



EFFECTIVENESS OF CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SINGING METHOD IN EARLY CHILDREN AT AT-TAQWA ISLAMIC KINDERGARTEN

Maya Oktaviani^{1*}, Citra Setya Rahmansyah², Rika Fitria Utami³, Elsa Nur Fidelia⁴, Restu Dyah Sulistyaningrum⁵, Syuhada Lathifah⁶, Tegar Fabiantoro Nistelrooy⁷

¹Family Welfare Education Study Program, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Rawamangun Muka Street, East Jakarta, 13220 Indonesia

²³⁴⁵⁶⁷Community Education, Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Rawamangun Muka Street, East Jakarta, 13220 Indonesia

*maya.oktaviani@unj.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Singing activities are one of the methods used in early childhood education. This basic idea is how singing activities influence cognitive and language development. This research aims to determine the effectiveness of the singing method for cognitive and language development in early childhood. The research was conducted at At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten, Rawamangun, East Jakarta, with a sample size of 12 children and 1 class teacher. The research was conducted in May 2023. The research method used was a qualitative method, where researchers made observations of students in class and interviews with class teachers. The research results show that the singing method effectively develops cognitive and language abilities in early childhood. This result is proven by the observations that students at At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten meet the Child Development Achievement Level Standards. Interviews between researchers and class teachers also strengthened the research results that around 80-90 per cent of students had clear and good articulation in the language aspect through singing activities. Then, in the cognitive aspect, students can think logically, solve problems, and learn good symbolic thinking through singing and other supporting methods. Stimulation of language and cognitive development in children still needs to be continued and improved by teachers at school and parents at home. There needs to be good cooperation between the family and the school environment in helping children to achieve optimal development.

Keywords: *cognitive development, early childhood, education, language development*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a humanitarian process, from now on known as humanizing humans (Pristiwanti et al., 2022). Education is a means and facility for forming and teaching children to grow maturely and independently, and it can improve attitudes, knowledge, and behaviour. Through education, children will develop their skills. Development can be interpreted as a journey towards an eternal and permanent process leading to an organization at a much higher level based on learning, growth, and maturation (L. Sari & Zulaikha, 2020). Development involves biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional processes. Cognitive processes refer to changes in an individual's thinking, intelligence, and language (Santrock, 2014). Cognitive development in children cannot be separated from language development.

Language effectively communicates and expresses individual feelings and thoughts through symbols (Fadliyah et al., 2021). Children can convey their intentions, goals, thoughts, or feelings to others by learning a language (L. Sari & Zulaikha, 2020). Language potential must be developed in preschool children because, with good language skills, children can develop academically and interact well in their social environment (Paujiah et al., 2022). In general, language development can be divided into three types, namely expressive abilities (speaking and writing), receptive abilities (listening and reading), and literacy (a child's ability to read and write, which is mastered before the child learns how to read and write). Language skills are included in what is seen, heard, and felt. Usually, the children will start to talk and be able to convey what is happening to them. This cognitive



development can train the child's memory of experiences or events experienced by the child; then, the mind will develop to digest from one incident to another and make scientific or natural reasons.

The environment influences children's personality and language development (Khoiriyati & Fansurullah, 2019). A conducive environment will lead children towards polite speech and can influence a person's character and behaviour. Several factors, such as family and school, are associated with developing language skills in early childhood (Washington-Nortey et al., 2020). Unfortunately, many parents still need an understanding of their role in stimulating early childhood language development (M. Sari, 2018). The parenting pattern parents apply will undoubtedly influence how parents provide and choose education for their children (Brantasari, 2022).

Meanwhile, many preschool teachers read books educationally in schools without strengthening understanding and encouraging more complex language use in children (Alatalo & Westlund, 2021). A survey conducted at Pertiwi Tuban Kindergarten found that only 23% of children could talk about their experiences and daily activities (Fadliyah et al., 2021). There are at least eight teacher roles that can improve children's language development, such as teachers as facilitators, mentors, and evaluators (Basri et al., 2023). Teachers and parents must facilitate students' enthusiasm for learning by using media or learning methods (Rahman et al., 2023). The learning process in early childhood should be carried out to provide basic concepts that are meaningful to children through authentic experiences that enable children to show activity and curiosity optimally (Wulandari & Imania, 2022).

Research results of Schmerse et al. 2018) show that the quality of the home learning environment predicts the development of grammar skills. The research results by Fadliyah et al. (2021) show that finger puppet stimulation significantly affects children's language development. Apart from that, picture and written educational cards are practical and can be used as language stimulation media for preschool-aged children (Firdaus et al., 2019). Other research results show that children's language development (starting from age 3) significantly predicts perspective-taking skills (Emen & Aslan, 2019). Children can more easily understand and receive stimulation when the language learning process is done in a fun and exciting way, one of which is through music (Mutoharoh et al., 2022).

Music is integral to early students' teaching and learning process because children like to listen to, sing, and learn with songs (Rachmawati & Husin, 2022). Music is usually used as an accompaniment in learning activities using the singing method. The singing learning method uses poetry songs adapted to the material to be taught (Rachmawati & Husin, 2022; Wulandari & Imania, 2022). Singing can also increase vocabulary (Dea et al., 2020; Fatimah et al., 2024). The lyrics in each verse of the song enable children to imagine and create movements that can improve children's logical thinking skills.

The research results show that school-aged students enjoy learning Arabic by singing and more easily remember the vocabulary taught by the teacher (Rachmawati & Husin, 2022). Children can develop language and perfect vocabulary (Wulandari & Imania, 2022). So, further analysis is needed regarding the impact of using singing methods on early children, especially students in kindergarten. This research was conducted to determine early children's language and cognitive abilities at the At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten.

2. METHODS

This research uses qualitative methods, which emphasize observing phenomena and the substance of the meaning of these phenomena. The research was conducted at At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten Rawamangun, East Jakarta, within one month, May 2023. The research sample consisted of 12 students and 1 class teacher. Samples were selected using the saturated sample technique.

The strength of the words and sentences greatly influences qualitative research's analysis and sharpness. Data was collected using interview techniques. An interview is a data collection technique through a one-way verbal question-and-answer process, meaning that the questions come from the person interviewing, and the answers are given by the interviewee (respondent). Apart from that, researchers also used observation techniques. Observation is a data



collection technique carried out through observation, accompanied by notes on the condition or behaviour of the target object. Testing the validity of the data was carried out using triangulation methods.

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Result

Singing activities have become a learning method for all students at At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten. The singing method conveys information covering social, religious, and other fields. For example, singing is used to learn to count, learn the names of prophets, learn about religion and divinity, remember, and even learn morals and social issues. So, singing activities at At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten are used as a language and cognitive development method in children, not just as entertainment for children while learning activities occur.

Based on the results of classroom observations, the singing method has a good influence on training students' articulation and pronunciation in class. Around 80-90 per cent of students already have clear articulation when speaking. This singing activity is also used to motivate less active children in class. Based on the results of interviews with teachers, this method successfully increased the motivation of students who needed to be more active and enthusiastic in class. Apart from singing, At-Taqwa Kindergarten carries out one activity to develop students' language and cognitive abilities, namely the language month program.

Apart from singing, teachers also use other methods, such as demonstrations, stimulus responses in the form of questions, and role-playing, to develop students' cognitive abilities. Teachers use worksheets and teaching aids that can help teachers to facilitate learning in the classroom. The variety of media and methods used by teachers at the At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten means that children can understand and carry commands. Apart from that, their numeracy skills were also considered quite good. Children understand numbers from 1 to 20 and addition from 1 to 10. Using various media and methods also means that children do not get bored quickly and have high initiative during the learning process. Through singing activities, children are trained to understand cause and effect. Children learn to solve problems independently and apply new knowledge and concepts to existing knowledge.

The following are the results of observations of early childhood children at the At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten based on standards for early childhood development achievement levels in language (table 1) and cognitive (table 2) aspects.

Table 1. Early Childhood Language Development Achievements

No	Language Development	Assessment Indicators				
		Very Not Good	Not Good	Fairly Good	Good	Very Good
1.	Expressive				V	
2.	Receptive				V	
3.	Literacy			V		

In general, language development can be divided into three types, namely expressive abilities (speaking and writing), receptive abilities (listening and reading), and literacy (the child's ability to read and write, which is mastered before the child learns how to read and write). Based on the results of observations in class, children at At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten already have good speaking and writing skills. Children can talk to peers and teachers and write letters and numbers. Their vocabulary is quite diverse. In terms of receptive abilities, children understand what other people are saying. They get this by listening to other people and taking turns speaking. The teacher stimulates expressive and receptive abilities through the singing method. In terms of literacy skills, children have good pre-writing skills. The teacher stimulates this skill in a class by making lines, cutting, and drawing.



Table 2. Early Childhood Cognitive Development Achievements

No	Cognitive Development	Assessment Indicators				
		Very Not Good	Not Good	Fairly Good	Good	Very Good
Learning and Problem Solving						
1.	Solve problems flexibly and socially acceptable				V	
2.	Applying knowledge in a new context				V	
Logical Thinking						
1.	Differences, classifications, pattern			V		
2.	Take the initiative, plan				V	
3.	Knowing cause and effect				V	
Symbolic Thinking						
1.	Get to know, mention					V
2.	Using the concept of number				V	
3.	Know letter			V		
4.	Presenting various objects and imagination in the form of pictures				V	

Based on Child Development Achievement Level Standards, the cognitive aspect includes three abilities: learning and problem-solving, logical thinking, and symbolic thinking. Children have flexible and socially acceptable problem-solving skills and apply knowledge in new contexts to a reasonable degree. Children can take initiative and plan and recognize cause-and-effect relationships well. However, the skills to differentiate, classify, and form patterns are still reasonably good. Children can recognize and name objects around them very well, use simple number concepts and present objects and their imaginations in the form of pictures well. Some children still do not know letters.

Discussion

In life and the community environment, every child can develop in his/her way and be different from other children. Listening and speaking skills are learned before entering school, while reading and writing skills are generally learned (Anggraini, 2020). Generally, language development in children is divided into three parts:

1. Children start with babbling when they are 0-1.
2. Children begin to say several words and expand the vocabulary they hear from the people around them when they are 1-2.5 years old.
3. Children can interpret frequently spoken words at the age of 2.5-5 years.



The research results show that children's expressive and receptive abilities are good, although their literacy abilities have only reached a pretty good level. This result aligns with the non-requirement of the calistung curriculum (reading, writing, arithmetic) for kindergarten students. The focus of learning in kindergarten has changed to playing while learning in a fun atmosphere, without any academic pressure. This activity aligns with research results by Mutoharoh et al. (2022) that children can more easily understand and receive stimulation well when the language learning process is carried out in a fun and exciting way, one of which is through music.

In kindergarten, music is a vehicle for children to learn to express thoughts and feelings as individuals and as group members (Anggraini, 2020). The lyrics in each verse of the song enable children to imagine and create movements that can improve children's logical thinking skills. In this activity, children will usually interpret each stanza of the song lyrics, musical arrangements, and beats, which can increase children's concentration and interest in doing this activity. Singing can also increase vocabulary (Dea et al., 2020; Fatimah et al., 2024).

The research results show that, on average, children's cognitive development is reasonable. This cognitive development can train the child's memory of experiences or events experienced by the child. Then, their mind will develop to digest from one incident to another and reason scientifically or naturally. Cognitive and language abilities in children can be developed by singing. By singing, children can convey their feelings to peers. Apart from that, it can also increase children's self-confidence.

The learning process using media and innovative learning activities allows children to interact as much as possible with peers, thereby improving children's speaking abilities (Fauziah & Rahman, 2021). Overall, the results of this study confirm previous research that by singing, children will more easily remember the vocabulary taught by the teacher (Rachmawati & Husin, 2022) and can develop language and perfect vocabulary (Wulandari & Imania, 2022). Regardless of the development achieved by early childhood, children still need stimulation to achieve their subsequent development. Adults around children need to stimulate children to explore and use vocabulary acquired during previous stages of development (Zikri, 2016). Children need to be introduced to interest and curiosity in reading to have essential motivation (Ceyhan & Yıldız, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

Children's language and cognitive development is critical. Children can develop their perceptions according to what they see, feel, and hear. Language skills include what is seen, heard, and felt. Usually, children will start to talk and be able to convey what is happening to them. Children's language and cognitive abilities can be developed by singing. Singing activities are not part of the curriculum, but singing activities were chosen as one of the learning methods used by teachers at At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten. The singing method is used to develop children's language and cognitive skills. Apart from that, the singing focuses on religious songs because At-Taqwa Kindergarten is Islamic. In the cognitive aspect, the media and methods used are demonstrations, singing, stimulus responses (questions), worksheets, props, and role play. Observation results show that children at the At-Taqwa Islamic Kindergarten have met the Child Development Achievement Level Standards. Around 80-90 per cent of students have good articulation in language aspects demonstrated through singing activities. In the cognitive realm, children can think logically, solve problems, and learn to think symbolically.

Stimulation of language and cognitive development in children still needs to be continued and improved by teachers at school and parents at home. Even though the golden age has passed, optimizing children's growth and development can still be continued when children enter school age. There needs to be good cooperation between the family and the school environment in helping children to achieve optimal development.

REFERENCES

- Alatalo, T., & Westlund, B. (2021). Preschool teachers' perceptions about read-alouds as a means to support children's early literacy and language development. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798419852136>



- Anggraini, N. (2020). Peranan orang tua dalam perkembangan bahasa anak usia dini. *Metafora: Jurnal Pembelajaran Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 7(1), 43–54. <https://doi.org/10.30595/mtf.v7i1.9741>
- Basri, F., Sahib, H., & Kaharuddin. (2023). Peran guru dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa pada pembelajaran bahasa indonesia. *Journal of Innovation Research and Knowledge*, 2(8), 3043–3053.
- Brantasari, M. (2022). Pola asuh orang tua terhadap perkembangan bahasa anak usia dini. *Murhum: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 3(2), 42–51. <https://doi.org/10.37985/murhum.v3i2.119>
- Ceyhan, S., & Yıldız, M. (2021). The effect of interactive reading aloud on student reading comprehension, reading motivation and reading fluency. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 13(4), 421–431. <https://doi.org/10.26822/iejee.2021.201>
- Dea, L. F., Setiawan, A., & Asmiyati, L. (2020). Upaya meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa anak usia 4-5 tahun melalui metode bernyanyi menggunakan media kartu gambar. *Murhum: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 1(1), 53–64. <https://doi.org/10.37985/murhum.v1i1.6>
- Emen, M., & Aslan, D. (2019). The relationship between perspective taking skills and language development in preschool children. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 6(1), 25–42. <https://doi.org/10.22555/joeed.v6i1.2159>
- Fadliyah, L., Susanto, J., & Rukanah. (2021). Stimulasi finger puppet terhadap perkembangan bahasa anak pra sekolah. *Jurnal Penelitian KEsehatan Suara Forikes*, 12(4), 459–462.
- Fatimah, F. N., Larasati, S. A., Aulia, P., & Lubis, H. Z. (2024). Penerapan dan dampak bernyanyi di kelas pada anak usia dini di TK IT Nurul Ilmi. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 8(1), 180–186.
- Fauziah, F., & Rahman, T. (2021). Meningkatkan perkembangan bahasa anak usia dini melalui metode bercerita. *J-SANAK: Jurnal Kajian Anak*, 2(2), 108–114.
- Firdaus, K. N., Indahwati, L., & Wati, L. R. (2019). Perbedaan efektifitas antara stimulasi bahasa dengan metode glenn doman melalui kartu edukasi bergambar dan kartu edukasi tulisan terhadap perkembangan bahasa anak usia prasekolah di Kelompok B TK Al-Jihad Kota Malang. *Journal of Issues in Midwifery*, 3(3), 88–96. <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.joim.2019.003.03.4>
- Khoiriyati, S., & Fansurullah, N. (2019). *Peran lingkungan terhadap perkembangan bahasa anak*. OSF Preprints. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/j5qcv>
- Mutoharoh, Q., Triningsih, R. W., & Aryani, H. R. (2022). Musik sebagai stimulasi perkembangan bahasa pada anak usia dini: literature review. *Jurnal Pendidikan Kesehatan*, 11(1), 1–15. <https://ojs.poltekkes-malang.ac.id/index.php/jpk/article/view/2969>
- Paujjah, T. S., Muslihin, H. Y., & Rahman, T. (2022). Peran lingkungan dalam menstimulasi perkembangan bahasa serta menumbuhkan karakter anak usia dini. *Pelangi: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Penelitian Islam Anak Usia Dini*, 4(1), 103–122.
- Pristiwanti, D., Badariah, B., Hidayat, S., & Dewi, R. S. (2022). Pengertian pendidikan. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling*, 4(6), 7911–7915.
- Rachmawati, R. A., & Husin, H. (2022). Penerapan metode bernyanyi dalam meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata bahasa arab di Panti Asuhan Nurul Jannah. *Berajah Journal*, 2(2), 223–230. <https://doi.org/10.47353/bj.v2i2.81>
- Rahman, A., Rambe, A. R., & Triana, R. (2023). Peran guru dan orang tua dalam perkembangan peserta didik. *PEMA (Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat)*, 2(2), 149–158. <https://doi.org/10.56832/pema.v2i2.302>
- Santroek, J. W. (2014). *Child Development* (Fourteenth). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Sari, L., & Zulaikha, F. (2020). hubungan stimulasi orang tua, pola asuh dan lingkungan dengan perkembangan bahasa anak usia prasekolah di PAUD Kota Samarinda. *Borneo Student Research (BSR)*, 1(3), 2235–2242.



- Sari, M. (2018). Peran orang tua dalam menstimulai perkembangan bahasa anak usia dini. *AULADA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Perkembangan Anak*, 1(2), 37–45.
- Schmerse, D., Anders, Y., Flöter, M., Wieduwilt, N., Roßbach, H. G., & Tietze, W. (2018). Differential effects of home and preschool learning environments on early language development. *British Educational Research Journal*, 44(2), 338–357. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3332>
- Washington-Nortey, P. M., Zhang, F., Xu, Y., Ruiz, A. B., Chen, C. C., & Spence, C. (2020). The impact of peer interactions on language development among preschool english language learners: a systematic review. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 49–59. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-020-01126-5>
- Wulandari, A., & Imania, H. (2022). Upaya guru dalam mengembangkan bahasa melalui metode bernyanyi pada anak usia dini di tk sahabat qur'an. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Early Childhood Education (IJIECE)*, 7(1), 84–93.
- Zikri, R. (2016). Peran orang tua dalam mengoptimalkan perkembangan bahasa anak fase golden age. *al-lisan: Jurnal Bahasa*, 1(1), 1–22.