

The Melodic Classroom: Enhancing Second Language (L2) English Vocabulary Acquisition through Islamic Songs for Kindergarten Students

Bazrina Ramly., Wan Syariza Wan Yadri*, Nur Afiqah Ab Latif., Mimi Mazlina Mohamad., Amanina Abdul Razak

Centre of Foundation Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Selangor, Kampus Dengkil, Dengkil, Selangor, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.910000841>

Received: 07 November 2025; Accepted: 14 November 2025; Published: 26 November 2025

ABSTRACT

The study aims at finding the effectiveness of Islamic songs in enhancing English vocabulary acquisition and improving attitudes toward English learning among kindergarten children. The researchers applied a quantitative design study. The sample consisted of 40 learners aged 5 to 6 from an Islamic kindergarten who participated in a pre-test and post-test survey. The intervention incorporated English Islamic songs designed with repetitive, meaningful, and culturally relevant lyrics. Paired-samples t-test results indicated a significant improvement in vocabulary acquisition. The Marginal Homogeneity Test further showed significant positive shifts in students' attitudes, motivation, and reduced anxiety toward learning English. These findings support key principles from Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Vygotsky's Social Constructivism, and Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory, demonstrating that Islamic songs provide comprehensible input, emotional comfort, and increased engagement. The study highlights the pedagogical value of culturally grounded musical instruction in early English language education and suggests implications for future research.

Keywords: Vocabulary acquisition, Islamic Songs, Early Childhood Education, Second Language, Affective Factors

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The vocabulary acquisition in early stages of language development plays a significant role in second language (L2) language learning. The ability to understand new words effectively builds the foundation for later language proficiency and communicative competence as a whole (Joyce, 2011; Lightbrown & Spade, 2013). Thus, teaching vocabulary to young learners requires approaches that are not only effective but also engaging, age appropriate and contextually relevant to their environment.

Among the various strategies available, the use of songs has become one of the powerful approaches for young learners to learn the English language. Songs combine melody, rhythm, repetition, and meaningful lyrics that lower the affective filter, sustain attention, and provide memorable linguistic input that supports vocabulary learning. Lijiao & Amirdabbaghian (2024) stated that songs stimulate interest and emotion through melody and lyrics, creating a positive, interactive, and engaging classroom atmosphere compared with traditional methods. In kindergarten contexts, rhythmic and melodic features help learners incorporate language patterns and routines, making lexical items more accessible and easier to recall (Ngadni & Wong, 2021).

Beyond initial word recognition, songs deepen vocabulary knowledge by situating words in context, exposing learners to collocations and formulaic sequences, and offering repeated, low-anxiety rehearsal opportunities that build automaticity (Nie, et al, 2022). For young L2 learners who have limited English exposure outside school,

music-based instruction can bridge home and school language environments, increase motivation, and accelerate the acquisition of high-frequency vocabulary, which is important for academic success, such as in reading and communication skills.

In the Malaysian context, Islamic songs hold a meaningful role in early childhood education. These songs are commonly used in preschools to nurture moral values, create a calming learning environment, and provide culturally familiar experiences for Muslim learners. According to Ngadni et al. (2025), Islamic songs blend simple language with melodic repetition, presenting English words in a way that is both accessible and emotionally comforting to young children. This cultural and pedagogical relevance makes Islamic songs a promising tool for supporting early English vocabulary development in Malaysia.

Statement of the Problem

Developing a strong English vocabulary during early childhood sets a vital foundation for future reading and communication skills. However, in Malaysian kindergartens, teachers often face challenges to retain young learners' interest long enough for effective vocabulary acquisition. This is due to short attention spans and limited English exposure at home. It has been observed that traditional learning methods often fail to hold young learners' attention. Previous studies confirmed that the lower the child's age, the shorter their attention span tends to be (Seli et al., 2023). Hence, there is a pressing need to develop teaching methods that can sustain and capture the interest of young learners, particularly those aged 5 to 6 years old.

Recent research supports the use of songs and music-based instruction as powerful tools to enhance vocabulary retention among preschoolers because rhythm, rhyme, and repetition naturally support memory and pronunciation (Morini et al., 2021; Silva, 2024; Zaharani & Hasanah, 2023). For Muslim learners, Islamic songs, or nasheeds, offer an added cultural advantage as they embed positive values and familiar contexts while presenting English words in meaningful and emotionally engaging ways (Misman et al., 2022; Ngadni et al., 2025). Ideally, integrating nasheed-based English lessons would motivate participation, strengthen vocabulary recall, and nurture moral development. However, despite these advantages, empirical evidence on how Islamic songs support English language vocabulary remains limited.

Existing studies often describe positive classroom experiences using songs but rarely examine the linguistic mechanism and affective mechanism that contribute to successful vocabulary learning. Very few studies apply established learning theories to explain how Islamic songs may enhance children's vocabulary development. Furthermore, research involving young Muslim learners frequently lacks structured pre-post assessments that measure actual vocabulary gains. As a result, there is limited empirical data showing to which extent Islamic songs improve vocabulary learning in early childhood education. In addition, although affective factors such as attitude and anxiety strongly influence language learning, little is known about how Islamic song-based lessons shape young children's feelings towards English.

Given these gaps, there is a clear need for research that examines both the vocabulary outcomes and the affective responses associated with using Islamic songs in English lessons. As such, this study aims to determine the effectiveness of Islamic songs in improving vocabulary acquisition among kindergarten learners and to explore how these songs influence their attitudes and anxiety towards learning English. By integrating pre- and post-vocabulary testing and child-friendly attitude measures, this study provides empirical evidence on the pedagogical value of Islamic songs in early English language learning.

Objective of the Study and Research Questions

This study is done to explore the role of songs in acquiring the English language learning. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a statistically significant difference in the vocabulary acquisition (pre-test vs. post-test scores) of kindergarten students following the intervention using Islamic songs in English?

2. Did the intervention program using English Islamic songs significantly change kindergarten students' attitudes and anxiety towards English language learning?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Importance of Vocabulary Acquisition in Early Childhood Education

Vocabulary acquisition is more incidental and accommodating in the mother tongue. However, L2 learners face difficulties in acquiring new vocabulary since they have lower vocabulary depth. The limited exposure to authentic language input restricts children's ability to use and interpret words in meaningful contexts (Hjetland et al., 2021). Therefore, educators need to vary the teaching strategies, especially for early learners, to enrich the students' vocabulary range and enhance their proficiency in the target language. One of the strategies that is believed to help widen early learners' vocabulary acquisition is by using songs in English. The theory that underpins this approach is Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. The theory posits that humans possess multiple distinctive intelligences that affect their ability to acquire new skills. Using music in language learning encourages greater learner participation and sustained engagement, making lessons more interactive and productive (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2023). The study demonstrates that having diverse learning activities in language classrooms improves vocabulary retention and fosters student engagement. Another similar study, managed by Meisuri et al. (2025), found that incorporating songs to reinforce vocabulary enhances learners' attention through repetition, rhythm, and gestures. Thus, the learning environment is more memorable and engaging for children, making the learning input more sustainable and retained.

Songs as a Tool for Language Learning

Songs are recognised as an effective instrument for second language acquisition due to their unique ability to integrate verbal input with rhythm, melody, and repetition. These components enhance memory traces and promote phonological awareness, thereby simplifying the process of learning new vocabulary (Hamilton et al., 2024). Songs also offer contextualised and intelligible input, consistent with Krashen's Input Hypothesis. In accordance with this theory, students acquire language quickly whenever they have exposure to comprehensible input that is slightly above their current level ($i+1$), and the rhythm and repetition in songs create precisely such input (Rowe et al., 2023).

Kumar (2022) asserts that music and songs enhance language retention in both short- and long-term memory by promoting repetition and lowering the affective filter, therefore making studying more effective and appealing. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2023) found that Chinese secondary students who learned English through singing demonstrated enhanced vocabulary retention and pronunciation fluency as compared to those learning through a traditional method. The results reveal that melodies enhance verbal memory and learning effectiveness. Supporting these findings, Kholid et al. (2024) reported a substantial vocabulary gain (43%, compared to 10% using textbook methods). This suggests that using songs in the English lesson can improve vocabulary recall via rhythm, repetition, and emotional involvement.

Huang et al. (2024) and Alharthi (2024) demonstrated that exercises centered on songs and lyrics enhance listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition, particularly when the lyrics are relevant, comprehensible, and age-appropriate for the learners. Lawson-Adams et al. (2022) similarly found that sung and rhythmic recited songs enhanced preschoolers' vocabulary more successfully than conventional visual card techniques. Their findings emphasise that music, rhythm, and pictures collectively enhance meaningful language learning and involvement.

Integration of Islamic Songs to Enhance English Vocabulary Learning

Islamic songs serve as a culturally meaningful and pedagogically effective medium that integrates rhythm, language, and moral instruction. Djamdjuri (2016) highlights that Islamic lullabies are designed not only to entertain but also to nurture faith-based qualities such as compassion, respect, and gratitude. Through these songs, children can adopt English vocabulary related to both religious and everyday moral values, demonstrating how language learning and character education can coexist. Similarly, Naralita and Azis (2020) emphasise that

incorporating Islamic melodies into English education promotes language proficiency while deepening religious consciousness, achieving harmony between linguistic and spiritual growth. In the Malaysian context, such religion-based learning materials also create a familiar and supportive classroom environment that reduces anxiety and fosters a sense of belonging among Muslim learners.

Moreover, Megawati et al. (2024) present a systematic framework for the implementation of Islamic song-based pedagogy, encompassing activities such as lyric analysis, fill-in-the-blank tasks, vocabulary matching, and reflective dialogues, all of which facilitate vocabulary acquisition through repetition and emotional involvement. These teaching approaches correspond with the findings of Coyle and Gómez Gracia (2014) that song-based learning enhances receptive vocabulary retention in young EFL learners. Likewise, Long and Mustafa (2020) discovered that Malaysian early childhood educators regard music and nursery rhymes as effective instruments for language instruction, as they enhance a positive learning atmosphere. Djamdjuri (2016) contends that Islamic melodies, or nasheeds, exemplified by Sami Yusuf, convey moral ideals that offer pedagogical potential for L2 classrooms by associating language input with spiritual reflection.

These studies jointly affirm that the incorporation of Islamic music into English vocabulary training enhances language outcomes while promoting moral, emotional, and cultural awareness among young Muslim learners. This instructional approach provides a holistic educational framework wherein language acquisition functions as an avenue for communication and personal growth.

Conceptual Framework

This study's methodological approach and hypothesised relationships are guided by a robust Conceptual Framework (as shown in Figure 1), which integrates established learning and language acquisition theories to explain the mechanism by which culturally relevant material, specifically Islamic songs, can enhance early English proficiency. While the existing literature identifies the benefits of music in language learning, a framework that synthesizes the linguistic input (Krashen), the social-cultural context (Vygotsky), and the cognitive pathway of delivery (Gardner) is necessary to precisely model the intervention's impact on kindergarten students. This framework operationalizes the use of Islamic songs as the independent variable, identifies the specific mediating variables through which learning occurs (exposure, engagement, repetition, and contextualization), and posits the predicted improvement in the dependent variables (vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation accuracy/fluency, and motivation). The subsequent sections detail the theoretical underpinnings, the hypothesized relationships, and the visual representation of this framework.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework, which is primarily grounded in three foundational learning theories: Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Vygotsky's Social Constructivism, and Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory. This synthesis explains how the use of Islamic songs in English enhances English language outcomes for kindergarten students. In this model, the independent variable is the Islamic Songs Intervention, which delivers comprehensible input ($i + 1$), as per Krashen's Hypothesis, through features such as simple vocabulary, repetitive lyrics, and meaningful cultural context. These song characteristics stimulate exposure, engagement, repetition, and contextualization, which function as mediating variables (or mechanisms) that directly influence the children's learning. Consequently, the dependent variables are positively affected: Linguistic outcomes (i.e., vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation accuracy) and the affective outcome (i.e., motivation toward English learning). Vygotsky's theory supports this process by emphasising the song's role as a potent social and cultural tool that facilitates language development within the learners' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Simultaneously, Gardner's theory highlights that music activates musical intelligence, making the input more enjoyable, memorable, and thus lowering the affective filter. Therefore, the framework clearly highlights that Islamic songs serve as a culturally congruent and engaging medium, providing both necessary linguistic input and crucial affective benefits that collectively facilitate young learners' English discovery.

IV:			MV: Exposure	Learning Facilitation	DV: Vocabulary Acquisition

	Use of Islamic Songs	Krashen's Input ($i + 1$)	MV: Engagement		
		Gardner's MI	MV: Repetition	Vygotsky's ZPD	DV: Pronunciation Accuracy
			MV: Contextualization		V: Motivation

Fig. 1 Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study is conducted to investigate the effectiveness of Islamic songs in enhancing English language learning among kindergarten students. A purposive sample of 40 children, aged 5 to 6, from an Islamic kindergarten participated in the study. The main instrument used is a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale adapted from Medina (2002) and Wasubaie (2015), which was designed to reveal the key variables shown in Figure 1. The instrument measured children's vocabulary acquisition and attitude, and anxiety when learning English through Islamic songs.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section A captured the demographic profile of the respondents (age and gender). Section B measured vocabulary acquisition, while Section C measured children's attitudes and anxiety towards the use of Islamic-based songs in English learning. The data was analysed to identify patterns of improvement and relationships between the variables.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of items in the questionnaire. The items were developed to reflect a framework that synthesises the linguistic input (Krashen), the socio-cultural context (Vygotsky), and the cognitive pathway of delivery (Gardner) that is necessary to model the intervention's impact on kindergarten students. These frameworks explain how repeated, meaningful input and low-anxiety learning environments contribute to vocabulary acquisition and positive attitudes toward English among kindergarten learners.

The analysis shows a Cronbach's alpha of .865 for all 10 items. These values exceed the recommended minimum of 0.70 (Jackson, 2015), thus indicating a good level of reliability for the instrument used. Further data analysis was conducted using SPSS to compute descriptive and inferential statistics to present findings that answer the research questions of the study. The findings provide empirical explanations for how Islamic songs can enhance English language learning by improving their vocabulary acquisition and fostering more positive attitudes while reducing anxiety towards English language learning.

CONSTRUCTS	SECTION	ITEMS
VOCABULARY ACQUISITION	B	5
ATTITUDES AND ANXIETY	C	5
		10

Fig. 2 Distribution of Items in the Questionnaire

FINDINGS

Findings for Demographic Profile

This section presents the results of the statistical analyses conducted to address the study's two research questions (RQs). The findings are organized as follows: first, a descriptive analysis of the participants' demographic profile is provided. Second, the quantitative results of the pre-test/post-test analysis, which determine the statistical significance of the Islamic songs intervention on vocabulary acquisition (RQ1), are presented. Finally, the

descriptive statistics derived from the post-intervention questionnaire are reported, detailing the students' levels of motivation and enjoyment (RQ2).

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	16	40
Female	24	60
Total	40	100

Fig. 3 Distribution of participants by gender

The study involved a total of 40 kindergarten students (Figure 3). The sample was slightly skewed towards female participants, who constituted 60% (n=24) of the total sample, while male participants accounted for 40% (n=16). As the students were all drawn from kindergarten classes, they represent the target population of young learners aged approximately 5 to 6 years old.

Findings to answer RQ1

Is there a statistically significant difference in the vocabulary acquisition (pre-test vs. post-test scores) of kindergarten students following the intervention using Islamic songs in English?

This section presents the results of the paired-samples *t*-test conducted to determine if the use of Islamic songs in English resulted in a statistically significant difference between the kindergarten students' pre-test and post-test vocabulary acquisition scores.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95%
Confidence Interval	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)	
			Lower	Upper
Pre – post	20.10	6.73	1.06	17.95
39	<.001		22.25	18.88

Fig. 4 Paired samples *t*-test

The analysis of the intervention yielded statistically significant evidence supporting the efficacy of using Islamic songs to enhance English learning outcomes among the kindergarten participants. Specifically, the students demonstrated a marked increase in their vocabulary scores post-intervention (M=43.40, SD=6.25) compared to their baseline scores at pre-test (M=23.30, SD=3.47). The results of the paired-samples *t*-test confirmed this difference was statistically significant, $t(39) = 18.88$, $p < .001$, 95% CI[17.95,22.25], leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests that the Islamic songs intervention has a profound and positive impact on vocabulary acquisition.

This linguistic success is attributed to several mechanisms inherent in the intervention, directly supporting the claims of the conceptual framework. Firstly, the repetitive and rhythmic structure of the songs ensured the delivery of comprehensible input (i+1), which is crucial for acquisition according to Krashen's Input Hypothesis and is strongly supported in L2 vocabulary retention studies (Ananda et al., 2023). This repetitive input facilitates long-term memory retrieval and retention by maximising exposure frequency. Secondly, the use of culturally relevant Islamic themes provided meaningful contextualisation, reinforcing language learning by treating the songs as effective social and cultural tools in line with Vygotsky's Social Constructivism (Harmer, 2020). Finally, the musical delivery channels the input through Gardner's Musical Intelligence, a factor established in the literature as an effective pedagogical tool that engages students and lowers the cognitive barrier to language processing (Hui & Jamaludin, 2024). Thus, the program's success in driving significant vocabulary gains is a direct outcome of leveraging these linguistic and contextual pathways.

Findings to answer RQ2

Did the intervention program using English Islamic songs significantly change kindergarten students' attitudes and anxiety towards English language learning?

This section presents the results of the Marginal Homogeneity Test (MHT), which was performed to determine if the Islamic songs intervention resulted in a statistically significant change in the kindergarten students' attitudes toward English songs and learning and their level of anxiety regarding English language learning. The MHT was applied to the five pairs of pre- and post-survey items, which were measured on a three-category nominal scale (Yes, Not Sure, No). The results show a statistically significant change in the distribution of responses from the pre-survey to the post-survey for all five attitude and affect items, as shown in Figure 5 below:

1.	Paired Survey Item	Std. MH Statistics (Z)
	Asymp. Sig. (p)	Conclusion
2.	Q1: Do you like to sing songs?	2.65 .008
	Significant change	
3.	Q2: Do you like to sing English songs?	3.27 .001
	Significant change	
4.	Q3: Do you like to learn English?	3.92 <.001
	Significant change	
5.	Q4: Excited/happy to learn English?	3.80 <.001
	Significant change	
6.	Q5: Feeling nervous to learn English?	-3.580 <.001
	Significant change	

Fig. 5 Analysis of Marginal Homogeneity Test Results

Based on Figure 5, the Marginal Homogeneity Test (MHT) was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the Islamic songs intervention in significantly changing students' attitudes and anxiety towards English Learning. The analysis revealed a statistically significant change in the distribution of responses from the pre-survey to the post-survey. Specifically, highly significant shifts were observed for Q2 (liking English songs, Std. MH Statistic = 3.27, $p = .001$), Q3 (liking to learn English, Std. MH statistic = 3.92, $p = <.001$), and Q4 (excitement to learn English, Std. MH Statistic = 3.80, $p = <.001$). Crucially, there was also a highly significant reduction in reported nervousness (Q5, Std. MH Statistic = 3.58, $p <.001$), suggesting the program successfully lowered the students' affective filter. The shift in general liking for singing (Q1, Std. MH Statistic = 2.65, $p = .008$) was also significant.

The statistically significant shifts across all five measures of attitude and affect strongly suggest that the Islamic songs intervention was highly effective in creating a positive and supportive learning environment. This finding directly supports the secondary claims of the conceptual framework, namely the roles of Gardner's Musical Intelligence and the affective filter.

The significant increase in reported excitement and liking to learn English (Q3 and Q4) demonstrates the intervention's success in enhancing intrinsic motivation (Jones, 2020). The engaging, rhythmic nature of the songs activates the learners' musical intelligence, making the cognitive effort of learning feel enjoyable rather than burdensome (Zakaria et al., 2023). This alignment between pedagogy and cognitive style is crucial for young learners.

Furthermore, the highly significant decrease in reported nervousness (Q5) is critical. This indicates that the songs successfully lowered the Affective Filter (Krashen's Input Hypothesis), a psychological barrier that prevents comprehensible input from reaching the language acquisition process (Sibouh et al., 2025). By lowering this filter, the learning environment becomes less threatening, allowing learners to be more receptive to the vocabulary and pronunciation input.

Finally, the improved attitude towards English songs (Q2) underscores the importance of culturally relevant content. Integrating Islamic themes provided a meaningful contextualisation (Vygotsky's Social Constructivism), transforming the learning material into a familiar cultural tool that children readily accepted and engaged with (Sabir & Hammad, 2023). This combination of affective engagement and cultural relevance

is the key driver behind the observed positive change in attitudes and the subsequent success in the vocabulary acquisition (RQ1).

CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings and Discussions

The study's findings convincingly demonstrate that integrating Islamic songs into English vocabulary lessons significantly enhances young learners' language acquisition and positive attitudes toward learning English. Quantitative analysis revealed a marked increase in vocabulary scores post-intervention, confirming the effectiveness of musical, repetitive, and culturally relevant input in facilitating language retention. In addition, students exhibited more positive attitudes and showed reduced anxiety, with significant shifts in their liking for English songs, motivation to learn, and decreased nervousness. These results point out the importance of culturally familiar and emotionally engaging materials. This aligns with theories such as Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Vygotsky's social constructivism, and Gardner's multiple intelligences in creating an enjoyable, meaningful, and less-threatening learning environment that boosts both linguistic and affective development.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that Islamic songs serve a dual purpose: fostering linguistic skills while simultaneously reinforcing moral and spiritual values, which enhances students' overall engagement and emotional connection to the learning process. By reducing anxiety and increasing motivation, these culturally embedded songs become powerful pedagogical tools that support sustained interest and active participation among young Muslim learners. The positive outcomes also highlight the importance of culturally relevant content in early childhood education, emphasising that integrating moral, religious, and language objectives within engaging and meaningful activities can significantly shape learners' attitudes, motivation, and long-term language retention. Future research exploring long-term effects and cultural comparisons could further strengthen the understanding of the broader educational benefits of this approach.

Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

The study has multiple pedagogical implications for English language instructors, particularly in Islamic or culturally relevant early childhood environments. English teachers in Muslim countries like Malaysia could incorporate Islamic songs as extra educational resources to enhance vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation skills. Islamic songs, or nasheeds, impart moral principles that provide teaching opportunities for second language classrooms by connecting language use with moral or spiritual development (Djamdjuri, 2016; Naralita and Azis, 2020). As proposed by Megawati et al. (2024), preschoolers' attention span could be enhanced by using lyric-based exercises like "gap filling," "vocabulary matching", or "action singing". These activities also reinforce vocabulary through contextual application and repetition.

Additionally, the incorporation of faith-based and culturally relevant content mitigates emotional obstacles and anxiety, as evidenced in this study and corroborated by Naralita and Azis (2020). Educators in Malaysian kindergartens might modify English nasheeds that incorporate qualities of respect, honesty, and thankfulness, ensuring alignment between moral and language objectives. This culturally sensitive methodology corresponds with Vygotsky's concept of social learning within familiar contexts and Bandura's (2001) focus on environmental factors in learning. Furthermore, the incorporation of Islamic songs can improve motivation and engagement by fostering excitement and interest within the teaching environment. Hence, preschool teachers are urged to employ musical intelligence as a primary learning approach (Gardner, 1983) to assist learners with diverse cognitive processes.

In addition to the pedagogical implications, several directions for future research are suggested. Firstly, longitudinal research should examine the long-term effects of Islamic song-based instructions on children's moral development and language retention. This would enable the researchers to determine if the immediate impacts of Islamic melodies are long-lasting. Furthermore, it may be feasible to investigate the impact of cultural relevance on retention and participation by comparing Islamic and non-Islamic song-based language learning. By comparing the responses of learners to materials that are aligned with their cultural and religious beliefs to those that are not, future research could determine the extent to which cultural familiarity improves retention,

motivation, and emotional connection. Finally, qualitative research methodology, such as classroom observations or interviews with teachers and parents may provide further insights into the impact of Islamic songs on children's motivation and identity development.

In summary, the incorporation of Islamic songs into English language kindergarten classrooms provides a comprehensive and culturally sensitive teaching strategy that fosters moral growth, improves vocabulary acquisition, and creates a positive learning atmosphere. This strategy integrates rhythm, repetition, and religious beliefs, constituting an innovative framework for early second language teaching in Muslim countries like Malaysia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher would like to express sincere gratitude to the administration and teachers of the Islamic kindergarten involved in this study for their cooperation and support throughout the data collection process. Heartfelt appreciation is also extended to the young learners and their parents for their participation and willingness to contribute to this research. The researcher is also grateful to colleagues and friends who provided assistance, insights, and motivation during the development of this project.

REFERENCES

1. Coyle, Y., & Gómez Gracia, R. (2014). Using songs to enhance L2 vocabulary acquisition in preschool children. *ELT Journal*, 68(3), 276–285. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccu015>
2. Djamdjuri, D. S. (2016). Islamic songs for children (immerse morals or religious understanding toward children). *English Journal*, 7(2), 120–127.
3. Hamilton, C., Schulz, J., Chalmers, H., & Murphy, V. (2024). Investigating the substantive linguistic effects of using songs for teaching second or foreign languages to preschool, primary and secondary school learners: A systematic review of intervention research. *System*, 124, 103350. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2024.103350>
4. Hjetland, H. N., Hofslundsengen, H., Klem, M., Karlsen, J., Hagen, Å. M., Engevik, L. I., Geva, E., Norbury, C., Monsrud, M.-B., & Bottegaard Naess, K.-A. (2021). Vocabulary interventions for second language (L2) learners up to six years. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, 2021(9). <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.cd014890>
5. Hui, J.C. W., & Jamaludin, A.K. (2024). The Use of Songs in English Language Teaching: A Systematic Literature Review to Identify Advantages and Appropriateness of Age Categories. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 13(1). <https://ijarped.com/index.php/journal/article/view/674>
6. Huang, Y.-C., & Kate Tzu-Ching Chen. (2024). Supporting EFL Listening Ability and Vocabulary Acquisition with Lyrics Training App. *International Journal of Instruction*, 17(2), 539–560. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2024.17230a>
7. Jones, L., & Patel, R. (2020). Digital Transformation in Classrooms: Challenges and Solutions. *Journal of Educational Technology*, 15, 45-67.
8. Kholid, M. F., Rini, Y. P. ., & Winasari, B. T. . (2024). Improving Vocabulary Mastery with English Kids' Songs: A Study in Primary Education. *LinguaEducare: Journal of English and Linguistic Studies*, 1(2), 71-82. <https://doi.org/10.63324/lec.1v.2i.16>
9. Kumar, T., Akhter, S., Yunus, M. M., & Shamsy, A. (2022). Use of music and songs as pedagogical tools in teaching English as foreign language contexts. *Education Research International*, 2022(1), 3384067.
10. Lawson-Adams, J., Dickinson, D.K. and Donner, J.K. (2022). Sing it or speak it?: the effects of sung and rhythmically spoken songs on preschool children's word learning. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 58 (87-102). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2021.06.008>
11. Lijiao, C. and Amirdabbaghian, A. (2024). The impact of songs on vocabulary acquisition by ESL undergraduate students. *Journal of Language and Literature*. Vol 13(2).
12. Long, G. L. J., & Mustafa, M. C. (2020). Early childhood teachers' perspectives on the effectiveness of teaching vocabulary through nursery rhymes. *Jurnal Pendidikan Awal Kanak-Kanak Kebangsaan*, 9, 9-17.

13. Megawati, F., Agustina, T., & Wulandari, D. (2024). Learning English with Islamic songs. *UMSIDA Press*. 1-63
14. Misman, Juritah & Abd Rahman, Nur & Sharipp, Muhammad Taufik & Abdullah, Nik & Soekarno, Megawati & Kassim, Hafizoah. (2022). Classroom Activities Using English Nasheed Songs. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 12. 10.6007/IJARBS/v12-i10/14984.
15. Medina, S. L. (2002). The effects of music on second language vocabulary acquisition. *Natl Netw. Early Lang. Learn.* 6, 1–8. doi: 10.1093/jmt/36.2.110
16. Meisuri, Wiwiek & Tanjung, Aqila & Hasim, Karina & Sinaga, Martha & Panjaitan, Reinhard & Gao, Shinta. (2025). Teaching English Vocabulary to Young Learners: An ESL Approach with Scouting Themes. *Jurnal Sadewa : Publikasi Ilmu Pendidikan, Pembelajaran dan Ilmu Sosial*. 3. 241-250. 10.61132/sadewa.v3i2.1803.
17. Morini, G., Manelis, A., & Melzi, G. (2021). Songs, rhythm, and vocabulary learning in early bilingual settings. *Early Child Development and Care*, 191(14), 2263–2274. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2019.1677029>
18. Mutezo, A. T., & Mapuva, J. (2023). Social presence and teaching interactions as predictors of learning engagement. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 71(2), 823–841. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-022-10163-1>
19. Naralita, V., & Azis, Y. A. (2020). Using Islamic songs and its effect in teaching English at an Indonesian Islamic university. *EduLangue*, 3(2), 127-149.
20. Nie, K., Fu, J., Rehman, H., and Zaigham, G.H. K. (2022). An Empirical Study of the Effects of Incidental Vocabulary Learning Through Listening to Songs. *Front Psychol.* doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.891146.
21. Ngadni, I., Idris, R., & Hassan, Z. (2025). Preschool educators' insights on music and movement in children's English vocabulary acquisition. *Journal of Early Childhood Studies*, 5(1), 33–49.
22. Ngadni, I., & Hui, W. Z. (2025). Preschool Educators' Insights: Exploring the Role of Music and Movement in Enhancing Children's English Language Acquisition. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 14(2), 195–204.
23. Nguyen, T. H. M., & Nguyen, T. M. T. (2023). *Applying Multiple Intelligences Theory in designing English vocabulary activities for high school students*. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 13(4), 235–240. <https://doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.13.04.2023.p13642>
24. Rowe, M. L., Kirby, A. L., Dahbi, M., & Luk, G. (2023). Promoting language and literacy skills through music in early childhood classrooms. *The Reading Teacher*, 76(4), 487–496. <https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2155>
25. Seli, P., Carriere, J. S. A., Smilek, D., & Schacter, D. L. (2023). Age-related differences in sustained attention and mind wandering: Evidence from the Attention Span Task (**A-Span**). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1265987. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1265987>
26. Silva, A. R. (2024). *Using songs, videos, and gestures to enhance vocabulary and engagement among young learners* [Master's thesis, University of Lisbon].
27. Zaharani, H., & Hasanah, S. (2023). Songs elevate students' vocabulary acquisition in English classrooms. *Asian Journal of Language Studies*, 7(2), 88–97.
28. Zhang, Y., Bails, F., & Prieto, P. (2023). Singing songs facilitates L2 pronunciation and vocabulary learning: A study with Chinese adolescent ESL learners. *Languages*, 8(3), 219.