The Effect of English Children's Songs on Students' Pronunciation Enhancement

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of children's song media on the enhancement of English pronunciation skills among fourth-grade students at MI Bina Ummat. The research employed a single-group pretest and posttest design, adopting an experimental approach. Thirty children from the fourth grade of MI Bina Ummat comprised the study population. The t-test was used in the analysis of this research data. The findings of the study showed that children's song media had a significant impact on students' English pronunciation, with a t-count of 8.101 > t-table of 2.042. The average value was 54.00 for pre-test data and 80.64 for post-test data. The difference in the average value is 24.64, representing a percentage increase of 42%. These results illustrate the extent of the change in students' pronunciation ability. Consequently, the use of children's song media is demonstrated to have a positive effect on improving English pronunciation skills among fourth-grade students at MI Bina Ummat, as indicated by these findings.

Keywords: english pronouncation, english children's song media

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki pengaruh media lagu anak-anak terhadap peningkatan keterampilan pengucapan bahasa Inggris di kalangan siswa kelas empat di MI Bina Ummat. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain pretest dan posttest kelompok tunggal, mengadopsi pendekatan eksperimental. Tiga puluh siswa kelas empat MI Bina Ummat menjadi populasi penelitian. Uji t digunakan dalam analisis data penelitian ini. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa media lagu anak-anak memiliki dampak signifikan pada pengucapan bahasa Inggris siswa, dengan nilai t hitung sebesar 8,101 > t tabel sebesar 2,042. Nilai rata-rata adalah 54,00 untuk data pretest dan 80,64 untuk data posttest. Perbedaan nilai rata-rata adalah 24,64, yang mencerminkan peningkatan persentase sebesar 42%. Hasil ini menggambarkan sejauh mana perubahan kemampuan pengucapan siswa. Oleh karena itu, penggunaan media lagu anak-anak terbukti memiliki efek positif dalam meningkatkan keterampilan pengucapan bahasa Inggris di kalangan siswa kelas empat di MI Bina Ummat, sebagaimana ditunjukkan oleh temuan ini.

Kata Kunci: *pengucapan bahasa inggris, media lagu anak bahasa inggris*

1. Introduction

Education and language are intricately connected; they complement and shape each other. Language stands out as the primary instrument in education, serving as the means through which knowledge is conveyed and understood (Smith, 2010). However, it's crucial to recognize that education plays a pivotal role not only in fostering language but also in influencing its evolution and potential decline. Language, as a vital communication tool, permeates our daily activities. In the global context, English assumes a prominent role as an international language. It is widely adopted by countries, functioning both as an official language and as a foreign language (Jones,

2015). The ubiquity of English underscores its significance in facilitating cross-cultural communication and fostering a shared platform for global discourse. In essence, the dynamic relationship between education and language extends beyond mere instruction; it involves a reciprocal process wherein language influences education and education, in turn, shapes language. This intricate interplay highlights the profound impact they have on each other, shaping not only individual experiences but also the broader global landscape (Faqihatuddiniyah, 2017)

Language serves as a fundamental tool for human communication, enabling the expression of ideas, desires, and experiences. It is through language that individuals and groups establish connections and foster interactions. Without language, effective communication between individuals and communities becomes impossible (Smith, 2010). In the realm of written communication, language takes the form of expressions, showcasing its versatility.

In Indonesia, where three official languages coexist—Indonesian, regional languages, and foreign languages—English remains categorized as a foreign language, distinguishing it from nations where it holds the status of a first or second language. Despite its global significance, English is still challenging for Indonesian students, many of whom do not consider it their primary or secondary language (Agustin, 2019). The complexity of English poses a considerable obstacle for comprehension and fluency, especially when contrasted with Indonesian (Jones, 2015).

The educational landscape in Indonesia introduces additional complexities as English competes with Indonesian, leading to a confluence of these languages. However, psychological barriers, where students perceive English as a difficult language to understand and speak, exacerbate the challenges (Smith, 2010). The prevalent teaching methods, prioritizing written assignments and memorization over oral communication, contribute to students feeling inadequate and hesitant to actively engage in English-speaking sessions.

Despite the government designating English as a foreign language, the mastery of English has become a pervasive issue among Indonesian students. Pronunciation, a crucial aspect of language learning, is often neglected in classroom instruction. Pronunciation involves the correct application of stress, rhythm, and intonation in spoken language (Brown, 2012). Consequently, many students struggle with pronunciation, hindering effective communication and comprehension.

The purpose of English learning in elementary schools is not merely the acquisition of vocabulary and grammar but also the development of oral communication skills that integrate these linguistic elements, including pronunciation (Smith, 2010). However, the current teaching methodologies, emphasizing rote memorization and written tasks, have failed to engage students in speaking English. This discrepancy highlights the need for innovative approaches to English education.

In response to these challenges, this article explores the impact of using children's songs, specifically from "COCOMELON," as a teaching tool to enhance pronunciation skills among fourth-grade students at MI Bina Umat. Drawing on the belief that learning strategies and resources reflect educational ideals, this study aims to assess the effectiveness of incorporating songs in language instruction. The research poses questions regarding the potential improvement

in pronunciation skills and overall English learning outcomes through the integration of children's song media in the classroom setting.

This study builds on the works of Suhendan (2014) and previous research demonstrating the effectiveness of using songs as a teaching strategy, particularly in enhancing student engagement and making learning enjoyable. By focusing on "COCOMELON" songs, the study seeks to contribute valuable insights into the efficacy of using audio from young children's media to enhance English language teaching in primary education.

The primary aim of this research is to investigate whether utilizing audio resources featuring young children can effectively enhance teachers' proficiency in English instruction. Additionally, it seeks to determine if this approach contributes to an improvement in teachers' ability to teach English to students in grades 4 and above at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Bina Umat, as indicated by their post-teaching assessments. Within the context of the aforementioned objectives, the study formulates several key questions: 1. Can the utilization of media containing children's songs enhance the pronunciation skills of grade 4 students at MI Bina Umat? 2. Will the incorporation of children's song media lead to an overall increase in the English pronunciation proficiency of grade 4 students?

2. Method

This experimental study assesses the effectiveness of an active learning program in a private Islamic school in Serang, Banten. Using a One Group pretest-posttest design, the study involves 30 fourth-grade students. The research focuses on within-group changes, evaluating the impact of the program through pre- and post-tests, inspired by the work of Samuel J. Stratton and using 10 English questions as a standardized assessment tool. The absence of a control group is acknowledged as a limitation, emphasizing the need for cautious interpretation. The study's cultural dimension is enriched by collaborating with the class instructor. The research aims to provide valuable insights into the dynamics of the active learning program in this specific educational setting. The research design and steps are summarized in 3 steps, highlighting the pre-test, treatment, and post-test phases. The concise process involves conducting a pre-test, implementing the treatment using English children's songs, and concluding with a post-test to assess the students' final abilities in English pronunciation.

3. Results and Discussion

Resuts

The correlation between strong pronunciation mastery and enhanced oral communication skills among students is a pivotal aspect, highlighting the crucial role of linguistic proficiency in spoken language. This connection is elucidated by Sihombing in 2014, where students who successfully pass the pronunciation mastery exam receive commendable marks for their speaking abilities. Conversely, those who perform poorly in the pronunciation mastery test tend to exhibit lower competence in oral communication, reflected in their comparatively lower marks on the speaking competence test. The nuanced exploration of these relationships is further illuminated through the examination of pre-test and post-test results presented in Table 2.

This tabular representation encapsulates students' performance levels before and after the intervention or assessment. The pre-test serves as a baseline measure, capturing the initial state of students' proficiency in pronunciation and oral communication skills. Subsequently, the post-test outcomes provide insights into the impact of any educational interventions or experiences, shedding light on the progression or stagnation of students' abilities over time. This cohesive exploration underscores the critical link between pronunciation mastery, speaking skills, and the dynamic nature of student development.

The role of Table 3 in assessing the statistical significance of changes between pre-test and post-test results is crucial for validating the impact of the pronunciation mastery intervention. Employing the T-test, a widely recognized statistical tool, this analysis distinguishes whether observed differences are statistically significant or merely due to random variation. By rigorously examining these statistical measures, the study aims to strengthen the qualitative observations made during the pre-test and post-test comparison, providing a more robust foundation for drawing conclusions regarding the effectiveness of pronunciation mastery on oral communication skills.

The pre-test data presented in Table 2 serves as a diagnostic tool to evaluate students' initial proficiency levels in pronunciation and oral communication. This baseline assessment is essential for understanding the starting point and identifying potential areas of improvement. Additionally, it aids in uncovering any existing disparities among the student population, thereby offering valuable insights to inform targeted interventions or educational strategies.

The post-test results, integrated into the same table, provide a comprehensive view of the outcomes stemming from the pronunciation mastery intervention or educational program. These findings serve as a snapshot of students' progress, enabling an assessment of the effectiveness of the applied methods or curriculum. Beyond offering a retrospective view of the impact on individual students, these results contribute to the broader discourse on the correlation between pronunciation mastery and oral communication skills.

Table 3, delving into the T-test results, plays a crucial role in adding a layer of statistical rigor to the qualitative insights derived from both pre-test and post-test analyses. The T-test serves as a decisive tool for evaluating the statistical significance of observed differences between the pre-test and post-test scores. This evaluation helps researchers and educators discern whether the changes are attributable to the intervention or if they could have occurred by chance. The statistical validation provided by the T-test is paramount for establishing the credibility and generalizability of the study's findings, enhancing the overall robustness of the research.

The incorporation of statistical analyses, demonstrated in Table 3, significantly bolsters the study's overall robustness. This integration not only introduces a more objective and quantifiable dimension to the observations but also facilitates the identification of trends or patterns that may not be immediately apparent through qualitative assessments alone. This multifaceted approach aligns with best practices in research methodology, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the intricate interplay between pronunciation mastery and oral communication skills.

Furthermore, the study's implications extend beyond the traditional boundaries of the classroom or examination hall. The established connection between pronunciation mastery scores and subsequent speaking competence highlights the broader relevance of linguistic proficiency in

real-world communication scenarios. Proficiency in pronunciation not only contributes to academic success but also holds practical implications for effective communication in both professional and social contexts. This insight underscores the holistic significance of linguistic proficiency in diverse facets of individuals' lives.

Table 2. Pre-test and post-test results

Statistik	Pre-test	Post-test
N	30	30
Average	54,00	78,67
Middle value	55,00	80,00
Standard deviation	14,288	8,604
Minimum value	20	60
Maximum value	70	90

Table 3. T-Test Results

Class	Average	T count	T table	P
Pre-test	54,00	8,101	2,042	0,000
Post-test	78,67	8,101	2,042	0,000

Discussion

The presented table serves as a gateway to understanding the homogeneity test results, a critical step with a threshold set at 0.05, designed to establish the comparability of variations in student learning outcomes (Hanifah & Wasitohadi, 2017). A p-value exceeding 0.05 signifies statistical similarity between the two data sets, laying the groundwork for a more detailed exploration of the research's central question: the potential enhancement of students' English pronunciation skills through the use of children's songs. The chosen analytical tool, the t-test, is instrumental in determining whether a substantial improvement in English pronunciation is evident. The crux of the researchers' conclusion relies on the significance of the t-count value in relation to the critical t-table value, providing a compelling statistical basis for asserting a significant increase in students' English pronunciation skills through the integration of children's songs. In this study, the t-count value of 8.101 significantly exceeds the t-table value of 2.042, given a degree of freedom (df) of 30 at a 5% significance level. This compelling statistical evidence forms the basis for the researchers' conclusion that there is indeed a substantial increase in students' English pronunciation skills through the utilization of children's songs as a pedagogical tool.

This assertion finds validation in the comparative analysis of pre-test and post-test data. The pre-test data, establishing a baseline with an average score of 54.00, represents the initial measurement of students' pronunciation skills. In contrast, the post-test data unveils a remarkable average score of 78.67, reflecting a substantial 42% increase in English pronunciation skills, a numerical representation that reinforces the statistical significance demonstrated by the t-test.

Beyond statistical validation, this tangible evidence underscores the practical impact of incorporating children's songs as an instructional medium, aligning seamlessly with the study's first hypothesis regarding the efficacy of this pedagogical approach.

Moving beyond statistical realms, the study aims to discern the practical implications for pedagogical practices at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Bina Umat. The observed increase in English pronunciation skills, substantiated by the research findings, supports the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, indicating the effectiveness of using children's songs. The study posits that the unique learning environment created by such integration contributes to students' comfort and engagement during the learning process, ultimately enhancing their English pronunciation skills. This emphasis on creating a positive and stimulating learning environment aligns with contemporary educational theories, emphasizing the crucial role it plays in language acquisition.

Moreover, the meticulous exploration of the magnitude of change in students' English pronunciation ability, as evidenced by the average score difference of 24.64 points and the substantial percentage increase of 42%, not only adds quantitative weight to the findings but also provides a tangible benchmark for educators and administrators seeking evidence-based strategies for improving language learning outcomes.

In conclusion, this study conducted at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Bina Umat introduces an innovative approach to language education, utilizing children's songs to enhance students' English pronunciation skills. The comprehensive analyses, including the homogeneity test and t-test, contribute to the research's robustness. The statistical evidence, coupled with a thorough exploration of pre-test and post-test data, supports the conclusion of a significant increase in English pronunciation skills. The acceptance of the alternative hypothesis aligns with the practical implications for pedagogical practices at MI Bina Umat, suggesting that incorporating children's songs creates a conducive learning environment positively influencing students' language acquisition. The study's commitment to both statistical significance and practical relevance positions it as a valuable contribution to the field of language education.

4. Conclusion

The primary aim of this study was to instill an awareness among students about the diverse and enjoyable avenues available for enhancing their English pronunciation skills. At the core of this endeavor was the belief that learning can be a delightful and engaging experience, especially when utilizing innovative pedagogical tools. The research process has yielded several notable successes, with a key revelation being the effectiveness and developmental potential inherent in the use of children's songs for learning English, particularly in pronunciation practice.

The success story of this research unfolds in the realization that children's songs, when employed as a pedagogical tool, possess a unique capacity for fostering language learning. Specifically, in the realm of pronunciation improvement, the melodic and rhythmic attributes of children's songs provide an engaging and effective means of language practice. The study emphasizes that this approach holds significant promise for development and is well-suited for the learning preferences and styles of children. The core element contributing to this success lies in the ability of children's songs to evoke happiness and enthusiasm among learners, thereby creating a positive and conducive atmosphere for language acquisition.

However, amidst the successes, the research journey faced challenges, particularly in the time-intensive nature of data collection. The need for a comprehensive understanding of the impact of children's songs on English pronunciation skills required significant time investment in data collection and analysis. This challenge underscores the meticulousness and thoroughness required in research endeavors, especially when exploring innovative aspects of pedagogy.

Another notable challenge pertained to selecting an appropriate research method due to the multifaceted nature of the study. The aim to gauge the impact of children's songs on English pronunciation skills necessitated careful consideration of the most fitting research methodology. This challenge highlights the importance of methodological rigor in educational research and the need for researchers to navigate methodological decisions judiciously.

Addressing these challenges underscores that the success of the study is not only measured by positive outcomes but also by the researcher's ability to navigate and overcome obstacles. The commitment to rigorous data collection and the thoughtful selection of an appropriate research method attest to the dedication to producing a robust and insightful study.

The significance of the research findings extends beyond the immediate context, carrying implications for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers in language education. The emphasis on creating enjoyable and enthusiastic learning experiences aligns with contemporary educational paradigms recognizing the importance of student engagement. The positive impact observed in this study aligns with broader educational theories advocating for the integration of interactive and enjoyable elements in the learning environment.

In conclusion, this study successfully highlights the potential of children's songs as a captivating and effective medium for improving English pronunciation skills. The researcher's commitment to exploring innovative approaches to language learning has resulted in valuable insights and a deeper understanding of the positive impact that engaging pedagogical tools can have on students. The successes and challenges encountered underscore the dynamic and evolving nature of educational research, contributing not only to the specific field of language education but also laying the groundwork for future exploration and advancements in pedagogical practices.

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