

Implementation of English Language Learning in Stimulating Early Childhood Roughness Skills

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Article Info: ABSTRACT

Accepted: 20-11-2025 Approved: 22-12-2025 Published: 25-01-2026	This study aims to capture how English language learning is applied to stimulate early literacy skills, particularly the early reading and listening skills of children aged 4–5 years. Using a qualitative case study design, this study collected data from the principal, classroom teachers, and students as the primary subjects. Through non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, the collected data were then analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model. Field findings indicate that English learning is structured through the <i>English Super Safari program</i> and interaction sessions with <i>native speakers</i> . The methods used are varied, ranging from <i>Total Physical Response (TPR)</i> and <i>Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)</i> to <i>storytelling</i> and <i>game-based learning</i> . The stimulation process is reinforced by the use of interactive visual media, such as <i>flashcards</i> and <i>Smart TVs</i> , which have been proven effective in helping children recognize letter symbols and phonetic pronunciation. The results showed positive developments in children's ability to distinguish letter shapes and respond spontaneously to spoken English instructions without the need for translation. This study concluded that an integrative and enjoyable foreign language introduction can provide a solid foundation for early childhood basic literacy.
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Keywords:

english language learning, early literacy, early reading, listening, early childhood

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of modern education, English language proficiency has shifted from merely a value-added value to an essential requirement in the era of globalization (Basri et al., 2024; Negash Tesema, 2025). Theoretically, this is supported by *the critical period hypothesis*, which states that children's brains possess extraordinary neurological flexibility to absorb new language systems naturally like a sponge (Long, 2012; Simon, 1978). Early exposure to

foreign languages has been shown to increase cognitive flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and metalinguistic awareness, superior to those of monolingual children (Galina, 2023; Ramadanti & Arifin, 2021). Listening skills serve as a stage in the internalization of sound patterns and vocabulary, which then synergize with early reading skills through the recognition of letter symbols and phonetics to form a complete early literacy profile (Astutik et al., 2025)

However, practice often demonstrates a gap between this theoretical potential and the reality of learning. Many educational institutions remain stuck in conventional, passive and less interactive methods, triggering boredom in children. Furthermore, low pedagogical competence in managing enjoyable English classes and a lack of materials relevant to children's playtime are major obstacles to achieving literacy development targets. A specific issue that arises is how to integrate foreign language introductions without burdening children's cognitive capacities, but rather making them a stimulant for their reading and listening skills (Fauziati, 2008; Odiljonovna & ..., 2024).

To address these challenges, innovative strategies such as the *English Super Safari program* and the involvement of *native speakers are needed* to create an authentic language environment. The use of *the Total Physical Response* (TPR) and *Communicative Language Teaching* (CLT) methods allows children to learn through body movements and real social interactions (*learning by doing*), enabling them to respond spontaneously to verbal instructions (Irhamna & Purnama, 2022; Septya et al., 2022). Furthermore, the integration of character values through the formation of *noble character* in the international curriculum is a unique value that maintains a balance between global intelligence and religious identity.

Unlike previous studies that tended to focus on general speaking skills, this study examines in depth the influence of the TPR and CLT methods on early reading skills (recognizing symbols and phonetics) and the ability to listen to complex instructions in children aged 4-5 years (Adhe & Ningrum, 2022; Wibowo et al., 2023). Furthermore, the collaboration between language exposure from native speakers *and* character building based on Islamic values provides a new perspective on a competitive early childhood education model that remains rooted in religious values (Afifah et al., 2022).

Based on this background, this study focuses on describing the implementation of English language learning at Al Azhar 35 Islamic Kindergarten, Surabaya. The results are expected to provide practical

contributions for educators in formulating effective foreign language literacy strategies appropriate to the developmental stages of early childhood.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research applies a qualitative approach with a case study design to deeply explore the phenomenon of implementing English language learning in stimulating early childhood literacy. The researcher acted as the primary instrument, directly engaging in the field to understand the complex interactions between teaching methods, instructional media, and children's developmental responses within the context of a specific educational environment. The research was conducted at Al-Azhar 35 Islamic Kindergarten in Surabaya with a research duration of approximately six months, starting from the preparation stage, field observations, and the preparation of the final report (June 2025 - January 2026). The research subjects were determined through a *purposive sampling technique* involving the Principal as the person in charge of the curriculum, Group A class teachers as instructional implementers, and students aged 4-5 years as the recipients of developmental stimulation.

The data collection process was carried out systematically through three main techniques: non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted over eight sessions to closely observe natural interactions during the learning process, particularly the use of the *English Super Safari curriculum* and interaction sessions with *Native Speakers*. The data were strengthened through in-depth interviews with key informants to explore pedagogical strategies and technical challenges encountered. In addition, researchers conducted a documentation study of the Daily Learning Implementation Plan (RPPH), school curriculum profiles, and child development records to ensure alignment between curriculum planning and the realization of stimulation in the classroom.

All collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the condensation stage, researchers sorted and coded relevant data with a focus on early reading and listening skills, then presented it descriptively to map effective stimulation patterns. To ensure the credibility and validity of the findings, this study applied source triangulation techniques and conducted *member checks* by reconfirming the findings with informants to ensure data accuracy. In addition, research ethics were upheld through *informed consent procedures* and guaranteed subject anonymity using name

initials, thus maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of all participants' data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Based on data collected through eight observation sessions and in-depth interviews, four main pillars were identified in the implementation of English language learning for early literacy stimulation at Al-Azhar 35 Islamic Kindergarten, Surabaya. These findings are summarized in the following thematic table:

Table 1. Thematic Visualization of Research Results

Dimensions	Key Findings in the Field	Early Literacy Indicators
Method	Use of <i>Total Physical Response</i> (TPR) & <i>Game-based Learning</i> .	Compliance responds to verbal instructions without the aid of translation.
Curriculum	<i>the English Super Safari</i> program with <i>Native Speaker</i> sessions.	Introduction of phonetic structures and new vocabulary in a contextual manner.
Media	Utilization of <i>Smart TV</i> and interactive <i>Flashcards</i> .	The ability to distinguish letter shapes (symbols) through visualization.
Character	Internalization of <i>Akhlakul Karimah</i> in language instruction.	Use of polite words <i>in</i> English.

Source: Data Processed

Findings show that children in the 4-5 age group begin to demonstrate sharp auditory discrimination skills (differentiating letter sounds). During sessions with *native speakers*, students were able to spontaneously follow complex instructions such as "*Touch your toes then jump.*" Furthermore, the use of a *Smart TV* provides visual stimulation that accelerates letter symbol recognition compared to conventional methods based solely on printed books.

Interpretation and Discussion

1. Synergy of CLT and TPR in Listening Stimulation

The Total Physical Response (TPR) method in this study proves the effectiveness of the *Stress-Free Learning theory* (Aini & Sassi, 2025; Habibah et al., 2021). By involving physical movement, children do not feel pressured to speak immediately, but rather build "auditory understanding" first. This

aligns with Asher's view that a second language will be absorbed more quickly if it is associated with motor activities (Viviane Hounhanou, 2020). The integration of *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) through Native Speaker* sessions also creates an authentic language environment, so children are accustomed to hearing correct intonation and phonetic pronunciation from an early age.

2. Visual Literacy and Symbol Recognition through Interactive Media

Findings regarding the use of *Smart TVs* and *flashcards* confirm the theory of Multimodal Literacy. At the age of 4-5 years, children are in the pre-operational stage where visual representations are very dominant. Interactive media acts as a "cognitive bridge" connecting abstract symbols (letters) with sounds (phonetics) (Munaamah et al., 2021; Winda et al., 2022). Theoretically, this exposure strengthens *phonological awareness*, which is the strongest predictor of future reading success (Aisyapuri et al., 2025; Kurniawati et al., 2021).

3. Character Value Integration (Novelty)

A unique aspect of the practice at the research site is the intersection between global language competency and religious values. Literacy stimulation extends beyond cognitive skills to character development (Khotimah & Maryani, 2025). This demonstrates that foreign language instruction does not have to uproot children's cultural and religious identities but can instead serve as a means to broaden their horizons.

Critical Reflection: Research Limitations and Delimitations

Although this study provides an in-depth overview of learning implementation, there are several limitations that need to be considered for future research:

1. Contextual Limitations

This research is limited to a single institution (single case study) with very adequate technological facilities (*Smart TV*, international curriculum). Therefore, the results may not be directly generalizable to educational institutions with limited resources or facilities.

2. Methodological Limitations

The observation duration of eight sessions provided a clear portrait of implementation, but was not yet able to capture the sustainability of children's literacy development in the long term (longitudinal study).

3. External Factors

This study focused on school activities. Researchers have not yet explored in depth the role of the family environment or exposure to digital media at

home, which likely influence the rate of children's English language development and early literacy.

4. Subjectivity of Intervention

As a qualitative research, data interpretation is highly dependent on the researcher's perspective, although triangulation and *member checking efforts* have been made to minimize such bias.

It can be concluded that early literacy stimulation through English at Al-Azhar 35 Islamic Kindergarten, Surabaya, was successful due to the consistency of active methods, varied media, and a supportive environment. This strategy not only improves children's linguistic abilities but also builds their confidence in interacting in a multicultural environment.

CONCLUSION

This study proves that the implementation of English language learning at Al Azhar 35 Islamic Kindergarten Surabaya effectively stimulates the early literacy of children aged 4-5 years through the creation of a natural language ecosystem. The synergy between the *English Super Safari curriculum*, regular interaction with *Native Speakers*, and the application of *the Total Physical Response (TPR)* and *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)* methods has been proven to increase children's active engagement. Specifically, the use of *Smart TV* and *flashcards* accelerates early reading skills in terms of recognizing letter symbols and phonetics, while consistent language exposure improves children's listening skills in responding to oral instructions spontaneously without the need for translation. This confirms that an integrative and enjoyable foreign language introduction can strengthen the foundation of basic literacy and children's academic readiness without burdening their cognitive capacity.

Practically, schools are expected to strengthen synergy with parents to maintain the sustainability of language stimulation in the home environment through simple literacy guides. However, academically, further research needs to be directed at longitudinal studies to measure the long-term impact of this stimulation on children's literacy skills at the elementary school level. Furthermore, broader comparative research is needed to test the effectiveness of the TPR method in institutions with limited technological facilities, as well as an in-depth psycholinguistic analysis of children's cognitive load when absorbing literacy symbols in two languages simultaneously. This step is crucial to finding the most optimal model for early literacy development for children in a multilingual educational context.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank the Al Azhar 35 Islamic Kindergarten in Surabaya for facilitating the data collection. Furthermore, the author would like to express his gratitude to the supervisors who provided helpful suggestions and input in writing this article, as well as to all parties whom the author cannot mention individually who have contributed both material and moral support.

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