

## Conference Paper

# Elementary School Students' Creativity in Singing Activities

Wadiyo, Udi Utomo, and Slamet Haryono

Universitas Negeri Semarang

## Abstract

Everyone needs music and wants to express themselves with music. The most familiar kind of music is vocal music. Everyone naturally performs singing activities, either singing seriously or just for fun. This is also happened in children who are still in elementary school. They are producing various kinds of sounds creatively. The purpose of this study is to analyze the creativity of elementary school children in producing singing sounds to be heard as melodious songs. The research method applied is qualitative interpretative. The location of this research is Semarang City. The focus of the research is on the creativity of elementary school children in singing activities to produce melodious sounds. Data collection techniques used in this research are observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The technique of data validity used is data triangulation. Data analysis techniques follow interactive analysis from data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and verification or conclusions. The results showed that the creativity of elementary school children in singing is a natural creativity, in which they use respiration technique which they think is good naturally. They are resonance, diction, articulation, and phrasering techniques applied by children in singing.

Corresponding Author:  
Wadiyo  
wadiyo@mail.unnes.ac.id

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## 1. Introduction

Singing is a physical activity of humans to produce melodious sounds. Even so, not every human or child has the same ability in singing. Some people have good singing skills naturally. In this sense, the voice is very pleasant to be heard by many people because it is melodious. Some people find it difficult to produce good sounds to be heard by others. All of this is certainly a factor to prove that not everyone is always the same. However, whatever factors that become the cause, it still can be seen that people who can sing is producing the melodious voice because there is creativity from someone to produce a melodious sound itself.

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This creativity can relate to a person's ability to use his breathing to produce a good voice. It can be creative in utilizing the resonance box that is in our physical like resonance in the head, chest cavity, abdominal cavity, and so on. In addition, it may be due to a person's ability to utilize the tone or intonation. It may also be because of the ability to articulate songs, the ability to chop off song sentences so that the breath is not panting and song messages can be heard well, and so on.

Research conducted by House, Eireann, Foster, and Cliath found that actually every child is born with creative potential [1]. Every child also already learned by using their creativity even before they learned in school through questioning, inquiring, searching, manipulating, experimenting, and playing. However, children need time and opportunities to stimulate their creativity.

What is discussed here is related to the creativity of people in general in singing activities. In this context is related to the creativity of elementary school children in singing activities in general class. The definition of general class here is a class in a school learning that does not have a special or specific singing teacher. Class teachers in elementary schools are teachers who must teach all teaching materials in elementary schools that are general in nature. The teachers themselves sometimes have very low singing abilities. It means that they are only singing with natural voice, and not having proper singing skills.

Whatever sound produced by elementary school children in singing activities is not considered as something important because music or singing in elementary school in formal learning is just to provide an aesthetic experience to children and convey song messages to be known as the media of education. Research related to the ability to sing for elementary school children has been done by many people, as the research conducted by Lamont, Daubney, and Spruce entitled *Singing in Primary Schools: Case Studies of Good Practice in Whole Class Vocal Tuition* [2]. This research included seven different primary schools in England and combined observational methods and semi-structured interviews with musicians, teachers and head teachers. The result of this research showed that singing activity has already fully integrated into all aspects of the school day. All school staffs are working hand in hand in creating music and singing as a part of National Curriculum. It is proven by the singing activity in every subject of National Curriculum, not only music subject.

There is also a previous research conducted in Indonesia by Lahamado [3]. The title of this research is *Peningkatan Hasil Belajar Materi Bernyanyi Melalui Metode Demonstrasi Siswa Kelas V SDN Rarampadende*. "The Improvement of Learning Outcomes for Singing Materials through the Demonstration Method of V Grades Students

at Rarampadende Primary School.” This type of research is classroom action research (CAR) implemented in 2 cycles. The stages in this study include the stages planning, action, observation and reflection. Data obtained in this study include student learning outcomes, observations of teacher activities and students taken from the observation sheet of teacher activities and observation sheets student activities, as well as interview results. The result of this research is through the demonstration method can improve learning outcomes of singing material students in grade V SDN Rarampadende.

The issue raised in this research is how creativity in singing elementary school children, especially elementary school children in Semarang, is considered as a representation of children who are of the same age and are still in elementary school. Based on the issues raised, it can be stated that the purpose of this research is to analyze the creativity side of elementary school children in producing songs.

## 2. Research Methods

The locations of this research are some primary schools in Semarang. Those are SDN Sekaran 1, SDN Sekaran 2, SDN Mangun Sari, Gunung Pati sub-district, Semarang city. Those primary schools was chosen not because of the reason for representing elementary school in the city of Semarang, but only considered for the singing ability of every student in every city are generally seen as the same. The focus of this research is related to the creativity of singing which is seen from the aspects of vocal techniques, intonation, articulation, diction or sound formation, articulation, and frequency.

Data validity techniques are carried out by observation, interviews, and documentation studies. Observations carried out by directly observing learning in fun when there are singing activities, especially when the teacher builds the classrooms using songs or when the teacher must enter teaching material through singing. Interviews are conducted by interviewing teachers and students. Documentation study was carried out by looking at school records when the children performed singing activities in various events conducted at school.

Data validity techniques primarily use data triangulation, which are done by matching data taken from observation, interviews, and documentation. Data triangulation is also done by observations made up to several times with interviews with several students at the same time and different. Olsen [4] argued that in social research, triangulation is not only used as a validation technique, but also at deepening and widening one's understanding. Meanwhile, the data analysis technique follows the flow of interactive analysis

as done by Miles and Huberman [5], namely from data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion or verification.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Results and discussion in this study is discussed unseparatedly. In short, the research results will be directly discussed. Results and discussion related to the problems being studied which is about the creativity of Primary School students in doing music in school Cultural Art subject. Creativity seen and analyzed here is a creativity related to singing songs.

#### 3.1. Creativity of students in singing songs

During the singing learning process, there are a lot of creative activities happened. Those creativity activities are starting form creativity in breathing technique until creativity in phrasering. Singing songs in formal education in Primary School by teachers are full with singing techniques in a correct order based on Western song rules. Dunga [6] and Prier SJ [7] stated long time ago that singing songs in Western style should always teach the students about breathing, voice formation, diction and articulation, and resonance. The same goes to the materials taught to students of Primary School. Mang [8] stated that words of songs and sense of tonality in song for children could create and improvise students' creativity as a reaction to environmental stimuli. The resultant early songs, therefore, exhibit a distinctive sense of ownership endowed with rich creative instincts.

#### 3.2. Creativity in breathing technique

Teaching about the breathing technique was taught by teachers by introducing the tecniques of breathing with shoulder, chest, and difragm. The shoulder breathing was done by inhaling upper parts of lungs and hold it that makes shoulder to be lifted up high. This kind of breathing cannot last long. The chest breathing, however, is done by holding the breath and insert it to the lungs and makes the chest to swell forward. This make the resulted voices becomes unstable. The diafragm breathing is done by loosen up the longs till it is filled fully and it is done till the diafragm moves bottom down. This is considered as the best technique of breathing done by the students. Even if it is

thought so, the students usually have their own way to breath as the manifestation of their creativity to sing without any breathing limitation.

Chapman [9] explained that awareness of the breathing technique in singing is essential and need to be learned. This is because there are differences among breathing as we are doing in normal breathing, breathing for sport, and breathing for singing. Even if, actually, numbers of professional singers that attempt to assess the effect of breathing technique on the qualities of the voice perceived by listeners are relatively small.

In relation to creativity, Bergström [10] explained how breathing is connected to thinking. A phrase is the physical line of a thought, where certain thoughts are short and demand little air, while others are complex and demand deep breaths and long vocal lines. Therefore, Bergström suggests that the singer should start to think and feel by the pulse, so that each break affects the singer in the work with the musical punctuation, when interpreting the vocal part.

### 3.3. Creativity in producing voice, diction, and articulation

The singing lesson at school is also taught students on how to form and produce good voices, as immitating in singing pieces of musical scales with voices na na na na, ni ni ni ni, nu nu nu nu, ne ne ne ne, no no no no. Ma ma ma ma, mi mi mi mi, mu mu, mu, mu, me me me me, mo, mo, mo, mo. Na ni nu ne no, ma mi, mu, me, mo, etc. All practices are done for the voices to be produced well. Mouth has to be opened based on the letter the students produced, even when it is vocal or consonant letter. Articulation should be acceptable and clear. However, in the field, students have their own strategy and do not always implement what they have learnt, as long as the goal to have beautiful voices is achieved.

In teaching creativity, teachers could teach the students about improvisation. As stated by Whitcomb [11] improvisational in learning music will create spontaneous musical activities for students that will make them express their feeling and idea simultaneously. By doing improvisation, students combine the musical skills of performing, listening, and analyzing.

### 3.4. Creativity in resonance and intonation

The resonance production technique is taught by teachers for the voice to be beautiful and light. Therefore, the students are all taught to make the use of all resonance system that they have. Besides, there is also intonation. Intonation is taught by students to be

able to sing in a correct notes. However, in the fields, students claim that they want their own characteristics to get the chance and that they want to have freedom in doing music. Resonance and diction are not taken as serious factors for students because the role model they have are pop singers who tend to sing freely outside the theory.

### 3.5. Creativity in phrasering

Phrasering was supposed to be absolute and should be exist in singing, so does taught by the teachers. It needs to be realized that singing is actually performing songs in melodic way. That way, one should understand the content of words containing in the message of the songs. In addition, a song must contain of language and musical sentence in the form of melody. Both are a unity. Adachi & Trehub [12] found that in one Canadian study, children naturally could use a specific rhythm to differentiate “happy” songs, contrasted by a reduced pitch range and suppression of melodic contours in “sad” songs.

Therefore, in a melodical song, both lyric and the melody should be synchronized. In order for the song message to be received by the listener in a correct way, both melody and lyric whould be united harmoniously in a sentence. However, most students do not pay attention since they care more to the nuance of song and the style of singing.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the research, it can be concluded that problem of this research is how the Primary School creativity in Junior High School in doing creativity in learning music through singing in Cultural Art learning. In the context of singing creativity, the Primary School students is singing in very natural way. They are no specific technique of singing that they use. They also tend to not implement diatonic music principle. However, students already showed their creativity in singing such as breathing technique and improvisation in singing.

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