

The Effect of English Choir Activities in English Day Programs on Students' English Pronunciation and Motivation at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Bengkulu

Adila¹, Dian Susyla²

^{1,2}Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu

Correspondent Author E-Mail: wahdela25@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the effect of English choir activities implemented in the English Day program on students' English pronunciation and learning motivation at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Bengkulu. This research employed a descriptive qualitative design to describe changes in students' pronunciation and to examine students' experiences and perceptions during their participation in English choir activities. The participants consisted of senior high school students who actively joined the English choir as part of the English Day program, with Class X Unggul selected for focused observation. Data were collected through classroom observations and documentation during four English choir training sessions conducted over one month. The findings reveal that English choir activities contributed positively to students' pronunciation development, particularly in terms of sound clarity, word stress, and intonation. In addition, the activities fostered higher learning motivation, as reflected in students' increased confidence, active engagement, and willingness to practice English pronunciation during the learning process. The enjoyable and collaborative nature of singing English songs created a supportive learning atmosphere that reduced students' anxiety and encouraged active participation. These findings suggest that English choir activities can serve as an effective qualitative learning strategy within English Day programs to support students' English pronunciation development and learning motivation in EFL contexts.

Keywords: *English Choir, English Day Program, Pronunciation, Learning Motivation, EFL Students*

Introduction

English pronunciation is a fundamental component of speaking skill and plays an essential role in successful oral communication, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts (Levis and Grant, 2020). Accurate pronunciation enables learners to convey meaning clearly and participate effectively in spoken interaction. However, many EFL students at the senior high school level still experience difficulties in producing English sounds accurately. These difficulties are often influenced by limited exposure to spoken English, insufficient practice opportunities, and affective factors such as anxiety, low confidence, and fear of making mistakes. In Indonesian EFL contexts, these challenges are frequently reinforced by classroom practices that emphasize written tasks and grammatical accuracy rather than meaningful oral communication. As a result, students may have limited opportunities to practice

English pronunciation in authentic and enjoyable situations. To address this issue, many schools have implemented school-based language programs, such as the English Day program, which aims to create a language-rich environment by encouraging students to use English beyond formal classroom instruction. English Day programs provide students with various co-curricular activities that allow them to practice English in more relaxed and interactive contexts. One activity commonly integrated into English Day programs is the English choir. English choir activities involve students singing English songs together, allowing them to practice pronunciation, word stress, rhythm, and intonation naturally through repetition and musical patterns. Singing English songs exposes students to authentic pronunciation models and encourages them to articulate sounds more clearly without the pressure of formal speaking tasks. From a qualitative perspective, English choir activities offer valuable opportunities to observe students' pronunciation development as it occurs naturally during the learning process. Through repeated practice, guided pronunciation drills, and group singing, students gradually become more familiar with English sound patterns. In addition, singing activities tend to reduce learners' anxiety and create a supportive atmosphere where students feel more confident using English orally (Krashen, 1982).

Besides linguistic benefits, English choir activities also play an important role in shaping students' learning motivation. Motivation is a crucial affective factor that influences students' engagement, persistence, and willingness to participate in language learning activities. Enjoyable and collaborative activities such as singing can enhance students' interest in English and foster positive learning experiences. When students feel motivated and emotionally comfortable, they are more likely to participate actively and take risks in practicing English pronunciation. Although English Day programs have been widely implemented in schools, studies that specifically explore the role of English choir activities in supporting students' English pronunciation and learning motivation remain limited, particularly at the senior high school level in Bengkulu. Most previous studies focus on general speaking skills or students' perceptions of English Day programs, while fewer studies provide an in-depth qualitative description of how English choir activities influence pronunciation and motivation during the learning process. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effect of English choir activities within the English Day program on students' English pronunciation and learning motivation at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Bengkulu using a descriptive qualitative approach. The findings of this study are expected to provide practical insights for English teachers and schools in optimizing English Day activities to support students' linguistic and affective development.

RESERACH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design. The primary objective of this research was to investigate the effect of English choir activities implemented in the English Day program on students' English pronunciation and learning motivation. A qualitative approach was selected because this study focused on describing observable changes in students' pronunciation and exploring students' perceptions and experiences rather than measuring learning outcomes through numerical scores or standardized tests. The descriptive qualitative design allowed the researcher to capture natural classroom practices and learning processes that occurred during English choir activities. Through this approach, the

study sought to provide an in-depth understanding of how repeated exposure to English songs, pronunciation drills, and group singing activities contributed to students' pronunciation development and motivation to use English in an authentic context.

This study was conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Bengkulu, a senior high school that implements English Day programs as part of its efforts to enhance students' English proficiency. The participants of this study consisted of students from grades X to XII who were involved in the school's English choir activities. These activities were conducted as a regular program and intensified as preparation for an English choir competition.

To obtain more focused and detailed data, students from Class X Unggul were selected as the main participants for observation. This class was chosen because the students actively participated in English choir practices and showed consistent involvement throughout the training sessions. The participants had varying levels of English proficiency, particularly in pronunciation, which provided rich data for observing changes during the learning process.

The English choir activities were conducted in four meetings over a period of one month, with one session held each week. Each meeting lasted approximately 45 minutes. The activities were designed to support students' pronunciation development through structured and repetitive practice. During the training sessions, students were guided to practice English pronunciation explicitly, focusing on vowel sounds, consonant sounds, word stress, and intonation. Vocabulary related to the song lyrics was also introduced to help students understand the meaning of the songs and pronounce the words more accurately. In addition, attention was given to song intonation and rhythm to ensure that students could produce English sounds naturally while singing.

Two English songs were used as learning media in this study, namely *I Have a Dream* by Westlife and *Shalala Lala* by Vengaboys. These songs were selected because they contain clear pronunciation patterns and repetitive lyrics, making them suitable for pronunciation practice. The English choir activities were carried out intensively as part of the preparation for an English choir competition, which encouraged students to practice consistently and perform confidently.

The data in this study were collected using qualitative techniques to explore students' English pronunciation development and learning motivation during English choir activities implemented in the English Day program. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because this study focused on describing learning processes and students' responses as they occurred naturally in the classroom (Creswell & Poth, 2021). The main data collection technique was classroom observation, supported by documentation. Observations were conducted during four English choir practice sessions over a one-month period, with one session held each week. Each session lasted approximately 45 minutes. The observations focused on students' pronunciation performance, including the production of English sounds, word stress, and intonation while singing English songs. Students' learning motivation was also observed through their participation, confidence, enthusiasm, and willingness to practice English pronunciation during the activities.

The observations were conducted without interfering with the learning process. The researcher acted as a non-participant observer to ensure that students' behavior reflected authentic learning conditions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2020). Field notes were taken to record important events, students' responses, and observable changes in pronunciation and motivation across the sessions. Documentation was used to support the observation data and strengthen data credibility. The documentation included lesson plans, song lyrics, and photographs taken during English choir activities. These documents provided additional context regarding the implementation of English choir activities and supported the interpretation of the observational data.

The data analysis in this study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. The qualitative data obtained from classroom observations and documentation were analyzed by organizing, reviewing, and interpreting the data to identify patterns related to students' English pronunciation development and learning motivation (Karim, 2024). The analysis process began with reviewing the observation field notes from each English choir session. The researcher examined the data to identify observable changes in students' pronunciation, such as clearer sound production, more accurate word stress, and improved intonation during singing activities. Students' learning motivation was analyzed based on indicators such as active participation, increased confidence, and willingness to engage in pronunciation practice.

After reviewing the data, the findings were grouped into two main categories: students' English pronunciation and students' learning motivation. The data were then interpreted descriptively to explain how English choir activities supported students' pronunciation development and enhanced their motivation during the English Day program. The findings were presented in narrative form to provide a clear and contextualized description of the learning process.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

FINDINGS

Students' English Pronunciation Development through English Choir Activities

The findings of this study show that English choir activities contributed positively to students' English pronunciation development during the English Day program at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Bengkulu. Based on classroom observations conducted over four meetings, students demonstrated gradual improvements in their ability to pronounce English sounds more clearly and accurately while participating in choir practices. At the beginning of the English choir sessions, several students experienced difficulties in producing certain English sounds, particularly English vowels and consonants that do not exist in Indonesian. Many students initially applied Indonesian pronunciation patterns when singing English songs, which resulted in unclear articulation, incorrect stress, and flat intonation. Some students also hesitated when pronouncing unfamiliar words found in the song lyrics.

However, as the English choir activities progressed, students became more familiar with English sound patterns through repeated exposure to song lyrics and guided

pronunciation practice. The repetition of lyrics during collective singing allowed students to practice pronunciation naturally without excessive pressure. Observable improvements were noted in vowel clarity, consonant articulation, word stress, and intonation, especially when students sang English songs such as *I Have a Dream* and *Shalala Lala*. The findings indicate that pronunciation improvement did not occur instantly but developed gradually throughout the learning process. English choir activities provided continuous opportunities for students to listen to correct pronunciation models and practice them repeatedly in a supportive group setting.

In addition to pronunciation development, the findings reveal that English choir activities positively influenced students' learning motivation. During the observation sessions, students showed increased enthusiasm, active participation, and confidence when engaging in English learning activities. At the initial stage, some students appeared shy and reluctant to sing loudly or pronounce English words clearly. However, as the choir activities continued, students gradually became more confident and comfortable participating in the sessions. Many students actively followed singing instructions, participated in group practices, and showed willingness to repeat pronunciation drills when guided by the teacher.

The collaborative nature of English choir activities reduced students' anxiety and fear of making mistakes because pronunciation practice was conducted collectively rather than individually. This group-based learning environment encouraged students to enjoy the learning process and engage more actively during English Day activities.

The findings also highlight the important role of English choir activities as part of the English Day program. English Day aims to provide students with opportunities to use English beyond formal classroom instruction, and English choir activities supported this goal by offering authentic and enjoyable language practice. Through choir activities, students practiced English pronunciation in a meaningful context while simultaneously developing positive attitudes toward English learning. The consistent implementation of choir practices, particularly as preparation for an English choir competition, encouraged regular exposure to English and sustained student engagement throughout the program.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study indicate that English choir activities play a significant role in improving students' English pronunciation and learning motivation within the English Day program. The observed improvements in students' pronunciation align with the view that pronunciation development can be enhanced through meaningful oral exposure and repeated practice in a supportive learning environment. According to Creswell and Poth (2021), qualitative learning processes emphasize gradual development through continuous engagement rather than immediate outcomes.

The use of English songs provided students with clear pronunciation models, rhythmic patterns, and natural intonation, which supported their pronunciation practice. Singing enabled students to internalize correct pronunciation patterns unconsciously, especially in terms of stress and intonation. This supports the idea that pronunciation

learning becomes more effective when students are exposed to authentic language input in enjoyable and low-anxiety contexts. Furthermore, the positive impact of English choir activities on students' learning motivation reflects the importance of affective factors in language learning. When students feel relaxed, supported, and emotionally engaged, they are more willing to participate actively and take risks in using the target language. Merriam and Tisdell (2020) emphasize that emotionally supportive learning environments encourage learner participation and persistence, particularly in qualitative educational settings.

The findings also demonstrate that English choir activities function effectively as part of English Day programs by providing students with opportunities to practice English outside conventional classroom instruction. This aligns with descriptive qualitative perspectives that focus on understanding students' learning experiences and processes rather than solely measuring achievement outcomes. As stated by Miles (2020), qualitative approaches highlight how learning activities shape students' engagement, motivation, and language development over time. Overall, the discussion suggests that integrating English choir activities into English Day programs can enhance both linguistic and affective aspects of English learning. English choir activities not only support students' pronunciation development but also foster motivation, confidence, and positive attitudes toward learning English.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSION

This study explored the effect of English choir activities implemented in the English Day program on students' English pronunciation and learning motivation at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Bengkulu using a descriptive qualitative approach. The findings indicate that English choir activities contributed positively to students' pronunciation development, particularly in terms of sound clarity, word stress, and intonation. Through repeated exposure to English songs and guided pronunciation practice, students gradually became more familiar with English sound patterns and demonstrated clearer and more confident pronunciation during the learning process. In addition to linguistic development, English choir activities were found to enhance students' learning motivation. The collaborative and enjoyable nature of group singing created a supportive learning environment that reduced students' anxiety and encouraged active participation. As a result, students showed increased confidence, enthusiasm, and willingness to practice English pronunciation during English choir sessions.

Overall, the findings suggest that English choir activities can serve as an effective qualitative learning strategy within English Day programs to support both students' English pronunciation development and learning motivation in EFL contexts. By providing meaningful, enjoyable, and low-anxiety learning experiences, English choir activities help create a positive atmosphere for language learning beyond formal classroom instruction. Therefore, English teachers and schools are encouraged to integrate English choir activities into English Day programs as an alternative approach to supporting students' linguistic and affective development.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions are proposed for related stakeholders. For English teachers, English choir activities can be used as an alternative learning strategy within English Day programs to support students' English pronunciation development. Teachers are encouraged to select English songs with clear pronunciation, simple lyrics, and repetitive patterns to help students practice sound production, word stress, and intonation. In addition, teachers may provide gradual pronunciation guidance to build students' confidence during the learning process.

For schools, English choir activities should be integrated more systematically into the implementation of English Day programs as a continuous and supportive activity. Schools are encouraged to provide consistent practice schedules, adequate facilities, and a learning environment that promotes active and enjoyable use of English. With proper support, English choir activities can function not only as extracurricular activities but also as an effective component of English language learning.

For future researchers, it is recommended to conduct further studies using more varied data collection techniques, such as interviews or students' reflective responses, to gain deeper insights into students' experiences and perceptions of English choir activities. Future research may also explore the implementation of English choir activities in different educational contexts or levels and examine their effects on other English language skills.

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