

Improving Vocabulary Learning Through Songs for Elementary School Students Using a Constructivist Approach

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Abstract: The application of constructivist learning theory I considered important nowadays. When songs are introduced in the classroom the students can be more engaged. This study explores the use of constructivist learning theory in teaching English language to grade five elementary students, focusing on the effectiveness of songs as a learning tool. It investigates how songs can enhance student engagement, vocabulary retention, and concept understanding by promoting active participation. Using a descriptive quantitative approach with a case study design, data were gathered through direct observations of student engagement and document analysis of learning outcomes. The findings show that incorporating songs significantly improves student participation, making vocabulary retention easier and aiding concept comprehension by providing meaningful context. The study concludes that integrating songs into the learning process creates a more engaging and effective learning environment, helping students deepen their knowledge through active experience and social interaction. Thus, the use of songs as a learning tool can be an effective strategy in improving the quality of English language learning in elementary schools.

Keywords: Constructivist theory, song, English language learning, elementary school, student engagement, vocabulary retention

Abstrak: Penerapan teori pembelajaran konstruktivis dianggap penting saat ini. Ketika lagu diperkenalkan di kelas, siswa dapat lebih terlibat. Studi ini mengeksplorasi penggunaan teori pembelajaran konstruktivis dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris kepada siswa sekolah dasar kelas lima, dengan fokus pada efektivitas lagu sebagai alat pembelajaran. Studi ini menyelidiki bagaimana lagu dapat meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa, retensi kosakata, dan pemahaman konsep dengan mempromosikan partisipasi aktif. Menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif dengan desain studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui pengamatan langsung terhadap keterlibatan siswa dan analisis dokumen hasil pembelajaran. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa menggabungkan lagu secara signifikan meningkatkan partisipasi siswa, membuat retensi kosakata lebih mudah dan membantu pemahaman konsep dengan memberikan konteks yang bermakna. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa mengintegrasikan lagu ke dalam proses pembelajaran menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang lebih menarik dan efektif, membantu siswa memperdalam pengetahuan mereka melalui pengalaman aktif dan interaksi sosial. Dengan demikian, penggunaan lagu sebagai alat pembelajaran dapat menjadi strategi yang efektif dalam meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di sekolah dasar.

Kata kunci: Teori konstruktivis, lagu, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, sekolah dasar, keterlibatan siswa, retensi kosakata.

INTRODUCTION

English is a language spoken all over the world, and learning it early can be an opportunity for children. The English serves as a universal language, facilitating cross-border communication and connecting people around the world. English stands out as one of the most dominant and widely spoken languages globally or can be referred to as a lingua franca, serving as a common language for communication among people from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Mehrajuddin & Wani, 2022). However, not many elementary school students in this era like English. Therefore, the need for constructive theory in English language learning because constructivist theory can encourage active participation and the development of critical thinking skills by involving

students in hands-on activities and collaborative learning experiences (Kieu Oanh & Hong Nhung, 2022).

Constructivism is a learning theory that emphasizes the active participation and involvement of students in the learning process that focuses on critical thinking, problem-solving skills (Mishra, 2023) (Almulla, 2023). Development towards constructivist principles, which emphasizes that students should be actively involved in their learning process rather than passively receiving information, The evolution of constructivist principles is also characterized by the integration of theoretical frameworks with practical applications. Educators are increasingly incorporating personal experience and collaborative learning into their teaching methods, demonstrating how constructivist theory can be applied in real-world educational settings (Cui, 2024). However, the need for supporters to help the continuation of constructivist theory learning, for example using songs.

Interesting learning to increase student interest and make students more active during the learning process, for example through songs. Songs are an effective intermediary for early childhood education, because they involve the body and mind. Dr. Frank Wood's statement that "music is the first language of the brain" can be interpreted as the importance of involving music in learning. According to Suwono, the use of songs in learning must be exciting and fun for children, so that it can create a positive relationship with education. where Rhythm as a fundamental element of the song, has a profound impact on the nervous system and overall development (Suwono, 2022). Fun songs, simple lyrics can make learning fun, The enthusiasm generated by songs can motivate students to actively participate in the learning process (Andari & Wiguna, 2022). Additionally, songs can improve a variety of language skills, including listening, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Songs provide meaningful context for students to hear and imitate correct pronunciation, as well as assist them in remembering new grammar rules and vocabulary (Al-Smadi, 2020).

The previous research contained in the Data Analysis of EFL students' perception of vocabulary learning through English songs on Spotify revealed several key findings. A large number of participants agreed that they could remember new vocabulary using songs with a percentage of 38.1% strongly agreeing and 28.9% agreeing. In addition, participants expressed enjoyment of learning English vocabulary through English songs on Spotify, with 33% strongly agreeing and 23% agreeing with this statement. These results highlight the positive attitudes and perceptions of EFL students towards the use of English songs on Spotify as a tool for vocabulary learning, emphasizing the potential benefits of incorporating music into language learning strategies (Butar Butar & Katemba, 2023).

In addition, there was a previous study that used a quasi-experimental design involving 287 fifth-grade students who were divided into an experimental class (23 students) and a control class (19 students) Post-test scores showed that the experimental class had an average score of 22.85, higher than 18.92 in the control class, indicating the effectiveness of songs in improving vocabulary mastery. Data analysis revealed that the t-value for the experimental class (2.558) was higher than the critical t-value (2.021), indicating a significant improvement in vocabulary learning with song-based instruction (Triwardani, 2022).

The previous research titled "A Case Study: The Use of Songs to Enhance Year 1 Pupils' Vocabulary" (Assan & Yamat, 2020), aimed to investigate whether the use of English songs in the classroom can improve vocabulary competence in grade 1 elementary school students in Simunjan, Sarawak, Malaysia. The method used is a quantitative method with a case study approach. The research sample consisted of 24 grade 1 students who were selected based on purposive sampling. This research involves pre-test and post-test to measure students' vocabulary knowledge before and after the use of songs in teaching, as well as semi-structured interviews to get students' views on the use of songs in learning. The average score of the pre-test was 10.79, while the average score of the post-test increased to 20.87. In addition, the interviews showed that students felt more motivated and had an easier time learning vocabulary through songs. The use

of songs in English language learning described in this study reflects constructivist principles, where students actively build new understandings through meaningful experiences and social interactions in a supportive context. This method is not only effective in improving vocabulary mastery, but also strengthens students' understanding and communication skills in the English through a relevant and fun approach (binti Assan & Yamat, 2020).

The results of the data analysis of twelve students from private elementary schools in Jakarta participating in the case study Incorporating songs in English classrooms as a Foreign Language (EFL) as an additional activity or for self-study at home were recommended based on positive responses from students. The assessment of the research shows that integrating songs into teaching practice can increase student engagement, align with the learning principles of young learners, and create a more creative and enjoyable learning environment for language mastery (Paskalisa & Sadikin, 2022).

Previous research, such as journals "The Implementation of Songs in Teaching Listening for Young Learners in Online Learning Environment," "A Case Study: The Use of Songs to Enhance Year 1 Pupils' Vocabulary," (Paskalisa & Savitri, 2022). "EFL Students' Perceptions Toward Vocabulary Learning by Listening to English Songs on Spotify," (Triwardani 2022). dan "Building Vocabulary Through Song as Effective Method in Learning English," (Triwardani 2022).

It shows that there are obstacles such as limited technology, variations in student responses, and limited use of media. However, the journal to be created offers a different approach by integrating constructivist theory that emphasizes on active student engagement and real learning experiences. In addition, the journal will use songs as fun and interactive learning, which can increase students' motivation and engagement in learning English. This approach focuses not only on improving vocabulary retention but also on conceptual understanding, which is expected to provide significant and applicative results in the process of language learning in primary schools, exceeding the advantages offered by previous journals.

So the purpose of this study is to create a more effective and fun English learning method by integrating constructivist theory and song media. Through this approach, it is hoped that it can significantly increase the motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes of elementary school students. By overcoming the limitations of previous research, this journal offers a better and applicable contribution to improving the quality of English vocabulary learning in primary schools.

METHOD

Research Design

The research method in this article uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive quantitative research is a method used to describe and analyze data systematically through numerical and statistical techniques (Dong, 2023). Data was collected through observation, and document analysis of one of the schools in North Surabaya, this study was conducted on grade V elementary school students. Observations were made during a learning session conducted with several students into 4 groups of elementary school students randomly divided and each using a different song to learn fruit vocabulary in English and Indonesia. Document analysis is carried out on the results of student work.

Analysis Stage

1. Student needs analysis

At this stage, the researcher assigns group assignments in one class that has been divided. His task is to collect fruit vocabulary and then turn it into a song. This assessment is seen from

how much vocabulary students have, students' creativity in compiling vocabulary into songs, and the suitability of the rhythm used.

2. Analysis material

In the analysis, the data was taken from the identification of student involvement, vocabulary retention, and emotional reactions to songs, where each group had different results both in terms of vocabulary, songs used, and lyrics that had been compiled.

The songs used are also in accordance with:

- a. Rhythm, Rhythm can be understood as a pattern of movement or sound that repeats over time. It is about the time and flow of events, whether in music, dance, or even in the way laws and regulations function in Society (Heaney, 2022). Songs with rhythm will help students remember new words more easily.
- b. Repetition, songs that are often repeated will help students strengthen students' memory.
- c. The context, lyrics in the song usually tell a story that gives the context learned

Implementation Stage

In the context of education, especially in the study discussed, implementation refers to the application of a carefully planned and implemented learning design. It is about practicing educational strategies to achieve the desired learning outcomes (Siregar, 2023). At this stage, this implementation aims to assess students' activeness in discussing, then how they can solve problems by finding suitable songs to use in the collected vocabulary so that it is easy to memorize, the researcher gives 60 minutes to discuss the vocabulary and songs to be used.

Evaluation Stage

Evaluation is an important process in education that measures student learning outcomes. It helps in assessing how well students have achieved the learning goals set by the educator (Siregar, 2023). The evaluation in this study was carried out to assess the effectiveness of the use of songs in learning fruit vocabulary in English among elementary school students. This evaluation is carried out in several stages which include:

- a. Direct Assessment of Students: This assessment is conducted by measuring how well students can remember and use the vocabulary taught through songs. This hands-on assessment includes both oral and written tests which include:
- b. Written Test: Students are asked to write down the vocabulary of fruits in English and their translations in Indonesian. This assessment aims to evaluate the retention and understanding of the vocabulary taught. The results of the written test show that students who learn through this method are able to remember and write vocabulary with higher accuracy compared to conventional methods.
- c. Oral Test: After a discussion and song preparation session, students are asked to present the vocabulary they have learned by singing the song they have created. This assessment helps in assessing a student's ability to pronounce, confidence in using new vocabulary, and his or her ability to integrate vocabulary into relevant contexts. The results of the oral test showed a significant improvement in language skills and better pronunciation.

Observation Stage

Observation in research is a complex process that benefits from depth, collaboration, and creativity, as illustrated through the integration of art into scientific practice (Gonzalez et al., 2024). Observations in this study were made during learning sessions to assess student engagement, enthusiasm, and social interaction among them. The aspects observed include:

a. Student Engagement

During the observation stage, students showed high involvement in learning activities by using songs. They are more enthusiastic in attending lessons, participate in discussions more

often, and are more active in singing the songs they have learned. This involvement is not only seen in their physical activities, such as singing and dancing, but also in their cognitive involvement, such as how they try to understand and remember the lyrics of songs that contain new vocabulary.

b. Student Enthusiasm

The researcher also observed the level of student enthusiasm during the learning process. The songs used can be a strong emotional attraction for students. They showed cheerful facial expressions, laughed, and overall seemed to enjoy the learning process. This enthusiasm shows that the use of songs as a learning tool not only increases students' interest in the material, but also makes the classroom atmosphere more lively and fun.

c. Social Interaction

Social interaction among students is also a major focus in this observation. Researchers noted that students tended to communicate and cooperate more often with their friends during group activities. For example, when they are tasked with composing the lyrics of a song, students exchange ideas and discuss words that should be included in the song. This interaction not only strengthens social relationships among students, but also allows them to learn from each other and build knowledge collectively.

d. Effectiveness of Learning Methods

In addition, this observation also helps in assessing the effectiveness of the learning methods used. From observation, it can be seen that the learning method with songs is more effective in attracting students' attention and helping them remember new vocabulary compared to conventional learning methods. Researchers observed that students more easily remember and repeat the vocabulary taught through songs, which suggests that this method is effective in improving vocabulary retention.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Result of The Development Process

This study involved 19 students in grade 5 of elementary school who were given the treatment of using songs as a vocabulary learning tool. Students are taught a song that contains relevant vocabulary. This learning process involves

Table 1. The Result of Each Group's Creativity in Compiling Vocabulary into Songs

Group name	Vocabullary	Song	Lyric
Group 1	Apple, Avocado, Orange, Pineapple	Banana, Mango, Naik naik ke puncak gunung	Apple apel, banana pisang, avocado alpukat 2x Mango mangga, orange tuh jeruk, pineapple artinya nanas 2x
Group 2	Banana, Dragon Pineapple, Watermelon	Guava, fruit, Grape,	Dimana mana hatiku senang
Group 3	Apple, Banana, Coconut, Avocado	Guava, Cherry, Lychee, Melon,	Bangun tidur kuterus mandi
			Banana pisang, guava jambu, dragon fruit buah naga, pineapple nanas, grape itu anggur, watermelon semangka. Lalalalala
			Apple apel, guava jambu, cherry ceri banana pisang, lychee leci, cocout kelapa, melon melon, avocado apukat.

Group name	Vocabullary	Song	Lyric
Group 4	Avocado, Strawberry, Lychee, Coconut, Banana, Apple, Papaya, Guava	Pelang Pelangi	Avocado alpukat, strawberry strawberry, lychee itu leci, coconut kelapa banana tuh pisang apple itu apel, papaya papaya guava jambu.

a. Student Emotional Engagement

The observation results showed high enthusiasm during the learning session with the song. They are more active and motivated to participate. Document Analysis is seen through student participation in class discussions. Therefore, it can be concluded that in the emotional involvement of students in this study, familiar and fun songs increase students' emotional involvement. Music creates a positive learning atmosphere, increasing students' motivation and interest in learning new vocabulary.

b. Vocabulary Retention and Comprehension

The results of the observation showed that students were faster to remember and use the vocabulary taught through songs compared to the conventional method. Document Analysis: The results of the student's work show the proper use of vocabulary in different contexts. Thus, in the context of retention and understanding of vocabulary, namely repetition in song lyrics plays an important role in vocabulary retention. Students find it easier to remember frequently repeated words and use them in the correct context.

c. Social Interaction and Collaborative Learning

The results of the observations obtained in this context show that the songs encourage students to cooperate and discuss with their friends. Meanwhile, in the analysis of the document through the reflection of students who showed that they felt more motivated to study with their friends. So it can be concluded that music encourages social interaction and collaborative learning. Students feel more comfortable and motivated to learn in groups, which increases their engagement and understanding of the learning material.

It can be concluded that using songs in learning English vocabulary with a constructivism approach can create an interesting, effective and interactive learning environment for elementary school students. Songs not only make the learning process enjoyable but also help students build their knowledge through real experiences and social injunction.

The value obtained from the implementation of vocabulary learning through songs for elementary school students is seen from the completeness of the vocabulary where the vocabulary that has been taught is 10 pieces, appropriate pronunciation, cohesiveness of each group when presenting, creativity in making songs.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{n}{a} \times 100\%$$

n= Group point
a= maximum point

Table 2. Group Assessment

Group	Completeness of vocabulary	pronunciation	Compactness	creativity	Total point	percentage
1	6/10	8/10	7/10	9/10	30/40	75%
2	6/10	9/10	8/10	8/10	31/40	77,5%
3	8/10	7/10	9/10	7/10	31/40	77,5%
4	8/10	9/10	7/10	9/10	33.40	82,5%

a. Vocabulary Completeness

Group 3 and Group 4 received the highest score in the vocabulary completeness category with a score of 8/10, indicating that they were able to identify and compile more vocabulary than other groups. This indicates that the songs used by these two groups are more effective in helping students remember and organize relevant vocabulary.

b. Pronunciation

Group 2 and Group 4 received the highest score in the pronunciation category with a score of 9/10. This suggests that students in these groups are able to pronounce vocabulary correctly and clearly, which is most likely influenced by the rhythm and melody of the song they use. Songs that make it easier to pronounce new words seem to be more effective in strengthening students' memory of vocabulary.

c. Compactness

Cohesiveness between group members, measured through cooperation and coordination during composing and singing songs, shows fairly even results. Group 3 obtained the highest score in this category with a score of 9/10, which indicates that they have excellent cooperation. This indicates that good group dynamics contribute to the effectiveness of learning with songs.

d. Creativeness

Group 1 and Group 4 stood out in terms of creativity with a score of 9/10. Creativity in the preparation of lyrics and the selection of appropriate songs shows that students are able to think outside the box and integrate vocabulary in an interesting and effective way. This creativity not only makes learning more interesting but also helps students remember vocabulary better.

e. Total Grades and Percentages

Group 4 obtained the highest success percentage of 82.5%, indicating that they were most effective in using the learning method with songs to improve the mastery of fruit vocabulary in English. Group 2 and Group 3 had the same success percentage of 77.5%, while Group 1 obtained 75%. Overall, the learning method with songs showed positive results with all groups achieving more than 75% success. This supports that the use of songs in vocabulary learning is effective in increasing student retention and understanding.

The results of the study show that the use of songs as a vocabulary learning tool with a constructivism approach in increasing learning motivation, increasing vocabulary mastery, and active involvement in elementary school students.

Discussion

The results of this study show that the use of songs as a vocabulary learning tool with a constructivism approach has a significant impact on various aspects of the student learning process. This study not only shows the advantages of this learning method in improving vocabulary retention, but also highlights how this approach can affect student motivation and engagement in learning.

a. Advantages of songs in vocabulary learning

Songs have proven to be an effective medium in vocabulary learning, especially because of their fun and memorable nature for students. This is in line with a study by Assan & Yamat (2020). The rhythm and repetition in the lyrics of the song make it easier for students to remember new words. Songs can also improve students' listening and pronunciation skills, which are important components in language learning. As it is also found in Al-Smadi (2020). In this study, songs that are familiar to students are used to introduce new vocabulary, which ultimately not only improves their memory but also makes the learning process more enjoyable.

b. Constructivist approach

The constructivist approach applied in this study emphasizes active and contextual learning, where students are not only passive recipients of information, but also engage in activities that demand critical thinking and collaboration. In this case, students are encouraged to build their own knowledge through hands-on experience, such as composing song lyrics and participating in group discussions. This was also confirmed by Almulla (2023). These activities not only assist students in developing vocabulary skills, but also improve their ability to cooperate and communicate effectively with their classmates.

c. Learning motivation

One of the important findings of this study is the increase in students' learning motivation when songs are used as a learning tool. Music, in general, has the ability to influence mood and emotions, which in turn can affect students' motivation to learn. In this study, students showed greater enthusiasm and higher engagement during learning sessions with songs compared to traditional learning methods (binti Assan & Yamat, 2020). This high motivation is very important because it correlates with better learning outcomes. When students are motivated, they tend to be more active in the learning process, more focused on the assigned tasks, and more eager to achieve the desired results.

It can be concluded that using songs in vocabulary learning with this constructivism approach shows that the integration of fun media such as songs with an active and contextual learning approach can provide significant results in the language learning process.

d. Social Interaction and Collaborative Learning

Songs also play an important role in encouraging social interaction and collaborative learning among students. Through activities such as composing and singing song lyrics in groups, students learn to work together, share ideas, and discuss the best solutions to complete the assigned task (Butar Butar & Katemba, (2023). This not only enriches students' learning experience, but also helps them develop important social skills, such as communication, collaboration, and group problem-solving. In addition, the social interactions that occur during these activities also create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, where each student feels valued and encouraged to participate.

e. Implications for Teaching English in Primary Schools

This study has important implications for the teaching of English in primary schools. The use of songs as a vocabulary learning tool, especially when combined with a constructivist approach, can be a very effective strategy to improve student engagement, learning motivation, and learning outcomes. Teachers can take advantage of the advantages of songs to make language learning more engaging and enjoyable for students, as well as encourage their active involvement in the learning process (Butar Butar & Katemba, (2023). In addition, this approach can also help students develop important social and emotional skills, which will be useful to them in a broader learning context.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The study highlights the positive impact of using songs as a vocabulary learning tool alongside a constructivist approach. Songs enhance vocabulary retention, listening, and pronunciation skills while boosting student motivation and engagement. The constructivist method encourages active, hands-on learning, fostering collaboration and critical thinking. Songs also promote social interaction and teamwork, enriching the learning experience and developing

communication skills. This approach, especially in primary education, proves effective in making language learning more enjoyable and engaging, improving both academic and social outcomes for student

The use of songs in vocabulary learning with a constructivist approach has been proven to create an engaging, effective, and interactive learning environment for elementary school students. Songs not only make the learning process fun but also help students build their knowledge through real-life experiences and social interactions. High levels of student engagement, increased vocabulary retention, and better motivation highlight the benefits of incorporating songs into language learning strategies.

One weakness of the research could be the potential over-reliance on familiar songs, which might limit its generalizability. If students are only exposed to vocabulary through songs they already know, the study may not fully capture how effective this method is with unfamiliar songs or a broader range of vocabulary topics. A suggestion for further research would be to explore the effectiveness of using unfamiliar or diverse types of songs in vocabulary learning. This could help determine whether the positive outcomes observed in the study are specific to familiar songs or if the method is equally effective across different musical genres and new content.

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