

# Convergence of Using English Teaching Media for Sunday School Children

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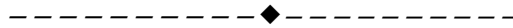
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## Abstract

Sunday school is an important part of the church, serving as one of its educational units, and plays a crucial role in shaping children's personal character, faith, and responsibility. Throughout the teaching provided in Sunday School, it is hoped that participants will be motivated to grow in faith and develop their character, becoming stronger in their relationship with God and more competent to face life physically and mentally. The purpose of this study is to discuss the use of media in learning activities in Sunday School and the correlation of the use of such media. The results of the study show that the use of media in learning English in Sunday school can increase interest and motivation, improve English language skills, and increase their self-efficacy.

**Keywords:** *Sunday School, Teaching Media, Motivation, Sunday School Children.*



## A. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English is no longer a foreign language but a second language. When communicating in international relations and everyday interactions, people tend to use English, and they switch to English from their mother tongue in daily conversation. The importance of knowledge and mastery of English stems from an active and continuous learning process. Therefore, in addition to formal schools, English lessons can also be found in non-formal education from the lowest level to the highest level. This refers to students' understanding, and active English can be continuously trained from occasionally and gradually. East Nusa Tenggara has issued Regulation No. 56 of 2018 concerning English Day. It is hoped to be applied all through formal, informal, and non-formal education.

English is also learned through the non-formal education system. One of them is Sunday School. As it is known, Sunday school is one way of building a congregation that focuses on children's and youth services. In this activity, they receive God's word and manage other activities such as playing games and doing some written creativities. The context presented by Sunday School is religious in accordance with the messages, values, ethics, and mandate of the Bible.

The curriculum and learning model presented by duplicating Bible stories into a presentation model that is suitable for the segmentation of children. Various teaching media are used adequately with those in Early Childhood Education (PAUD) level to Junior High School level. What distinguishes them is the content of the materials.

In addition, to answer the millennial era, Sunday Schools are required to make several improvements of teaching-learning methods, one of which is to introduce and apply English in Christian religious values through the introduction of songs, games, and English-language competitions. The achievement of English skills can be achieved by applying appropriate teaching-learning methods in terms of mastery of materials and skills. In choosing the right learning method, media and learning resources are equally important to play a role in achieving an effective teaching and learning process. Learning English in Sunday School aims to guide and support children to be able to communicate orally and in writing. Communicating in this case is understanding and expressing information, thoughts, feelings, and developing science, technology, and culture.

The use of media in the learning process in Sunday schools is related to the level of psychological development and the level of ability of children who follow the learning process and is adjusted to the interests and talents of children to generate motivation to learn. In carrying out learning, every Sunday School teacher should have teaching-learning media. It becomes a learning component that includes materials and equipment. With the inclusion of various theories and technologies, learning media also continues to develop and appear in various types.

Some practical uses of the use of learning media are to clarify the presentation of messages and information that can facilitate and improve learning processes and outcomes. Furthermore, learning media can increase and direct the attention of students to create learning motivation, more direct interaction between them and their environment, and enable students to learn independently according to their abilities and interests. Learning media can also overcome the limitations of the senses, space, and time.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Media Education**

Media refers to all forms of tools used in the process of distributing or conveying information. Media is essentially a physical form used to facilitate the delivery of information. (Siregar, 2022). Learning media is something that can be used to convey messages that facilitate learning activities and enable students to quickly understand the material (Ridwan et al., 2020). They provide channels through which representations and images of the world can be communicated indirectly. Whereas Suryaman et al (2021) defined instructional media as a learning communication tool using technology, symbol systems, and processing capabilities in the form of words or images to stimulate students to learn, therefore, those positive mental representations are formed in order to overcome various learning problems. In the digital age, the media appears to be a powerful actor of social change as it is seen and used simultaneously as a tool, a means of communication, information, and knowledge (Loicq, 2014).

Education is a matter of individual human growth and development; therefore, the technological methodology must be introduced with care (Morris, 1963).

Furthermore, he stated that media can enhance learning and extend the range of a good teacher is a fact. That expanded development of such media in coordination with curriculum can further contribute to productivity and instruction quality is a reasonable assumption. A technological leap forward is required in education. In Reeves' perspective (1998:1), media and technology have been introduced into schools because it is believed that they can have positive effects on teaching and learning.

Media education, in Buckingham's perspective (2003:4), is the process of teaching and learning about media. It is about developing young people's critical and creative abilities. Furthermore, Bazalgette (2010), stated that media education is a process. In addition, media education is about how teaching students how to use media can be organized and practiced (Qvortrup, 2007:3). he also stated that media education is much more directly related to the basic dilemma of modern education – some call it the paradox of education that the basic aim of education is through teaching to influence the students in order not to be susceptible to influence Whereas the outcome of media education is media literacy – the knowledge and skills learners acquire (Buckingham, 2003:4).

According to Kapur (2018:1), the role of media in the development of education has been imperative. It has played an important part in influencing the underprivileged and the socio-economic backward sections of society in recognizing the significance of education. Various forms of media such as newspapers, television, radio, the internet, and so forth have largely contributed to spreading among the masses the viewpoint that they should focus upon the development of the basic literacy skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, in order to make their living efficient. Furthermore, Widayanto (2015:12), stated that teachers should use teaching media for language learning because it motivates students and offers a different mode of presentation.

## **2. Media Literacy**

As stated above, according to Bunckingham (2003), as well as Bazalgette (2010), the definition of media literacy is an outcome of media education (the knowledge and skills learners acquire). Furthermore, Fedorov (2015:5), stated that media literacy helps a person to actively use opportunities of the information field provided by the television, radio, video, film, press, and internet. He defined the function of media literacy, first, to develop the person's critical thinking skills and critical autonomy. Second, to develop abilities to perceive, evaluate, understand, and analyze media texts of different forms and genres (including their moral implications and artistic qualities). And third, to teach students to experiment with the media, to create their media products or texts.

Meanwhile, Thoman (1999) summarizes, as cited in Schwarz (2001:112) that media literacy is "the ability to create personal meaning from verbal and visual symbols we take in every day through television, radio, computers, newspapers, and magazines, and, of course, advertising. It's the ability to choose and select, the ability to challenge and question, the ability to be conscious about what's going on around

us and not be passive and vulnerable. Schwarz added that in other teacher preparation courses--in the foundations of education, field experiences, and courses introducing professional issues--media literacy is also relevant (p.116). He also described the benefits of media literacy for teachers, who are critical thinkers and good communicators, who challenge the status quo when needed, who are both skilled and thoughtful in the uses of technology across disciplines, who understand their own culture, and others--are teachers who can help their students achieve the same goals in their own lives (p.118).

### **3. Types of Media**

Teaching media is media that bring messages or information that contain the aim or goal of teaching. Language teaching media are very important to help students acquire new concepts of, skills and language competencies (Widayanto, 2015:3). According to his perspective, teaching media can be classified into three classifications based on its physical characteristics. Those are two-dimension media, three-dimension media, and audiovisual media. Two-dimension media is a media that has no space or room, for example, cartoons, comics, graphs, posters, flashcards, etc. Three-dimension media is a media that has space or room, for example, dolls, globe, scrabble, etc. Whereas audiovisual media is a media that can be heard and seen, for example, television, computer, etc.

Meanwhile, according to Suryaman et al. (2021), they defined that in general, it can be concluded that the types of media including audio, visual, audio-visual, and computer media. Bates (2019), as cited in Suryaman (2021) classifies media types into text, graphics, audio, video, and computing the text includes textbooks, novels, and poems; graphics include diagrams, photographs, drawings, posters, and graffiti; audio includes sounds and speech; videos include television programs, YouTube clips, and talking heads; and computing which includes animation, simulations, online discussion forums, and virtual worlds.

### **4. The Function of Media**

Morris (1963:3) identifies two general functions of instructional media within school programs. First, instructional media serve to supplement the teacher by increasing effectiveness in classroom instruction, providing support that enriches learning activities and helps clarify the material. Second, instructional media function to improve overall productivity through systems that operate independently of the teacher, reducing the need for involvement in routine instructional tasks or clerical-mechanical activities. Together, these functions highlight the important role of instructional media in both strengthening teaching quality and streamlining instructional processes.

Furthermore, he described that Educational Media are defined as those things which are manipulated, seen, heard, read, or talked about, plus the instruments which facilitate such activity. Their function is to serve these two processes by enhancing clarity in communication, diversity in method, and forcefulness in appeal. The

function of media can be classified into two that are media as a learning tool and also media as a learning resource. As a tool, the media has a function to reach the goal of the learning process. The learning activities with the help of the media can enhance the quality of student learning activity, and learning resource is anything that can be used as a resource for getting knowledge and helping the teacher to make the student more understands about the material. The use of media in teaching English would help students to relate the concepts to the context more easily (Widayanto, 2015; Suryaman, 2021).

### **5. The Use of Media in Teaching Sunday School Children**

Sunday School is a religious institution's branch, which is an additional learning system about Christian religious teachings that is held every Sunday, followed by participants of two to fourteen years old. During the teaching, it was mixed so interestingly that participants could understand what was being told through storytelling or videos. Church institutions teach literacy through Sunday school in the form of stories, applications of stories, and physical activities in the form of games, or to test the absorption of stories told through quizzes.

### **6. Previous Studies**

To provide this research, the writer reviewed some previous studies related to the role of teaching media and teaching media for early education that had been conducted by some researchers. First, Receptoğlu (2015), stated that The Turkish Ministry of National Education and RTUK (Radio and Television Supreme Council) made great leaps by introducing media education into the curriculum of the primary schools. It is of great importance to have the media literacy competencies and awareness for pre-service teachers before they start the teaching profession. Second, Ekayani (2017), described that teaching media has an important role to increase student achievement. It has some benefits such as clarifying the messages, overcoming limitations, increasing enthusiasm for learning, etc. Third, Tarigan (2016), concluded that there is a significant effect of digital storytelling technique on students' vocabulary mastery. Fourth, Reeves (1998), analyzed that media and technology are effective in schools as phenomena to learn both from and with. Learning "from" media and technology is often referred to in terms such as instructional television, computer-based instruction, or integrated learning systems. Learning "with" technology is referred to in terms such as cognitive tools and constructivist learning environments. Constructivist approaches to applying media and technology may have more potential to enhance teaching and learning than instructive models. Fifth, Widayanto (2015), described that we can classify teaching media into three classifications based on its physical characteristic, those are two-dimension media, three-dimension media, and audiovisual media. A teacher should consider the appropriateness of media to the material, the affordability to be made or financed, the availability of hardware to facilitate the teaching media, the easiness of using the

teaching media, the quality of the teaching media, and the suitability to the students' intelligence level.

For this study, the writer observed a relationship between the use of learning media, both audiovisual and written, in the form of games or songs, to attract Sunday school children's interest in learning English. The training was first conducted for teachers in December 2018. Later, the games and songs were planned to be part of Sunday School teaching which started from February-July 2019 twice a month. In the middle of July, the writer organized more training to support the first one. The instruments used in this research were games, songs, interview guidelines, and electronic devices. The songs and games namely Whisper-race game, Stations game, guessing game, Deep and Wide song, and God is good songs. To support the use of media in teaching Sunday School children, some Bible-themed videos were also used.

### **C. METHODS**

Empirically, the most independent qualitative data collection methods among all types of data collection and data analysis techniques are in-depth interviews, becoming a participant observer, documentary materials, and library methods. Qualitative research is a method used to examine objects in their natural conditions (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out using triangulation (combination), data analysis is inductive, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization (Sugiyono, 2021).

In organizing the observation, the writer acted as an observer and one of the instructors at once to monitor the application of English teaching media, and also the TPR method in Bible-themed games and songs that were taught to Sunday School children. Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method used as an approach in language teaching that uses physical movements and actions to respond and imitate. This research was conducted in 2018-2019 during Sunday School activities every Sunday, only once a month.

### **D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the methods offered, there were three stages of implementation. First, started by giving lectures and discussions related to the application of English to non-formal education. Three presenters detailed the material to the participants. Next, they had a small group discussion about the strategies. The materials summarized the theme of teaching English Bible Games and songs to young learners in Sunday School. The participants discussed important matters gained from the presentation. The final stage is when they are then given feedback and corrections so that they can continue to improve their language skills in group discussions and games.

The combination of lecture methods and the use of media in informal English language learning at Sunday school also provides motivation and support for participants in attending Sunday school activities. The most common media used in Sunday school activities this week are games and teaching materials in the form of

short videos. According to Ammy & Wahyuni (2020), the use of videos in distance learning is able to visualize material very effectively, providing students with new learning experiences and motivating them to learn. Learning based on the TPR (Total Physical Response) method has a positive impact on early childhood education and has shown improvement. This is evidenced by the use of English games and songs during Sunday school activities held every month, which greatly motivates participants to attend Sunday school. The collaboration of games and short videos related to the Bible gives participants new enthusiasm, as evidenced by their enthusiasm in each stage they participate in, which can be seen from their activity when attending Sunday school.

The use of media as a learning tool is very helpful in learning English. One example is short animated videos. Short videos do not contain too many long words, making it easier for participants to understand the topic being taught at that time. Short videos and games in Sunday school activities are very attractive to participants because they provide something interesting and different from the usual. Most Sunday schools are monotonous in their lecture methods, where the teacher plays a dominant role in teaching, whereas the use of short videos and games as learning media in Sunday school greatly supports and motivates participants to be happier and more enthusiastic in taking part in Sunday school activities.

The use of learning media during Sunday school also enriches students' vocabulary directly from the short-animated videos shown and the use of English-based games. In addition, it also greatly helps participants with pronunciation and listening skills in a natural way. They try to listen carefully to the short videos shown. The implementation of media-based learning in Sunday school activities has shown a range of positive outcomes that influence students' participation, motivation, and mastery of the learning materials. The integration of digital media, such as short videos, interactive games, and visual learning tools creates a more engaging and supportive learning environment. Through these media, students not only become more enthusiastic about attending the sessions but also demonstrate improvements in language skills, comprehension of the lesson content, and confidence in expressing themselves. The following results highlight the key impacts observed during the implementation of media-assisted learning:

1. Increased interest and motivation

Media such as short videos and English-based games are used to make learning more enjoyable and motivate participants to continue attending Sunday school.

2. Improvement of language skills

Increasing student participation during Sunday school, improving their ability to listen to English vocabulary, and improving pronunciation. The use of short videos containing Bible teachings makes participants more interactive, and participants are also able to train their listening skills when listening to short stories shown in the short videos available.

3. Effectiveness of material presentation

The presentation of material is more systematic and structured, making it easier for participants to understand. The teaching material presented is also more varied, and participants have a better understanding of the concepts and vocabulary presented.

4. Increase children's self-efficacy

Some of the students first joined the Sunday School service, but they were too passive to join. They lacked the courage to express themselves through songs and games. Afterwards, they were finally motivated by the teachers and other friends; therefore, they became active. This ensued because teachers approached and motivated them to follow the songs and games slowly.

The diversity of Sunday School children from different educational backgrounds and variations is a challenge for teachers in compiling and designing a medium that is considered effective for all participants. The different needs of Sunday school children also often mean that the media used cannot accommodate all learning styles.

## E. CONCLUSION

Teaching English using learning media greatly helps Sunday school children and teachers in the smooth running of the learning process. The use of media and games in Sunday School learning has a positive impact on Sunday School participants and teachers alike. The use of media makes it easier for Sunday school participants to understand the concepts of the teaching material provided. As Sunday school teachers, the use of learning media in Sunday school activities makes it easier for teachers to deliver the material. In addition, it also saves time for Sunday school participants and teachers in completing the material taught because it is more effective and efficient to deliver teaching material and understand the concepts presented. Therefore, the use of learning media in Sunday School activities not only has a positive impact on one party, but both Sunday school children and teachers benefit from it, as it makes it easier for them to understand and complete Sunday school activities.

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