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# Learning through Senses: Improving Kindergarten Students' Speaking Skills through Multisensory Activities

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**ABSTRACT**
Speaking skills, as an essential aspect of early language development, should receive greater attention in kindergarten because they enable children to express their ideas, emotions, and engage in social interaction with others. In reality, In reality, many students still experience difficulties in speaking activities due to a lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and the limited use of interactive learning strategies. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the improvement of kindergarten students' speaking skills through multisensory activities using Classroom Action Research (CAR). The study was conducted in a kindergarten classroom consisting of 19 students at one of the leading kindergartens in Batam. The classroom research followed the series of Classroom Action Research (CAR), including planning action observation and reflection Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and speaking assessments using a rubric that assessed three dimensions: linguistic complexity, vocabulary usage, and language control. The findings showed that the implementation of multisensory activities improved students' speaking performance while also increasing their motivation, confidence, and active participation during classroom interactions. In brief, multisensory learning helped the kindergarten students to develop their speaking skills.

## INTRODUCTION

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Language plays an important role in children's early development because it helps them communicate, express ideas, and interact with others in daily life. In early childhood education, language development is considered essential for children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Among the four language skills, speaking is one of the most important because it allows children to communicate their ideas, feelings, and needs effectively (Al Adzillina & Hasanah, 2021). At the kindergarten level, developing speaking skills is important to enhance children's language proficiency, confidence, and social interaction (Jasmine & Carley, 2022). Therefore, teachers need effective and engaging teaching strategies to support children's speaking development meaningfully(Ponticorvo et al., 2020). Assessment also plays an important role in measuring students' language development and speaking progress in classroom activities (Marsevani et al., 2024). In addition, meaningful classroom interaction and appropriate learning strategies are important to support students' participation and language learning processes (Pratiwi et al., 2025). However, teaching speaking to kindergarten students remains challenging because young learners tend to have short attention spans and require interactive activities to stay focused (Bingham & Gerde, 2023).

Activities that involve speaking are also crucial in assisting kids to gain confidence and be willing to participate in classroom interaction. Through speaking exercises, learners can develop communication skills to convey ideas, interact with others, and build new social contacts with their peers and teachers. English language learning also requires meaningful interaction and appropriate teaching strategies to help students develop language skills effectively in classroom settings (Zaki et al., 2025). Unfortunately, verbal-only teaching methods are usually considered less effective as children at this particular stage learn better through tangible experiences and active participation (Muhtadin et al., 2024). Moreover, young learners possess different learning styles, implying that a single-mode teaching approach may not effectively accommodate all students (Wulandari & Pujaningsih, 2025). As a result, a large number of students may have difficulty in articulating their thoughts orally, ultimately resulting in low self-esteem, and limited speaking abilities in the classroom (Saborío-Taylor, 2025).

Multisensory learning has been proven to be an effective strategy for helping young learners learn language. Multisensory learning integrates visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile learning experiences and allows learners to learn through multiple sensory channels simultaneously (Lady et al., 2024). It caters to the natural tendencies of young children who learn best from movement and body language, manipulation of objects, and positive exploration (Olavarria, 2023). Using multisensory activities in teaching can promote learning more effectively, facilitate the understanding of language items, reduce learning anxiety and make the learning processes more fun.

Still, early classroom observations indicated some challenges in children's speaking skills. Several students in the class had speech delays that limited their ability to communicate effectively and respond to simple verbal instructions in verbal exchanges (Prastawa & Naufal, 2021). Also, there was a low degree of motivation among the students to speak English and encourage them to speak through speaking practices, which has a negative influence on their oral performances (Gkintoni et al., 2025; Saborío-Taylor, 2025). These issues may also

be attributed to the underutilized interactive teaching methods like games, sensory-based approaches that make kids actively involved in learning a language (Wang, 2021).

Previous researches have illustrated the success of applying multisensory learning on young learners' language development. Agustina & Azizah (2025) reported on the use of multisensory activities of audio flashcards, manipulatives and kinesthetic learning tasks to develop the kindergarten students' expressive and receptive language, The study also reported improvements in students' motivation and self-confidence. Other evidence points to the development of language skills, motivation to participate and speech confidence in the learner through interacting with sensory-based activities (Al Adzillina & Hasanah, 2021; Gkintoni et al., 2025; Ponticorvo et al., 2020).

Yet, very few studies have been conducted on the implementation of Multisensory Activities (MSA) through Classroom Action Research (CAR) in authentic classroom contexts to improve the speaking skills of kindergarten students. As a result, the present study attempts to answer the following research questions: (1) How do multisensory activities improve kindergarten students' speaking skills? and (2) To what extent do multisensory activities improve kindergarten students' speaking performance in terms of linguistic complexity, vocabulary usage, and language control? To address these research questions, the present study will aim to improve the speaking skills of kindergarten students through the implementation of MSA. In this study, visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile will be integrated into the interactive learning environment of kindergarten class.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Research Design

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) the researcher decided to use Classroom Action Research (CAR) as the research method. CAR was selected because the researcher was directly involved in implementing and evaluating the intervention. Besides, the researcher wants to concentrate on finding ways to help students improve their speaking skills in a real classroom environment. According to Mertler (2021), action research is essentially a reflective and systematic process that allows teachers to identify their classroom challenges, find ways to solve them, carry out the solution, and assess its effectiveness, all aimed at improving educational practice. CAR is considered suitable for addressing the problems because the researcher is able to not only witness the students' learning performance but also make continuous adjustments based on the student's needs.

This study followed the CAR (collaborative action research) model with four stages proposed by Kemmis et al. (2014) that included planning, acts, observing, and reflecting. In the planning phase, the researcher interviewed a class teacher to identify students' speaking difficulties and learning needs. Then, a lesson plan and other materials with multisensory activities were developed to meet the students' needs. The speaking assessment rubric and classroom observation sheets were also made to monitor the students' performance. The activities were carried out during the act stage by having speaking lessons which offered a blend of visual auditory kinesthetic, and tactile learning experiences. Students' engagement, speaking performance, and classroom responses were gathered in the observation stage by completing observation sheets and speaking assessment rubrics. In the reflecting phase, the researcher interpreted and discussed the data of the implementation to judge whether the

intervention was successful and the objectives were met, or the project should be continued in the next cycle for achieving the success criteria.

Ethical approval and permission to conduct the study were obtained from the involved institution, before the research activities. The study was also in line with the child protection policy of the school to be certain that only activities that are safe and appropriate for learning were offered to the students and other children at the school. Informed consent was obtained from all relevant parties before data collection. To avoid identifying the participants' identities, codes were given to students instead of real names and all the information collected remained confidential for the use of the research only. These procedures provided a guarantee of confidentiality, child protection, and other child rights of the participants during the whole research period.

**Research Site and Participants**

The research was conducted at kindergarten in Batam. It focused on the Kinder 1 level, made up of 19 students. The school was selected because it is known as a top-notch institution with excellent learning resources and well-organized teaching methods. The classroom setting encourages interactive and student-centered learning activities. Such a situation is perfect for carrying out Classroom Action Research in a very effective way. The participants were selected because early childhood is a critical period for developing oral language and speaking skills. Children at this level start to acquire fine motor skills, letter writing, and early literacy readiness.

**Data collection and instrumentation**

The data were collected using various tools during each stage of CAR. Including interview protocol, speaking test, observation sheet, reflective notes. In the planning stage, an interview was taken with the English teacher to find out the speaking problems faced by the students as well as classroom problems and ways of developing students' speaking skills. The data from the interview helped the researcher to decide the actions of intervention and the needs of the students. In the acting stage, a speaking test was administered as a pre-test and post-test so that the researcher can see the improvement in students' speaking performance after using the multisensory activities. The assessments of the students speaking were done with using a speaking assessment rubric adapted from Shafer Willner et al. (2021) based on linguistic complexity, vocabulary use and control (see Table 1. In the observing stage, observation sheet was used for recording students' participation, engagement, confidence, and responses and response in the classroom activities. At the end, the teacher wrote reflexive notes to reflect on the effectiveness of the classroom activities, students’ progress and difficulties as well as to reflect the teaching and learning.

Table 1. Speaking Assessment Rubric (Adapted from (Shafer Willner et al., 2021))

| Level | Category | Linguistic Complexity | Vocabulary Usage | Language Control |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Entering | Produces single words or memorized expressions | Uses very basic and familiar words | Speech is often unclear and difficult to understand |
| **2** | Emerging | Produces short phrases or simple sentences | Uses general vocabulary related to the topic | Speech is understandable but with frequent errors |
| **3** | Developing | Produces simple sentences with some detail | Uses a wider range of vocabulary | Speech is generally clear with some errors |
| **4** | Expanding | Produces longer sentences with more complexity | Uses specific vocabulary appropriately | Speech is clear and fluent with minor errors |
| **5** | Bridging | Produces more complex and organized sentences | Uses varied and appropriate vocabulary | Speech is very clear and fluent with minimal errors |

## Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed quantitatively. Students' scores were recorded in a spreadsheet (e.g., Microsoft Excel), and mean scores were calculated for both pre- and post-tests. The improvement in mean scores indicated whether multisensory activities effectively enhanced students' speaking ability. These numerical results were then interpreted to assess the strategy's overall success in improving oral communication among kindergarten learners.

## FINDINGS

In this section, the results related to the application of multisensory activities using the Classroom Action Research (CAR) cycle are explained. For better comprehension, the discussion has been separated into two main parts. The first portion covers how the multisensory activities were carried out during the different stages of planning acting observing, and reflecting, and the second portion shows how the speaking abilities of the kindergarten students improved on their language complexity, vocabulary knowledge, and language control.

## Planning

The planning stage began with an interview with the English teacher to identify students' speaking difficulties and classroom needs. The interview revealed that many students experienced limited vocabulary, difficulty constructing simple sentences, and low confidence during speaking activities. Based on these findings, the researcher prepared lesson plans,

multisensory learning materials, speaking assessments, observation sheets, and movement-based activities focusing on action verbs.

> *"Most students understand simple instructions, but they still have difficulty expressing themselves in English and often hesitate to speak during classroom activities." – Teacher A.*

**Acting**

During the acting phase, different multisensory activities that combined visual auditory tactile, and kinesthetic elements were introduced to teach action verbs. The students got to play around with naming pictures, answering some basic questions, making short sentences, and playing movement-based games like throwing balls and jumping towards the right pictures. These activities created good opportunities for students to practice their speaking skills while they were learning.

**Observing**

Classroom observation revealed that the students took part in the multisensory activities eagerly and actively. Against the time the lesson was starting, students were more self-assured about answering questions, being able to pronounce vocabulary, and getting with both their teacher and peers during conversation. Also pictures movements, and games were used to maintain students' interest during the entire lesson.

**Reflecting**

As for the reflection phase, multisensory activities had a positive effect on students' speaking development and participation in class. Despite Really a number of students were still in need of assistance to be able to make full sentences and utilize a broader vocabulary, all learners showed progress in speaking skill. Since the specified success criterion was realized, it was decided to stop the study after only the first cycle of CAR.

**The Improvement of Kindergarten Students' Speaking Skills through Multisensory Activities**

To evaluate the effectiveness of the multisensory activities, students completed a speaking assessment before and after the implementation. The comparison between the pre-test and post-test results is presented in Table 2.

*Table 2. The Improvement of Students' Speaking Skill Achievement*

| Test | Mean Score |
|---|---|
| Pre-Test | 37.54 |
| Post-Test | 71.92 |

Table 2 depicts a significant jump in the speaking ability of students through the use of multisensory methods. On average, students scored 37.54 in the pre-test, while in the post-test they got an average score of 71.92 which shows the development of speaking skills of the students after the multisensory activities.

Table 3. Mean Scores of Speaking Assessment Criteria

| Criteria | Pre-Test | Post-Test | Improvement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Linguistic Complexity | 1.68 | 3.68 | **+2.00** |
| Vocabulary Usage | 1.40 | 3.37 | **+1.97** |
| Language Control | 2.21 | 3.74 | **+1.53** |

Table 3 show that the students improved for all speaking assessment criteria. Linguistic Complexity recorded the largest increase (1.68 to 3.68), closely followed by Vocabulary Usage (1.40 to 3.37) and Language Control (2.21 to 3.74). The data support the notion that multisensory activities have helped students to speak longer utterances, use wider vocabulary and speak more fluently. These conclusions align with the earlier research findings showing that multisensory learning contributes to language development and enhances classroom learning (Agustina & Aazizah, 2025; Gkintoni et al. 2025; Ponticorvo et al. 2019).

According to the findings, multisensory learning facilitated a lively, strong-and-deep meaningful language learning atmosphere for the young learners. The combination of visual auditory tactile, and kinesthetics stimuli gave the learners an opportunity to acquire language via multiple sensory experiences that transformed the speaking activities into a more lively and fascinating interaction. Since young learners are generally more receptive when they involve themselves actively, are on the move and directly experience things, the multisensory method led the students to raise their level of speaking confidence and motivation during their classroom activities.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that after introducing multisensory activities students' speaking skills were Quite a bit improved and their confidence, participation and level of engagement during classroom interaction. Through the combination of visual audio tactile, and kinesthetic methods students were motivated to open up communication and get involved in speaking activities with much meaning (Asril et al., 2025). This paper reveals that multisensory learning offers stimulating experiences to young learners, which they need for development of language skills by doing instead of the traditional passive method of teaching. (Agustina & Azizah, 2025) stated in their research that the use of multisensory activities enhanced children's abilities to express and understand language, and their motivation and confidence also rose. In the same way the authors from previous studies found that using multisensory learning methods in the teaching process helps language development, students' participation in the class, and meaningful learning via the use of multiple senses through interactive experience (Bigozzi et al., 2023; Gkintoni et al., 2025).

One reason multisensory activities are effective is that the way a young child processes information naturally involves multiple sensory modalities. Besides having verbal explanations, students got to feel the language through pictures, teacher examples, movement-based games, and student interaction making speaking activities more fun and less difficult (Damsgaard et al., 2020; Talbot & Barends, 2024). These diversified sensory experiences reduced the mental effort required during speaking tasks while keeping learners'

attention, motivation, and willingness to communicate in English intact. Xu (2025) mentions how toddlers get used to the language naturally by looking listening talking with the people and playing with the surroundings. Also, Fitria (2023) maintains that using the movement, gaming, and a multiplicity of sensory experiences help to keep up learners' motivation and communication in a meaningful way. These results have also been confirmed by Tubele (2023) stating that multisensory learning boosts children's confidence and language development through authentic sensory-rich learning environments.

The second question asked how students' speaking performance was affected by multisensory activities. It was found that in all the speaking aspects, students showed progress: linguistic complexity, vocabulary use, and language control. Teachers repeatedly modelling how to speak and guiding students through speaking practice were factors in students' production of longer utterances (Pošteková & Gužíková, 2025). Target vocabulary was presented to students through visuals movement games, and classroom interaction, thereby helping the students to retain the vocabulary and use it during the speaking sessions. Students' language control which is a key thing of effective communication improved through regular pronunciation training, the role of teacher's input cannot be forgotten as well. These results support the work of Xu (2025), a researcher who underlines the role of vocabulary in communication development in children, who have children as their subjects. And, it echoes similar findings by Putri et al. (2023), as well as Seidl et al. (2024) who claimed that multisensory education not only enhances language development and speaking performance but also classroom participation in children.

What the study is revealing is that kindergarten education is a very important context due to Truth is language acquisition and communication development are in particular crucial during early childhood. Here's a stage where play movement exploration were all learning avenues and children develop best through direct interaction with the environment, so multisensory learning is very suitable for classroom teaching. Through simultaneous use of multiple senses, multisensory activities offer significant learning experiences encouraging communicating naturally and at the same time, lowering the anxiety one feel while speaking. The results have the same backing as Rifqiyah et al. (2025) , who said that multinational approach not only enhances active learning but also knowledge retention through sensory integration. In the same way, Sahlan (2023) underlined their effectiveness on children's speaking fluency and all-around development of their language skills.

This research highlights a few significant implications for teaching young children through English language exposure during early years. It proposes that teachers should create speaking tasks that integrate various aspects like visual aids, body movements, teacher demonstration, classroom games, and real-life conversation to foster a positive environment for learning through which children can confidently communicate their ideas (Solichah & Fardana, 2024; Vinci-Booher & James, 2021). The use of predominantly spoken explanations and monotonous repetitions should be avoided in favor of letting the students experience the language using different modalities of perception and interaction corresponding to their stage of growth (Wulandari & Pujaningsih, 2025). Besides, schools are advised to have various sensory learning facilities available and professional support that will enable the staff to apply the method of language teaching in a more interactive way successfully. Such proposals claim that learning by doing, which also includes children's

bodily activities and sensory input, supports children's language acquisition as well as motivation and participation in class (Agustina & Azizah, 2025; Fitria, 2023; Puspita & Kurniawan, 2024).

This contribution to the growing literature on multisensory learning is in the shape of a real kindergarten lesson where we have shown in practice how multisensory learning can be implemented by a Classroom Action Research method. Our study revealed that children not only improved in speaking, but they also became more involved and confident in participating. But of course, since the study has only one kindergarten class of 19 girls and one CAR cycle there is not enough evidence to support the generalizability of the findings or even to look into the long-term effects of the learning strategies. Further research which involves more subjects, different study contexts, and repeated CAR cycles will be necessary in order for us to understand the long-term effect of multisensory activities on the speaking skills of children better.

## CONCLUSION

This Classroom Action Research has found that the application of the multisensory approach was conducive to facilitating the speaking skill development of kindergarten students. The use of multisensory approach built in meaningful contexts the real usage of language through various types of sensory stimulation, enhancing linguistic and vocabulary complexity as well as language control in the young learners' speaking effort while boosting their participation and confidence in the classroom communication. Also, these findings are relevant to preschool education for early childhood teachers in other ways. Elementary school teachers could use the multisensory approach to facilitate kindergarten children's speaking ability and to develop active and interactive English learning environment.

Schools and curriculum developers are recommended to design and implement curriculum of early childhood English course with multisensory approaches. Alongside, relevant curriculum design and teaching procedures could be recommended to the education policymakers to improve the parents and teachers' capability with the purpose of accommodating the implementation of multisensory approaches in early childhood English course. Still, this study also has some limitations. First, The small number of participants, the small of 19 students of kindergarten and only a single cycle of Classroom Action Research. If there were more students from various kindergartens and conducted more than one cycle, the result would be valid to apply in various settings and rather show results of classical learning. Even so, in the future, it should be more of participant groups and more Classroom Action Research cycles and also investigation on the long- term effect of the learning. Also, further classroom projects can be investigated on other skills, i.e., listening, reading, and writing skills.

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