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The Analysis of English Teaching Strategies at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar

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Abstract
This study aims to analyze the teaching strategies used by English teachers at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar. . Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were gathered through classroom observations, interviews, and documentation to explore the real classroom practices. The participant of this study was an English teacher of the fourth grade, chosen based on prior observations indicating effective teaching performance and student participation. The findings revealed that the teacher implemented several strategies, including demonstration, questioning, drilling, games, small group discussions, dictionary-based learning, and the use of learning aids and worksheets (LKPD). These strategies were applied adaptively, depending on the learning objectives, students' proficiency levels, and classroom conditions. These strategies were implemented flexibly according to lesson objectives, students' proficiency levels, and classroom conditions. The findings indicate that applying varied and interactive strategies can enhance students' participation and understanding during English lessons. The findings suggest that the combination of interactive and varied strategies increases students' motivation, participation, and comprehension during English lessons. It is recommended that teachers continue to use diverse strategies to meet students' learning needs and enhance the quality of English language teaching at the primary school level.

Keywords: *Teaching Strategies, English Language Teaching, Young Learners*

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INTRODUCTION

English has become a global language that plays an important role in education, communication, and professional development. As a result, the demand for teaching English from an early age has rapidly increased, including in

non-English-speaking countries such as Indonesia (Philp et al., 2008). English is considered a fundamental subject that equips students with essential abilities for future success (Nunan, 2005). However, teaching English to young learners presents unique challenges. It requires strategies that are not only effective but also engaging, as children are easily distracted and are in a critical stage of cognitive and emotional development. Therefore, the implementation of appropriate teaching techniques is essential to optimize students' learning potential in primary schools such as SDN Tamalanrea Makassar.

Teaching English at the primary level demands high sensitivity and creativity from teachers. Young learners are still developing their emotional and cognitive abilities; thus, interactive and varied learning methods are crucial for maintaining attention and motivation. Strategies involving songs, games, visual aids, and group work are among the most recommended approaches for this level (Piller & Skillings, 2005). However, several constraints still exist, including limited classroom time, students' proficiency levels, and classroom management issues (Adibah et al., 2024). These conditions require teachers to be flexible and innovative in order to create meaningful learning experiences. Effective strategies are vital for enhancing students' motivation, retention, and overall language achievement.

Several previous studies have examined English teaching strategies for young learners. Harmer (2007) introduced the Engage, Study, Activate (ESA) model, which emphasizes engaging, meaningful, and student-centered instruction suitable for children. Arrasul, Nggolaon, and Pinaling (2023) found that using diverse strategies such as translation, imagery, repetition, gestures, code-switching, memorization, and word lists can effectively enhance students' vocabulary retention. Similarly, Annajmi (2023) reported that games, small group discussions, role-play, and brainstorming are among the most effective techniques for engaging young learners. Adibah, Ramadanti, and Fatimah (2024) also highlighted interactive warm-ups, vocabulary enrichment, and the use of flashcards and singing activities as effective methods, though they noted challenges related to classroom conditions and student participation. These findings consistently show that varied, interactive, and flexible strategies are essential for successful English instruction among young learners.

Despite these studies, research at the primary level, especially in public schools, remains limited. Most previous research has focused on private or Islamic-based schools and on secondary education levels (Arrasul, 2023; Annajmi, 2023; Adibah et al., 2024). Few have explored how English teachers in public elementary schools implement strategies in real classroom contexts. Preliminary observations conducted at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar indicated that many students demonstrated relatively strong English language development. Their pronunciation, vocabulary mastery, and overall language awareness appeared to be well-formed despite English being taught as a foreign language. This finding

raised interest in investigating the instructional approaches used by the English teachers at the school.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the teaching strategies employed by English teachers at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar. It seeks to identify the types of strategies used and the ways they are implemented in classroom settings. The findings are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the understanding of effective English teaching strategies in public primary schools and offer practical insights for teachers to enhance instructional practices and create more engaging learning environments. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on real classroom practices in a public elementary school context, which has received limited scholarly attention compared to private institutions.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design that aimed to analyze the English teaching strategies used by teachers at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar. As stated by Creswell (2018), a qualitative approach is appropriate for exploring social or educational phenomena and understanding the meanings individuals assign to them. This method is appropriate for this study since it aims to describe and analyze the teaching strategies used by English teachers at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar.

The participant in this research is one English teacher from the fourth grade, selected through purposive sampling based on prior classroom observations that indicated effective teaching performance and student engagement. The study was conducted from January to June 2025 at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar.

Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and documentation. The observation focused on identifying the teaching strategies applied during English lessons, while the interview aimed to obtain deeper explanations about the teacher's instructional choices. Documentation such as lesson plans was used to verify and support the data from observations and interviews. These instruments ensured the accuracy and validity of the findings and allowed the research procedures to be replicated by future researchers.

The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model, which includes three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This process was carried out carefully to ensure that the findings accurately represent the real classroom context

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings Discussion

Based on six classroom observations, lesson plan reviews, and teacher interviews, the findings revealed that the English teacher at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar consistently implemented structured and engaging lessons. Each meeting followed clear instructional stages consisting of opening, main, and closing activities. The teaching process was characterized by active student participation and interactive guidance from the teacher.

1). Observation Findings

The classroom observations showed that the teacher used a variety of strategies including demonstration, drilling, questioning, games, small group discussion, dictionary-based learning, and the use of learning aids or worksheets (LKPD). Demonstration was frequently used to introduce new vocabulary through gestures, songs, and visual aids, helping students associate words with actions. Drilling was applied during pronunciation and writing activities to reinforce accuracy and fluency. Questioning served to maintain student engagement and check comprehension. Games were occasionally used to create a fun and relaxed learning atmosphere, while small group discussions encouraged collaboration among students. Dictionary-based learning fostered independence, as students were required to bring and use dictionaries during lessons. The use of LKPD supported individual accountability and provided visual references that enhanced understanding.

2). Lesson Plan Analysis

The lesson plan analysis indicated alignment between instructional design and classroom implementation. Each unit in the lesson plan—such as "What Are You Doing?" and "There Are 67 English Books"—clearly stated objectives, activities, and evaluation components consistent with the Kurikulum Merdeka framework. The plans emphasized vocabulary enrichment, repetition, and the integration of songs and gestures to suit young learners' characteristics. However, reflective and follow-up activities were not explicitly included, as evaluation mainly relied on students' oral and written responses during class.

3). Interview Findings

The interview results confirmed the consistency between planned and implemented strategies. The teacher stated that dictionary-based learning helped students build independence and vocabulary retention, while games were used selectively to maintain motivation. Group discussions were designed to enhance cooperation and responsibility, especially by assigning weaker students as group leaders. The teacher also used LKPD and learning aids to sustain student focus when engagement decreased. These insights reinforced that the teacher's strategies were adaptive, student-centered, and aimed at creating an enjoyable yet structured learning environment.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that the English teacher at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar employed a range of interactive and student-centered strategies, including demonstration, questioning, drilling, games, small group discussion, dictionary-based learning, and the use of worksheets (LKPD). These strategies were applied flexibly according to the students' proficiency levels, classroom atmosphere, and lesson objectives. The variety of approaches reflects the teacher's effort to create an engaging learning environment suitable for young

learners, aligning with Harmer's (2007) principle of the Engage–Study–Activate (ESA) model, which emphasizes meaningful and active participation in learning.

Demonstration emerged as the most dominant strategy. It allowed students to associate language with physical actions, which supports Cameron's (2001) and Harmer's (2007) claims that young learners understand new concepts more effectively when they are linked to visual and kinesthetic cues. Similar to the findings of Arrasul, Nggolaon, and Pinaling (2023), the use of gestures and visual materials enhanced students' vocabulary retention. However, the overuse of demonstration may limit opportunities for independent language production, suggesting that balance between teacher modeling and learner creativity is necessary.

Questioning was another frequently used strategy, serving as a tool for comprehension checks and encouraging active participation. This aligns with Brown (2001), who emphasized that questioning can promote interaction and cognitive engagement. While effective for recall and attention, the repetitive use of simple questions may lead to mechanical responses, echoing Al-Zahrani's (2019) observation that varied questioning techniques are needed to stimulate higher-order thinking.

Drilling was applied to reinforce pronunciation and spelling accuracy. Consistent with Ur (2012) and Doff (1998), drilling helped students internalize correct language patterns and develop fluency through repetition. Nevertheless, excessive drilling risks emphasizing accuracy over meaning. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to balance form-focused and communicative activities to support both fluency and understanding.

The use of games was found to enhance motivation and classroom dynamics. Wright, Betteridge, and Buckby (2005) argued that games create positive emotional experiences that reduce anxiety and foster participation. The teacher in this study used games selectively to maintain excitement without disrupting the lesson flow. This finding supports Adibah, Ramadanti, and Fatimah (2024), who also highlighted the importance of incorporating interactive activities to sustain young learners' attention.

Small group discussions promoted collaboration and confidence among students. The teacher's strategy of assigning mixed-ability groups aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, emphasizing learning through social interaction. Similar findings were reported by Annajmi (2023), who observed that group activities help students support each other and build communication skills. However, the time constraints in public school settings limited the frequency of this approach.

A distinctive finding of this study was the consistent application of dictionary-based learning. The teacher required students to bring dictionaries and use them to discover meanings independently. This approach supports Nation (2001) and

Schmitt (2008), who argued that self-directed vocabulary discovery enhances learner autonomy and retention. While this strategy is rarely reported in primary-level studies, its effectiveness in fostering independence was evident in this context, marking a unique contribution to the literature.

Lastly, the use of learning aids and LKPD provided visual guidance and structured practice for students. According to Richards and Farrell (2005), supportive teaching materials facilitate student understanding and enable more effective feedback. The teacher's use of LKPD also served as an evaluation tool that kept students focused during individual activities. This combination of visual and written reinforcement ensured that students remained engaged and accountable during lessons.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the English teacher at SDN Tamalanrea Makassar applied several strategies such as demonstration, drilling, small group discussion, dictionary-based learning, and the use of LKPD to support students' engagement and understanding in learning English. These strategies effectively created an active and enjoyable learning atmosphere by combining structural and communicative approaches.

This study advances current understanding of English teaching in public primary schools by highlighting how varied and adaptive strategies can enhance students' participation and learning outcomes. It also provides insight into practical classroom practices that have been rarely discussed in previous research focusing mainly on private or secondary school settings.

However, the limitation of this study lies in its small scope, as it only involved one teacher from one school. Therefore, future research is recommended to include more participants and explore the impact of each strategy on different language skills such as speaking, writing, and listening to provide a broader understanding of effective teaching methods.

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