

Improving English Vocabulary through Guess-the-Word Games Using Audio-Visual Media for Group B Children (Aged 5–6 Years) at TK Bhakti Siwi

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article history: Received: September 12, 2025 Accepted: October 22, 2025 Available online on: October 31, 2025 Keywords: <i>Early Childhood; Vocabulary; English; Audio-Visual; Guess- The-Word Game</i> Copyright ©2025 by Authors. Published by Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang	This study aims to improve the English vocabulary mastery of Group B children (aged 5–6 years) at TK Bhakti Siwi through guess-the-word games based on audio-visual media. The research background stems from the children's limited vocabulary, characterized by low interest, participation, and ability to mention and understand simple words. The study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach following the Kemmis and McTaggart model over two cycles, involving 10 children (4 boys and 6 girls). Data were collected through observation, documentation, and informal interviews, and analyzed qualitatively and descriptively by comparing the results of the pre-cycle, Cycle I, and Cycle II. The findings showed a significant improvement. In the pre-cycle, the average achievement was 0%, with nearly all children unable to name or understand vocabulary correctly. After Cycle I, the achievement increased to 20%, though not yet evenly distributed. In Cycle II, the

achievement reached 80%, exceeding the minimum criterion in which at least 75% of children were categorized as A (Good). Almost all children were able to mention, understand, and use simple English words with more accurate pronunciation and confidence. The application of this medium also enhanced motivation, active participation, and enthusiasm, making it a suitable, interactive, and enjoyable strategy for English learning in early childhood education.

Introduction

Early childhood represents a sensitive or “golden age,” which is the most optimal period for fostering children’s overall development (Saripudin, 2019). During this period, children require holistic services to ensure their growth and development align with societal values and norms (Ningrum et al., 2022). The Early Childhood Education (ECE) curriculum encompasses six areas of development, one of which is language—an essential domain that enables children to express themselves and understand others (Lengkong & Solang, 2021). Language development is influenced by biological, cognitive, and emotional factors (Neviyarni, 2020) and is regarded as one of the most complex human achievements (Heryani, 2020; Firdaus & Gandana, 2024). Language functions both as a tool and as a result of social interaction (Etnawati, 2022), a medium for expressing thought (Harmawati et al., 2017), and the main channel through which children communicate (Sinaga & Intan, 2023).

Language is viewed as a system of signs used to convey information (Hasbullah, 2020; Mailani et al., 2022) and as a vital aspect of human development (Siregar et al., 2023). Therefore, mastery of language—including English as an international language (Supena, 2024)—should be introduced from an early age (Arumsari et al., 2017; Khomsin & Rahimmatussalisa, 2021). Many schools introduce English vocabulary through images, animations, and other learning media (Aulia et al., 2024).

One of the schools implementing early English instruction is TK Bhakti Siwi. Preliminary observations at this institution revealed that Group B children still face challenges in mastering English vocabulary. Ten children were observed to be passive and unmotivated in English-related activities, which could hinder the development of their English literacy skills in later years. Limited vocabulary also affects their ability to comprehend simple instructions, participate in brief conversations, and develop an interest in English. Among the total of 15 children in Group B, 10 were identified as having low English vocabulary mastery due to their limited interest in reading.

One factor influencing this condition is the presence of an engaging learning environment, which can encourage children to participate in activities that foster fine and gross motor skills, creativity, and communication with peers. A stimulating learning atmosphere also enhances motivation, making learning not merely an obligation but an

enjoyable experience. Careful planning that integrates various media and creative exercises helps children think critically, solve problems, and collaborate with teachers (Dwijantie, 2024; Liani et al., 2023). Furthermore, learning media serve as an essential supporting element because they are an integral part of the educational process that cannot be separated (Rahayuningsih, 2022). Selecting appropriate media makes material delivery more effective and easier to understand; for example, the use of audio-visual media has been proven to improve children's English vocabulary comprehension (Aulia & Putro, 2024).

Audio-visual media such as videos, animations, and sound recordings have great potential to increase students' motivation and engagement, as they allow children to both hear and see information simultaneously. The combination of visuals and audio makes learning materials more understandable, appealing, and useful, thereby helping children retain new vocabulary more effectively (Mustami, 2024; Azzahra et al., 2025; Muttaqien, 2017). In English learning, common obstacles include the influence of the first language and low motivation caused by monotonous, overly theoretical methods (Zulfitri & Nurlaili, 2020). Therefore, specialized instruction is needed, such as the use of games aligned with the learning material, though not all topics are suitable for this approach (Susanti, 2022). One effective method is the *Guess-the-Word Game*, a play-based learning strategy that uses word cards containing clues for students to guess the meaning. This method

has been shown to enhance vocabulary mastery and elicit positive responses from students in English learning contexts (Norhidayah, 2020; Susanti, 2022).

Given that vocabulary mastery forms the foundation of language learning, innovative, interactive, and age-appropriate teaching methods are essential. One particularly effective approach is learning through play (Zakiyah, 2019). Play provides a fun and motivating context that encourages children to learn actively (Ummah et al., 2023). The *Guess-the-Word Game* specifically allows children to practice listening, identifying, and pronouncing English words in a relaxed, pressure-free environment (Zulkaeriyah et al., 2023).

Previous studies have examined the improvement of young learners' English vocabulary through play-based media with varying results. Aminah (2021) found that educational games effectively enhance vocabulary, but the study did not focus on a specific type of game. Santoso (2022) demonstrated the effectiveness of picture-based guessing games but only in Group A, who were still at the early preoperational stage. Lestari (2023) studied guessing games in an early childhood setting but limited the research to a case study without linking it to a formal curriculum. Wijaya and Cahyani (2020) emphasized teachers' roles in language games without discussing the specific strategy of implementation. Meanwhile, Sari (2024) explored vocabulary improvement in Group B using various play methods but

did not examine one dominant method in depth. These findings reveal a research gap: the lack of an in-depth study on the effectiveness of a *Guess-the-Word Game* integrated into the curriculum, focused on Group B children who are cognitively more advanced, and guided by well-structured teaching strategies to support vocabulary mastery.

Therefore, this study introduces novelty in the application of a *Guess-the-Word Game* based on audio-visual media for Group B children at TK Bhakti Siwi. The study not only assesses the effectiveness of the game in enhancing vocabulary mastery but also connects it with enjoyable, interactive, and curriculum-aligned teaching strategies. The research aims to determine how far guess-the-word games using audio-visual media can help children recognize, recall, and articulate English vocabulary in a more comprehensible manner while offering an innovative learning alternative that enhances motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes among early childhood learners.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach using the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method, as its main focus was on improving children's English vocabulary through the direct implementation of the *Guess-the-Word Game* using audio-visual media in an authentic learning setting. CAR was chosen because it allows the researcher to conduct intervention while systematically observing the resulting changes. The research design followed the Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) model,

which consists of four main stages—planning, acting, observing, and reflecting—and was carried out in two learning cycles.

The subjects of the study were 10 children from Group B at TK Bhakti Siwi, consisting of 4 boys and 6 girls. The object of this study was the implementation of the *Guess-the-Word Game* using audio-visual media as a learning strategy to enhance children's English vocabulary. The research took place at TK Bhakti Siwi, located at Jl. PB Sudirman No. 63, Tanggul Wetan, RT.03/RW.05, Krajan Hamlet, Tanggul Wetan Village, Tanggul Subdistrict. The site was chosen based on its relevance, accessibility, and support for the implementation of the learning intervention.

The data collection methods included observation, documentation, and informal interviews, which complemented one another to obtain comprehensive information regarding the improvement of Group B children's English vocabulary through the use of audio-visual-based guessing games.

- **Observation** was conducted participatively using observation sheets containing indicators such as participation, attention, ability to mention vocabulary, and interaction among children. These indicators were assessed using a **five-point rating scale (1–5)** to measure vocabulary mastery levels.
- **Documentation** consisted of written notes, photographs, and video recordings that served as tangible evidence to support

observation data and to provide an objective portrayal of children’s progress from the pre-cycle to Cycle II.

- **Informal interviews** with the accompanying teacher and several children were carried out flexibly to explore learning experiences, challenges, and responses to the implementation of the game, allowing the data to remain natural and contextually grounded.

Table 1. Learning Achievement Qualification

No	Achievement Percentage	Criteria
1	75% – 100%	Good (A)
2	50% – 74.99%	Fair (B)
3	25% – 49.99%	Poor (C)
4	0% – 24.99%	Very Poor (D)

Source: Yoni (2010)

Observation data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative methods by calculating the percentage of achievement in children’s English vocabulary development. The calculation was based on observation scores and the assessment rubric, using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$$

where **P** represents the percentage of achievement, **f** denotes the score obtained by the child, and **N** refers to the total number of children observed. The results were then classified according to the learning

achievement qualification table to determine each child's vocabulary development category.

The research was considered **successful** if **at least 75% of the children** reached the **A (Good)** category, indicating that most children could recognize, recall, and pronounce English vocabulary correctly and confidently after the intervention.

Result and Discussions

Initial observations indicated that the children's development was consistent with their age. Physically and motorically, they were active; socially and emotionally, they were enthusiastic though some lacked confidence; cognitively, they were able to recognize shapes, colors, and simple numbers; and linguistically, they were fairly communicative in everyday interactions.

Table 2. Initial Condition of English Vocabulary Mastery of Group B Children at TK Bhakti Siwi (Pre-Cycle)

No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	A	0	0.00%
2	B	2	20.00%
3	C	8	80.00%
4	D	0	0.00%
Total		10	100.00%

Description: A (Good): 75%–100%; B (Fair): 50%–74.99%; C (Poor): 25%–49.99%; D (Very Poor): 0%–24.99%

The results of the pre-cycle observation showed that none of the 10 children in Group B at TK Bhakti Siwi achieved the A (Good) category, only 2 children (20%) were in category B (Fair), while the majority, 8 children (80%), were still in category C (Poor), and none were in category D (Very Poor). Children in category B tended to be more courageous in answering questions, although their pronunciation was still imperfect; they were able to respond to simple instructions and appeared enthusiastic and confident. Conversely, children in category C still found it difficult to recognize and recall vocabulary, often seemed confused or passive, and easily lost focus when conventional learning methods were used. Overall, the children's English vocabulary mastery was low, limited to basic everyday words, which signaled the need for innovative and enjoyable learning strategies such as the audio-visual-based *Guess-the-Word Game*.

Table 3. Improvement of English Vocabulary Mastery of Group B
Children at TK Bhakti Siwi (Cycle I)

No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	A	2	20.00%
2	B	8	80.00%
3	C	0	0.00%
4	D	0	0.00%
Total		10	100.00%

Description: A (Good): 75%–100%; B (Fair): 50%–74.99%; C (Poor): 25%–49.99%; D (Very Poor):

0%–24.99%

The observation results in Cycle I showed a significant improvement in English vocabulary mastery among Group B children at TK Bhakti Siwi compared to the pre-cycle, where 2 children (20%) had reached the A (Good) category, and 8 children (80%) were in the B (Fair) category, with no children remaining in the C or D categories. The implementation of the audio-visual-based *Guess-the-Word Game* helped children become more focused, enthusiastic, and confident in guessing and repeating words, resulting in a shift from the predominance of “Poor” to mostly “Fair” and partially “Good.” This demonstrates that play-based learning combined with visual and auditory media is well-suited to early childhood characteristics and effectively enhances English vocabulary mastery.

Overall, the behavior of Group B children in Cycle I showed noticeable progress compared to the pre-cycle, as they paid closer attention to animated videos, eagerly followed teacher instructions, and displayed visible joy during participation. Previously passive children began to show courage in attempting to answer, even though not perfectly. Children in category A (Good) exhibited high self-confidence, enthusiasm, prompt responses to instructions, consistent and correct word recall, active repetition, and served as role models for their peers. Meanwhile, children in category B (Fair) also demonstrated improvement, being able to answer most questions though still requiring more time, teacher guidance, or showing shyness and

hesitation. The shift from pre-cycle to Cycle I indicated an overall improvement, where children previously in category C progressed to category B with greater confidence and engagement, while those in category B advanced to category A with increased self-assurance and consistency.

The results of Cycle I showed that the success criteria ($\geq 75\%$ of children in category A) had not yet been achieved, as only 20% of children reached category A, while the majority (80%) remained in category B, despite showing considerable progress from the pre-cycle. The reflection phase identified several weaknesses: the video duration was too long, reducing focus; the game variation was limited, allowing faster children to dominate; individual reinforcement was not yet optimal; peer interaction was still limited; and the evaluation focused more on vocabulary results rather than active participation. Therefore, improvements were made in Cycle II by shortening video duration, adding more vocabulary themes, modifying the game with physical activities, providing individual rewards, dividing the class into smaller groups, and refining the evaluation instrument to include activeness indicators—so that more children could reach category A and the 75% success target could be achieved.

Table 4. Improvement of English Vocabulary Mastery of Group B

Children at TK Bhakti Siwi (Cycle II)

No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
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1	A	8	80.00%
2	B	2	20.00%
3	C	0	0.00%
4	D	0	0.00%
Total		10	100.00%

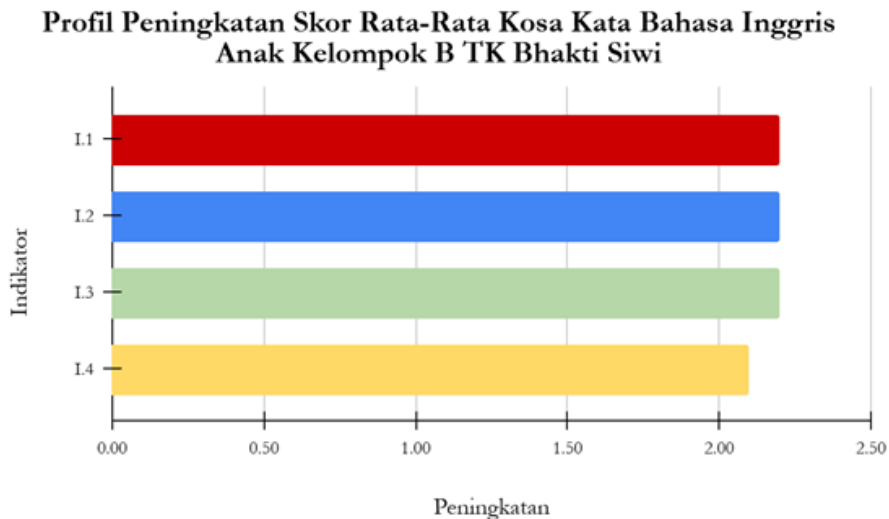
Description: A (Good): 75%–100%; B (Fair): 50%–74.99%; C (Poor): 25%–49.99%; D (Very Poor): 0%–24.99%

The results of Cycle II (Table 4) showed a significant improvement in English vocabulary mastery among the children. Eight children (80%) reached the A (Good) category, with a mastery level between 75%–100%. This indicates that most children were already able to recognize, understand, and use vocabulary correctly within learning contexts. Meanwhile, two children (20%) remained in the B (Fair) category, achieving between 50%–74.99%, which means they had made positive progress but still needed reinforcement—especially in consistent word usage and confidence in oral practice. None of the children were in the C (Poor) or D (Very Poor) categories. It can be concluded that the Cycle II intervention successfully optimized the children’s English vocabulary mastery. This improvement also shows that the applied learning method was well aligned with early childhood characteristics, particularly in capturing attention, motivating engagement, and providing enjoyable and meaningful learning experiences.

Based on the observations, most children (80%) progressed from the

recognition to the recall stage, improving in articulation accuracy, meaning retention, and ability to transfer labels to new representations. Meanwhile, children in category B (20%) still relied on cues and showed phonological errors, suggesting that they needed spaced retrieval practice to reinforce medium-term memory. In terms of social interaction, action-based and small-group games increased joint attention, turn-taking, and peer scaffolding, though participation remained uneven as A-category children tended to dominate. Thus, strategies such as *round-robin*, *turn tokens*, and A–B pairing are recommended to ensure more balanced contributions. Regarding motivation, the use of short, varied media, physical activities, and simple rewards enhanced comfort, confidence, and persistence. However, to prevent overreliance on external rewards, learning should also incorporate process praise, limited choice-making, and small-group objectives to maintain children’s intrinsic motivation.

Table 5. Profile of Average Score Improvement in English Vocabulary
Mastery of Group B Children at TK Bhakti Siwi



Based on the development of each indicator (Table 5), there was a consistent improvement from pre-cycle to Cycle II. For **Indicator I.1**, the children’s ability to match heard English words with corresponding pictures increased from 2.20 in the pre-cycle to 4.40 in Cycle II, a gain of 2.20 points—indicating substantial progress. **Indicator I.2**, the ability to imitate English pronunciation, improved by 2.20 points (from 1.90 to 4.10), demonstrating that repetitive practice helped children become more confident in pronunciation. **Indicator I.3**, the ability to mention vocabulary independently, rose from 1.70 to 3.90, reflecting the success of contextual learning strategies. Lastly, **Indicator I.4**, the ability to connect pictures with written English words, increased from 2.10 to 4.20, an improvement of 2.10 points. These findings reveal balanced progress across all indicators, suggesting that the learning intervention positively affected all aspects of vocabulary acquisition.

According to Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory (1952), children aged 5–6 years are in the preoperational stage, learning primarily through symbols, images, and language. The findings show that the audio-visual-based *Guess-the-Word Game* helped children connect visual and auditory symbols with English vocabulary, evidenced by improvement from the pre-cycle (80% in category C), to Cycle I (80% in category B and 20% in category A), to Cycle II (80% in category A and 20% in category B). In Cycle I, children began to associate images and sounds with words, corresponding to the assimilation process, where new vocabulary was integrated into existing cognitive structures (Piaget, 1952). This is natural as children construct new schemas through symbolic experience. In Cycle II, a significant leap occurred, indicating **accommodation**, where new, more complex schemas were formed.

This improvement aligns with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), in which scaffolding from teachers, peers, and audio-visual media accelerates vocabulary internalization (Karami, 2019; Vygotsky, 1978). The consistent 2.10–2.20 point increase across indicators supports the theory that social interaction, guided assistance, and the use of concrete to semi-concrete media help children move from actual to potential development levels (Situmorang, 2023).

The findings also confirm Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory, particularly the Input Hypothesis, which states that language is

acquired more easily when learners receive *comprehensible input*—input slightly above their current proficiency. In the pre-cycle, most children struggled to understand English vocabulary, but after receiving auditory and visual stimuli, there was significant improvement in Cycle I and II. Audio-visual media provided real-life contexts, allowing children to understand meaning naturally without relying on translation (Krashen, 1981; 1985; Rodrigo et al., 2004).

Moreover, the study supports Asher's Total Physical Response (TPR) theory (1966; 1969), which emphasizes associating language learning with movement, images, or sound. In the *Guess-the-Word Game*, children not only listened and watched but also actively guessed, repeated, and responded through interaction with the media—creating enjoyable, low-pressure, and memory-friendly learning experiences that suit their sensory-motor and kinesthetic nature. The consistent improvement from pre-cycle to Cycle II demonstrates that integrating visual, auditory, and physical activities according to TPR principles effectively strengthens vocabulary retention among young learners.

This study aligns with prior findings on the effectiveness of play-based media in improving early English vocabulary (Aminah, 2021; Santoso, 2022; Lestari, 2023; Wijaya & Cahyani, 2020), and specifically demonstrates that audio-visual-based *Guess-the-Word Games* provide effective *comprehensible input* through the association of words with images and sounds, leading to higher participation and learning

outcomes. Unlike previous studies that discussed play-based learning in general or focused on younger age groups, this research centers on Group B children and integrates the method into the TK Bhakti Siwi curriculum, offering both theoretical and practical novelty in early childhood English education.

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that early childhood teachers, especially those teaching Group B, adopt the audio-visual-based *Guess-the-Word Game* as an instructional strategy for English vocabulary development. The media proved effective in delivering *comprehensible input* that matches children's developmental stages while fostering an interactive, enjoyable, and meaningful learning atmosphere. Teachers are also advised to vary images, sounds, and movements and integrate TPR-based methods to enhance understanding through direct experience.

For future research, it is recommended to test the game's effectiveness with a larger sample, diverse vocabulary themes, or through comparison with other media such as flashcards, realia, or interactive digital applications. Further studies could also explore its effects on other aspects such as speaking ability, communication confidence, and learning motivation, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of effective strategies for supporting early English language development.

Conclusion

The classroom action research conducted at TK Bhakti Siwi demonstrated that the use of the audio-visual-based Guess-the-Word Game effectively improved the English vocabulary mastery of Group B children. The results showed a significant increase from the pre-cycle to Cycle II, during which nearly all children were able to mention, understand, and use basic English vocabulary more confidently. This learning media proved capable of attracting attention, encouraging participation, and creating a joyful and meaningful learning experience.

The findings also highlight that combining play-based learning with audio-visual media supports the principles of early childhood education, where children learn best through active engagement, observation, and interaction. The game's integration of images, sounds, and movement not only enhanced vocabulary retention but also stimulated motivation, social cooperation, and confidence in language expression.

Based on these outcomes, early childhood and kindergarten teachers are advised to regularly incorporate the audio-visual Guess-the-Word Game into English learning activities, adapting vocabulary difficulty levels and combining it with other interactive exercises to prevent monotony and maintain enthusiasm. This approach helps children acquire vocabulary naturally while developing linguistic, cognitive, and social-emotional skills in a balanced way.

For future research, it is recommended to apply this method to a

larger group of participants or in different school settings, as well as to compare its effectiveness with other interactive digital media. Further studies may also examine its impact on other aspects of language learning—such as speaking ability, communication confidence, and intrinsic motivation—to provide a broader and more comprehensive picture of effective strategies for supporting early childhood English education.

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