

## **Increasing Students' Knowledge Through Make A Songs Training At Tanjong Malim National School**

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### **Abstract:**

Tanjong Malim National School is one of the elementary school levels located in Perak, Malaysia. This school needs attention because it is far from Malaysia's capital city. Schools have many students, so it is necessary to be equipped with good knowledge. One of the debriefings can be done through training in making songs. Making songs can stimulate students to think creatively. They not only learn music theory but also hone their language skills. The activity was carried out with a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection was done through semi-structured interviews and direct observation. The collected data is a collection of activities that are presented and described. The training is carried out using. The results show that songwriting training can improve music and language skills for students at the National School of Tanjong Malim. In addition, the process of activities carried out has an impact on increasing student confidence.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, Music, Song, Tanjong Malim, Training

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Tanjong Malim is relatively large but still lags behind other areas in Malaysia. National School (SK) Tanjong Malim is a school located on Jalan Ketoyong, Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia. Its location in an oil palm plantation area and on the provincial border between Perak and Selangor makes this school visited by many students who attend the Tanjong Malim National School. Not a few workers who come from Indonesia who live in the area send their children to school.

Schools have problems with many students but a lack of teachers (Hasanah & Lena, 2021). Even the school does not have a teacher with an artistic background (Sutisna, 2020) even though there are music subjects that the Malaysian Government Education requires. These demands make teachers who come from other fields of science, such as Malay language and biology, have to double as music teachers at the school. The absence of a music teacher impacts the lack of artistic activity (Djau, 2019) at the school and there are no art extracurriculars. Students also rarely participate in competitions and festivals in the arts.

One artistic activity can be done by making songs (Ratih et al., 2020). Making songs can stimulate students to think and explore knowledge (Walangado & Djau, 2022). The activity of making songs can be used as one of the materials in music subjects. Making songs can be done by students with the direction of the teaching teacher. Based on the situation analysis, the researcher conducted research by providing training in creating songs. The activity of making songs can improve cognitive abilities and experiences for students. The training is intended for students at the national school of Tanjong malim, Malaysia, by involving teachers in the training process. The trainers in this activity came from three countries: Indonesia, Japan, and the Philippines. The involvement of teachers from schools is carried out so that training can be monitored optimally. In addition, training is carried out by involving teachers so that music learning can occur continuously at the Tanjong Malim National School. Several parties involved in this activity are lecturers of the Music Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, Jakarta State University, collaborating with the team members as trainers from the Philippines and Japan, and partnering with the National School of Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia.

## **METHOD**

The method uses a qualitative descriptive approach (Tiswarni, 2019; Pahleviannur et al., 2022). The data collected was obtained directly from the participants through observation and interviews (Rukajat, 2018). Participants in this activity were 37 students from the National School of Tanjong Malim. The training was conducted during the period from April to July. The training was carried out by involving the students of the Nationality School of Tanjong Malim and observing health protocols. Facilities and tools used in training activities include presentation power points, stationery, LCDs, laptops, and loudspeakers (Ariyanti et al., 2021). The exercise involved several parties, including the trainer, one of the lecturers from Nagoya University, and the activity designer from Arellano University. Evaluation and monitoring of activities are carried out intensively (Yuliadi, 2017) by the team at each activity to ensure that the implementation of

activities can go according to plan. Evaluation is carried out in line with monitoring so that if there are obstacles, they will be resolved immediately. At the end of the activity, the team of trainers, together with teachers and students, will conduct a final evaluation of the training activities that have been carried out. Evaluation is used to find out what deficiencies occur during the training process and will be used as improvements in other collaborative activities.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Tanjong Malim is relatively large but still lags behind other areas in Malaysia (Halim et al., 2020). Located on the provincial border between Perak and Selangor, this school is visited by many Tanjong Malim National School students. The school has 28 classes to accommodate an average of 900 students per year. A large number of classes and students has an impact on the limitations of teachers who must focus on teaching according to their respective disciplines. So music subjects are considered secondary subjects in the fulfillment of the school curriculum. The lack of competence in the field of music also impacts the lack of artistic activities in the school, and there are no art extracurriculars (Toscher, 2019). Students also rarely participate in competitions and festivals in the arts.

The school has a mission, namely, to realize a school that is brilliant, brilliant, and spelled out. To support this vision, there are missions including clean, efficient, and trustworthy management and leadership. Academic excellence through memorable activities. The development of sahsiah is based on the development of human identity. Sports development is based on continuous practice. The brilliance of the curriculum through innovation activities. The school has a philosophy that is trying to provide education to develop the potential of each student to become a balanced and skilled human being who has an identity and competitiveness, has a firm grip on religion that has a life goal to achieve happiness in the world and the hereafter.

Activities in the arts can be helpful to support the mission and carry out the school's philosophy. Therefore, this activity is carried out by the analysis of the problems experienced by partners, including the lack of artistic activities in schools and no teachers with a scientific background in music while high demands in music subjects. One of the competencies that students must have is being able to compose songs. Therefore, the team in activities will try to solve the solutions experienced by partners. In addition, the activities carried out are aimed at increasing the international cooperation network for Jakarta State University. Activities carried out at the National School of Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia involves a team consisting of members from 3 different countries, namely Indonesia, the Philippines, and Japan.

Based on the background of the existing problems, all identifications submitted are the main priorities handled through the training carried out. The team provides training in composing songs and practicing playing music to improve students' cognitive abilities. The training will be aimed at students in schools, but it is possible to involve teachers in training students. So that music learning can occur continuously by teachers in schools later. Therefore, on occasion carried out through this activity, the team of proposals which are lecturers of the Music Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Jakarta State University collaborating with team members from the Philippines and Japan in partnership with the National School of Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia trying to conduct training in composing songs to provide students with skills.

The training carried out is not only theoretical but also many practical activities. The form of activities carried out in this program is conducting training in writing songs. The team will act as a coach and facilitate students in making songs. Activities are carried out both in the classroom and outside the classroom by adjusting the conditions and situations at school. The team collaborated with a music teacher who has a background as a Malay language teacher at the school. Students will be trained in recognizing musical notation and then making song lyrics. Song lyrics can be made in Malay by utilizing the teacher's abilities. Through the training carried out, in the future music subjects will no longer be carried out in theory but students are given direct experience through practice in accordance with the competencies expected in the curriculum of these subjects.

The activities carried out to involve not only expert members from other countries but also include students of the 6th semester of music education study programs who have taken music competency courses so that the activities carried out help provide experiences for students to disseminate their knowledge and learning experiences while in the study program of music education.

The training activities were given to 37 students classified as intelligent at the school. Students, if directed properly, will have the potential to progress in school, especially if they are equipped with skills in making songs and playing music. Activities are carried out to provide skills so students will show potential and courageous attitude and mentality to perform artistic performances.

The training is an international collaborative collaborative activity aiming to increase students' knowledge in terms of musical and language skills. In addition, this activity is carried out based on mutual concern for the advancement of one of the schools in an area far from the capital, namely Tanjong Malim. The form of activities is conducting training in making and

arranging songs. The songs that are made are then sung individually or in groups. The training provided to students not only provides knowledge of songwriting skills but also aims to build international cooperation and give the students experience in cross-country learning strategies.

The training was carried out for six months involving the trainers interacting directly with students. The involved training instructors from Indonesia, Japan, and the Philippines. The training was carried out by providing materials such as an introduction to music theory, arranging songs, and making simple songs. Learning music in making songs begins with the involvement of students in paying attention to the teacher's explanation and presentation of the material. Furthermore, students enrich their ability to create songs by looking at references to songs on YouTube and television media. Then students are directed to explore the meaning and concept of the song they hear to be used as a reference in the song they will make. In addition, students are directed to express their feelings and thoughts through the songs they want to make.

The indicator of success in making a song is the delivery of the message to the listener. This material should be adjusted to the capacity of students' abilities. Elements of song lyrics become the central aspect of creating songs. Then students are taught to determine the tempo and dynamics of the songs. At the end of the lesson, students are asked to reflect on the learning experience in creating songs.

The song-making process took approximately four months. The final result of this learning activity is that students can produce a product of a song and perform it. The songs suggest love for the country, compassion for others, mutual respect, and cleanliness. The theme is given to instill character education in students (Herdiati & Saputra, 2022). Activities during the theme exploration process involve aspects of knowledge, experience, and skills in exploring music and relating it to the song to be made.

Making a song is not as difficult as one might think. Composing a song will seem difficult if you don't act immediately. This means that making a song is easy if you try and don't just think about it. Making a song is easy, but making a song to be accepted and understood by the listener is a challenge for students. Easy songs generally have lyrics that are not too long, so they are easy to remember (Ridwan & Awaluddin, 2019). However, long lyrics are also not a problem as long as they contain meaning in a song.

There are several things to do to create a song quickly. First, listen to songs often. Listening to songs will undoubtedly add to our musical treasury, melodies, lyrics, harmony, and so on. Second, enrich language skills. Language skills also give us a vocabulary to compose meaningful song lyrics and have a relationship between the first sentence and so on. Weak language skills are often the biggest obstacle for someone in creating songs. Therefore enrich the

language by reading and listening to songs a lot. Third, open up to the environment. This third aspect plays a significant role for someone who wants to make a song. A person must be able to open his mind and heart to enter inspiration from various sources, both seen, heard, and felt. Through so much material that joins us, we can process and express it through a song product.

Before making a song, students should know the structure generally found in a song. Some of the structures in the song are the intro, verse, bridge, chorus, interlude, modulation, ending, and coda. In this lesson, at least students can compose a song that consists of at least a stanza and a chorus. The intro is the part of the song that is at the beginning of the song. In most songs, the intro is filled with the melodic sound of a musical instrument. So making an intro is not required for students. However, this does not limit teachers and students if they want to give an intro at the beginning of the song that will be created.

The next part is verse. The verse is a part of the introduction to the song to be sung. This part is not very important in a song because it only acts as an additional sentence at the beginning. The next part of the song is Bridge. A bridge is an essential part of the song. Bridge is usually used as a bridge in several parts of the song, such as between the chorus and the verse or vice versa, or it can also be used as a link between the chorus and the chorus that has modulation. Modulation is a change in tone in a song. Modulating the song can be done on some or all of the notes. Chorus is usually called a song stanza. So this part has an essential role in a song. Chorus usually has the same melody between one stanza and another, only differing in sentences or song lyrics. However, each stanza may have a different melody.

In the structure of the next song there is a chorus or commonly abbreviated as chorus. This chorus is usually called the second part of the song. This section is also important in a song because it is useful to provide reinforcement or climax to a song. Bridge is a part of some songs, but not all songs have it. Usually, this part comes after the second chorus. Bridges are short, consisting of only one or two lines of lyrics, and are sometimes prefixed with pitch changes (modulations). Next interlude. Interlude is a series of melodies generally played by specific musical instruments as a separator or marker after a chorus, then returns to the beginning of the song. This interlude can be placed anywhere in a song. The principle of the interlude is the same as the intro, except that it is located in the middle of the song while the intro is at the beginning of the song. Interlude also functions as a connecting melody between parts in a song, for example, between chorus to the chorus, chorus to chorus, and so on.

The last part of a song is the ending. This ending can have a coda or an outro. The ending of a song is usually referred to as a fade-out. Fade out means that the sound or sound will slowly disappear. At the same time, the song's coda is called the song's tail. Generally, the coda is

closed with the singer's voice to complete the song. Coda usually takes the repetition of the last line of the song. The next part is the outro. The outro is the end of a song that contains the melody of a musical instrument to close the end of a song. The outro could have used the song's last line repeated using a musical instrument as the melody.

After understanding the structure of the song parts that have been explained, the next step is the process of making songs. Several steps can be taken as a reference in creating a song. These stages will be discussed further in the presentation of this material.

#### 1. Determining the Theme

The first thing in making a song is to determine the theme of the song. The song's theme can be used as an initial source of ideas or ideas in song creation. Various themes can be used as a source of inspiration, such as beauty, environment, family, education, spirituality, social criticism, romance, sadness, anger, and so on. Students choose the theme according to the inspiration they want to pour through the song.

#### 2. Determining the Title

If students have determined the theme, the next step is determining the song's title. The song's title is a derivative of the theme chosen at the beginning of the song creation process. The song's title usually describes a significant story or meaning in the song to be conveyed.

#### 3. Stringing Words

The next step is to string words together. Stringing words has its challenges for some people because in stringing words, it is required to have the proper relationship between one word and another so as not to produce multiple interpretations for the listener. A good set of words will make an excellent lyric sentence too. Good song lyrics can bring listeners to feel certain emotions according to the feelings the songwriter wants to convey to others. It should be noted that other people who hear the song created do not have to feel the same emotions, but at least other people can read the emotions felt by the songwriter, such as sadness, happiness, anger, and so on. At the stage of stringing words, the creator is still in the process of replacing.

#### 4. Composing Lyrics

Good song lyrics can usually be performed also in the form of poetry. Some songwriters make songs from the poems they created first. There are song lyrics that pay attention to the same rhyme or ending in each sentence. Still, this material is recommended that students be given the freedom to explore their language skills without being bound by specific rules.

#### 5. Melody Giving

After the lyrics have been compiled, the next step is to give the melody to the syllables in each sentence contained in the song lyrics. Lyrics or sentences that have been made previously

are advised not to be patented, meaning that the sentences are flexible. This flexibility means that words and sentences that have been made can still be changed and adapted to the melody that you want to make. At this stage, the songwriter can still change the word or sentence to find a match between the lyrics and the song's melody. On the other hand, it is usually found that there are different stages in the song creation process. Some songwriters compose the melody first and then make the sentences. Songwriters may freely carry out this stage in creating songs. They are free to determine the steps of either composing the melody first or the sentence first. There is no right or wrong in this. However, in learning, especially at the beginner level, it is recommended to make sentences first so that the meaning and message in the song can be conveyed properly and precisely. The song's lyrics have a great priority in obtaining the song's content.

#### 6. Editing Songs

The next stage is to finish the song by editing. The editing process can be done by singing the songs that have been made repeatedly. These activities are carried out to improve specific parts of the song if found in either words or tones that do not fit or do not match what was expected by the songwriter. At this stage, the songwriter may change the melody, phrases, or sentences in the song that has been made. The procedure is to create quality songs worthy of being heard by others. At this stage, the songwriter usually determines the chords that accompany the song to be played using musical instruments such as guitar, piano, or keyboard.

#### 7. Asking for Advice

The last step is to ask other people for advice. Before the creation of the song is widely distributed to many people, it would be nice to ask for advice from the closest friends and teachers to provide input on the songs that students have created. It is essential to do so that the song created is perfect and will be accepted by others who hear it.



Figure 1. Song Making Process

The stage has been conveyed as the primary stage that can be used as an essential reference in making songs for beginners. Students can develop or deepen their review of the



process of creating song works by paying attention to musical elements such as melodic structure, song form, harmony, expression, and so on. The method of making songs can also be done by using the inspiration of an image. The teacher can display or show an image offered to students to be used as a source of inspiration for making songs.

The series of words that have been compiled can be used directly as lyrics to a song about to be made. After the sentence to be conveyed has been arranged, the melody is given. Making melody is provided in each syllable. Students can give melodies by using the help of musical instruments such as the piano. Driving melodies can be done in several ways. The first way is to use essential melody development. This basic melody is up to the songwriter. For example, the fundamental melody only uses the do (1) re (2) and mi (3) melodies and is then developed. The second way is to process the melody of an existing song. For example, students are directed to listen to the melody of a simple song such as 'Twinkle-Twinkle Little Star. Students can write down the complete melody of the song and then change the melody so that a new melody will be formed with the same rhythm as the song 'Twinkle-Twinkle Little Star.

After the melody or tone sequence is formed, students can determine the beat's short length to give the beat's value of the beat on every melody. The next step is that students are directed to edit the songs that have been made. At this stage, students are allowed to evaluate the overall song that has been made. Evaluation includes song lyrics and melody. If possible, at this stage, students can provide song chords to be used as accompaniment chords using guitar instruments. In the last step, the teacher offers suggestions and input on the songs that students have made.

The songs that students have made are then sung. There may still be some revisions when students and teachers still feel the things they think need to be changed or improved again.



Figure 2. Song performance

The songs made are then sung again by the students as the final stage of the training activities carried out. Some students sing individually or in groups according to the process they are working on.

## **CONCLUSION**

There was an increase in the knowledge of the Tanjong Malim National School students after the song-making training. An increase in ability can be seen when students are tested for basic music theory knowledge. Before the training, students did not understand the tone, rhythm, tempo, and dynamics. Some students cannot sing in the correct pitch when singing a simple song. After the training, students can sing well and confidently. Students can make simple songs. In addition, several students said that the importance of language skills is inseparable from creating songs. They look for words that they did not know before to be used in the song they made. The training provided to students at the National School of Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia proven to be effective in increasing students' knowledge in the ability to sing, compose songs, and speak Malay.

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