

IMPROVING LISTENING SKILLS THROUGH ENGLISH
SONG AT THE SEVEN GRADE OF MTS BABUSSALAM
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Abstract

This journal's purpose is to learn how music can be used to develop listening skills. One of the four foundational English language skills is listening. It appears that speaking, reading, and writing are among the other skills. These fundamental abilities are broken down into productive skills like speaking and writing and receptive skills like listening and reading. Songs and music are essential components of development and education. The use of music in the classroom has various benefits. The use of songs in the teaching of foreign languages has both supporters and opponents. The use of songs in the educational process, particularly during listening lessons, helps students develop their listening skills as one of their valuable techniques to deal with listening skill issues English songs are engaging, so they can encourage participation from the students and help them perform better on listening tasks. However, using songs to aid in listening has drawbacks. For example, popular music isn't always accurate, and inadequate sound systems in classrooms can interfere with listening to music.

Keywords : *Listening Skill, English Song, English Students*

INTRODUCTION

Without the ability to communicate effectively through language, people cannot function as social beings. It is crucial to learn foreign languages in addition to one's own tongue because it substantially improves communication. The younger generation of Indonesia must learn foreign languages, notably English, to succeed and compete in the

modern, globalized world. The main language used for communication across borders is English, thus learning it is essential. English proficiency is crucial for preparing the next generation to succeed in the global marketplace. Through institutional and informal channels like schools, classes, and extracurricular activities, young people can learn English proficiency. It's typical to see young people communicating with one another in English on a daily basis.

Reading, speaking, writing, and listening are the four fundamental components of the English language acquisition process. These components are necessary for developing a thorough comprehension of the language. As English is used as the international language in a variety of fields, including politics, science, journalism, the arts, and entertainment, mastery of all four aspects facilitates successful communication on a global scale.

The main human action when acquiring a language is listening. Similar to how a baby learns, the first thing they do is listen to other people chatting and interacting with one another. By paying close attention, kids begin to mimic and babble, which eventually results in better speaking abilities. They then go on to reading and writing.

As receptive abilities, listening and reading do not need language production; rather, they concentrate on comprehension. The fourth and most difficult for young people, especially students, is listening. Understanding spoken English words or sentences can be difficult for many pupils. Unfortunately, the school's listening instruction techniques are frequently rigid and generally concentrate on conversational exercises, as evidenced in TOEFL preparation.

In order to become fluent in a language, it is essential to develop one's listening abilities. One of the receptive abilities that involves interpreting and processing input in English is listening. Reading, on the other hand, is a receptive talent that also requires deciphering written words. However, hearing is frequently more difficult than reading since spoken words are more difficult for people to recognize than written ones. Furthermore, when reading, people have the option to go back and read a passage again, however when listening, they only have one chance to fully comprehend the material. Many young people, especially students, struggle with this hearing issue.

Some people mistakenly think that speaking effectively equates to good communication, but in fact, a person's language aptitude is equally influenced by how well they can listen. Tasks that require listening can be disheartening and demotivating for students, especially if they have had bad experiences in the past. One strategy is to use songs to teach listening in a fun way that won't dull or demotivate students. Songs inspire students to listen to them multiple times and mimic their favorite performers' pronunciation. Songs are thought to pique young people's interest in learning and make

lessons less tiresome. The use of music in teaching is also effective since it is a culturally rich element. Since students can memorize lyrics while listening to music in class, English teachers have long recognized the importance of songs and music in language training. Music has a significant emotional impact and enables people to mentally understand those emotions. The learning environment is made more interesting by introducing music, creating a good connection between fun and learning.

Songs, which combine music and lyrics, have a wide range of inherent qualities, including expressiveness, dependability, and therapeutic effects. They are therefore a useful tool for language learning (Shen, 2009). Due to its power to inspire and delight young people, music and songs have a tremendous impact on education and personal development. The benefits of using music to teach listening skills are numerous. tunes, which are incredibly memorable and relatable to learners, can improve their learning, especially when employing current popular tunes that young people are familiar with. Songs often contain repetition, which is useful since it helps students memorize words.

Songs can be listened to for a number of benefits, including relaxation and the acquisition of new language and pronunciation. Depending on the song's content, listening to music can make you feel everything from joy to melancholy. With the ability to listen to music on their handy and portable phones, people in the modern generation may now enjoy music more easily. Through smartphones, music can be quickly accessed and enjoyed no matter where you are or how much time you have. In the latest study conducted by Tampubolon and Tamba (2022), listening to songs especially classical music during teaching learning process can improve students' concentration and also their learning outcomes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Listening

There are many different definitions of listening that may be found in educational materials and online references. According to Howatt and Dakin (1974), listening is the capacity to hear and understand what others are saying. The accent, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and general meaning of the spoken language must all be understood. Listening is seen as a sophisticated process in language learning that helps us to understand spoken language. It involves more than just hearing sounds; it also entails understanding the words' intended meanings and how sentences work in everyday speech (Carter, 2001: 7).

Due to the fact that listening is a receptive talent rather than a productive one, language is absorbed and understood rather than produced. According to Mukmiatun (2009), hearing is an invisible mental process, making it difficult to express precisely. Listeners must be able to differentiate between sounds, understand language and

grammar, and assess the utterance's sociocultural context – both in the local context and the larger social milieu.

In a similar vein, Nunan (1970) emphasizes the importance of listening as one of the core language abilities by defining it as the capacity to recognize and comprehend what others are saying. In essence, listening requires sophisticated cognitive processes that let people understand spoken language and have productive conversations.

In the past, reading and writing have received more attention than listening when it comes to the learning process (Qiu, 2006; Cook, 2001; Rost, 2005). The development of speaking and writing skills, however, depends heavily on listening, which is a fundamental language ability. Students may struggle in their writing and speaking without good listening intake since these output abilities are more difficult. Establishing the foundation for speaking and writing begins with listening. Students can enhance their pronunciation and pick up useful words, phrases, and sentences by actively listening.

Real-world listening is different from listening you do every day. Therefore, listening exercises in the classroom must to be created to prepare students for circumstances they may encounter outside of it. This highlights how crucial it is to emphasize listening as a fundamental ability for children to succeed in real-world situations. To do this, teachers can integrate engaging activities that help students apply what they learn in the classroom about listening to effectively communicate in everyday settings by utilizing the right words and sentences.

In conclusion, listening is the act of receiving and understanding information, whether it comes through radio, television, or newspapers. To fully understand the speaker's essential points, you need to hear well and pay close attention. As a vital component of language acquisition and the basis for speaking and writing abilities, mastering listening is necessary for acquiring fluency in English.

Teaching Listening

Language acquisition mainly relies on listening, and teaching entails assisting and guiding the learning process. The auditory information that forms the basis for language learning and enables learners to participate in spoken communication is listening. Effective language instructors show their pupils how to modify their listening strategies to suit diverse contexts, input formats, and listening goals. They help students create a repertoire of listening techniques and match the best ones to various listening situations. Nunan (2003) asserts that listening is an active and important process for understanding what we hear. Contrary to popular assumption, listening is a highly active talent that is classed as being responsive and passive. When someone listens, they take in information, but they also respond to it by comparing or contrasting it with what they already know.

Depending on what it is used for, listening can be divided into three categories. The first kind is called listening to repeat, and it involves students practicing listening exercises so they can repeat the words they heard during the activity while paying attention to accurate pronunciation (Adiatmana & Hassan, 2022). The objective of the second type, listening to comprehend, is to improve and exercise pupils' comprehension. This style frequently entails task-based listening, when students hear a piece of content and respond to inquiries or finish activities in accordance with the information presented. The third sort of listening is communicating, and it attempts to help students become more proficient communicators who can convey their ideas clearly and concisely. This is accomplished by combining all language skills and honing skills like question anticipation and understanding, taking notes, and practicing pronunciation (Diaz-Rico, 2004: 145–154).

Using Songs as Media of Learning

According to Saricoban (2000), including songs in the classroom setting can make it fun and engaging for the students, assisting them in getting over their uneasiness as they learn a language framework. Songs can help create a happy and peaceful atmosphere, which makes it simpler to discuss difficulties in class. Additionally, songs can improve students' emotional states by lowering anxiety, raising self-confidence, and removing emotions of threat, all of which can improve learning (Kramersch, 1993). Songs' energizing and upbeat qualities motivate students to actively engage in the learning process, making use of their musical expertise and boosting their confidence in language learning (ahin, 2008).

Orlova (2003) cites a number of advantages of song use in the classroom:

- a. Exercising the English language's rhythm, stress, and intonation patterns.
- b. Vocabulary instruction, especially during the vocabulary reinforcement phase.
- c. Teaching grammar with an emphasis on the proper use of tenses.
- d. Songs and their lyrics are utilized as conversation starters in speaking classes.
- e. Listening lessons, as music can help with understanding.
- f. Using songs to engage in writing exercises like making predictions about the fate of characters or composing letters to the major characters.

METHOD

This research is carried out using CAR (classroom action research) which was conducted at MTSS Babussalam Besilam in April 2023. Classroom action research is practical research intended to improve learning in the classroom. This research is one of the efforts of teachers or practitioners in various forms of activities carried out to improve and increase enthusiasm in learning English as the quality of learning in the classroom.

The population sample taken was 50 students in one class in 7.2 MTSS Babussalam Besilam. The subjects of this study were students of the English language study program in semester 4 of the 2022/2023 academic year carried out in order to examine how the conditions and development of students in learning English.

The object of this research includes all subjects both researchers and people who are being studied. This research object aims to find out where the students' English language skills are by using the English Songs method.

In collecting data, researchers make direct observations. The observation method is an activity towards a process by directly observing the conditions and problems to be solved, especially when learning English. Researchers try to observe with the Listening songs method. At the end of learning, students are tested one by one about how much they master vocabulary.

Vocabulary mastery ability tests are used for data sources. After collecting data, researchers analyzed the data. The data analysis technique used by researchers is the class action research data analysis technique, where PTK data is obtained from the results of observations or observations during the learning process.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrated that integrating English songs in second language learning activities can positively affect young learners' listening comprehension if the tasks set are in line with their skill level. When compared to the results of the experimental groups and the control groups, the use of songs definitely had a significant role in the development of young learners' listening ability. The experimental groups, which listened to English music, performed considerably better on the post-tests than the control groups, which followed the standard listening curriculum.

This finding is consistent with Cameron's (2001) viewpoint, which emphasizes the value of employing songs and rhymes to help early language learners. This idea is supported by the current study, which emphasizes the many benefits of song instruction for young language learners in the first stages of language learning. Songs also foster an inclusive environment, which encourages hesitant students to join in class activities, according to Djigunovich and Vilke (2000). Considering students' high affinity for music in the language classroom, Cullen (1999) also supports the use of songs as important teaching resources for ESL/EFL.

Table 1. Average score in cycle 1

No	Indicator	Percentase
1	Vocabulary	41,6 %
2	Pronunciation	37,4 %
3	Comprehension	49,92 %
4	Memorization	43,68 %

Figure 1. Students' Percentage Score in Cycle 1

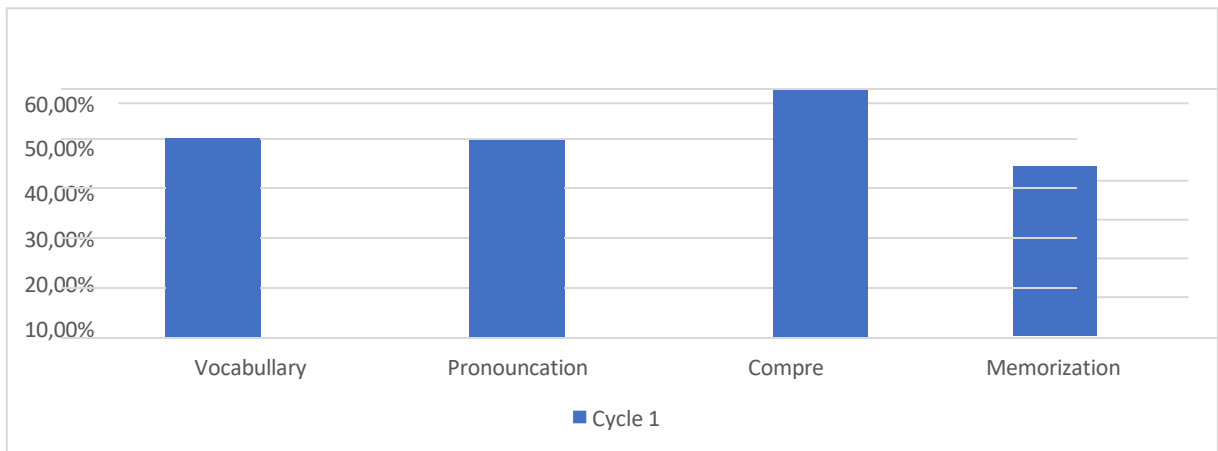


Table2. Average Score In Cycle 2

No	Indicator	Percentase
1	Vocabulary	54,08 %
2	Pronunciation	49,92 %
3	Comprehension	56,16 %
4	Memorization	54,08 %

Figure 2. Students' Percentage Score in Cycle 2

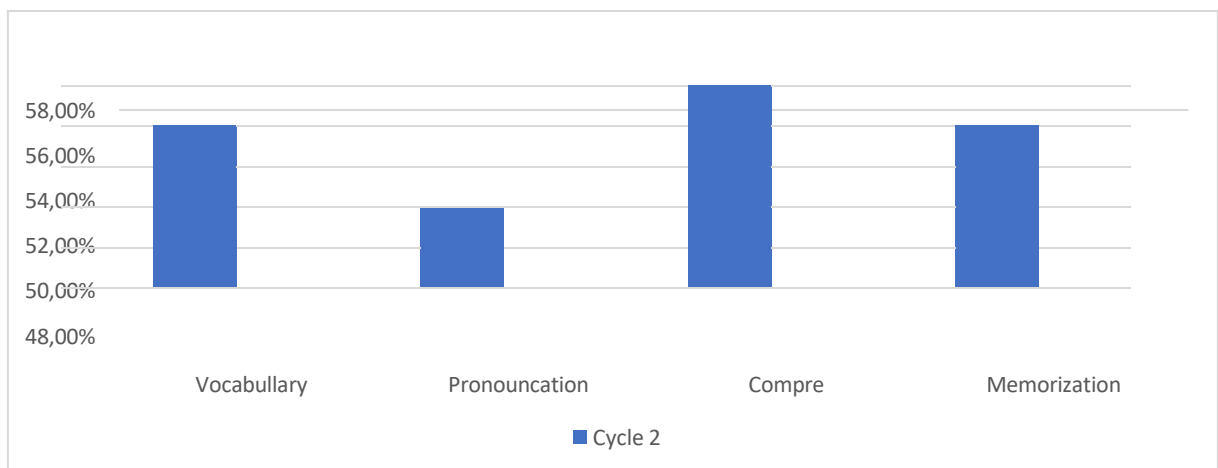


Table 1 shows that students' comprehension on pronunciation increased the highest which reached 49.92%, followed by memorization which is 43.68% which means the students' ability in memorizing after being taught with songs was improved. The students' vocabulary mastery was also risen up which reached 41.6%. Meanwhile their pronunciation only reached 37.4%. This result on cycle 1 shows there is a positive effect of using songs as media of teaching listening to students. Nevertheless, the researcher conducted cycle 2 to see how effective this method in enhancing students' listening skill.

And the table of cycle 2 shows that there was a significant improvement on students' listening ability for each indicator. The students' score on vocabulary rises up to 54.08% which is 13% higher than that of cycle 1. Their score on pronunciation also went high up to 49.92% which is 12% higher than that of cycle 1. The slight increase on comprehension can be also seen on the table of cycle 2, which is 56.16%. It shows that there is 7% improvement compared to the score on cycle 1. The last indicator which is memorization also shows a significant increase on the score which is 54.08%. That means 11% higher than that of cycle 1.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study were concentrated on how English songs affected listening. It was found that MTs Babussalam pupils can learn new vocabulary and enhance their listening skills by listening to English music. They found it simpler to recall how to pronounce words by singing a song. The purpose of this study was to determine how much listening skills can be enhanced by English songs for kids. The results show that the music has a beneficial effect on language abilities, notably listening capacity. All the indicators show significant improvement on students' score in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension and memorization. The students comprehension after being taught through songs leveled up the highest in cycle 1 but the lowest in cycle 2. Therefore it's really suggested for further research to do a deeper study on how significant the use of songs on students' listening comprehension.

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