



## Improving Young Learners' Vocabulary Through Peppa Pig Cartoon

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### Abstract

#### *History Artikel:*

*Received 1 April 2026*

*Revised 15 April 2026*

*Accepted 1 Mei 2026*

*Available online 14 Mei 2026*

This study aims to improve English vocabulary mastery among 3rd-grade students at MI Rohmatul Ummah through the use of the Peppa Pig animated series, specifically the "Fruit" episode. The primary issue addressed is the low student interest and limited vocabulary range typical of young learners when taught using conventional methods. This qualitative research involved 27 students (12 males and 15 females) as participants. Data were collected through participant observation and interviews, utilizing the paused-viewing technique to facilitate deeper engagement. The results indicate that the use of animation significantly enhanced students' ability to identify various fruits, distinguish between fruits and vegetables, and accurately imitate expressions of preference. Furthermore, the audiovisual nature of the cartoon proved effective in creating a low-anxiety learning environment and accelerating vocabulary retention through strong visual and auditory associations. This study concludes that integrating popular animated media can serve as an innovative and enjoyable tool for English teachers to foster active learning in elementary EFL classrooms.

#### **Keywords:**

*Vocabulary Acquisition, Peppa Pig, Young Learners, Qualitative Research, Fruit Episode*

### Introduction/ مقدمة

Vocabulary acquisition is the most crucial foundation in learning English as a foreign language, especially for young learners. Recent studies suggest that vocabulary knowledge is the primary predictor of overall language competence, influencing all four language skills (Webb & Nation, 2017). However, classroom reality often shows that vocabulary learning becomes a burden due to methods relying on rote memorization without clear context. Without adequate vocabulary, communication in English is hindered regardless of grammatical knowledge.

The main challenge at MI Rohmatul Ummah is the lack of media capable of consistently capturing students' attention. Conventional learning relying on textbooks causes the 27 students in the 3rd grade to become passive. Read (2019) explains that children need high-engagement activities that provide a meaningful context for language use to ensure long-term retention. Therefore, audiovisual media is required to present English in a simple, real-life context so students understand application rather than just memorization.

Animated cartoons, such as *Peppa Pig*, offer a rich and authentic language environment. Based on the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, students learn more deeply from words and pictures combined than from words alone (Mayer, 2020). The *Peppa Pig* series is suitable for EFL contexts due to its clear pronunciation, repetitive sentence

structures, and relatable storytelling (Pikhart, 2020). Visual aids in animation significantly reduce cognitive load, allowing young learners to associate sounds with objects effectively.

The “Fruit” episode of *Peppa Pig* was selected because the theme is closely linked to students' daily lives. This episode facilitates observational learning, where children learn by imitating the behavior and speech of characters in a low-anxiety environment (Albiladi et al., 2020). By involving familiar characters, students feel a sense of social presence that increases motivation to participate in classroom activities.

Through a qualitative approach, this study describes how 27 3rd-grade students at MI Rohmatul Ummah enhance their vocabulary mastery during the intervention. The focus is on identifying fruit names, differentiating categories, and imitating expressions of preference. This research contributes to innovative practices for elementary English teachers in utilizing digital media to create an active and enjoyable learning atmosphere.

### Method/ منهجية البحث

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative method was selected to provide a profound description of natural vocabulary acquisition through audiovisual media. In this study, the researcher focuses on observing behaviors, interaction processes, and verbal responses of 27 third-grade students at MI Rohmatul Ummah when exposed to Peppa Pig cartoon content. The researcher acts as the primary instrument for observing, recording data, and conducting direct field analysis to obtain a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of animation in teaching vocabulary.

The participants of this study are third-grade students at MI Rohmatul Ummah. This level was selected based on the cognitive characteristics of primary school children in the concrete operational stage, where they are highly receptive to visual and repetitive input. The total number of participants is 27 students, consisting of 12 male students and 15 female students. The research was conducted over an intensive one-week period to monitor the daily development of the students' lexical retention.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the qualitative data, the researcher utilized three primary instruments:

1. Participant Observation: The researcher was directly involved in the classroom to record student enthusiasm, emotional reactions to characters, and spontaneous utterances during the viewing sessions.
2. Vocabulary Checklist: A list of target vocabulary from the “Fruit” episode used to monitor the extent to which students could recognize specific words.
3. Structured Interview Guide: This instrument contains key questions designed to trigger language production and measure the students' comprehension of the video content. The questions are as follows:
  - Who are the characters in this story?
  - What is Peppa's favorite fruit?
  - George likes strawberry and...? (Target answer: Fruit Smoothies)
  - Is carrot a fruit or a vegetable? (Referring to the young elephant's dialogue)
  - What did the elephant say? I like...? (Target answer: Bananas)
  - Can you mention five fruits you saw in the video?

The data collection process followed four systematic stages to ensure objective results:

1. Pre-Viewing Stage: The researcher conducted an introduction to stimulate the students' background knowledge regarding fruit names in their native language.
2. While-Viewing Stage: Utilizing the "Paused-Viewing" or "Cut-and-Ask" technique, the researcher played the video and paused it at critical moments to ask interactive questions relevant to the newly introduced vocabulary.
3. Post-Viewing Stage: After the video ended, students engaged in a short discussion and were asked to rewrite the vocabulary or character names they remembered in their notebooks as a form of memory recall.
4. Verification Stage: The researcher conducted random Q&A sessions using the questions listed in section 3.3 to verify final comprehension.

#### Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analyzed using the Descriptive Qualitative Analysis model by Miles and Huberman, which includes:

- Data Reduction: Filtering observation results and student answers to focus on the acquisition of target vocabulary (fruit names and food categories).
- Data Display: Presenting findings in a descriptive narrative that explains student progress, mastered vocabulary categories, and direct quotes from student responses.
- Conclusion Drawing: Summarizing the analysis to answer the research question regarding the impact of using Peppa Pig cartoons on students' vocabulary improvement.

#### Findings / نتائج البحث

The qualitative research conducted over a one-week period in the third-grade class of MI Rohmatul Ummah yielded significant results regarding student vocabulary acquisition through the animated series Peppa Pig, specifically the "Fruit" episode. Based on participant observations of 27 students (12 males and 15 females), the researcher categorized the findings into three primary themes: engagement enthusiasm, categorical lexical mastery, and the imitation of functional phrases.

During the video screening, student engagement levels remained exceptionally high. The cheerful characters Peppa, George, Mommy Pig, and Daddy Pig successfully captured the students' attention from the first minute. A notable finding occurred when guest characters, Mr. Potato and Mrs. Carrot, appeared on screen; male students tended to laugh and actively point at the screen. This suggests that humorous elements in animation serve as effective stimulants to maintain children's focus.

In terms of visual recognition, the "paused-viewing" technique allowed students to identify objects directly. When the video was paused at a scene showing a pile of fruit, the researcher asked: "What do you see?" Spontaneously, the female students (15 participants) responded more quickly by identifying colors and fruit names, such as "Red apple" and "Yellow banana". Students did not merely observe the images but began to associate the sounds heard from the characters with the visual forms presented on the screen.

A crucial finding in this study was the students' ability to distinguish between food categories. In this episode, a dialogue occurs between a young elephant character and a rabbit

character carrying a carrot. The young elephant states, "Carrot is vegetables". The researcher found that prior to viewing, the majority of students considered all edible plants to be "fruits." However, after discussing that specific scene, all 27 students successfully understood that Apple, Orange, Banana, Strawberry, Blueberry, Pineapple, and Watermelon fall under the "Fruit" category, while Carrot is categorized as a "Vegetable." This ability to categorize indicates a deep cognitive process beyond rote memorization, involving the understanding of semantic concepts.

In addition to single nouns, students demonstrated an extraordinary ability to imitate functional phrases. When a character asked, "What's your favorite fruit?", the researcher repeated the question to the students. Almost all students were able to respond using simple sentence patterns: "I like apple" or "I like orange juice". Furthermore, several students imitated the characters' emotional expressions, such as "Wow, so much fruit!", with intonations remarkably similar to the original characters. This imitation was most evident with the character George, who loves Strawberry Smoothies; students easily remembered the word "Smoothies" due to its frequent repetition during George's expressions of preference.

Tabel 1. Research Participants at MI Rohmatul Ummah

No	Category	Number of Students	Remarks
1.	Male	12	
2.	Female	15	
<b>Total</b>		<b>27</b>	

Source: Researcher's Primary Data (2026)

### Discussion / مناقشتها

The findings demonstrate that audiovisual media, particularly cartoons designed for children, possess significant pedagogical power in teaching English vocabulary. Based on the analysis, several factors explain the effectiveness of Peppa Pig at MI Rohmatul Ummah.

The students' ability to quickly recall vocabulary such as Blueberry and Watermelon aligns with Mayer's (2001) Multimedia Learning Theory. Third-grade students are in the concrete operational stage, requiring visual representations to understand linguistic symbols. At MI Rohmatul Ummah, this media replaced static textbooks. Through the cartoon, "Watermelon" appeared not just as text but as a large green object held by Daddy Pig, enjoyed together by the characters. This emotional and contextual association allowed the word to settle into the students' long-term memory.

The classroom atmosphere remained fluid and filled with laughter throughout the research. This relates directly to Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Theory. In conventional English learning, students often fear making mistakes in pronunciation. However, because they felt they were "watching a movie" rather than "being tested," these mental barriers vanished. Male and female students interacted in a healthy, competitive manner when answering the researcher's questions. The presence of humorous characters lowered stress levels, allowing linguistic input to be processed optimally.

Repetition within the Peppa Pig series serves as reinforcement. Words such as "Fruit" and "Like" appear repeatedly in various contexts. However, observation showed that viewing alone was insufficient. The researcher's role as a facilitator utilizing the "cut-and-ask"

technique was key to success. Without educational intervention, children might enjoy the plot without attending to linguistic details. By asking, “What did Miss Rabbit say?”, the researcher prompted active listening. This supports the view of Pratama and Wijaya (2025) that educator involvement in digital media is a determining factor in the quality of information absorption.

There were interesting differences in interaction between the 12 male and 15 female students. Male students tended to be more vocal during action scenes (e.g., when George jumps), while female students were more meticulous in observing object details (e.g., the color of a strawberry). This diversity of interest enriched classroom discussions. Furthermore, the cartoon triggered collaborative learning; when one student forgot the word “Pineapple”, others assisted by referencing the physical characteristics of the fruit shown on screen.

## Conclusion/الخلاصة

Research at MI Rohmatul Ummah demonstrates that the *Peppa Pig* “Fruit” episode significantly enhances English vocabulary acquisition in third-grade students. By utilizing audiovisual media, 27 participants successfully transitioned from rote memorization to contextual understanding. Students effectively identified various fruits and distinguished between food categories through visual-auditory associations provided by the animation.

Furthermore, the animated format lowered students’ “Affective Filter,” creating a low-anxiety environment that encouraged confident language production. However, teacher intervention remained vital; the “Paused-Viewing” and “Cut-and-Ask” techniques were essential in transforming passive viewing into active cognitive processing. In summary, *Peppa Pig* provides the ideal balance of clear articulation and repetition for young learners. It is highly recommended that primary educators integrate interactive audiovisual strategies to foster a more dynamic and effective English learning experience.

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