



## Improving Early Vocabulary Skills with Colorful Visuals: An Evaluation at TK Katolik Santa Maria Tulungagung

Dominika Apri Liya Kristiani<sup>1\*</sup>, Moh. Hanafi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Bhinneka PGRI University, Indonesia

[kristianiapriyaya@gmail.com](mailto:kristianiapriyaya@gmail.com)<sup>1\*</sup>, [hanafiemoh@gmail.com](mailto:hanafiemoh@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>

Address: Mayor Sujadi road No.7, Manggisan, Plosokandang, Kedungwaru District, Tulungagung Regency, East Java 66229

Author correspondence: [kristianiapriyaya@gmail.com](mailto:kristianiapriyaya@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** This study explored the impact of colorful pictures on vocabulary teaching effectiveness for students at TKK Santa Maria Tulungagung. Utilizing a pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design, the research involved TKK Santa Maria Tulungagung students who engaged with colorful pictures. Analysis was conducted using the SPSS 27 statistical program. Findings indicated a significant improvement in vocabulary mastery among students using colorful pictures, with a two-tailed sig. value of 0.006, which is below the 0.05 threshold. The incorporation of colorful pictures not only enhanced understanding but also made the learning process more engaging and enjoyable. Consequently, colorful pictures are deemed an effective strategy for teaching vocabulary to kindergarten students. This research aims to assist teachers in selecting more innovative and efficient methods to enhance vocabulary acquisition at the early childhood education level.

**Keywords:** Colorful picture, Effectiveness, Vocabulary teaching

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential tool for communication within any community, facilitating interaction and cultural exchange (Setiyadi et al., 2009). Language acquisition begins in early childhood, often naturally and without formal instruction, allowing children to learn their first language seamlessly (Nurhasanah Purba et al., 2020). Besides their first language, learning a second or foreign language, such as English, is increasingly vital in today's globalized world (Pertiwi et al., 2021). English, as an international language, plays a crucial role in various domains including politics, economics, society, and education, necessitating its study from an early age.

In the context of child development, language learning progresses through several stages (Kurniati, 2017). According to Lundsteen, these stages include the prelinguistic stage (0-12 months), where sounds originate internally and later involve the lips and palate, producing simple syllables like "ma," "da," and "ba." The protolinguistic stage (12 months-2 years) involves recognizing body parts and speaking a few words, expanding vocabulary to 200-300 words. The linguistic stage (2-6 years and beyond) is when children start learning grammar and significantly expand their vocabulary to around 3000 words.

Given these developmental stages, effective language teaching for young learners, particularly in English, requires tailored methods. Vocabulary is foundational to language learning, forming the basis for sentence construction and communication (Munir, 2016).

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Therefore, engaging and creative vocabulary instruction is crucial for young learners. One effective method involves using colorful pictures as learning media, which can enhance students' interest and comprehension. Various learning aids such as pictures, posters, hand puppets, and songs can make vocabulary learning more appealing and effective. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of colorful pictures in teaching vocabulary to kindergarten students at TKK Santa Maria Tulungagung.

## **2. THEORETICAL STUDY**

Language is essential for communication and cultural exchange (Setiyadi et al., 2009). Early childhood is a critical period for language acquisition, often occurring naturally (Nurhasanah Purba et al., 2020). Learning English as a second language is crucial in today's globalized world (Pertiwi et al., 2021), playing a significant role in various domains, including education. Children's language learning progresses through stages: prelinguistic (0-12 months), protolinguisitic (12 months-2 years), and linguistic (2-6 years) (Kurniati, 2017). Effective vocabulary instruction, a foundation for communication (Munir, 2016), must be engaging and creative. Colorful pictures can enhance interest and comprehension, making vocabulary learning appealing for young learners.

Previous studies highlight various effective methods for teaching vocabulary: singing, games, drilling (Pertiwi et al., 2021), flashcards (Zainuddin), pictures (Liando et al., 2022), cartoon films (Munir, 2016), realia (Irawan, 2017), songs (Anggaira et al.), animated media (Sartika et al., 2021), and interactive media like EdPuzzle (Rahayu & Bhaskoro, 2022). The hypothesis is crucial for guiding research and is formulated at the start (Yam & Taufik, 2021). It can express the influence of variables, either with or without direction (Yam & Taufik, 2021). Hypotheses are classified as null (H<sub>0</sub>) or alternative (H<sub>1</sub>). The null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) states there is no significant relationship between variables, while the alternative hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) represents the expected outcome. Based on this research, the hypotheses are:

- a. Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>): Colorful pictures are not effective in teaching vocabulary to kindergarten students.
- b. Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>): Colorful pictures are effective in teaching vocabulary to kindergarten students.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The research design is a plan for conducting empirical research, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data (Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020). It includes a conceptual framework to visualize and understand the relationships between dependent and independent variables. This study employs a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental One-Group Pretest-Posttest design to assess the effectiveness of colorful pictures in teaching vocabulary to kindergarten students at TKK Santa Maria Tulungagung.

The population of the study comprises all students at TKK Santa Maria Tulungagung for the 2023/2024 academic year, totaling 73 students. From this population, one class of 38 group B students was selected using purposive sampling, as these students are better adapted and can create a conducive learning environment. The research identifies two variables: the independent variable (x) is the use of colorful pictures, and the dependent variable (y) is students' vocabulary achievement. The effectiveness of colorful pictures in learning is measured through tests administered during both pre-test and post-test.

The research procedure involves preparing instruments with colorful pictures, obtaining permission from the headmaster, selecting one class of group B students, conducting a pre-test, applying the treatment, conducting a post-test, collecting data, analyzing data using SPSS 27, and drawing conclusions. Data collection employs an oral question-and-answer test with colorful pictures to assess students' vocabulary knowledge. Statistical analysis includes descriptive statistics and assumption tests such as normality tests and paired t-tests to compare vocabulary learning before and after using colorful pictures. The normality test checks if the sample data come from a normally distributed population, while the paired t-test assesses the effectiveness of the colorful pictures by comparing pre-test and post-test results.

### **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This research was attended by 38 students. Students' mastery of everyday vocabulary still tends to be lacking. In this research, especially in the pre-test, there were still students who did not understand vocabulary, so treatment was carried out using colorful pictures as a connecting medium so that later students could understand vocabulary well and accurately. In addition, it can be emphasized that visual aids in vocabulary learning can significantly improve language mastery. To achieve this success, it is recommended to combine colorful pictures with collaborative activities. So, different learning styles can further strengthen students' vocabulary abilities

This research demonstrates that using colorful pictures as a learning medium effectively enhances students' vocabulary mastery. In the pre-test, many students struggled with vocabulary comprehension, but after being treated with colorful pictures, their understanding was significantly improved. The T-test results showed a p-value of 0.006, indicating that H<sub>0</sub> is rejected and H<sub>1</sub> is accepted, meaning that colorful pictures positively impact vocabulary mastery.

After the treatment, the highest student score was 91, and the lowest was 49, showing a range in students' comprehension levels, but overall, there was a significant improvement. These findings are consistent with previous research that recommends using pictures as a teaching medium to enhance vocabulary mastery. The results offer new guidance for teachers in addressing students' vocabulary deficiencies by incorporating pictures as a teaching tool.

## **5. REKOMENDATION**

Based on the research results, several recommendations are provided for improving students' mastery of English vocabulary. English teachers are encouraged to enhance vocabulary learning by incorporating visual media, as using colorful pictures can help students more easily grasp and retain new vocabulary. Students should begin learning vocabulary with colorful pictures to aid memory and then progress to practicing memorization and rewriting the words they have learned to further enhance their vocabulary skills. For future researchers, there are many aspects of this topic that can still be explored. Future research could examine the effectiveness of colorful pictures on students' comprehension patterns in English learning, involve more participants, or be conducted at higher education levels.

## **Acknowledgment**

Based on the research results, several recommendations are provided for improving students' mastery of English vocabulary. Firstly, English teachers are encouraged to enhance vocabulary learning by incorporating visual media, as using colorful pictures can help students more easily grasp and retain new vocabulary. Secondly, students should begin learning vocabulary with colorful pictures to aid memory. They can then progress to practicing memorization and rewriting the words they have learned to further enhance their vocabulary skills. Lastly, for future researchers, there are many aspects of this topic that can still be explored. Future research could examine the effectiveness of colorful pictures on students' comprehension patterns in English learning, involve more participants, or be conducted at higher education levels.

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