

Effective Strategies for Teaching English to Elementary School Students at SDN 02 Sukamulya Cikarang Utara

Edri

Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Sekolah Tinggi Bahasa Asing Bina Dinamika Cianjur

E-mail: edri.humana@gmail.com



<https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v3i4.832>

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: 11 May 2025

Revised: 18 May 2025

Accepted: 26 May 2025

Kata kunci

Teaching Strategies,
Students, English Language
Instruction

Keywords

Strategi Pengajaran, Siswa,
Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris



ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi strategi yang efektif dalam mengajar Bahasa Inggris kepada siswa sekolah dasar di SDN 02 Sukamulya Cikarang Utara. Dengan fokus pada keterlibatan siswa dan pemerolehan bahasa, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi metode interaktif dan multimodal yang sesuai dengan konteks sekolah dasar di Indonesia. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif—analisis dokumen, wawancara dengan guru Bahasa Inggris, dan observasi kelas—penelitian ini menyoroti strategi utama yang meningkatkan pembelajaran. Strategi tersebut meliputi penggunaan alat bantu visual (seperti kartu bergambar, poster), aktivitas berbasis permainan (misalnya “Simon Says”), dan latihan berbasis lagu (seperti “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes”). Kegiatan bercerita dengan struktur kalimat berulang membantu memperkuat kosa kata dan tata bahasa, sementara alih kode antara Bahasa Inggris dan Bahasa Indonesia meningkatkan pemahaman dan mengurangi kecemasan siswa. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya kreativitas guru, kemampuan beradaptasi, dan variasi bahan ajar dalam menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang menyenangkan dan efektif. Wawasan ini memberikan panduan berharga bagi para pendidik yang ingin meningkatkan pengajaran Bahasa Inggris di konteks pendidikan dasar yang serupa.

This study aims to identify effective strategies for teaching English to young learners at SDN 02 Sukamulya Cikarang Utara. Focusing on student engagement and language acquisition, it explores interactive and multimodal methods suited to primary school settings in Indonesia. Using qualitative methods—document analysis, interviews with English teachers, and classroom observations—the study highlights key strategies that enhance learning. These include the use of visual aids (e.g., flashcards, posters), game-based activities (e.g., “Simon Says”), and song-based exercises (e.g., “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes”). Storytelling with repetitive sentence structures helps reinforce vocabulary and grammar, while code-switching between English and Bahasa Indonesia improves comprehension and reduces anxiety. The findings emphasize the importance of teacher creativity, adaptability, and varied materials in building a fun and effective learning environment. These insights offer valuable guidance for educators aiming to improve English instruction in similar primary education contexts.



This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.

How to Cite: Edri, et al (2025). Effective Strategies for Teaching English to Elementary School Students at SDN 02 Sukamulya Cikarang Utara , 3(4). 2127-2132 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v3i4.831>

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English to young primary school students in Indonesia requires creative and flexible approaches that align with their cognitive, emotional, and linguistic development. Unlike adults, children in elementary school are in the early stages of language acquisition, where learning occurs more naturally through exposure, play, and interaction rather than formal grammatical instruction (Fitriyani 2017) . Therefore, teachers have a crucial role beyond simply delivering knowledge; they must act as facilitators who create engaging, enjoyable, and meaningful learning environments.

Young learners possess unique needs such as shorter attention spans, a preference for multisensory experiences, and reliance on concrete rather than abstract concepts. To maximize learning outcomes, teaching strategies should be adapted to suit these developmental characteristics. A teacher's role involves fostering a supportive and dynamic atmosphere that not only entertains but also encourages active participation and meaningful use of the language. Creating such an environment helps students develop language proficiency as well as positive attitudes towards learning English, which are essential for sustained motivation and success.

In Indonesia, English is often taught as a local content subject (*muatan lokal*), which results in variability in availability and exposure depending on school policies and resources. This uneven exposure causes disparities in students' English proficiency across different schools. Additionally, English is rarely used in everyday communication at home or school, limiting students' linguistic input and making language acquisition more challenging (Suriaty and Prakasa 2020)

Beyond infrastructure limitations, student motivation is critical. Elementary students' short attention spans mean that monotonous teaching methods quickly diminish their interest. Hence, teachers need to employ innovative and engaging techniques that capture and maintain student attention while ensuring content remains comprehensible and enjoyable (Siagian et al. 2023)

Previous studies emphasize the importance of age-appropriate teaching methods, such as the use of songs, games, storytelling, and visual aids, which foster student engagement, vocabulary retention, and positive attitudes toward English learning. However, particularly in resource-constrained schools like SDN 02 Sukamulya, there is limited research on how teachers adapt these methods to local contexts.

This study aims to identify and analyze effective English teaching strategies implemented by teachers at SDN 02 Sukamulya Cikarang Utara, thereby addressing this research gap. By investigating current practices and assessing their impact on student learning and engagement, this research intends to provide valuable insights for teachers, school administrators, and curriculum developers seeking to improve primary English education (Puspita, Imron, and Sunandar 2015)

Ultimately, the goal is not merely to document successful teaching methods but also to offer recommendations for enhancing the quality of English instruction in primary schools. Given the increasing global importance of English, a strong foundation at the early stages is vital for students' future academic and professional success. Understanding effective teaching practices, especially in under-resourced settings, is a step toward creating a more equitable and effective English education system (Bong and Firmansyah 2023).

METHOD

This study investigated effective teaching English techniques for elementary school students at SDN 02 Sukamulya, in the Cikarang Utara, using a qualitative research method. The qualitative approach was selected since it would enable a comprehensive study of the teaching and learning processes from the points of view of direct participants—that is, teachers and students—by means of an in-depth analysis. Focusing on the meanings, experiences, and perceptions of individuals, qualitative research is especially appropriate for investigating complex events in their natural settings, claims. (Chih-Pei, H. U., & Chang 2017). This method fits the constructivist paradigm, according to which contextual events and social interactions shape knowledge (Yazan and Rudolph 2018). Thus, in real-world educational settings, qualitative research provides rich, descriptive insights into pedagogical tactics and classroom practices.

Research Design

The study adopted a case study design, a common framework in qualitative research, to conduct a detailed examination of a bounded system in this instance, the English teaching practices at SDN 02 Sukamulya. The case study approach facilitates comprehensive data collection about the phenomenon in its authentic context, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the contextual factors influencing teaching effectiveness (Zhang 2022). This design enables the observation of classroom interactions and dynamics in a holistic manner.

Data Collection Procedures

This study applied several qualitative data collecting strategies, combining a triangulation of data sources: classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, thereby obtaining

a thorough and reliable knowledge of the teaching approaches used. Using triangulation cross-verifies material gathered from many sources, therefore improving the validity and dependability of the results.

1. Classroom Observations

Systematic observations of English language lessons were conducted to capture real-time instructional practices, teacher-student interactions, and classroom dynamics. Observations were non-participant in nature, with the researcher acting as a passive observer to minimize disruption to the learning process while taking detailed field notes on teaching strategies, student engagement, and the use of learning aids. (Noguera 2018)

2. Semi-Structured Interview

Selected teachers and students were asked in-depth questions to gather their impressions, experiences, and thoughts on the English teaching and learning process. Maintaining a consistent set of fundamental questions, the semi-structured approach allowed respondents to freely and extensively express their opinions, hence allowing the freedom to investigate developing topics. (Yisihak Ukumo and Damtew Berlie 2024)

3. Document Analysis

Relevant school documents, such as lesson plans, curriculum guidelines, teaching materials, and student work samples, were examined to supplement and contextualize data gathered from observations and interviews. Document analysis served to verify the alignment between intended instructional strategies and actual classroom implementation.

These interview questions are used to understand teachers' experiences and perspectives on reflective teaching :

1. What strategies do you usually use to teach English in your classroom?
2. Can you describe how you use visual aids (e.g., pictures, flashcards, real objects) in your teaching?
3. How often do you incorporate games in your English lessons? What kinds of games do you use?
4. Do you use songs or chants in teaching English? If so, how do students respond?
5. Do you use code-switching (switching between Bahasa Indonesia and English) in your classroom? Why or why not?
6. How do you implement daily English expressions or routines in class (e.g., greetings, asking permission)?
7. What are the biggest challenges you face in teaching English to elementary students?
8. How much time is allocated for English lessons each week, and is it enough in your opinion?
9. Do you receive any training or workshops on how to teach English to young learners?
10. What kind of support or resources would help improve your English teaching?

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data in this study were derived from classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with English teachers, and interviews with several students at SDN 02 Sukamulya, Cikarang Utara. Based on the collected data, several effective teaching tactics emerged that positively influenced the English learning process for elementary students. The following sections provide a detailed description of these strategies, their implementation, and their impact on student language learning (Bachinskyi et al. 2020)

1. Visual Aids

The use of visual aids such as flashcards, posters, real objects (realia), and photos helped students better understand vocabulary and language concepts. Visuals provided concrete representations that enhanced word recall and comprehension. Observational data indicated that students were more enthusiastic and quickly memorized vocabulary when taught with visual aids. Interviews with teachers confirmed that this method aligns well with young learners' cognitive development, as visual stimuli are closely connected to their learning processes,

2. Game Based Learning

Games were frequently employed to review vocabulary, practice sentence structures, and increase student engagement. These included physical games like "Simon Says" and word-matching activities, as well as language games such as spelling bees and word searches. Student interviews revealed that approximately 80% of the students expressed high interest and

motivation when learning English through games. Observational data also recorded high levels of active participation during game-based sessions, which supports effective language acquisition

3. Songs and Chants

Songs and chants were used to teach vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence patterns in a fun and memorable way. The rhythm and melody of songs help reinforce language memory and improve listening and speaking skills. Data analysis from interviews showed that students were better able to remember sentence patterns and new vocabulary after participating in singing activities (Simatupang, Widayati, and Sholihah 2022)

4. Storytelling with Repetition

Teachers applied storytelling techniques that involved repeating key phrases or vocabulary. Repetition in storytelling enabled children to internalize language structures while developing listening comprehension. Classroom observations showed that students were more focused and actively responded when stories with repeated elements were presented, thus facilitating deeper vocabulary understanding (Cekaite and Björk-Willén 2018)

5. Contextual and Thematic Learning

Lessons were often organized around themes such as “My Family,” “Animals,” or “At School.” This thematic approach supports contextual understanding and helps learners connect new vocabulary with their real-life experiences. Teacher interviews revealed that this method increased the relevance of learning materials, making them easier for students to comprehend and remember

6. Code-Switching

Teachers switched between English and Bahasa Indonesia to explain instructions or meanings. This strategy helped students, especially those at lower proficiency levels, better understand the material. It functioned as a bridge between the students’ native language and the target language, enhancing comprehension. Interview data indicated that students felt more comfortable and understood lessons better with occasional use of Bahasa Indonesia. (Gross et al. 2022)

7. Classroom English Routine

The consistent use of routine English phrases (e.g., “Good morning,” “May I go to the toilet?”) helped create a language-rich environment and encouraged functional use of English. Observations showed that these routines fostered familiarity and fluency in everyday expressions (Clark-Gareca 2016)

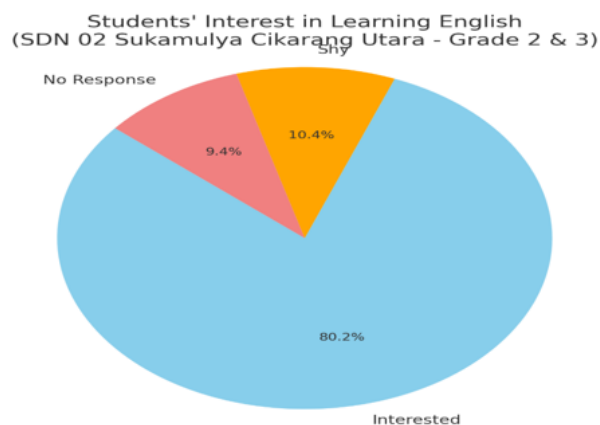
8. Challenges Faced

Despite these successful strategies, teachers reported several challenges including limited English exposure outside the classroom, large class sizes, restricted access to multimedia resources, and inadequate training in pedagogy for young learners. These findings align with previous research highlighting the need for systemic support to implement communicative and engaging English teaching approaches in elementary schools (Moses and Mohamad 2019)

Data Analysis

In research conducted at SDN 02 Sukamulya Cikarang Utara, most of the 106 kids in grades 2 and 3 expressed a strong wish in studying English. Of the 85 students specially, 80% said they would like to study English. This indicates that early on there is considerable opportunity to enhance the language skills of lower primary pupils as they prefer English. Eleven students, 10% of the total, were still shy or reticent when learning English. This conduct could be influenced by lack of confidence, limited language, or educational tactics that do not entirely involve them or motivate active participation. Ten more students, or ten percent, also skipped the interest question. This silence could indicate ambiguity, indifference, or difficulty understanding the question.

The results reveal a generally good attitude among young students about English acquisition. Still, for those who are still timid or inattentive specifically, teachers should employ interactive and student-friendly teaching strategies to boost confidence and involvement. These insights can guide future changes in main English teaching approaches.



Research Result: Students' Interest in Learning English

Research Findings

After making the interviews as well as analyzing the data, the findings can be concluded as follows:

1. There are eight main teaching methods that are effective and frequently used at SDN 02 Sukamulya, namely visual aids, game-based learning, songs and chants, storytelling with repetition, contextual and thematic learning, code-switching, classroom English routines, and managing teaching challenges.
2. These methods have been proven to enhance students' motivation, active participation, and understanding of English.
3. The researcher conducted the study in Grades 2 and 3. Based on the total number of students in those classes, it was concluded approximately 80% expressed high interest in learning English, especially when lessons involved visual aids and games. Around 10% of students were reluctant or shy, and another 10% did not respond, which could suggest confusion, lack of confidence, or disengagement.
4. In addition, teachers face challenges related to limited learning media for English lessons. Another obstacle is that English is taught by the classroom teacher, rather than a specialized English teacher, which hinders the optimal implementation of the lessons.
5. English lessons are only taught for 35 minutes to 1 hour at SDN 02 Sukamulya. According to the researcher, the limited time allocated for English instruction contributes to the suboptimal learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study found that visual aids, game-based learning, songs and chants, storytelling with repetition, contextual and thematic lessons, code-switching, and daily English routines constitute effective English teaching strategies for early grade students at SDN 02 Sukamulya Cikarang Utara. These strategies have shown to greatly improve student grasp of English materials, motivation, and involvement.

According to data from classroom observations and interviews, almost 80% of students in Grades 2 and 3 had a high desire in learning English, particularly when learning activities were made interactive and fun by games and graphics. Still, a tiny fraction of students 10% remained reluctant, and another 10% did not reply, suggesting that more inclusive and confidence-building techniques are needed. Notwithstanding these encouraging results, problems still exist including inadequate teaching tools, shortage of professional English teachers, and limited instructional time between 35 minutes and one hour every week. These obstacles affect the best execution of English teachings.

To support efficient English language acquisition at the elementary level, the study thus stresses the need of ongoing teacher training, access to diverse teaching resources, and a rise in instructional time. Particularly those with low resources, the results provide insightful information for teachers and legislators trying to improve English education in similar elementary school environments.

REFERENSI

- Andreotta, Matthew, Robertus Nugroho, Mark J. Hurlstone, Fabio Boschetti, Simon Farrell, Iain Walker, and Cecile Paris. 2019. "Analyzing Social Media Data: A Mixed-Methods Framework Combining Computational and Qualitative Text Analysis." *Behavior Research Methods*. doi: 10.3758/s13428-019-01202-8.
- Bachinskyi, V. T., O. Ya Wanchulyak, A. G. Ushenko, Yu A. Ushenko, A. V. Dubolazov, and Igor Meglinski. 2020. "Results and Discussion." in *SpringerBriefs in Physics*.
- Bong, Valenteeno, and Muhamad Dody Firmansyah. 2023. "Analisa Duolingo Terhadap Prestasi Bahasa Inggris Siswa SMP Batam Dengan Metode TAM." *Jurnal Informasi Dan Teknologi*. doi: 10.60083/jidt.v5i3.407.
- Cekaite, Asta, and Polly Björk-Willén. 2018. "Enchantment in Storytelling: Co-Operation and Participation in Children's Aesthetic Experience." *Linguistics and Education*. doi: 10.1016/j.linged.2018.08.005.
- Chih-Pei, H. U., & Chang, Y. Y. 2017. "Creswell, Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches." *Journal of Social and Administrative Sciences*.
- Clark-Gareca, Beth. 2016. "Classroom Assessment and English Language Learners: Teachers' Accommodations Implementation on Routine Math and Science Tests." *Teaching and Teacher Education*. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2015.11.003.
- Fitriyani, Dewi. 2017. "THE EFFECT OF LANGUAGE GAME TECHNIQUE AND LEARNING MOTIVATION TOWARDS MASTERY OF VOCABULARY (An Experimental at V Grade MIN Hadiluwih Sumberlawang Sragen)." *BAHTERA : Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra*. doi: 10.21009/bahtera.151.03.
- Gross, Megan C., Ada C. López González, Maria G. Girardin, and Adriana M. Almeida. 2022. "Code-Switching by Spanish-English Bilingual Children in a Code-Switching Conversation Sample: Roles of Language Proficiency, Interlocutor Behavior, and Parent-Reported Code-Switching Experience." *Languages*. doi: 10.3390/languages7040246.
- Moses, Rachel Nyanamoney, and Maslawati Mohamad. 2019. "Challenges Faced by Students and Teachers on Writing Skills in ESL Contexts: A Literature Review." *Creative Education*. doi: 10.4236/ce.2019.1013260.
- Noguera, Joana Salazar. 2018. "The Role of Classroom Observation in Pre-Service English Teachers' Understanding of the Teaching Profession." *Porta Linguarum*. doi: 10.30827/digibug.54068.
- Puspita, Ayu Linda, Ali Imron, and Asep Sunandar. 2015. "Manajemen Pembelajaran Workbook Dalam Implementasi Kurikulum 2013 Dan Kurikulum Cambridge Di Sekolah Dasar Laboratorium UM Kota Malang Dan Kota Blitar." *Ecodunamika*.
- Siagian, Claudya Benesa, Gabriella Clarisa Silaban, Elisa May Yolanda Marbun, Igna Mariana Purba, Anita Panjaitan, Eka Uchi Monica Sirait, Indra Pranata Purba, Herman Herman, Bloner Sinurat, and Imelda Sabrina Sibarani. 2023. "Penggunaan 'Fun With English' Dengan Metode Game Based Learning Untuk Melatih Kemampuan Kosakata Di Smp Negeri 3 Pematangsiantar." *Pengabdian Masyarakat Sumber Daya Unggul*. doi: 10.37985/pmsdu.v1i2.54.
- Simatupang, Nurhenti, Sri Widayati, and Sefy Amaliatus Sholihah. 2022. "Application of Singing Activities to Stimulate Children's Vocabulary Acquisition." *Child Education Journal*. doi: 10.33086/cej.v4i2.3164.
- Suriaty, S., and H. A. Prakasa. 2020. "Pengembangan Media Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Dalam Pengenalan Komunikasi Untuk Siswa Sekolah Dasar." *Media Bina Ilmiah*.
- Yazan, Bedrettin., and Nathanael. Rudolph. 2018. *Criticality, Teacher Identity, and (In)Equity in English Language Teaching : Issues and Implications*.
- Yisihak Ukumo, Endrias, and Abebe Damtew Berlie. 2024. "Primary School English Teachers' Practice of Teaching Early Grade Reading." *Social Sciences and Humanities Open*. doi: 10.1016/j.ssaho.2024.100840.
- Zhang, Lu. 2022. "Optimized Algorithm Analysis of Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of English Teaching under the New Curriculum Concept." *Scientific Programming*. doi: 10.1155/2022/1361226.