

Students' Perception on Song As Media in Learning EFL

Darman Pangaribuan¹, Chairunnissa²

English Department, University of Prima Indonesia, Indonesia

darmanpangaribuan@unprimdn.ac.id¹, chairunnissa246@gmail.com²

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Abstract

Despite a sizable body of research, the benefits of employing songs for learning (learner-centered) receive little attention. The purpose of the study is to understand what Indonesian EFL students think about the benefits of utilizing music to learn a new language. Eleven college students majoring in English were used to gather data for an in-depth interview approach used to investigate the research phenomena utilizing a qualitative case study design. The results of this study revealed an intriguing finding: the participants felt that using songs could help them learn English more effectively in aspects such as speaking and listening skill, pronunciation and vocabulary advancement, and development of confidence while keeping the class mood and concentration. Therefore, it is advised that songs be used in both EFL instruction by teachers and EFL instruction by students.

Keywords : English Songs, Students Perception, Teaching media

INTRODUCTION

Learning a foreign language, sometimes known as learning a "second" language, entails teaching a non-native language outside of its natural setting. This area of study examines how well humans can acquire languages other than their native tongue. It brings together experts from the fields of psychology, linguistics, language pedagogy, education, neuroscience, sociology, and anthropology. New insights into effective settings intended to raise language accomplishment and competence have been made possible by innovations in learning and teaching methodologies. If a language is primarily learnt in a classroom and is not used in the culture where the instruction takes place, it is regarded as alien. Learning a new language enables one to interact with others in real-world circumstances and communicate persuasively and creatively in the language of the target culture.

Learning a second language allows for access to viewpoints different than one's own, improves one's capacity for making connections between subjects, and fosters an interdisciplinary viewpoint while fostering intercultural understandings. Effective human-to-human communication depends on language, which also helps people comprehend their own languages and cultures.

Songs foster a relaxed learning environment and give possibilities for language practice through repetition, listening comprehension, language association and assimilation, and phonological development. Therefore, while teaching English, songs may be used to recycle numerous language elements. Songs may be included into various learning phases as warm-ups or fillers to keep students engaged in the material (Johar et al 2020; Magulod et al 2021). Given the songs' value, this essay will examine the instructional roles that music and songs have in the study of English as a second or foreign language.

Songs have been used to teach English because of their profound benefits as authentic teaching tools and because of their great advantages for teaching English as a first language, second language, or even a foreign language (Romero, 2017). Songs can also increase students' motivation and proficiency in learning a foreign language (Chen & Chen, 2009). The benefits of songs in EFL teaching and learning have been supported by certain studies. For instance, research was done in Turkey to see how primary school instructors felt about using songs as listening aids. According to the study's findings, songs help students become better listeners (Sevik, 2011). In Malaysia, comparable research of a different kind were also carried out (Razak & Yunus, 2016). Listening to songs while studying can also increase students' concentration and desire in following the class (Tampubolon & Tamba, 2022)

The majority of earlier research were carried out from teachers point of view rather than students point of view. Specifically, there is a beliefs that second language and EFL learners model of learning using music have been disregarded. Despite the significance of EFL learning, few research have been done on learners' views in it, and those that have been done did not relate with students' beliefs in songs. In fact, as it is a crucial construct, (Altan, 2006) stated that, it affects students' way of thinking and bearing. (Incecay and Dollar: 2011) stated that, learners' beliefs have a significant impact on EFL learning. Since "what students believe affect their language learning much more than their teachers do" (Riley, 1996: 128, in Abdul & Abid, 2012). It is believed that the learners' beliefs have a significant influence on their language learning in the setting of EFL learning (Abdi and Asadi: 2015). These lead the research to belief that, learners' beliefs will determine whether they learn or not. Prior research has mostly concentrated on the teaching perspective, ignoring the significance of learners' views in the use of songs in EFL learning. However, because they affect how students think and act, learners' beliefs are important for EFL learning. While earlier studies focused on using songs to teach English from a teaching perspective, this research examines songs from the viewpoint of teenage learners. This research puts emphasis on how English song learning helps EFL learners acquire English language.

METHOD

This study looked at how Indonesian EFL students felt about utilizing songs to learn English. As a result, it was carried out using a qualitative research approach and designated as a case study. It is typically observed that qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and methods are widely used in a variety of educational disciplines, including sociology, psychology, history, and so forth. There are still ongoing "paradigm wars" about research methodologies, when scholars from the two opposing camps of positivism and interpretivism contend for dominance. According to positivistic scholars, the social world is made up of tangible, immutable reality that can be objectively measured. However, interpretative scholars challenge the positivist view of reality, contending that reality is socially produced by people and susceptible to change and interpretation (Kroeze, 2012).

In order to help researchers explore phenomena that are socially and culturally focused, qualitative research techniques were developed in the social sciences (Cresswell 2009). Nowadays, practically all study fields and areas employ qualitative methods and analysis. The approach often uses observational and respondent observational data sources, surveys and interviews, documents, as well as the researcher's impressions and perceptions.

Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches employ case studies. Case studies, according to Yin (1994), are empirical investigations of phenomena within the context of their environments when the link between the phenomena and the environment is ambiguous. As a result, a case is analyzed to comprehend a problem or contribute to an established theory or a novel theoretical idea. The entity notion is related to the unit of measurement used in case studies. Research projects using the case study methodology may include one or more instances. A research study's instances may be compared or contrasted in order to reach a conclusion. For instance, a researcher may employ a single case study approach to examine the link between user involvement in system development and the problem of organizational change related to the creation and deployment of IT systems (Butler and Fitzgerald, 2001). Depending on the study goal, case studies can be done using a single or multiple design. Single case designs are appropriate for researching extreme examples, supporting or refuting hypotheses, or in situations where access is restricted. The many case design is appropriate for obtaining information and making decisions based on found facts. Both strategies improve the validity and dependability of study findings. For instance, Hassan and Veeraghavan (2000) investigated how businesses might utilize data to achieve goals through the creation of multidimensional databases using a multiple case design. Researchers can draw findings that improve the validity and reliability of their study by comparing and contrasting the four scenarios.

Research Subject

Twenty Indonesian EFL students from SMA St. Thomas 2 Medan in the Indonesian province of North Sumatera participated in this qualitative study. Purposive behavior sampling was used to be able to gather the data for this investigation. Since only students who are able to hold a discussion regarding music in English language were chosen as the sample, this kind of sampling methodology was applied.

Data Collection

An open-ended questionnaire and an in-depth interview were used to gather the research's data. A talk used to obtain information is called an interview. In a research interview, both the interviewer and the interviewee participate in the conversation and answer the interviewer's questions. You can conduct interviews in-person or on the phone. According to Easwaramoorthy and Zarinpoush (2006), the internet is now being used as a medium for conducting interviews.

Some of the EFL students were questioned if they enjoy listening to English music outside of the classes in order to elicit their beliefs. The following question was posed to those who responded "yes." To find out if they used songs to enhance their EFL learning, the question was asked. If they said "yes," they were questioned about how the music helped them learn English. Their responses to the third question were used as the research's data. The writers also went over the literature from a variety of sources, including books, the internet, journals, and other materials pertinent to their main areas of inquiry.

Data Analysis

In accordance with the methodology outlined by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaa (2018), the interview data was examined. They are verification, conclusion drafting, data presentation, and data condensing. We condensed the data by selecting the most pertinent facts to address the study's objective. To better analyze and explain the data, we aim to "display data" by using snippets to infer the presentation. Finally, the reformed data were referenced back to the data presentation and raw data during the steps of developing and validating findings.

FINDINGS

Based on the informants' perceptions, the findings of this study demonstrate that songs provide a number of benefits, as stated in Table 1 below:

Table 1 The Benefits of Songs

No	Advantage	Affected Subject
1	Improving Listening Skill	8
2	Improving Pronunciation	5
3	Increasing Vocabulary	18
4	Develop Confidence in Speaking	7
5	Help Build a Calm and Relaxing Learning Session	16
6	Restoring Students Mood and Focus	19

DISCUSSION

According to the students' opinions, the benefits of listening to English music are further explained and organized in the part that follows.

1. Improving Listening Skill

The results of the interviews showed that English songs helped in improving students' listening abilities. The student participants S1 and S15, for instance, utilized English songs to enhance their listening cognition skill. They admitted that listening to the music helped them strengthen their listening abilities, which in turn helped them understand what they were hearing better. For instance, Student S15 explained her use of English music as follows:

One method I employ to comprehend English literature is song. I so frequently listen to English music in order to comprehend English listening materials. Therefore, English songs can help improve my listening skills, i think its because music is a great tool for learning as well as for fun. I become more acclimated to English words and their pronunciation by listening to English music more frequently. I am thus familiar with terms found in the texts whenever I listen to listening test recordings that the listening topic speaker presents. I am no longer a stranger to them.

S18 and S19 reported that they used their favorite tunes to help them listen more clearly. They enjoyed Adele and Bruno Mars' pop tunes. They learned new phrases, vocabulary, and idioms from the tunes. It showed that the students tried to understand the song's words by looking for them, translating them, and memorizing them. English songs might be learned by continuously playing them in their ears. According to S18, S19, and S20, several students like the songs as well. To enhance their listening comprehension, they selected their favorite tunes. In other words, listening to English music had a significant impact on how well the students could listen.

S9, meanwhile, indicated that he utilized the taking notes technique in listening lessons to anticipate new phrases that he did not yet know or fully comprehend.

The passage following is from a different participant, student S18, who discussed her experience learning English through English songs:

I find that music helps me unwind. I am able to concentrate better on whatever it is I am listening to as a consequence. I enjoy listening to English music. They provide me with entertainment. English music helps me to relax and quiet my thoughts. My vocabulary and pronunciation in English both grow as a result of listening to English music. In other words, music helps me focus and lift my mood more than anything else. **My ability to listen is enhanced** if I am more concentrated and in a good mood.

For instance, the following participating student S18 described how she acquired English songs:

I listen to my favorite music every day to enhance my listening comprehension. Adele and Bruno Mars' pop songs are among my favorites. I learn new information, phrases, words, and idioms from the music. Normally, I seek out the lyrics, translate them, and remember them. These help me be more attentive while listening. English songs will be committed to memory if I listen to them repeatedly. The music is also enjoyable. Right? I thus pick my favorite tunes to hone my listening skills. My ability to listen has definitely improved because to listening to English songs.

2. Improving Pronunciation

The interviews also showed that listening to English music helps students improve their pronunciation. In this situation, proper pronunciation helped the students talk and communicate with the audience. Even if they made some linguistic errors, learners who had high speaking skills were more likely to have understanding. S15 said that she could focus on certain language sounds and speech elements that incorporated the sounds by listening to English music. Here is an illustration of a participant's statement, for instance, Student S15 explained her use of English music as follows:

One method I employ to comprehend English hearing literature is song. I so frequently listen to English music in order to comprehend English listening materials. I learned a ton of new words and **my pronunciation improved**.

The second participant (S18) admitted to listening to English music in either a British or an American fashion. Sometimes the song pronunciations corresponded with the recordings she had heard. To put it another way, the word pronunciations that the students heard in English songs are frequently connected to the music that she hears. They may work on their pronunciation regardless of the music genre, be it rap, slow, pop, or jazz.

3. Increasing Vocabulary

It is important to notice that vocabulary achievement among learners rises quickly when they listen to English music. Five interviewees (S1, S15, S14, S2, and S9) recognized that they learned a ton of new language.

In addition, S1 and S15 learned a vast amount of new vocabulary and pronunciation through listening to English music. In other words, students learned a lot of new terms and improved their English pronunciation through listening to English music. Additionally, it was discovered that the

pupils said that listening to English music helped them understand more. The students are both consciously and unconsciously used to hearing English words if they have listened to English songs. It would be simpler for them to understand what the speakers meant. For instance, Student S2 gave the following account of her experience with English songs:

One of my favorite strategy in learning English language is through songs. I so frequently listen to English music in order to comprehend English listening materials. Through songs, **I learned a ton of new words and my pronunciation improved.**

Additionally, they learned some new idioms and concepts as they trained their hearings to get familiar to hearing those new words, phrases, or sentences and recognized their meanings in light of the language's usage context.

4. Develop Confidence in Speaking

According to interview findings, certain remarks made by participants, such as S14, admitted that their understanding and confidence in utilizing the English language had greatly increased as a result of listening to English music. S2 also acknowledged that she felt a little more comfortable using English because she had become accustomed to hearing various words and saying in the songs. The students can instantly employ the newly acquired knowledge in their language learning tasks whether in writing or speech.

Student S14 was another pupil who shared his sentiments. He described the benefit he received from listening to English songs as follows:

My mood and listening abilities may both be enhanced by listening to music and viewing movies. I thus learn a lot of new language by listening to foreign music regularly, especially western music. Each song has its own lexicon, you know. As a result, I gained a ton of new vocabulary while also training my ears to become accustomed to hearing those new terms. I find that listening to English music helps me learn more and boosts my confidence when I speak in front of groups

5. Help Build a Calm and Relaxing Learning Session

Two participants (S19 and S20) believe that listening to English music will help them learn the language more easily by lowering their stress levels, boosting their motivation and interest, and putting them at ease. In other words, the students found English music to be enjoyable. They believed that they were currently studying English on their own outside of the classroom. Songs helped them unwind and feel tranquil. S19 and S20 both said that listening to music helped them unwind. They could thus pay closer attention to what they are listening to as a result. According to the informants, including those listed below, they enjoyed listening to English music since they helped to quiet and relax their minds.

Song listening helps me unwind...English music helps me to relax and quiet my thoughts. My vocabulary and pronunciation in English both grow as a result of listening to English music.

6. Restoring Students Mood and Focus

Three participants (S19, S12, and S3) believed that utilizing music to learn English had additional benefits. They believed that English music could lift their spirits and help them concentrate. They stated that listening to numerous types of music would refresh their minds and

feelings so that their mood would be improved whenever they were in a foul mood, feeling bored and fatigued owing to many duties. Additionally, they believed that they would become more concentrated after listening to English music from Western nations.

I feel more calm when I listen to music; for me, music serves more as a mood and attention booster. My ability to listen is enhanced and I can concentrate more and in a good mood.

English as a foreign language (EFL) learners like singing and respond favorably to the employment of English songs as a teaching tool. These songs can be utilized as extracurricular language exercises to help independent adult EFL learners become more motivated and successful. They may help elevate mood and provide a soothing setting, which makes studying EFL a nonthreatening experience. According to the study's findings, EFL students think that listening comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, knowledge, confidence, and mood are all improved by songs. Additionally, they think that teaching with English songs helps students regain their concentration and attitude. When studying English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia, the goal is to overcome learning barriers while still having fun and gaining knowledge, perception, and understanding through English songs.

In summary, utilizing English songs as a medium for learning English may improve pleasure, knowledge, perception, understanding, and get around learning barriers, making it an efficient and fun way for EFL students.

CONCLUSION

The English songs depict the current state of affairs as seen by native speakers of the language. Through the lyrics, they can convey desires, motives, cultural fads, as well as concerns, anxieties, pleasures, and opinions that aid EFL learners in understanding the culture of the targeted language.

In addition, many educators consider songs to be a useful tool for addressing a variety of pedagogical issues in the context of EFL, based on their own experiences. assist EFL students quickly and easily acquire new language patterns, including numerous phrases, by connecting the foreign teacher with them. Songs provide a simple, enjoyable learning environment that can lessen the cognitive load on EFL learners and boost their enthusiasm, which helps to lessen the stressful parts of learning. English songs are suggested since they are not only entertaining but also improve teaching and learning. A corpus of studies has suggested the use of songs to teach English from the perspective of a teacher. From a learning perspective, this research points in the same direction. More research must be conducted, either qualitatively or quantitatively, because the research was conducted qualitatively and cannot be generalized.

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