# INCREASING ENGLISH VOCABULARY OF THE FIFTH GRADE THROUGH VIDEOTAPED CHILDREN SONGS

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## ABSTRACT

Indonesian pupils' vocabulary mastery was categorized in low level. These made the writer interested in using videotaped children songs to increase the pupils' vocabulary. The objectives of the study was to find out whether or not there was a significant difference in vocabulary mastery between the pupils who were taught by using videotaped children songs and those who were not. The population was all the fifth grade pupils of SDN 6 Talang Kelapa. The samples were 60 pupils. This study was experimental. The data were collected by using tests. The data were analyzed by using t-tests. The findings showed that videotaped children songs could increase pupils' vocabulary mastery (T=3.696, p<0.001) significantly. In addition, there was a significant difference in pupils' vocabulary mastery (T=2.435, p<0.018) between the pupils who were taught using videotaped children songs and those who were not.

*Key words:* Vocabulary Mastery and Videotaped Children Songs

## Introduction

In applying speaking and writing skills, the language users need to be backed up with a lot of vocabulary stocks which is usually called vocabulary size. Furthermore, it is stated that a five year old child beginning school of native will have a vocabulary of around 4000 to 5000 word families. A university graduate would have a vocabulary of around 20.000 word families (Nation & Waring, 1997: 7). This implicitly shows that non-native, who wants to be native like, at least must have closed vocabulary size if not the same as native speaker.

Vocabulary mastery is the skill of the language speaker to choose the appropriate lexical items or words in oral communication. Vocabulary mastery has been studied in research for more than a half century and some researchers point out that vocabulary is one of the properties that is specific to language that has to be learned. It is not only a list of words but it is a system which is embedded in a language. Good vocabulary mastery supports mastery of each of language skills, both receptive and productive (Cahyono & Widiati, 2008: 1).

Unfortunately, Ivone (2005) found that language teachers do not give sufficient attention to vocabulary teaching because they think that vocabulary mastery do not have to be taught extensively as it is picked up along the way of learning L2. In addition, Khabib (2009) found that there is failure in vocabulary instruction given by the teachers. As the result, the failure causes low vocabulary mastery. Sutarsyah (2001) stated that the university students have low achievement in reading skills and vocabulary gain. In addition, it is also found that most of university students had low achievement on vocabulary mastery which might hamper their academic study (Nurweni and Read, 1998). The above findings on low achievement due to lack of vocabularies are badly discouraging teachers and learners to learn and have discussion during lesson in classroom.

The application of an innovative, energetic, and interesting teaching strategy was very demanded but has not been successful enough in Indonesia since the teachers still apply monotonous strategy. The teachers use monotonous method and they are not motivated to find new teaching technique which is more interesting and effective (Khabib, 2009). Yet, songs are now a popular thing used in teaching listening skills. Listening to songs and everyday sounds in the environment could play an important role in the development of communication. Many educators recognized that teaching with songs

made learning not only more fun, but also more effective and long–lasting. Songs could also be implemented well in classroom if they are selected well. Therefore, songs are used to teach the students for various purposes such as telling time, writing, and listening (Kent, 1999; Ahola, 2005; Yoo, 2002)

Seeing the concept of songs in the classroom teaching, it would be more suited to the nature of primary pupils in learning a language. Halliwell (1992: 6) suggested that children do get absorbed in play or fun in a language classroom, as long as it has a role in game, rather than just be a feature of children's education. Primary pupils must need the innovative, energetic, and interesting teaching strategies. Moreover, *Badan Pusat Statistik* showed that there are more students participating in elementary schools than in high schools or universities. The percentage was 94.37% pupils participate in elementary schools, 67.4% students participate in junior high schools, 45.06% students participate in senior high schools, and 10.3% students participate in universities. In addition, *Badan Pusat Statistik* showed that there are more young learners involve in learning rather than adults. The percentage was 97.80% for 7-12 years old students, 84.65% for 13-15 years old students, 54.12% for 16-18 years old students, and 11.83% for 19-24 years old students. The above data could implicitly show that the English lesson in elementary schools should be given more attention since they cover more pupils. In fact, there were more than 30 – 35 pupils in a classroom to be taught by a teacher and it could be one of failure factors for English teaching. These made the writer interested in proposing videotaped children songs to increase the pupils' vocabulary. The objectives of the study was to find out whether or not there was a significant difference in vocabulary mastery between the pupils who were taught by using videotaped children songs and those who were not.

**The Nature of Teaching Children**

As suggested by Rositasari (2008), teaching could be carried out through two ways: deductive and inductive way. In deductive way of teaching in which learners are taught rules and given specific information about language and this is what believed by most English teachers in Indonesia now. They then apply these rules when they use the language. Meanwhile, in inductive way of teaching, the learners are not taught grammatical or other types of rules directly but are left to discover or induce rules from their experience of using the language. Furthermore, it is believed that children would be best learning in inductive process where they could learn while playing and the pupils would be better when they learn in natural situation rather than stressful classroom condition. Therefore, many studies proposed many strategies in teaching which might suit to the nature of primary learners such as Aunurrahman (1998), in his study, proposed students' involvement in classroom management to create a conducive classroom and Arifin (2003) who proposed games to primary learners.

Seeing the nature of children learning process, a good teacher is demanded to be aware of making the sense of fun in classroom activity for their elementary pupils. The teacher is demanded to be creative and innovative in creating as natural as possible for condition of learning in classroom. Therefore, the children would achieve better English when they learnt in the classroom. Videotaped children songs could be one of the media used to motivate and create an interesting and attractive classroom activity. It is also hoped to be an inductive way of learning language for children.

**Increasing Vocabulary**

Vocabulary knowledge is really essential, even not the only one, for speakers of languages. People could not express their ideas, feelings, and opinions well if they have no sufficient knowledge in vocabulary. As Nation and Waring (1997) highlighted that vocabulary knowledge is only one component of language skills such as reading and

speaking. Therefore, it could be concluded that vocabulary mastery/knowledge is really essential for pupils in Indonesia if they were willing to be able to use their English communicatively.

Some specific strategies for presenting new vocabulary items are (1) guessing words in context, (2) using keywords techniques, and (3) using affixes (Nation cited in Aziez, 2008). In addition, Nation and Newton cited in Ivone, 2005 stated that vocabulary teaching needs to be made more explicit at the early stages of learning. As learners develop enough vocabulary recognition, the emphasis then move more strongly to guessing from context and that the previous teaching procedure would no longer be appropriate. Therefore, teachers need to have more strategies in teaching vocabularies to pupils in elementary school in order to motivate and encourage the pupils and either made the pupils understand new words. As Arifin (2003) found that games are beneficial for teachers to be used to increase the students' vocabulary and encourage them to learn. Other study, as Rositasari (2008), suggested that Quartet Card Game to increase students' vocabulary.

In relation to this study, the writer would only focus on the pupils' vocabulary mastery of words which are mostly used in daily activity. It is usually called 'word frequency', that is, how often the words occur in normal use of the language. In short, the writer would only expose the pupils to the words which they probably use in everyday lives whether in classroom activities or outside classroom activities. The word frequency was referred to Bianco and Ives study (Appendix 1).

**Using Videotaped children songs to Increase Vocabulary**

Videotaped children songs, in this study, are defined as songs which are recorded by using video and it provides the text in that video. In teaching, videotaped materials are commonly used but videotaped children songs are still rarely used. Most studies are discussing about the use of songs in teaching their students. For example, a study from Cakir (1999) stated some importance of songs in English classroom. Songs, rhymes, chants, and musical games are fantastic materials for the language teacher to use with young learners. They had innumerable virtues such as source of motivation and enjoyment, and reinforcement for structure and vocabulary.

Through videotaped songs, pupils could learn how to spell the words correctly and increase their vocabulary mastery by seeing the texts written in videotaped children songs. These types of videotaped children songs were available in stores. The most videotaped children songs which are sold in stores are for children or kids. It could be concluded that the strategy of videotaped children songs really matches to the children. By seeing the available CDs and the nature of children, the writer believed that the strategy of videotaped children songs to increase pupils' vocabulary would be applicable to do. The writer selected some songs which are interesting in rhyme and contain most words which are listed in Oxford Word List. List of songs are in Appendix 2.

**Methodology**

To conduct this study, the writer used videotaped children songs strategy to experimental group to increase the pupils' vocabulary mastery. This study required two parallel classes, experimental group (EG) and control group (CG) that are as similar as possible. The researcher did the experiment in 14 meetings – one meeting for pre test, twelve meetings for treatment, and one meeting for post test. It took 2 x 35 minutes per meeting.

The population of this study was all the fifth grade pupils of primary school 6 Talang Kelapa academic year 2010-2011. The total of the population is sixty pupils. There are two classes of fifth grade in the school. Each class consisted of thirty pupils. The writer chose this school because this school was considered as *Sekolah Inti* for Talang Kelapa

district. In this study, population sample was applied. However, the writer classified the samples, into EG and CG, by using certain procedures. The writer gave the pupils general vocabulary test to see the pupils' average score of vocabulary mastery. Then, the writer selected the samples based on these following criteria (1) the pupils were taught by the same teacher, (2) the pupils' average score (6-7) of the general vocabulary, (3) the pupils did not have English lesson out of school, (4) the pupils were relatively the same age. The sample consisted of 30 pupils.

In this study, the writer used a vocabulary test in pre-test and post-test to the sample pupils. The vocabulary test was in a form of written test which consisted of spelling, matching pictures with words, rearranging letters, and multiple choices. There were thirty five questions in this test. In constructing the test, the writer followed certain procedures. The writer built her own test by consulting to primary curriculum and list of frequent words in Bianco, Scull and Ives' study and the writer discussed them to the expert's judgment on the appropriateness, in this case the English elementary school teachers. Then, the test was tried out at SDN 14 Talang Kelapa. The writer analyzed the result, whether or not it was valid and reliable. Finally, the writer produced the final test and conducted the test.

**Validity and Reliability**

Measuring the validity, in this study, the writer used content validity and face validity. Content validity showed the researcher whether the test items represented the list of frequent vocabularies or not. Then, face validity showed whether the test instructions and fonts were applicable and understandable for elementary school pupils. The assessment of this content validity was frequently made by expert judgments with the aids of descriptive statistics and the assessment of this face validity was made by some participants' responses with the aids of percentage.

To find the content validity of the test, the researcher did the following steps: (1) provided a curriculum, (2) provided table of specification, and (3) asked the experts' judgment on the appropriateness based on syllabus to three elementary English teachers. These persons were chosen based on two criteria, that is, the elementary school teachers and three years teaching experiences. The three respondents were asked to determine the level of appropriateness of the tests. The result of the responses of vocabulary test (35 items) were 71% very appropriate and 29% appropriate. Moreover, the difficulty level of vocabulary test of 35 items given, it was found that 31% very easy or easy, 43% desirable, and 26% very difficult or difficult.

Then, to find out face validity of the test, the researcher did these following steps: (1) provided a simple questionnaire to be given to the pupils, and (2) analyzed the responses by using percentage. In this study, the face validity was measured about the clearness of test instructions. The clearer the test instruction was, the more valid the tests were. The format of the questionnaire was adapted from Likert Scale Method.

From four instructions of the vocabulary test, spelling instruction was 53% strongly clear, matching picture instruction was 43% strongly clear, rearranging letter instruction was 33% moderate, and multiple choice instruction was 53% clear.

Meanwhile, to judge vocabulary test reliable or not, the researcher applied test-retest reliability. It means the test is administered twice at different time interval. After the gained scores were obtained from the try out test result taken from SDN 14 Talang Kelapa, the two total scores were correlated by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The reliability of the test was 0.878 since the reliability coefficient of the test was higher than 0.70, the test was considered reliable.

**Findings**

**Table 1. Summary Normality and Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Scores in the Experimental and Control Group**

| Group | Pretest | | | | | | Posttest | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Highest | Lowest | Frequent | Average | SD | Normality | Highest | Lowest | Frequent | Average | SD | Normality |
| EG | 31.00 | 11.00 | 16.00 | 20.70 | 5.24 | .200* | 33.00 | 13.00 | 19.00 | 23.46 | 5.86 | .200* |
| CG | 31.00 | 12.00 | 18.00 | 21.10 | 5.06 | .040 | 30.00 | 13.00 | 13.00 | 19.86 | 5.58 | .038 |

Before analyzing the data, it is needed to test the normality of the data. The writer used *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* in this study. According to Pallant (2005), it assesses the normality of the distribution of scores by seeing its significant value of more than 0.05. The test showed that vocabulary scores for pretest and posttest in EG were considered as the normal data. Meanwhile, CG was not considered normal for both pre and posttest. (see Table 1)

For pretest score obtained in the experimental group, the lowest pretest score obtained by the pupils was 11.00 while the highest was 31.00, and the average score was 20.70 with standard deviation of 5.24. The most frequent score was 16.00. Meanwhile, In the control group, the lowest score obtained by the pupils was 12.00 while the highest score was 31.00. The average score was 21.10 with standard deviation of 5.06. The most frequent score was 18.00

For posttest score obtained in EG, the lowest posttest score obtained by the pupils was 13.00 while the highest score was 33.00 and the average score was 23.46 with standard deviation of 5.86. However, in the control group, the lowest score posttest obtained by the pupils was 13.00 while the highest score was 30.00. The average score was 19.86 with standard deviation of 5.58. The most frequent scores were 13.00.

**Table 2. The Grade Categories on Vocabulary Scores**

| Grade | Interval | Category |
|---|---|---|
| A | 29-35 | very good |
| B | 22-28 | above average |
| C | 15-21 | Average |
| D | 8-14 | below average |
| E | 0-7 | poor |

All scores obtained, then, were divided into five categories, that is, poor, below average, average, above average, and very good. The categories can be seen in Table 2.

Therefore, it was found that there were 3 pupils (10%) were in below average category, 15 pupils (50%) were in average category, 10 pupils (33%) were in above average category, 2 pupils (7%) were in very good category for pretest in EG. It was found that 2 pupils (7%) were in below average category, 16 pupils (53%) were in average, 10 pupils (33%) were in above average, and 2 pupils (7%) were in very good category for pretest in CG.

At the end of the treatment, it was found that 2 pupils (7%) were in below average category; 11 pupils (37%) were in average category; 9 pupils (30%) were in above average category; 8 pupils (27%) were in very good category for posttest in EG. In contrast, posttest in CG, It was found that 7 pupils (23%) were in below average category, 12 pupils (40%) were in average, 8 pupils (27%) were in above average, and 3 pupils (10%) were in very good category.

Then, to see the different scores obtained before and after the treatment in vocabulary score of the experimental group, the line graph was displayed in Figure 1.
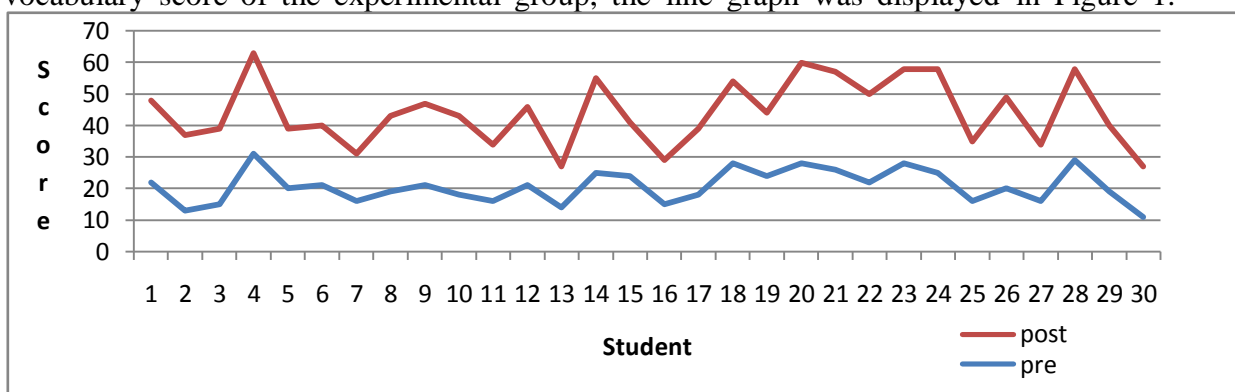


**Figure 1. Pupils' vocabulary achievement experimental group within**

Red line refers to the posttest score of vocabulary in experimental group and blue line refers to the pretest score of vocabulary in experimental group. From the line graph above, it could be seen explicitly that pretest scores obtained and posttest scores obtained by the pupils were different. The posttest scores were higher than pretest score. Almost, if not, all pupils increase their vocabulary mastery in frequent words.

In addition, to see the different scores obtained before and after the treatment in vocabulary score of the control group, the line graph was displayed in Figure 2.
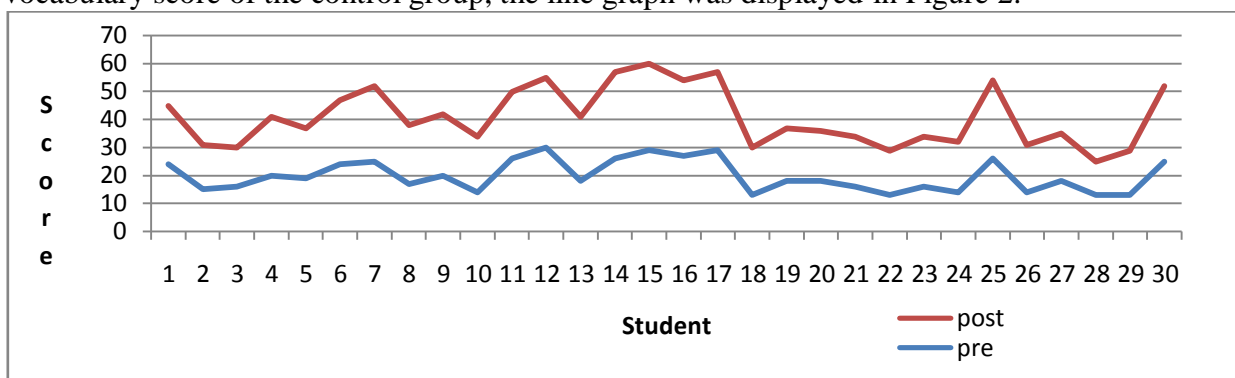


**Figure 2. Pupils' vocabulary achievement control group within**

Red line refers to the posttest score of vocabulary in control group and blue line refers to the pretest score of vocabulary in control group. From the line graph above, it could be seen explicitly that pretest scores obtained and posttest scores obtained by the pupils were mostly static. Almost, if not, all pupils do not increase their vocabulary mastery significantly in frequent words.

Furthermore, In order to find out whether or not there was a significant difference in vocabulary mastery of the pupils who were taught by using videotaped children songs compared to that of those who were not, the results of posttest scores of vocabulary test in the experimental group and the control group were compared by using independent samples t-test. The value of t-obtained was 2.435. At the significant level of 0.05 in two tailed testing with df was 58, the critical value of t-table was 1.67155. Since the value of t-obtained 2.435 was higher than the critical value of t-table (1.67155) and the significance was less than 0.05, means that the teaching of English using videotaped children songs significantly increased the pupils' vocabulary mastery. Furthermore, there was a significant difference in vocabulary mastery of the pupils who were taught by using videotaped children songs and those who were not.

**Interpretation**

From the mean score obtained by each group and the independent t-test result, it was understood that the experimental group did better than control group. This progress is probably caused by videotaped children songs which provides audio and visual at the same time so that the teacher helped the pupils acquire the language that they listen to and practice. Pupils could see the spelling from the text over and over since the pupils could play the videotaped children songs as often as they needed. These could increase their vocabulary. Therefore, the experimental group might probably better than the control group.

The nature of children played an important role to this videotaped children songs strategy. The videotaped children songs provided some aspects which were demanded by children, i.e., natural and fun situation. They used to be forced to study the language in grammar translation class. In contrast, using videotaped children songs means the teacher invites the pupils to learn a language with keeping the stress and boredom away. Therefore, the pupils were really enjoying their classroom activity and resulting the increase in their vocabulary.

Teaching frequency could also be an aspect which contributed to the pupils in experimental group. The teaching was held four times a week for twelve meetings (2x35 minutes). This made the pupils have more times to practice their vocabulary so that they were better compared to those who did not.

However, the pupils could not cover all questions in vocabulary test since there were still words they could not spell correctly. This might be caused by limited time of teaching which was only one month and the researcher's unintentional negligence in exposing them.

In short, the teaching of videotaped children songs had significantly increased the pupils' vocabulary mastery.

**Conclusions**

Based on the findings and interpretation in the previous chapter, it could be concluded that there was a significant difference in vocabulary mastery of the pupils who were taught by using videotaped children songs compared to that of those who were not. The writer would like to suggest that the English teacher in elementary school uses videotaped children songs as an alternative teaching technique. Therefore, the teacher can help their pupils to have more practice. It is also suggested that government and school equip the elementary school with multimedia and ICT products as they are really needed in teaching using this technique. Further research could also be conducted since this study could not cover all aspects in words spelling and probably sounds.

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**List of Word Frequency**

**oxford wordlist**

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## Words 1–307 in order of frequency

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I | for | ate | friend | really | old | funny | together | snake |
| the | dad | get | their | could | woke | book | walk | jumped |
| and | but | lived | put | shop | ball | bad | great | place |
| to | saw | am | gave | would | come | things | icecream | show |
| a | house | him | found | eat | ever | yesterday | loved | where |
| was | that | watched | from | fish | new | computer | magic | everyone |
| my | weekend | little | down | this | room | help | work | or |
| went | time | can | water | ran | nice | zoo | coming | shark |
| we | her | bought | party | first | scared | now | someone | something |
| on | go | brother | about | by | who | ride | team | asked |
| it | came | big | took | food | inside | castle | thing | OK |
| then | because | birthday | good | named | it's | toy | always | scary |
| he | up | them | other | baby | tree | cousins | boat | every |
| had | his | bed | see | cat | cake | look | red | walked |
| in | once | made | girl | outside | best | more | teacher | read |
| they | after | name | boy | away | fell | tried | its | world |
| with | fun | too | over | favourite | long | find | princess | monster |
| of | like | next | us | has | movie | four | shopping | slide |
| there | some | dog | your | family | soccer | I'm | until | thank |
| got | have | lots | off | lunch | how | happily | only | white |
| she | are | night | three | man | also | started | black | buy |
| said | out | not | dinner | shops | know | dragon | garden | dressed |
| played | going | friends | liked | football | last | much | still | fast |
| one | called | into | won | looked | sleep | rabbit | beautiful | head |
| is | all | an | morning | wanted | swimming | five | pool | walking |
| were | play | park | playing | bike | don't | turned | take | why |
| day | Sunday | will | want | no | just | another | well | blue * |
| so | upon | car | happy | lost | told | make | animals | dogs * |
| when | Saturday | our | what | TV | yes | cousin's | horse | footy * |
| home | did | do | as | fairy | around | breakfast | movies | here * |
| you | school | sister | love | cousin | lot | chips | names | killed * |
| at | two | be | if | stayed | today | door | bit | need * |
| me | very | people | again | Friday | beach | couldn't | race | playground * |
| mum | back | didn't | game | games | finished | present | sad | that's * |
| | | | | | | | | watch * |

\* Words 299 to 307 occurred with equal frequency. This influenced the number of words in this list.

**List of videotaped children songs**

Meeting 1      : Good morning to you (kiddies songs)

Meeting 2      : ABC Musical Alphabet (Kiddies songs)

Meeting 3      : Are you sleeping? (Let's sing together)

Meeting 4      : Twinkle twinkle little star (Let's sing together)

Meeting 5      : My Bonnie (Let's sing together)

Meeting 6      : It's small world (Let's sing together)

Meeting 7      : Do Re Mi (Let's sing together)

Meeting 8      : He's got the whole wide world (Kiddies songs)

Meeting 9      : London Bridge (Let's sing together)

Meeting 10      : This Old man (Let's sing together)

Meeting 11      : I saw three ships (Let's sing together)

Meeting 12      : A for apple B for boy (Let's sing together)