

Empowering Kindergarten Teachers to Teach English Speaking Skills through the Singing Method at TK Al-Aqobah II

Sri Endah Kusmartini

Language and Tourism Department, Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia

Corresponding author: sriendah@polsri.ac.id

ABSTRACT

English is important in global education, so teaching it early helps children build strong language skills. One approach to teaching English is the singing method, which is effective and engaging because it utilizes repetition and rhythm to enhance memory and encourage participation. Teachers at TK Al-Aqobah II recognize the importance of English instruction but face challenges in implementation. Therefore, they require support to effectively apply methods like singing to improve students' speaking skills. This community service project aims to empower teachers to teach English speaking skills through the Singing Method at TK Al-Aqobah II. The program was conducted through the training session, model teaching demonstration, and mentoring activity. The implementation revealed that the teachers demonstrated increased confidence in using English during lessons, and students responded positively with improved participation and pronunciation. This method also fostered a more engaging and joyful learning atmosphere, making English more accessible and enjoyable for young learners. Overall, the activity successfully strengthened the teachers' capacity to deliver effective and interactive English speaking lessons.

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INTRODUCTION

English language holds a key component as a global means of interaction, particularly within the educational sector (Rao, 2019; Mauliska & D'Angelo, 2024). Therefore, early exposure to English is vital, as it lays the groundwork for the advancement of children's linguistic abilities in later stages of their development (Trilestari, Manurung, & Simangunsong, 2024; Restuti, 2021).

One of the most effective and enjoyable methods for teaching English to young learners is the singing method (Putri & Rustipa, 2023). Song-based learning is a teaching method that uses songs or singing to deliver educational material. This approach actively engages students and encourages them to speak through repetition and rhythmic patterns, which aid in memory retention (Gayatri et al., 2024; Sutikno et al., 2024). Through songs, learners are exposed to natural language patterns, vocabulary, and pronunciation in a contextualized and memorable way (Putri & Rustipa, 2023). As a result, the learning process becomes more natural as students enjoy the content through rhythm and lyrics (Alfiani & Rukhiyah, 2019). Therefore, incorporating music and songs is essential for promoting active student involvement in English language learning settings (Bokiev et al., 2018). Integrating singing into language instruction can significantly enhance both the effectiveness and enjoyment of the learning process (Hidayat et al., 2024).

Moreover, this approach aims to create a fun and interactive learning atmosphere, especially for kindergarten students (Gong & Wang, 2023). Singing creates a low-anxiety learning environment, which is particularly important for early language acquisition (Purnama & Karimullah, 2024). It also fosters students' motivation and participation, as musical activities tend to be more appealing and accessible to young children.

Recent studies highlight the advantages of using music in language learning, particularly for young learners. Songs have been shown to significantly improve vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation skills (Putri & Rustipa, 2023). The repetitive and rhythmic elements in songs support memorization and help students retain new words more effectively. Additionally, song enhances listening skills by exposing learners to natural speech patterns and authentic intonation (Ali, 2020). Budianto et al. (2024) emphasize that songs create a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment, especially in EFL settings. Song not only bridges language gaps but also increases emotional engagement and supports a positive atmosphere for language development.

Furthermore, songs can greatly lower the stress levels and boost enthusiasm for learning (Purnama & Karimullah, 2024). This is because song and music creates a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment that lowers the affective filter—a psychological barrier that can hinder language acquisition when learners feel anxious or self-conscious. When students interact through melodies, they tend to join classroom activities more willingly and without the fear of making errors, which helps build their confidence in using the target language. More over, the repetitive and rhythmic nature of songs aids in memorization, facilitating the pupils to internalize word collection and sentence constructions. As a result, tunes not only support emotional well-being but also improve students' overall engagement and academic outcomes in language learning contexts.

Kumar et al. (2022) mention that songs and music are widely recognized as valuable tools in language acquisition, offering meaningful support to language instruction without imposing excessive academic demands on learners. Therefore, English language educators should strive to create a low-anxiety, supportive classroom atmosphere that promotes learning through enjoyable and interactive methods. combining music and songs into lessons serves as an effective listening activity, contributing positively to multiple aspects of language development. This approach is particularly beneficial for young learners, as it enables them to grasp essential language concepts in an engaging and playful manner. As such, music-

based instruction presents a practical and enjoyable strategy for fostering language skills in early education contexts.

Additionally, songs can improve students' pronunciation and listening skills because they expose learners to authentic spoken English in a natural, enjoyable way (Baills et al., 2024). Songs provide repeated exposure to how words are pronounced by native speakers, including stress, rhythm, and intonation patterns. Singing along helps students mimic these sounds, which improves their pronunciation and accent. English has a particular rhythm, and songs naturally highlight word stress and sentence stress. This helps students become more aware of how English is spoken fluently.

By listening to lyrics, students practice decoding spoken language and identifying key words and phrases in context. This sharpens their ability to understand English when spoken quickly or informally (Purnama & Karimullah, 2024). Learners listen to their favorite songs multiple times, which reinforces vocabulary and pronunciation. Repetition is key to developing listening comprehension. Music provides emotional and situational context, helping students infer meaning and recognize tone, mood, or speaker intent—important skills for real-world listening. Through enjoyable and meaningful engagement, musics assist students in enhancing their listening accuracy as well as developing more natural speech production patterns.

Although use of songs in language instruction offers numerous pedagogical benefits, teachers at TK Al-Aqobah II may still require additional support and training to implement this approach effectively within their English language classrooms. To address this need, professional development programs focusing on innovative and creative teaching methodologies, particularly those involving the integration of song and music, can be instrumental. Research by Bautista and Ho (2021) showed that teachers were highly motivated to join music and movement training, preferring sessions led by experienced kindergarten teachers or musicians, held during work hours or online, and focused on practical, classroom-based content. Such programs can enhance teachers' instructional skills and build their confidence, thereby enabling them to utilize songs as an effective teaching tool. By adopting these strategies, the institution has the potential to foster a more engaging and effective English language learning environment for its students.

METHOD

The following illustrates the stages involved in the implementation of the community service activities.

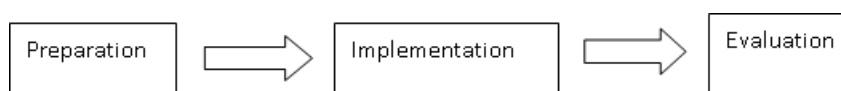


FIGURE 1.

The project began with the preparation of materials, during which all the necessary teaching resources were developed by the community service lecturer, ensuring alignment with the objectives of the program and adherence to proper academic standards. To determine the necessary materials for the preparation phase, relevant information was gathered through surveys, interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis as stated by Rizal & Hikmah (2022) who noted that gathering information was conducted to find out what is necessary and needs to be given priority.

The Implementation was conducted in 5 weeks. Five participating teachers received guidance and hands-on training on how to effectively utilize the singing method in their English language instruction. During the implementation phase, participating teachers were provided with guidance and practical training on the effective singing method in English language instruction. The research design tailored by the community service lecturer involved the administration of an initial assessment before the intervention

and a final evaluation after its completion, to identify differences and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented method. At this stage, the evaluation focused on the fidelity of implementation, assessing the degree to which the program was being delivered as intended, and identifying any challenges or obstacles encountered during the process. The primary aim was to provide timely feedback, allowing for real-time adjustments and improvements to enhance the effectiveness of the intervention.

Evaluation was conducted after the implementation had been completed. Its main objective was to determine the overall impact and effectiveness of the intervention. This stage involved analyzing outcomes through a comparison of pre-test and post-test results to assess whether the intended learning goals or program objectives had been achieved. This summative evaluation provided conclusive insights into the success of the intervention and informs future recommendations or decision-making.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The project commenced with a thorough planning stage. In this phase, all necessary instructional materials and tools were carefully created to support the successful application of the singing method in early childhood English education. To determine the particular needs and contextual conditions of TK Al-Aqobah II, pertinent data were collected using surveys, educator interviews, classroom observations, and an analysis of current curriculum materials which were designed by faculty member for community engagement. These methods of data collection offered a comprehensive understanding of existing teaching practices, difficulties faced by teachers, and the level of student involvement in English-speaking activities. This is consistent with Rizal and Hikmah's (2022) assertion about the significance of collecting relevant information to identify essential needs and establish priorities.

The findings from this preliminary research highlighted critical areas in which teachers needed further guidance and training. This aligns with the findings of Bautista and Ho (2021), who emphasized the significance of professional development programs. Consequently, the preparation phase was carefully tailored to address these identified needs, ensuring that the materials and training provided were both relevant and practical for enhancing teachers' instructional capacity, utilizing the singing method effectively.

During the implementation phase, several structured activities were conducted to ensure that participating teachers gained both theoretical understanding and practical experience in using the singing method effectively.

First, teachers attended interactive session covering the pedagogical principles of the singing method, including how music supported language acquisition, cognitive development, and motivation in young learners. This is in line with the statements of Putri and Rustipa (2023), as well as Hidayah et al. (2024), regarding the importance of teaching English through singing methods for kindergarten students. Discussions regarding pedagogical principles of the singing method focused on how singing can enhance vocabulary, pronunciation, and oral fluency. Kumar et al. (2022) emphasize the significance of singing as an instructional strategy in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. Due to time constraints, the interactive activity was implemented in only one meeting (50 minutes), thereby limiting the opportunity for extended engagement and comprehensive learning.

Second, teachers engaged in collaborative exercises to select appropriate English songs aligned with the kindergarten curriculum and students' proficiency levels. They learnt how to design lesson plans by integrating singing activities with specific speaking objectives. They were trained how to use song-based materials and music-based teaching aids. It is in line with Bokiev's (2018) view regarding the effectiveness of collaborative strategies in the context of teaching English as a Foreign Language.

Third, the trainer demonstrated effective techniques for conducting singing sessions, showcasing methods such as call-and-response, repetitive choruses, and action songs that promoted active student participation and language practice. For example, in the call-and-response technique, the teacher sang a line like “Hello, how are you?” and the students responded by repeating the same line, encouraging listening and speaking skills. In the repetitive chorus method, a simple, catchy chorus such as “I like to jump, jump, jump” was sung multiple times to reinforce vocabulary and rhythm. This finding aligns with the view of Gayatri et al. (2024), who mentioned that memory retention can be built by conducting the repetition and rhythmic patterns. Meanwhile, combining singing with physical movements helps students associate words with body parts while also engaging their motor skills, making language learning more interactive and memorable. Similar statement was conveyed by Alfiani and Rukhiyah (2019) who mentioned that singing helps children express their thoughts and feelings joyfully while also learning new words and songs through movement and music.

Fourth, the teachers practiced leading singing activities in simulated classroom settings, receiving real-time feedback on their use of voice modulation, gestures, pacing, and classroom management to maintain engagement and support language learning. The teacher led the class to sing a song entitled “My little Bunny”, using enthusiastic voice inflection and animated gestures like placing both hands on top of the head to form bunny ears and do small hopping movements like a bunny. The teacher also led the class to sing a song entitled “The Wheels on the Bus”. The activities were conducted to capture the children’s attention. During the simulation, the trainer observed how the teacher used varying tones to emphasize key words, maintained a steady rhythm suitable for young learners, and gave clear instructions to manage student participation. Feedback was then provided on how to enhance interaction, such as maintaining eye contact, using hand signals to cue actions, or adjusting the speed of the song to ensure all students can follow comfortably.



FIGURE 2. Singing Practice Session

Finally, teachers observed video recordings of singing-based lessons, followed by reflective discussions to identify effective strategies and areas for improvement. One of the videos showed a kindergarten teacher using the song “My Little Bunny” to teach English. The song “My Little Bunny” (sung to the tune of Are You Sleeping) teaches several important concepts for young children, especially in early childhood education. Children are introduced to simple and useful words such as: bunny, hop, garden, ears, tail, carrot, happy, etc. This helps them expand their English vocabulary in a fun and memorable way. By singing, children practice clear pronunciation of words and understand the rhythm and sound patterns of the English language. With movements like hopping, wiggling ears or tails, children develop physical coordination and release energy positively and playfully. The song encourages children to express joy and affection toward animals and use their imagination through the playful character of the bunny. Through lyrics like “My bunny loves me”, the song teaches the importance of love and friendship and caring for pets, and living things in a gentle, responsible way. After viewing the video, teachers engaged in a group discussion guided by

reflection questions. The first question is about the strategies used to help maintain students' engagement. During the song activity, teachers maintained student engagement by incorporating fun movements and using a familiar tune with a playful theme. The second question was about how to reinforce new vocabulary. New vocabulary was reinforced through repetition, actions, and visual aids, helping children understand and remember key words. The last question was about effective classroom management techniques used during the song activity. Effective classroom management involved clear instructions, encouraging group participation, and positive reinforcement to keep students focused and motivated.

The evaluation phase was conducted after the full implementation of the program to determine the effectiveness and overall impact of the intervention. This summative evaluation focused on two main aspects: the development of students' English speaking skills and the improvement in teachers' pedagogical practices through the use of the singing method. To assess the progress in students' speaking abilities, an initial test was administered before the intervention, and a final assessment was conducted after the completion of the program. These assessments measured key indicators of speaking proficiency appropriate for early childhood learners, including pronunciation, vocabulary usage, basic sentence formation, and the ability to respond to simple questions. During the pre-test, many students exhibited hesitation in speaking, limited vocabulary, and incorrect pronunciation. Following several weeks of instruction using songs such as "My Little Bunny", post-test results revealed significant improvements. Students were more confident, actively responded to teacher prompts in English, and demonstrated greater accuracy in using target vocabulary from the songs. The implication showed that there was a noticeable increase in students' oral proficiency, indicating the positive influence of the singing method on language acquisition. The average speaking score improved from 60% to 85%. This data would serve as strong evidence that the singing method positively impacted students' English speaking skills. In addition to test scores, the evaluation also included teacher feedback, classroom observations, and student participation records. The teachers reported the increased student confidence and engagement during English sessions, while the observer noted more active use of English during singing activities and related follow-up tasks.



FIGURE 3. Post Test Activity

In parallel, the evaluation also examined the performance and engagement of the participating teachers. Throughout the training and implementation period, teachers were observed during classroom activities and asked to participate in reflective discussions. Their ability to apply the singing method effectively was assessed based on several criteria: classroom management, use of gestures and voice modulation, follow-up speaking activities, and student engagement. Before the treatment, many teachers delivered songs in a monotonous manner with less engaging pacing, which often led to reduced student

attention. Visual aids were rarely used, making it difficult for young learners to grasp the meaning of new vocabulary. Student involvement was mostly passive, as there were limited speaking activities following the singing. Teachers also expressed a lack of confidence in teaching English and were unfamiliar with using songs as a tool for language learning. Meanwhile, after the treatment, the teachers demonstrated improved skills in delivering songs with appropriate pacing and energy, using visual aids to reinforce meaning, and encouraging student participation through follow-up speaking tasks. Teachers also reported increased confidence and enthusiasm in teaching English, as well as a more thorough insight into the ways music can aid language acquisition in early childhood education.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The implementation of the Singing Method as a strategy for teaching English speaking skills at TK Al-Aqobah II proved effective in empowering kindergarten teachers to enhance their instructional practices. The program provided a structured training session that introduced the theoretical foundations of using songs in language learning for young children. However, the session has limited duration—restricted to a single 50-minute meeting—posed constraints on the depth of content delivery and limited opportunities for participant engagement and reflective discussion.

To reinforce the theoretical insights, the training was followed by a series of practical workshops and model teaching demonstrations. During these sessions, the trainer demonstrated how to effectively incorporate songs into lesson plans, manage classroom activities, and promote active student participation through the use of simple English expressions. These hands-on activities helped bridge theory and practice, enabling teachers to apply the singing method more confidently and effectively in their classrooms.

In addition to training, personalized mentoring sessions allowed teachers to review and evaluate their teaching methods, ask questions, also receive feedback on how to enhance their classroom performance. This ongoing support helped build their confidence in speaking English and reduced anxiety about using a foreign language in front of young learners.

Overall, this program successfully bridged the gap between theory and practice by equipping teachers with both the knowledge and hands-on experience needed to implement the Singing Method effectively. The impact was visible in the increased classroom interaction, student engagement, and observable gains in the students' basic English speaking skills.

Recommendation

To sustain and expand the positive outcomes of this program, it is recommended to conduct regular follow-up training with longer duration of training to reinforce the skills learned and introduce new materials or songs. A collection of English songs and teaching resources should be developed and made available to support teachers' daily practice. The Singing Method should be shared with other early childhood education institutions to broaden its impact. Stakeholders, including school administrators and parents, should be encouraged to support the use of English songs as part of children's early language development at school and at home.

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