



Students' Perspectives on Enhancing Vocabulary Through Song

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Abstract - The purpose of this study is to investigate junior high school students' perspectives regarding the efficacy of teaching vocabulary in English through the use of English songs. The participants in this study were 9th-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Kabila Bone in the academic year 2023-2024. This is a qualitative study which use interview in open-ended questions form in gathering the data. The result showed that songs provide a dynamic and engaging approach which may capturing students and minimizing monotony in the classroom. Students' interest also was sparked by the rhythmic beat and fun of the songs, which encouraged active involvement and made learning vocabulary enjoyable. Songs also helped students expand and acquire their vocabulary by giving them context-rich examples of word usage and enhancing their language comprehension. In summary, the use of songs in vocabulary learning creates an engaging, enjoyable, and effective educational experience.

Keywords: students' perspectives, English vocabulary, song

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Abstract - Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui perspektif siswa sekolah menengah pertama tentang efektifitas pengajaran kosakata dalam bahasa Inggris melalui penggunaan lagu-lagu berbahasa Inggris. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas 9 SMP Negeri 1 Kabila Bone tahun ajaran 2023-2024. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang menggunakan wawancara dalam bentuk pertanyaan terbuka dalam pengumpulan data. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa lagu memberikan pendekatan yang dinamis dan menarik yang dapat memikat siswa dan meminimalkan pembelajaran yang monoton di kelas. Ketertarikan siswa juga terhadap irama lagu yang berirama indah dan lirik yang menyenangkan, hal ini mendorong keterlibatan aktif dan membuat pembelajaran kosa kata menjadi menyenangkan. Lagu juga membantu siswa memperluas dan memperoleh kosa kata mereka dengan memberi mereka contoh penggunaan kata yang kaya konteks dan meningkatkan pemahaman bahasa mereka. Singkatnya, penggunaan lagu dalam pembelajaran kosakata menciptakan pengalaman pembelajaran yang menarik, menyenangkan, dan efektif.

Kata Kunci: perspektif siswa, kosakata Bahasa Inggris, lagu



INTRODUCTION

One of the benefits of utilizing songs to teach vocabulary is flexibility. A song is considered easy since it may be utilized for different objectives. There are several reasons why songs might be considered beneficial for teaching. Songs are powerful teaching and learning aids because they can help students put words into practice and broaden their vocabulary. English teachers frequently utilize songs to stimulate language learning. Learning through songs may stimulate classroom activities and help in vocabulary memory since students read and translate on their own, and catchy tunes help them remember the repeated words. English songs had a considerable impact on students' English language skills. Participants stated that English songs helped them learn new vocabulary, particularly uncommon terms, as well as improve their word pronunciation (Andyani & Dewi 2020; Isnaini & Aminatun 2021). These findings show the efficacy of utilizing songs as a teaching and learning technique, especially for foreign language learners who may struggle to remember new words. It also emphasizes the significance of experimenting with unique and engaging teaching techniques to achieve good language learning outcomes.

Many EFL students are still having difficulty learning vocabulary these days. One of the teachers' challenges is to be creative and innovative in their learning. The government has provided teachers the freedom to design learning in the classroom, and songs are a good strategy to introduce vocabulary because they provide a relevant context for the word (Kau at all, 2024). Most learners' vocabulary expands through incidental learning, such as continual exposure to language comprehension in listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Based on the pre-observation, teachers have already used songs in the classroom to help students improve their vocabulary collection, which includes a variety of songs to assist them in learning new terms.

This study on the usefulness of utilizing English songs to enhance vocabulary among 9th-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Kabila Bone offers a more extensive and nuanced analysis of the effectiveness of using English songs to improve vocabulary.

Learning vocabulary is important for learning English. This is an important factor in learning a foreign language. Vocabulary is important because it allows students to understand what they write, read, hear, and speak. A vocabulary term is an important word in the language. However, many kids continue seeking assistance memorizing vocabulary. As a result, in order to understand the importance of vocabulary, students must first acquire the basics. Vocabulary becomes an important part of learning a language since it gives the meaning that people use to communicate. Vocabulary is a collection of words that a person/individual knows in a language. (Islami 2019, Purnami 2022, Kusuma & Rustipa 2023).

Perception is the process of gathering and evaluating sensory data in order to develop an understanding and mental representation of things. Perception is the process by which a person gets and organizes inputs in order to understand them meaningfully. In brief, perception is the product of an experience, which can lead to an opinion. Experience-based perceptions are difficult to change because they make people feel more pleased. When instructors understand their students' perceptions, they are better able to choose the appropriate approach and strategies in class. (Meilinda 2019, Fatmawati R, et al. 2022, Wusqo 2024) In conclusion, perception, influenced by human experiences and difficult to



modify, involves analyzing sensory information to generate meaningful knowledge, which is critical for instructors to consider when choosing teaching approaches and methods.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative methodology to explore students' perceptions and experiences of the use of English songs for vocabulary development. As defined by Creswell, qualitative research focuses on textual and visual data, which was deemed appropriate to uncover the nuanced insights sought in this study. Semi-structured interviews were used as the primary data collection technique to explore the benefits of using song to improve students' vocabulary. Conducted during the school day, each participant was interviewed once, with sessions lasting between three to five minutes, and recorded using a voice recorder for accuracy. Using a semi-structured approach, this method allowed participants the freedom to fully express their perspectives, drawing on the theories of eminent researchers to inform the construction of interview questions.

This research took place at SMP Negeri 1 Kabila Bone and the participants were ten ninth grade students, academic year 2023/2024, from the school that were selected based on a number of factors. The selected participants consist of two male and eight female students with an average age of 13 to 14 years. The rationale for selecting this group of students stemmed from the observation of a lack of interest in learning English and a limited vocabulary among some students at SMP Negeri 1 Kabila Bone, particularly within this group of ten students. This observation was made during a pre-observation conducted prior to the research, which identified teaching strategies that contributed to these challenges. The students themselves expressed difficulties in understanding and pronouncing English, and noted the limited and uninteresting learning materials provided.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research delved into the enriching impact of incorporating songs and song analysis into the realm of English language learning. The exploration revolved around various categories, each shedding light on a distinct aspect of how songs can enhance the language learning experience. These categories encompassed heightened engagement, vocabulary enrichment, improved pronunciation, stress reduction, enhanced creativity, and a positive classroom atmosphere. The comprehensive analysis of these categories presents a compelling case for the integration of songs and their analytical exploration in the language learning curriculum.

The first category, "Enhanced Engagement and Interest in Learning," elucidated the immense potential of songs to bring vitality to the classroom. Students voiced their appreciation for songs, which infuse a lively ambiance into the learning environment. The dynamic nature of songs, coupled with their rhythmic tempo and melodious tunes, captivates students, preventing monotony and encouraging active participation, which is aligned with Thao & Herman (2021) who stated that incorporating songs in language teaching makes the learning process more enjoyable and effective. This heightened engagement stems from the fact that songs resonate with students on a personal level. When the subject matter is presented in a musical form, it becomes more relatable and engaging, ultimately enhancing comprehension and knowledge retention. Moreover, the



interactivity of singing along and dissecting song fosters a deeper understanding of language elements, making the learning process more enjoyable and effective.

The second category, "Facilitation of Vocabulary Acquisition and Expansion," highlighted the instrumental role of songs in enriching students' vocabulary. Students shared instances where songs introduced them to new words, offering contextualized examples of their usage. Songs were seen as valuable resources for expanding vocabulary in an enjoyable and interactive manner. The integration of songs in language learning aligns with contemporary pedagogical approaches that emphasize experiential and contextual learning. The exposure to diverse vocabulary within the musical context contributes to a more profound understanding of word meanings and usage, providing students with a nuanced appreciation of the language, which aligns with Farmand & Pourgharib (2013) and Gilakjani & Sabouri (2017) who stated that learning English through songs provides an opportunity for students to learn how to pronounce words correctly and presumably increase the amount of vocabulary possessed by the students themselves.

The third category, "Pronunciation and Language Fluency Improvement," brought to light the potential of songs in refining pronunciation and enhancing language fluency. Students recognized that imitating the pronunciation of singers aids them in sounding more like native English speakers. The phonetic patterns and intonation present in songs provide valuable models for accurate pronunciation. Moreover, the auditory nature of songs, combined with the visual aid allows students to simultaneously see and hear the correct pronunciation of words, enhancing their language fluency. According to the findings of Farmand and Pourgharib (2013) as well as Gilakjani and Sabouri (2017), utilizing songs for learning English presents a valuable chance for students to master accurate pronunciation of words and it can be said that by incorporating songs in language education, educators can encourage students to embrace authentic pronunciation, ultimately boosting their confidence and proficiency in spoken English.

The fourth category, "Reduction of Learning-Related Stress," presented songs as effective tools in alleviating the stress often associated with language learning. Students highlighted the calming effect of music, which creates a joyful and relaxing atmosphere during the learning process. The enjoyable nature of songs helps in mitigating the anxiety students may experience when faced with challenging language concepts. This underscores the potential of songs to create a relaxed environment, promoting a positive and stress-free classroom atmosphere, similar to the statement made by Dilago et al. (2022), who stated that using songs as a medium of instruction creates a more relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom. Such an atmosphere is conducive to effective learning, fostering an environment where students can thrive and engage with the material in a more productive manner.

The fifth category, "Promotion of Creativity and Imagination," showcased how songs stimulate creativity among students. The narratives and themes present in song were found to fuel creative thinking, inspiring students to write poems, stories, or even explore other art forms. By engaging with songs, students are encouraged to think outside the box, interpret in their unique ways, and transform them into their creative expressions, which is supported by Bokiev et al. (2018) who stated that musical activities can stimulate students' creativity. The vast array of emotions and experiences depicted in song provides a rich



palette for students to draw from, fostering a more imaginative approach to language learning.

The sixth category, "Fostering a Positive Classroom Atmosphere," underscored the transformative effect of songs on the overall classroom ambiance. The engaging and enjoyable nature of songs encourages participation and active involvement, making the learning experience more pleasant. Students noted that singing together lightens the mood and fosters a joyful atmosphere, which is aligned with Dilago et al.'s (2022) assertion where the utilization of songs as an instructional tool fosters a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere within the classroom. Such an atmosphere promotes effective learning by creating a positive and lively classroom environment. The interactivity of singing and engaging with the songs as a group cultivates a sense of camaraderie among students, fostering a supportive learning community.

The seventh category, "Integration of Song Analysis into Language Learning," highlighted the educational value of analyzing song. This analytical approach facilitates a deeper understanding of language concepts, cultural elements, and historical contexts. The contextualization of academic topics through song analysis enriches the learning experience. By exploring the themes and messages conveyed through song, students can delve into the nuances of language and its cultural implications, which is similar to the discovery made by Herman & Silalahi (2020) who stated that using songs in the classroom can be beneficial for language learners as it can improve their pronunciation and listening skills, expand their vocabulary, and enhance their grammar knowledge. This underscores the pedagogical potential of integrating song analysis into language education, offering a more comprehensive understanding of language and its diverse contexts.

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the significant potential of integrating songs and song analysis into English language learning. Each category unraveled unique aspects of the impact of songs on language education, collectively portraying a vivid picture of the enriching influence songs can have on the learning journey. From enhancing engagement and vocabulary to fostering creativity, songs offer an innovative and effective means of enriching the language learning experience. The integration of songs aligns with contemporary pedagogical approaches, which advocate for dynamic and experiential learning methods. By embracing songs and their analytical exploration, educators can create a more engaging, enjoyable and effective language learning environment, ultimately nurturing proficient and confident English language learners.

CONCLUSION

This research sheds light on the effectiveness of incorporating English song in teaching English vocabulary, focusing on ninth grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Kabila Bone. The integration of English song into the language learning process was found to be highly beneficial. The research showed that songs provide a dynamic and engaging approach that engages students and prevents monotony in the classroom. The rhythmic tempo and melodic tunes of songs piqued students' interest encouraged active participation and made the vocabulary learning process enjoyable. In addition, songs were instrumental in vocabulary acquisition and expansion, providing contextualized examples of word usage



and enriching students' language understanding. The inherent repetitiveness of song aided the retention of frequently used words.

In terms of students' perceptions, the research revealed a highly positive outlook towards the use of English song. Students perceived songs as effective tools for learning new words, improving pronunciation, and enhancing language fluency. The contextualized learning provided by song resonated with students, enabling a deeper understanding of language elements. The calming and enjoyable nature of songs also contributed to stress reduction during learning activities, promoting a relaxed and positive classroom atmosphere. Moreover, students acknowledged that songs inspired creativity, encouraging them to engage in various forms of artistic expression. The integration of song analysis enriched the academic relevance of the material, facilitating a deeper understanding of language concepts and their cultural implications. Overall, students viewed the integration of English song as a valuable and enjoyable addition to their language learning journey.

After completing this study, there are suggestions for incorporating English songs into language learning. Students can benefit from interactive language methods that include English song. These methods often provide engaging exercises and quizzes related to song, reinforcing vocabulary and comprehension in an enjoyable manner. Keeping a personal vocabulary list while engaging with songs, noting down new words, understanding their meanings in context, and practicing their usage in sentences can significantly aid vocabulary acquisition. In addition, participating in language challenges or competitions centered on song interpretations can foster active involvement, enhance comprehension, and provide a fun platform for learning and competing with peers. Collaborative learning through group activities focused on song analysis is also highly recommended, as it promotes a deeper understanding of language elements and encourages diverse perspectives.

For educators, optimizing the integration of English song into language teaching involves organizing a library of age-appropriate songs aligned with the curriculum. Consideration should be given to language complexity and relevance to learning objectives. Furthermore, incorporating a variety of music genres and themes provides to diverse student preferences and language goals, ensuring high engagement levels during lessons. Designing structured activities around song, such as gap-filling exercises, word scrambles, or group discussions, can encourage active participation and critical analysis. Additionally, assigning creative projects where students write their songs or poems inspired by song fosters creativity, language proficiency, and a deeper appreciation of the songwriting process.

Future researchers could explore the cross-cultural impacts of using English song in language learning. Understanding how culture influences the learning experience can provide valuable insights for designing culturally inclusive language teaching methods. Future researchers are also suggested to examine the long-term effects of incorporating English song on language proficiency, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the long-term benefits. Advanced data analytics and machine learning techniques can be utilized to analyze vast amounts of song and learner data, providing deeper insights into vocabulary frequency, linguistic patterns, and optimal teaching strategies for different learner groups. Collaboration with professionals in music and linguistics is encouraged to



gain a more holistic understanding of the intricate relationship between song, language learning, and cognitive processes, enriching the field and yielding innovative educational approaches.

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