Anak Pra Sekolah*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.

Sukmadinata, N. S. (2001). *Pengembangan Kurikulum Teori dan praktek*. Bandung: Rosdakarya

Susanto, A. (2011). *Perkembangan Anak Usia Dini*. Jakarta: Kencana Prenada, Media Group.

Syamsuddin, M. A. (2001). *Psikologi Kependidikan*. Bandung: Rosda Karya.

Usman, M.U. (2003) *Menjadi Guru Profesional*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya

Widia, P. (2005). *Metode Pengembangan Seni*. Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka.