



## The Use of Indonesian Children's Songs to Improve The Language Ability of Foreign Students at Suksa Muslim School

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**Abstract:** This study aims to improve the Indonesian language skills of foreign students in class Matthayom 4 at Suksa Muslim School through the use of the Indonesian children's song "Balonku" as a learning medium. This study uses the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method which is implemented in two cycles, each including the planning stage, action implementation, observation, and reflection. The research subjects were 20 Thai students who are studying Indonesian at the elementary level. Data collection techniques were carried out through tests, observations, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that the use of Indonesian children's songs can significantly improve students' language skills, both in the aspects of Vocabulary Mastery, Pronunciation, Writing Accuracy. The improvement is seen from the average scores of students in the pre-action stage, cycle I, to cycle II. In addition, student learning activities have increased in terms of activeness, motivation, and emotional involvement during the learning process. Thus, Indonesian children's songs are proven to be effective in improving the language skills of foreign students.

**Keywords:** Language Skills; Indonesian Children's Songs; Foreign Learners.

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### Introduction

Indonesian Language Learning for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) has shown increasingly rapid development in various countries, including Thailand (Fani & Febriyana, 2025). This development aligns with the growing international interest in Indonesian language and culture, making BIPA not only a language learning tool but also a medium for strengthening educational and cultural cooperation between countries..

In the process of acquiring a second language, foreign learners are required to master language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Amri & Kurniawan, 2023). These four skills are interrelated and serve as the primary foundation for learners to understand and use Indonesian effectively (Purbarani et al., 2021). Furthermore, language skills also encompass vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, and

writing accuracy, which play a crucial role in supporting daily communication.

Therefore, mastering comprehensive language skills is the main goal of classroom learning. However, language acquisition often presents a challenge for international learners. Differences in linguistic systems between the learner's native language and Indonesian, cultural differences in communication, and their limited experience in learning a second language often present obstacles in the learning process (Rahmadani et al., 2023).

Foreign learners also often experience difficulties recognizing new vocabulary, understanding sentence structure, pronouncing sounds, and conveying ideas orally and in writing. These challenges highlight the need for a more innovative, adaptive, and learner-specific learning approach. Therefore, engaging, effective, and contextual learning strategies and media

are essential for optimal student comprehension of Indonesian language materials.

In language learning, selecting the right media is a crucial factor influencing student engagement and learning outcomes (Cahyani et al., 2024). Appropriate media can create a more interactive learning environment, encourage active participation, and help learners understand language concepts more concretely and contextually. Engaging learning media can also minimize boredom, increase motivation, and strengthen learners' retention of the material taught (Ayshara, 2024). Therefore, the presence of effective learning media is a crucial aspect in efforts to improve the language skills of foreign learners.

Various previous studies have emphasized the importance of using engaging and interactive learning media to support the learning process. Research (Rifai, 2023) shows that easy-to-understand teaching materials that encourage student engagement can improve learning effectiveness. Findings (Krismanto et al., 2023) also explain that visual learning media can increase learning interest and facilitate conceptual understanding in drama scriptwriting lessons. Similarly, (Shabrina et al., 2025) state that selecting the right media can create interactive learning and improve student learning outcomes. Advances in information technology also open up opportunities for the development of more varied and effective learning media (Saragih, et al., 2025). One of the learning media that has been proven effective according to various studies is song. (SR & Silalahi, 2025) found that the use of folk songs can create a more dynamic and enjoyable learning environment and increase student engagement. Research (Mandasari et al., 2025) shows that children's songs help students recognize letters and basic vocabulary through their engaging rhythm and melody.

Furthermore, (Abdullah et al., 2025) revealed that the use of songs can significantly improve vocabulary recall, especially when combined with physical activities and contextual explanations. These studies confirm the great potential of songs as an effective learning medium for improving students' language skills. The use of Indonesian children's songs is also highly relevant for foreign learners, especially those in primary and secondary education, as songs can reduce cognitive load, foster a positive learning environment, and naturally strengthen memory (Bella & Respati, 2021). At Suksa Muslim School, foreign learners require learning media that are not only engaging and enjoyable but also help them understand Indonesian vocabulary, language structure, and pronunciation more easily. However, research on the use of Indonesian children's songs as a medium to improve the language skills of foreign learners in Thailand is still very limited. Based on the description above, this study was conducted to assess

the effectiveness of using Indonesian children's songs in improving the language skills of foreign students at Suksa Muslim School. This study used the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method, implemented in two cycles, each encompassing the planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. Through an interactive, fun, and music-based learning approach, this study is expected to make a real contribution to improving the language skills of foreign students, particularly in learning in Thailand.

## Metode

This study used Classroom Action Research (CAR) implemented in two cycles. Each cycle consists of four stages, namely planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection (Khasinah, 2013). The research subjects were 20 foreign learners (Thai students) who were studying Indonesian at the elementary level. Research data were collected through tests, observations, and documentation. In the pre-action, Indonesian language skills were measured. In Cycle I, learning was carried out using Indonesian children's songs to improve language skills. In Cycle II, the learning strategy was improved by adding elements of movement and slowing down the tempo of the songs. Data analysis was carried out quantitatively to measure the increase in average scores and percentages of students in each cycle, while qualitative analysis was used to observe the development of students' learning behavior, activeness, and language skills during the action process.

## Result And Discussion

This section outlines research findings related to improving the language skills of foreign students in Matthayom 4 class at Suksa Muslim School through the use of Indonesian children's songs. The research findings on language skill improvement are presented systematically based on the pre-action phase, cycle I, and cycle II.

### Pre-action.

In the pre-action phase, before the implementation of Indonesian children's songs in learning, the language skills of foreign students in Matthayom 4 class at Suksa Muslim School were still in the low category. An initial evaluation of the learning process in the pre-action phase revealed several obstacles that affected the students' language proficiency. The detailed evaluation results of the pre-action phase are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Pre-action Results

Student Name	Vocabulary Mastery	Pronunciation	Writing Accuracy	Mark
P1	4	2	4	83,3
P2	2	4	3	75
P3	4	4	4	100
P4	3	2	4	75
P5	2	2	2	50
P6	4	2	2	66,7
P7	3	2	4	75
P8	3	2	1	50
P9	2	2	2	50
P10	4	2	1	58,3
P11	4	3	2	75
P12	4	3	4	91,7
P13	3	4	3	83,3
P14	3	4	3	83,3
P15	2	3	2	58,3
P16	4	2	4	83,3
P17	3	2	3	66,7
P18	4	1	3	66,7
P19	1	2	2	41,7
P20	3	4	2	75
<b>Amount</b>				<b>1,408,3</b>
<b>Average</b>				<b>70</b>

**Table 2.** Assessment Frequency

Category	Value Interval	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very good	93-100	1	5%
Good	84-92	1	5%
Enough	75-83	9	45%
Not enough	<75	9	45%

Based on the results of the pre-action stage, the language skills of foreign students in class Matthayom 4 are still in the low category. Nine out of 20 students (45%) obtained scores below the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM) of 75, while only nine students (45%) achieved the sufficient category. Only 5% of students fell

into the good or very good category. The average class score of only 70 indicates that basic skills have not been optimally met. Therefore, corrective action is needed through the application of Indonesian children's songs in cycle I.

**Cycle I**

In cycle I, learning activities were carried out using Indonesian children's songs as a learning medium in class Matthayom 4 at Suksa Muslim School. Test results in cycle I showed an increase in student abilities compared to the pre-action phase, although this improvement did not reach maximum results. Detailed evaluation results for cycle I are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Cycle Results 1

Student Name	Vocabulary Mastery	Pronunciation	Writing Accuracy	Mark
P1	4	4	4	100
P2	2	4	3	75
P3	4	4	4	100
P4	4	2	4	83,3
P5	2	2	2	50
P6	4	2	2	66,7
P7	3	2	4	75
P8	3	2	1	50
P9	2	2	2	50
P10	4	2	1	58,3

P11	4	3	4	91,7
P12	4	3	4	91,7
P13	4	4	4	100
P14	4	4	4	100
P15	2	3	2	58,3
P16	4	4	4	100
P17	4	4	4	100
P18	4	1	3	66,7
P19	1	2	2	41,7
P20	3	4	2	75
<b>Amount</b>				<b>1,533,4</b>
<b>Average</b>				<b>76</b>

**Table 4.** Assessment Frequency

Category	Value Interval	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very good	93-100	6	30%
Good	84-92	2	10%
Enough	75-83	4	20%
Not enough	<75	8	40%

Based on the evaluation results table for cycle I, learners' language skills showed improvement compared to the pre-action stage. Eight learners (40%) were still in the poor category, four learners (20%) were in the adequate category, two learners (10%) reached the good category, and six learners (30%) were in the excellent category. However, these results indicate that learning outcomes were not yet optimal.

Observations during cycle I showed that some students lacked focus in participating in learning activities because the methods applied did not fully capture their attention. Consequently, students still

faced difficulties in vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, and writing accuracy. Therefore, improvements to learning strategies were needed in cycle II to maximize student participation and learning outcomes (Anmalia, 2025).

**Cycle II**

The second cycle involved re-implementing Indonesian children's songs as a learning medium in the Matthayom 4 class at SuksA Muslim School. This cycle was a follow-up to the first cycle, which was designed based on evaluation and reflection, with the aim of further improving students' language skills. Improvements were made to the learning process by adding movement elements and slowing down the tempo of the songs to make them easier for students to follow. The test results in cycle II showed a significant improvement in students' language skills. Detailed evaluation results from cycle II are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Cycle results 2

Student Name	Vocabulary Mastery	Pronunciation	Writing Accuracy	Mark
P1	4	4	4	100
P2	4	4	4	100
P3	4	4	4	100
P4	4	3	4	91,7
P5	3	3	3	75
P6	4	3	4	91,7
P7	3	3	4	83,3
P8	3	3	3	75
P9	3	3	3	75
P10	4	3	3	83,3
P11	4	4	4	100
P12	4	4	4	100
P13	4	4	4	100
P14	4	4	4	100
P15	3	3	2	66,7
P16	4	4	4	100
P17	4	4	4	100

P18	4	3	3	83,3
P19	3	3	3	75
P20	3	4	3	83,3
<b>Amount</b>				<b>1,783,3</b>
<b>Average</b>				<b>89</b>

**Table 6.** Assessment Frequency

Category	Value Interval	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very good	93-100	9	45%
Good	84-92	2	10%
Enough	75-83	8	40%
Not enough	<75	1	5%

Based on the results of cycle II, learners' language skills showed more optimal improvement through the use of Indonesian children's songs. This improvement occurred after improvements were made to the learning process, including adding movement elements and slowing down the tempo of the songs to make them easier for learners to follow.

The assessment results in cycle II showed that 1 student (5%) was still in the poor category, 8 students (40%) were in the adequate category, 2 students (10%) reached the good category, and 9 students (45%) were in the excellent category. These data indicate a shift in student abilities to a higher category compared to the previous cycle.

Observation results also showed positive changes in the learning process, marked by increased focus, enthusiasm, and active participation from students during the activity. Most students were able to master vocabulary, pronunciation, and writing accuracy. With the achievement of the established success indicators, the implementation of Cycle II was deemed adequate, requiring no further action.

### Conclusion

Based on observations, the use of Indonesian children's songs has proven effective in improving students' language skills in the Matthayom class at Suksa Muslim School, Thailand. This effectiveness is reflected in the increase in the average score of students' language skills, from 70 in the pre-action stage (poor category), to 76 in cycle I (sufficient category), and reaching 89 in cycle II (good category). In addition, the percentage of students in the very good category also experienced a significant increase, from 5% in the pre-action stage to 30% in cycle I and 45% in cycle II.

Learning improvements in cycle II, including movement elements and slowing down the tempo of the songs, have been shown to increase students' motivation and understanding of words, meanings, and spelling.

The use of Indonesian children's songs also contributes to the development of students' concentration and critical thinking skills, thus optimally supporting the achievement of the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM).

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