

USING SONGS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL: STUDENTS' PERCEPTION

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Abstract

The Songs can provide attractive and instructional media in learning activities. Song has been designed to motivate students to participate in English teaching and learning. The study aims to identify the students' perception of using songs in teaching English. Interviews are conducted as the research instruments to get students' perceptions towards English songs in teaching English. The interviews show that most students feel English songs are very helpful for them in improving their Speaking skills. They also feel that the English songs they listen to have the power to encourage students' motivation to learn. Correct pronunciation and learn English more deeply. In addition, the beauty of the tone and rhythm of the music also makes students feel happy and relaxed. They also feel that by listening to the lyrics of English songs carefully, they can easily get information about the correct pronunciation from native speakers. It makes them enthusiastic and increases their interest in learning.

Keywords: students' perception, song, English teaching, senior high school

BACKGROUND

Difficulties in learning English are often experienced by learners in Indonesia. Many learning problems arise due to differences between the elements of the mother tongue and the target language. There are two types of factors that influence a person in learning English, namely internal and external factors. Internal factors originate from within the learner, including motivation, interest, talent, and intelligence. Meanwhile, external factors come from outside the learner, such as the situation and environmental conditions, learning materials, and learning programs. In addition to these factors, teachers need to have special tricks to motivate students to learn English (Hendriani et al., 2020).

Students can be attracted to learning English through the use of interesting media and fun activities that can be tailored to their age and level, such as singing English songs.

Singing English songs greatly contributes to increasing student motivation. These contributions include vocabulary enrichment and the development of listening and speaking skills.

Songs can serve as an interesting and instructional learning medium. Its use is designed to motivate students to participate in the English language teaching and learning process. This study aims to determine students' perceptions of the effectiveness of songs in increasing their motivation to learn English. According to Saricoban and Metin (2000), a classroom environment that uses songs can entertain students, make them feel comfortable, and eliminate an uncomfortable atmosphere when learning linguistic structures. In addition, the positive and relaxed atmosphere created by songs facilitates problem-solving in the classroom, especially

for certain emotional cases in students, such as anxiety, lack of confidence, and feelings of threat, and can positively influence the learning process or facilitate it by stimulating students emotionally (Kramersch, 1993). Songs also motivate students by creating a positive atmosphere. Students are encouraged to actively engage in the learning process by utilizing their musical knowledge. In this context, songs are an effective way to help students improve their confidence in learning languages (Şahin & Shelley, 2008).

In this study, the researcher identified the effectiveness of using songs as a medium to motivate students to study English at SMA Madani Palu.

LITERATURE REVIEW

English Language Teaching

English language learning in Indonesia often faces various challenges, including differences between learners' first languages and the target language, which can cause difficulties. In addition, the socio-cultural context also plays an important role in the language learning process, where intercultural sensitivity is very important. Teaching English is not easy. Teachers and students in Indonesia face various problems and challenges in language teaching and learning.

Factors that influence English language learning can be grouped into internal factors (motivation, interest, talent, intelligence) and external factors (environment, materials, learning programs). Improvements in external factors can support internal factors. In this case, students' motivation, interest, talent, and intelligence can be shaped by the environment, materials, and learning programs available at school.

Therefore, teachers, as part of these external factors, need to be able to provide appropriate stimuli so that students are more motivated to learn English. English teachers are encouraged to implement creative and

adaptive teaching strategies, which are designed not only to increase student motivation but also to optimize learning outcomes.

These efforts must also consider and overcome potential obstacles that may arise to create a learning experience that is relevant, interesting, and effective for students. To improve the value of an integrated and dynamic multi-skill learning model, teachers can focus on meaningful communication and the development of communicative competencies in students.

Learning media plays an important role in increasing student motivation, especially in the context of multiple classes where students may experience difficulties. In such situations, media that combines various sensory elements such as visual, audio, and kinesthetic can be very effective in stimulating student engagement and interest, as well as accommodating diverse learning styles, so that lesson material can be delivered more effectively and remain in students' memories. Thus, the appropriate use of media in English language learning acts as a crucial bridge between teachers and students, ensuring that the learning process is effective and that learning objectives are optimally achieved.

The Use of Songs in English Language Teaching

The use of songs in English language learning is designed to increase student participation and motivation. Singing songs can enrich vocabulary and develop students' listening and speaking skills. Saricoban and Metin (2000) state that songs can create a pleasant and comfortable classroom atmosphere, helping students overcome difficulties in learning language structures. The positive and relaxed atmosphere created by songs can also reduce students' emotional problems, such as anxiety and lack of confidence, which in turn can facilitate the learning process.

In addition, songs motivate students by creating a conducive atmosphere and

encouraging active involvement in learning through the use of their musical knowledge. Şahin and Shelley (2008) emphasize that songs are an effective way to build students' confidence in learning languages. Songs also serve as a means of instilling cultural elements in language learning.

Songs serve as a versatile tool that can be used in various classroom activities, facilitating language learning and reinforcement in a fun and meaningful way. The use of songs in English language teaching can help students improve their language skills, language components, knowledge, confidence, relaxation, mood, and focus.

This study aims to identify students' perceptions of the effectiveness of using songs in improving their motivation and language learning skills. Specifically, this study seeks to understand how the use of songs can improve students' listening skills, focus, and motivation in language learning.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This is a chapter where the researcher shares what the foundations of the methodology are. This research was qualitative. The research used interviews as a technique of data collection. Comprehensive explanations are needed so that this research is arranged systematically, starting from the research design, the object of the study, and the method of data collection.

The researcher identified that the perception of students on the effectiveness of teaching English using songs can improve students' listening and focus before and after treatment. The researcher only takes a class which, in the interview, consists of 5 students.

This research was conducted in the SMAN Model Terpadu Madani Palu. This school is located on Jalan Soekarna Hatta Bumi Roviga. The subjects of this research

were five students of SMAN Model Terpadu Madani Palu.

In this research, the researcher used interviews given to the five students. According to Creswell & Creswell (2017), when researchers ask one or more subjects general, open-ended questions and record their responses, they are conducting an interview. The data is subsequently transcribed and typed into a computer file for analysis by the researcher.

In qualitative research, researchers require more in-depth and clear information about the case they wish to investigate. As stated by Creswell (2009), data collection methods in qualitative research are based on interviews, observations, and several documents. In this study, researchers will use interview questions as primary data collection to obtain in-depth information from participants. Additionally, the researcher will conduct interview sessions with participants to inquire about their perceptions regarding the effectiveness of using songs in English language teaching. The researcher will interview participants using audio recordings to record the discussions between the researcher and participants. The data collected by the researcher will then be transcribed from spoken words into writing and analyzed using relevant theories related to the research topic. The interview instruments are shown below.

In this study, researchers use thematic analysis to analyze data from interviews. According to Alhojailan (2012), thematic analysis allows researchers to accurately determine the relationship between drafts and compare them with data collected by researchers. Researchers will then analyze the data using the step-by-step guide from Braun & Clarke (2006). The first step is familiarizing oneself with the data, where the researcher must understand all aspects of the collected data. This step may involve transcribing the interviews, rereading all the data, and taking notes. The second step is generating initial codes, where the

researcher needs to code the data by highlighting participants' responses that are relevant to the theoretical framework and adding comments. The third step is to search for themes by classifying different codes into potential themes and organizing all relevant coded data. In the fourth step, reviewing themes, the researcher must review and ensure that the themes are useful and accurate. The next step is to define and name the themes. Defining themes involves formulating precisely what each theme means and finding out how it helps to understand the data. After that, naming themes involves assigning a short and easy-to-understand name to each theme. The final step is to write the report. After the researcher analyses the data, the writer will present the data and draw conclusions based on the findings.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Based on the responses from the students, the researcher can discuss the effectiveness of English songs as a learning medium for English language learners.

Using English songs as one of the mediums for learning English

Student 1 and Student 4 use English songs often or occasionally, finding them helpful for vocabulary improvement. Student 2 does not prefer songs, favoring other methods like movies or books. Student 3 and Student 5 use songs less frequently or find them less effective for focusing on language learning.

Most students (3 out of 5) use English songs as a learning medium, albeit to varying degrees. They find it enjoyable and less stressful than traditional studying methods. However, two students do not find English songs effective for their learning, citing reasons such as the fast pace of songs and the difficulty in understanding lyrics.

The appropriateness of English songs as a learning material

Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4 find English songs suitable depending on the song or as a break from traditional methods. Student 2 and Student 5 do not find songs suitable, preferring structured learning materials.

It can be inferred that students have different preferences when it comes to learning materials. Some students, such as Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4, find English songs to be suitable learning materials. They might find songs enjoyable and engaging, which can enhance their motivation to learn.

On the other hand, Student 2 and Student 5 prefer structured learning materials over songs. They might find structured materials more effective for systematic learning.

A relaxing learning atmosphere

Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4 agree that songs create a more relaxed learning atmosphere. Student 2 and Student 5 do not find the atmosphere relaxed when using songs for learning.

The use of songs in a learning environment is perceived differently by different students. Three out of five students (Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4) agree that songs create a more relaxed learning atmosphere. This aligns with research suggesting that music can help create a conducive learning environment, reduce stress and anxiety, and improve focus and concentration.

However, Student 2 and Student 5 do not find the atmosphere relaxed when using songs for learning. This could be due to individual learning preferences, as different people have different ways of learning, and what works for one might not work for another. For instance, some students might find music distracting, especially if it has lyrics.

Satisfaction with using English songs as a learning medium in learning English

Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4 enjoy using English songs as a learning medium. Student 2 and Student 5 do not enjoy it as much, finding other methods more effective.

It can be inferred that students have different preferences when it comes to learning English. Some students, such as Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4, find using English songs as a learning medium enjoyable and effective.

On the other hand, Student 2 and Student 5 do not find using English songs as effective, preferring other methods instead. This reflects the fact that individuals acquire learning styles and techniques according to their differences.

English songs make it easier to listen to English words

Student 1 finds songs helpful for understanding pronunciation and intonation.

Student 4 agrees but also needs to read the lyrics. Student 2, Student 3, and Student 5 have mixed feelings or do not find songs effective for listening to English words correctly. Student 1 finds songs beneficial for understanding pronunciation and intonation. Student 4 shares Student 1's view but also relies on reading the lyrics. This implies that visual aids like lyrics can boost some learners' comprehension of the song and help them notice pronunciation and vocabulary.

On the other hand, Students 2, 3, and 5 have mixed feelings or do not find songs effective for listening to English words correctly. This reflects the diversity in learning styles among individuals. While some learners may find music a helpful tool for language learning, others may not find it as effective.

Distinguishing the correct pronunciation of English sounds through English songs.

Student 1 and Student 4 can distinguish pronunciation to some extent,

especially with clear enunciation. Student 2, Student 3, and Student 5 find it challenging due to unusual pronunciation in songs.

The ability to distinguish the correct pronunciation of English sounds through songs varies among students. Student 1 and Student 4 have some ability to distinguish pronunciation, especially when the enunciation is clear.

On the other hand, Student 2, Student 3, and Student 5 find it challenging to distinguish pronunciation in songs, particularly due to unusual pronunciation. This could be because songs often contain colloquial language and slang, and sometimes artists may not enunciate words clearly or may use regional accents. These factors can make it difficult for learners to understand and replicate the correct pronunciation.

English songs help in becoming more fluent in speaking English

Student 1 feels more confident in speaking English after singing along. Student 4 finds it helpful but also needs separate speaking practice. Student 2, Student 3, and Student 5 do not think songs have much impact on their fluency.

The impact of English songs on fluency in speaking English varies among students. Student 1 feels more confident in speaking English after singing along. Student 4 finds English songs helpful but also needs separate speaking practice. This suggests that while songs can be a beneficial supplement to language learning, they may not be sufficient on their own for some learners.

Students 2, 3, and 5 do not think songs have much impact on their fluency. This suggests that the effectiveness of songs in language learning can depend on individual learning styles and preferences. Some learners may not find songs as helpful as others in improving their language skills.

In summary, the effectiveness of English songs as a learning tool varies among students. While some find it

engaging and helpful for vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation, others prefer more structured learning methods and find songs less effective.

Discussion

The Use of English Songs as a Learning Medium

The results showed that most students (3 out of 5 respondents) utilized English songs as a learning medium, although with varying degrees of frequency. These students, such as Student 1 and Student 4, found that these songs were useful in enriching their vocabulary. This view is in line with Saricoban and Metin's (2000) findings, which state that songs can make students feel happy and eliminate discomfort when learning linguistic structures, as well as enrich their vocabulary. In addition, they feel that learning through songs is more enjoyable and less stressful than traditional learning methods (Hursepun & Rijoly, 2022; Tilwani et al., 2022). This is also aligned with the idea that the use of interesting teaching aids, such as songs, enables the creation of an enjoyable learning environment among students and simplifies the learning process, especially in mastering vocabulary (Husain et al., 2021). This shows that songs can be an attractive and instructional medium in learning activities.

However, it is important to note that two students did not consider English songs effective for their learning. The reasons they gave included the fast tempo of the songs and difficulty in understanding the lyrics. Student 2 specifically preferred other methods, such as films or books, while Students 3 and 5 rarely used songs or felt they were ineffective for focusing on language learning. This indicates that individual preferences for learning media vary greatly, and not all students respond positively to the use of songs in the learning process.

Suitability of English Songs as Learning Materials

In terms of the suitability of songs as learning materials, the findings show clear differences in preferences among students. Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4 consider English songs suitable, depending on the song or as a break from traditional methods. They may find songs enjoyable and interesting, which can increase their motivation to learn. This supports the view that songs can be designed to motivate students to participate in English teaching and learning. As stated by Şahin and Shelley (2008), songs are indeed an effective way to build students' confidence in language learning.

Conversely, Students 2 and 5 do not view songs as suitable, preferring structured learning materials. These preferences may stem from their learning styles, which necessitate a more systematic approach to learning. These differences underscore the importance for educators to offer a variety of learning materials and methods to accommodate diverse learning styles (Xing, 2023).

Relaxed Learning Atmosphere

The majority of students (Student 1, Student 3, and Student 4) agreed that songs created a more relaxed learning atmosphere. This is consistent with research showing that music can help create a conducive learning environment, reduce stress and anxiety, and improve focus and concentration (Kumar et al., 2022). The positive atmosphere and calming mood brought about by songs can also facilitate the learning process by stimulating students emotionally (Triwardani, 2022).

The relaxed learning atmosphere created by songs can have a significant impact on student motivation and learning outcomes. When students feel more relaxed, they are more likely to participate actively in learning activities, ask questions, and take risks in using the language (Xiao-Wei, 2021). By involving songs, teachers can create a fun

classroom atmosphere and motivate students.

However, Student 2 and Student 5 did not feel relaxed when using songs for learning. This could be due to individual learning preferences; some students may find music distracting, especially if there are lyrics. This shows that although songs can motivate students by providing a good atmosphere, their effectiveness greatly depends on the students themselves.

Satisfaction with Using English Songs as a Learning Medium

Satisfaction with using English songs as a learning medium also shows diversity in perception. Students 1, 3, and 4 enjoyed using songs, finding them effective and enjoyable. This reinforces the idea that songs can positively influence learning by stimulating students emotionally. The integration of songs can enhance the affective dimension of learning, fostering a sense of enjoyment and personal connection to the material, ultimately leading to a more enriched and meaningful educational experience (Luo et al., 2022; Wardiman et al., 2022).

However, Student 2 and Student 5 did not particularly enjoy or find the songs effective, preferring other methods. This again reflects that individuals acquire learning styles and techniques according to their differences. This reminds educators of the importance of customizing learning experiences to meet the specific needs and preferences of each student (Xiao, 2022).

Ease of Hearing English Words and Distinguishing Pronunciation

Regarding the ease of hearing English words, Student 1 felt that songs helped in understanding pronunciation and intonation. Student 4 agreed but was also required to read the lyrics. This suggests that visual aids such as lyrics can enhance some learners' understanding of the song and help them pay attention to pronunciation and vocabulary (Husain et al., 2021). This finding also

supports the statement that carefully listening to the lyrics of English songs can help students obtain accurate pronunciation information from native speakers (Suciati & Zarkasih, 2021).

In contrast, Student 2, Student 3, and Student 5 had mixed feelings or did not consider songs effective for listening to English words correctly. When it came to distinguishing correct pronunciation, Student 1 and Student 4 were able to distinguish pronunciation to a certain extent, especially with clear articulation. However, Student 2, Student 3, and Student 5 found it difficult because of the unusual pronunciation of the songs. This may be due to the songs often containing colloquial language, slang, or even unclear pronunciation or regional accents of the artists.

Contribution of English Songs to Speaking Fluency

Regarding the impact of English songs on speaking fluency, students' perceptions varied. Student 1 felt more confident in speaking English after singing along. Student 4 considered it helpful but also required separate speaking practice. (Palupi et al., 2022) May states that the ability to speak fluently is an essential part of language learning, especially for communication, so the use of songs in the classroom can help to improve pronunciation skills. However, the findings show that while songs can be a beneficial supplement to language learning, they may not be sufficient on their own for some learners.

Students 2, 3, and 5 did not find that songs helped with their speaking fluency. They need additional practice to improve their speaking abilities. This again underlines that the effectiveness of songs in language learning may depend on individual learning styles and preferences.

Overall, the findings indicate that English songs have great potential as an engaging and motivating learning tool,

particularly in vocabulary acquisition and creating a relaxed learning atmosphere. Songs can also encourage students to learn correct pronunciation and study English more deeply, as well as make students feel happy and relaxed due to the beauty of the melody and rhythm of the music (Husain et al., 2021; Wardiman et al., 2022). However, their effectiveness is greatly influenced by students' individual preferences and learning styles. Teachers should consider this diversity and may combine songs with other teaching methods to meet the needs of all students. Nevertheless, songs generally can make students enthusiastic and increase their interest in learning.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The findings of this study explain important points related to students' perceptions of the effectiveness of using songs in English language teaching. Based on interviews, most students feel that English songs are very helpful in improving their speaking skills. They also feel that the English songs they listen to have the power to motivate students to learn correct pronunciation and study English more deeply.

In addition, the beauty of the melody and rhythm of the music also makes students feel happy and relaxed. They also feel that by listening carefully to the lyrics of English songs, they can easily obtain information about correct pronunciation from native speakers. This makes them enthusiastic and increases their interest in learning. By looking at the reasons for choosing the topic, this study collected data and explained the phenomenon of students' perceptions of the use of English songs to find out how their perceptions obtained positive results that the use of English songs can improve their pronunciation and speaking skills.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study regarding students' perception of the use of songs in English language learning, several suggestions can be made for future research. Subsequent researchers need to explore further variations in the use of songs in English language teaching, such as cloze procedures with lyrics or lyric analysis for cultural understanding, in order to identify the most effective approaches for different learning styles. Additionally, comparative studies comparing the effectiveness of songs with other learning media, such as films or books, in developing specific language skills (vocabulary, pronunciation, or speaking fluency) would be highly beneficial. It is also recommended to analyze in greater depth the factors influencing students' preferences for songs, such as musical intelligence or prior experience with music, through the use of more detailed questionnaires or focus groups.

Another interesting area of research is investigating the impact of songs on students' writing skills, which has not been explored much. To obtain a more comprehensive and generalizable picture, future researchers should use larger and more diverse samples and combine quantitative research methods such as large-scale surveys or language proficiency tests to measure the impact of song use more objectively. Finally, studying the role of teachers in integrating songs into the curriculum, including the challenges they face and effective teaching strategies, will provide a more holistic perspective.

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