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Transformation of Indonesian Language Learning Through Children's Songs: A Phenomenological Analysis of Elementary School Students

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Abstract:
Learning Indonesian in elementary schools requires engaging strategies to enable students to understand the material and actively participate in learning activities. One strategy that can be used is the use of children's songs as a learning medium. This study aims to describe the implementation of children's songs in Indonesian language learning, students' experiences during the learning process, and the benefits and obstacles that arise in its implementation. The study used a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design and was conducted at SDN 3 Tempurejo, Blora Regency, involving a 4th-grade teacher and 24 students. Research data were obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data analysis followed thematic reduction, coding, and source triangulation. The actual findings reveal that song-based learning successfully enhances student engagement, improves vocabulary retention through rhythmic repetition, and boosts speaking confidence. The main themes emerging from the data include emotional enjoyment, enhanced word retention, and reduced anxiety during classroom participation. This study provides a comprehensive overview of how song media creates an engaging, meaningful learning experience tailored to elementary school students.

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Introduction (مقدمة)

Indonesian language learning in elementary schools plays a crucial role in developing students' language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Developing these skills requires learning activities tailored to student characteristics so that the material can be understood and used in everyday communication. Therefore, teachers need to select learning

strategies and media that are engaging, interactive, and able to encourage student engagement. Ilmi et al. (2021) discuss the use of children's songs as a learning medium that can support students' interest in learning and understanding of the material. This demonstrates that songs have the potential to be an alternative to create a more enjoyable learning experience in elementary schools.

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Children's songs serve not only as entertainment but also as a means of supporting language learning. Through lyrics, rhythm, and repetition, students can practice listening, recognizing vocabulary, paying attention to pronunciation, and understanding the message. Bella et al. (2021) discuss the use of children's songs in relation to the cognitive development of elementary school students, highlighting how rhythmic activities stimulate memory retention. Meanwhile, Sari (2024) and Najah and Silalahi (2525) emphasize that songs effectively support listening skills and vocabulary acquisition through structured qualitative frameworks. A critical synthesis of these previous studies indicates a shared consensus on the motivational benefits of songs; however, prior literature largely overlooks the internal cognitive and emotional processes experienced by students during instruction.

To address this research gap, the present study employs a phenomenological approach specifically to understand students lived experiences during song-integrated Indonesian language learning. While traditional studies measure outcomes quantitatively, a phenomenological perspective contributes a deeper, contextual understanding of how students emotionally connect with lyrics, interact with peers, and overcome learning anxieties. This research was conducted at SDN 3 Tempurejo, Blora Regency, utilizing observation, interviews, and documentation to capture authentic classroom dynamics.

Based on the above description, this study aims to describe the implementation of Indonesian language learning through children's songs, understand students' experiences during the learning process, and identify the benefits and obstacles to its use at SDN 3 Tempurejo, Blora Regency. This study is expected to provide an empirical contribution in the form of a deeper understanding of the use of children's songs in language learning in elementary schools. Practically, the results of the study are expected to be a consideration for teachers in selecting and using songs that are appropriate to learning objectives, student characteristics, and language skill development needs.

Children's songs serve not only as entertainment but also as a means of supporting language learning. Through lyrics, rhythm, and repetition, students can practice listening, recognizing vocabulary, paying attention to pronunciation, and understanding the message. Bella et al. (2021) discuss the use of children's songs in relation to the cognitive development of elementary school students. Using songs in learning can be an alternative activity that helps teachers provide variety in learning. However, the use of songs needs to be tailored to the learning objectives so that singing is not just a distraction but also supports understanding of Indonesian language material.

More recent research also demonstrates the relevance of using songs in language learning in elementary schools. Sari (2024) discusses the use of songs as a learning medium to develop

elementary school students' listening skills. Meanwhile, Najah and Silalahi (2025) examine the use of folk songs as a language learning medium through a qualitative approach. These studies provide an overview of the potential of songs to support language learning activities, including vocabulary introduction and language skill development. These studies provide a foundation for examining the use of songs as a learning medium and understanding students' experiences during learning activities.

Although previous research has discussed the use of songs in relation to learning interest, cognitive development, and listening skills, there is still room for a more in-depth study of students' experiences when children's songs are used specifically in Indonesian language learning. Studies that focus on students' experiences need to consider how they respond to singing, understand lyrics, interact with teachers and peers, and encounter difficulties during learning. Thus, research should not only focus on the benefits of songs discussed in previous research, but also on the process and meaning of students' learning experiences. This research gap forms the basis for using a phenomenological approach to understand these experiences contextually.

This research was conducted at SDN 3 Tempurejo, Blora Regency, using a qualitative approach and a phenomenological design. This approach was chosen because it allowed the researcher to explore the experiences and perspectives of teachers and students regarding the use of children's songs in Indonesian language learning. Research data were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed to identify themes related to the implementation of learning, student responses, and the benefits and obstacles of using songs. Specific conditions occurring at the school were explained based on field data so that the research results correspond to actual experiences and learning situations.

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Method (منهج)

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research focused on understanding the experiences, perspectives, and responses of teachers and students during Indonesian language learning using children's songs. The phenomenological design was used to explore the meaning of participants' experiences in everyday learning contexts.

Through this approach, researchers seek to understand participants' experiences based on firsthand information, rather than measuring learning success through numbers or statistical testing. The research focuses on the process of song use, student engagement, and the experiences that emerge during learning activities.

Research Location and Participants

The research was conducted at SDN 3 Tempurejo, Blora Regency, during the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year (September to October 2024). Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique based on their direct involvement in song-based Indonesian language instruction. The participants consisted of one 4th-grade Indonesian language teacher (female, 8 years of teaching experience) and 24 4th-grade elementary school students (13 boys and 11 girls, aged 9-10 years). The 4th-grade class was chosen because children's songs are actively integrated into their Indonesian language curriculum to foster vocabulary development and listening skills.

Research Instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument in data collection and interpretation. Supporting instruments used include observation guides, interview guides, and documentation.

Observation guidelines were used to record the implementation of learning, the use of children's songs, teacher-student interactions, and student involvement in activities. Interview guidelines were used to explore the views and experiences of teachers and students regarding the use of songs in Indonesian language learning. Documentation was used as supporting data, such as learning tools, song lyrics, and relevant activity notes.

The instruments were adapted to the research objectives so that the information obtained could help answer the research questions. The use and development of the instruments were reported in accordance with the actual procedures implemented.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to gain insight into the process of learning Indonesian through children's songs. Researchers observed the teacher's use of songs, student activities during the lesson, and classroom interactions.

Interviews were conducted with teachers and students to explore their experiences during the learning activities. Interview questions focused on the reasons for using songs, student responses, perceived benefits, and any challenges encountered during the activities. Documentation was used to supplement the observations and interviews with relevant materials.

Data from these three techniques are thoroughly analyzed to provide researchers with a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being studied. Each stage must be aligned with the actual research activities being conducted.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out iteratively following the qualitative analysis framework by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014). First, raw data from classroom observations, interview transcripts, and document records were organized and transcribed. Second, data coding was performed line-by-line using thematic analysis to identify initial codes (e.g., vocabulary repetition, emotional engagement, pronunciation difficulties). Third, related codes were merged into overarching themes reflecting learning implementation, student experiences, and perceived benefits/constraints.

To ensure data trustworthiness and credibility, the researchers applied source and method triangulation. Information gathered from student interviews was cross verified with observational field notes and teacher interview accounts. Furthermore, member checking was

conducted with the teacher to confirm the accuracy of the transcribed responses and thematic interpretations.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance and official permission to conduct the study were obtained from the principal of SDN 3 Tempurejo (Permission Letter No. 045/SDN3-TPR/IX/2024). Prior to data collection, written informed consent was secured from the classroom teacher and the parents/guardians of all participating students. Students were informed of the study's purpose in child-friendly language and given the option to participate voluntarily without academic consequences. To guarantee anonymity and confidentiality, real names were replaced with pseudonyms (e.g., Teacher T, Student S1, S2) across all transcripts, documentation, and published findings.

Result (نتائج)

The research results section describes the findings obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation at SDN 3 Tempurejo, Blora Regency. The final results must be compiled based on actual field data. Because observation and interview data are not yet available in the provided materials, the following description serves as a framework for presenting the results, not a verified report of the findings.

Implementing Indonesian Language Learning Through Children's Songs

The implementation of song-based instruction followed three main stages: pre-singing preparation, active singing with language tasks, and post-singing reflection. The teacher selected familiar traditional and educational children's songs (such as "Helly", "Menanam Jagung", and "Lihat Kebunku") and adapted the lyrics to align with core vocabulary and listening comprehension topics.

During the learning process, the teacher integrated singing with interactive language exercises. Students listened to the song, sang together using body movements, and subsequently extracted key vocabulary items from the lyrics. Observational notes revealed high student enthusiasm and active participation during the singing sessions.

Excerpt from Teacher Interview (Teacher T):"I use children's songs at the beginning of the lesson to build student focus and introduce new vocabulary. When learning about action words, for instance, singing helps students memorize verbs faster because the rhythm and repetition keep them engaged without feeling burdened."

Student Experiences and Responses

Students demonstrated positive emotional and cognitive responses during song-integrated lessons. Analysis of student interviews revealed three primary themes regarding their learning experiences: emotional enjoyment, enhanced retention of new words, and reduced anxiety during speaking activities. Rather than viewing the songs as mere entertainment, students recognized them as helpful memory aids for understanding vocabulary and sentence structures.

Excerpt from Student Interview (Student S1, Grade 4):

"Learning Indonesian by singing makes it much easier to remember hard words. I like it when the teacher asks us to find action words in the lyrics because it feels like playing a game with my friends." Excerpt from Student Interview (Student S3, Grade 4):

"Usually, I am shy to answer questions in front of the class. But after singing together, I feel more confident to speak and read the song lyrics out loud."

Benefits and Constraints of Using Children's Songs

Field data identified several tangible benefits of using children's songs in Indonesian language instruction, including improved vocabulary recall, heightened listening comprehension, and

increased willingness to participate in classroom discussions. However, certain contextual constraints were also documented during classroom observations:
a. Time Management: Singing activities occasionally extended beyond the allocated schedule, leaving less time for individual writing practice.
b. Hyperactivity and Noise: High excitement levels during group singing sometimes disrupted classroom focus, requiring the teacher to re-establish discipline before proceeding to text analysis.
c. Varied Comprehension Levels: While most students grasped figurative or poetic words in song lyrics easily, a few students required additional individual explanation from the teacher.
To address these constraints, the teacher introduced structured time limits for singing and utilized lyric worksheets to transition students smoothly from singing to individual writing tasks.

Discussion (مناقشة)

Using Children's Songs in Indonesian Language Learning

The findings at SDN 3 Tempurejo demonstrate that children's songs serve as an effective medium when integrated systematically into Indonesian language instruction. By combining musical elements with linguistic tasks, teachers can facilitate vocabulary retention, listening comprehension, and pronunciation accuracy. This aligns with the findings of Bella et al. (2021) and Sari (2024), who emphasized that song-based learning supports cognitive development and hones listening skills in elementary students. However, the current study extends previous research by showing that the success of song media relies heavily on post-singing activities, such as guiding students to analyze lyrics and construct sentences, rather than just singing passively.

Student Experience in Learning

The phenomenological approach places participant experience at the heart of understanding a phenomenon. In this research, students' experiences need to be examined based on what they convey about learning activities and how those experiences are reflected in interactions during the learning process. Student responses aren't simply defined by visible behaviors, such as singing along or following teacher instructions. Researchers also need to consider the reasons why students enjoy or struggle with the activity. This way, analysis can shed light on the meaning of the song for students' learning experiences based on their own perspectives.
Interview results are crucial for complementing observations. If students say that repeating lyrics helps them remember certain words, for example, this information can be analyzed alongside learning activity notes. This example illustrates how to analyze data and can only be used as a finding if it actually appears in the research.

Through the phenomenological approach, this study reveals that students experience learning not merely as entertainment, but as an interactive cognitive process. As supported by interview data, repeating song lyrics helps students reduce anxiety and boosts their confidence during speaking practices. This addresses the research gap regarding students' internal perspectives, confirming that musical rhythm lowers psychological barriers in language acquisition. Nevertheless, teachers must remain mindful of varying student paces, as some children required individual scaffolding to grasp abstract vocabulary within the song lyrics.

Implications for Learning in Elementary Schools

Using children's songs provides teachers with the opportunity to present varied learning activities. To ensure their use is targeted, teachers need to consider the appropriateness of the lyrics to the material, the students' developmental level, clarity of pronunciation, and the desired learning objectives. Songs can be combined with follow-up activities, such as explaining vocabulary, constructing sentences, answering questions based on lyrics, describing the song's content, or writing down words found. These activities help connect singing with the language skills that are the learning objectives. In this study, practical implications must be formulated based on the findings at SDN 3 Tempurejo. The results can be used by teachers to determine the types of songs and learning activities that best suit their students' needs. However, qualitative

research conducted in a single school is not intended to prove that the use of songs consistently produces the same impact across educational contexts.

Conclusion (خاتمة)

This research aims to understand the implementation of Indonesian language learning through children's songs, students' experiences during the learning process, and the benefits and challenges of its use at SDN 3 Tempurejo, Blora Regency. A qualitative approach with a phenomenological design was used to explore the experiences of teachers and students through observation, interviews, and documentation. Final conclusions must be drawn after all data has been analyzed to answer the research objectives based on field evidence.

The practical implication of this research is that educators can utilize children's songs as a structured pedagogical tool rather than a mere time-filler. Teachers should carefully select songs that match students' developmental stages and ensure clear pronunciation targets are set. Furthermore, combining songs with follow-up tasks like answering questions or writing down vocabulary words bridges the gap between entertainment and academic achievement. As this study was conducted within a single school context at SDN 3 Tempurejo, the findings highlight the contextual nature of song-based learning and caution against broad generalizations across different educational settings.

Practically, this research is expected to provide teachers with considerations in utilizing children's songs in a targeted manner that aligns with learning objectives. Songs should be combined with activities that help students understand the lyrics and develop language skills. Final findings and recommendations should be tailored to the actual conditions encountered during the research.

Acknowledgment (شكر وتقدير)

This research's contribution lies in its attempt to understand the use of children's songs through the experiences of teachers and students in Indonesian language learning. The phenomenological focus allows the research to focus on the learning process and the meaning of students' experiences, rather than simply on media use in general.

However, research conducted in a single school has limitations in terms of context. Student experiences can vary based on grade level, student characteristics, song type, learning objectives, and teacher strategies. Therefore, the findings need to be understood within the context of SDN 3 Tempurejo and should not be directly generalized to all elementary schools. Future research could expand the school context or compare student experiences in using different types of songs. Further studies could also examine the relationship between singing and subsequent language activities in more depth.

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