



THE USE OF ENGLISH SONGS TO IMPROVE ENGLISH STUDENTS' LISTENING SKILLS

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Abstract

This study investigated students' listening skills using English songs. The reason for choosing this topic is based on the problem of listening ability. The purpose of this study was to determine the use of English songs to improve students' listening skills. The targets of this study were students in the fifth and seventh semester of the English Education study program in Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia. 100 students participated in this study. This research method is qualitative. Data collection was carried out by distributing link questionnaires to 100 students who had taken listening courses. The results showed that the progress of students' listening skills mastery during the activity could be seen from the data analysis, the researchers used tabulated data. This result shows that English songs are effective in listening skills.

Keywords: Listening Skill, English Song, English Students

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INTRODUCTION

Listening is one of the language skills. It is an essential part of the telecommunication process that should be mastered by the students. By listening, the students can acquire information and develop what the speakers say. According to (Brown, 2006), listening is an activity to put the information they have heard. It means that listening is an important skill for students especially in the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, listening is the activity of paying attention to the speaker and trying to find meaning from something that is heard (Underwood, 1989: 1). Listening is also the most important language skill and a part of communication, from listening, we can share our ideas with other people. Nowadays, English is a communication tool especially during pandemics which online activity runs the most. Thus, English is one of the life skills that must be mastered by every student so that they have a competitive advantage in the world of work or a compilation developed from universities.

(Purcell 1992) states that students tend to feel bored by repeatedly listening to a narrative or dialogue when they are trying to understand the meaning of new words or phrases in context. On the other hand, listening to a song over and over can feel less monotonous because of the rhythm and melody. In addition, (Listiyangsih, 2017) also states that one way to improve listening skills is listening to English songs. Listening to English songs can improve listening skills. When someone listens to English songs, their ears will unconsciously get used to hearing so that when in a listening class, someone who is used to listening to songs will find it easier to get the meaning of what the narrator is saying. When learning English, especially in listening, many media can help students improve their listening skills, such as in videos, movies, and songs (Simamora & Oktaviani, 2020).

Songs are a medium that can improve listening skills because we can find songs everywhere and train our ears to listen. When a student listens and memorizes a song involved in the class, the lyrics are embedded in his long-term memory. Listening also is a creative skill because to understand the sound which we hear, we take the raw material of words, arrangements of words, and the rise and fall of the voice, and from this material, we create ourselves significance as listeners, which is dependent on linguistic information, situational context, and intentions of the speaker (Rivers, 1980).

Jalongo (1992) states that listening involves 3 things:

- 1) Hearing is a physiological process that includes auditory acuity (the ability to hear) and auditory perception (the ability to discriminate among sounds, blend sounds, and hold sequences of sounds in memory).

- 2) Listening is an act of perception which includes focusing, becoming aware, and selecting cues from the environment.
- 3) Auding is an act of comprehension that begins with hearing and listening. It includes getting meaning from what is heard, associating sounds to something already known, organizing, imagining, and appreciating.

(Ur, 1996) says that there are some students' difficulties in learning to listen, such as having trouble with sounds, having to understand every word, cannot understand fast and natural native speech, needing to hear things more than once, finding it difficult to keep up, and get tired. In relation to those problems, we cannot deny that students' motivation plays important role in learning listening. As mentioned in Brown (2006), another theme will be motivation. Because listening is so challenging, teachers need to think carefully about making the activities successful and the content interesting.

According to Ur (1996), listening activities are based on a simulated real-life situation and are likely to be most interesting and motivating to do than contrived textbook comprehension exercises. The following features characterize real-life listening activity:

- a. We listen for a purpose and with certain expecting
- b. We make an immediate response to what we hear
- c. We see the person we are listening to
- d. There are some visual or environment clues as to the meaning of what is heard
- e. Stretches of hand discourse are spontaneous and therefore differ from formal spoken prose in the amount of redundancy, noise, and colloquialism, and it is auditory character.

From the features above, the song is one of the authentic listening materials. (Ross, 2006) says that the example of authentic listening materials is listening to a song to learn more about well-known bands that sing in English. In common, songs always follow us at home, at school, at the office, at cars, and so on. So, we can directly listen to the song and also be interested to learn the value of language in it. Griffie (1992) recommends using short and slow songs for students on the beginner level. Besides, crosswords, drawing, or picture showing exercises can be conducted with such songs. For the students with a higher language level, long and fast songs that tell a story should be used. The song to be chosen should have a clear sound and it should be comprehensible; there should not be too many instruments played with a high volume in the song. Thus, the researchers are going to conduct this research.

METHOD

Data analysis for this research is using qualitative research. The qualitative data was used to analyze and explain how students utilize & improve their listening skills using the song. Qualitative data instruments such as observation, open-ended questions, in-depth interviews (audio or video), and field notes were used to collect the data participants in their natural environment.

The participants of this research were fifth and seventh-semester students of the English Education study program in Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia. The researchers distributed the questionnaire to 100 students that had taken listening courses. As a data collection method, the questionnaire consists of 20 statements. The researchers use a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from the questionnaires will be presented using descriptive statistical analysis. This is the tabulated data that the researchers obtained from the questionnaire:

1. Students' interest in listening to English songs

Table 1. Data from the questionnaire

No.	Statement	Alternative Answer					Total
		SA	A	N	D	SD	
1	I spend 5-6 hours a day listening to a song.	21,6%	27,5%	32,4%	16,7%	0%	100%
2	I like listening to a song since I was in elementary school.	29,4%	51%	14,7%	0%	0%	100%
3	I like to listen to an English-native-speaker singer.	25,5%	54,9%	19,6%	0%	0%	100%
4	I always listen to the newest song by my favorite singer.	29,4%	27,1%	19,6%	0%	0%	100%
5	I like listening to English songs because it helps me increase my listening skill and pronunciation in a fun way.	48%	49%	0%	0%	0%	100%
6	I listening music using applications like (JOOX, Spotify, Soundcloud, etc.) because there are various types of songs.	53,9%	37,3%	7,8%	0%	0%	100%
7	I listen to popular songs (pop, jazz, rock, metal, etc) in English to improve my listening/listening skills in English.	43,1%	38,2%	17,6%	0%	0%	100%
8	I often listen english song in every single day.	23,5%	41,2%	31,4%	0%	0%	100%
9	I often listen to English songs, rather than Indonesian songs.	21,6%	31,4%	43,1%	0%	0%	100%
10	English songs can make me active in class, (I feel interested).	13,7%	43,1%	38,2%	0%	0%	100%

From Table 1 above, there were 49.1% of students often spend 5-6 hours a day playing songs. One participant said that in his spare time, he listens to music. However, some students disagreed with the first statement. It is evident from the data above, there are 16.7% of students disagree. As a result, we know that almost all participants often listen to music 5-6 hours a day.

Furthermore, in the second statement can be seen that 80.4% of students agree that they have liked listening to songs since they were in elementary school. However, there were 14.7% of students who couldn't decide whether they had listened to a song since they were in elementary school. Furthermore, there were no other students who disagreed with the second statement. Thus, we can know that in the second statement most of the students 80.4% listened to songs since elementary school

The third statement shows that 80.4% of students agreed that they like listening to native English-speaking singers. However, there are 19.6% of students who cannot decide whether they like listening to native English-speaking singers. Furthermore, there were no other students who disagreed with the third statement. Thus it can be seen that in the third statement most students like to listen to native English speaking singers as much as 80.4%.

In the fourth statement, it can be seen that most students 56.5% of the students agreed that they always listen to the latest songs from their favorite singers. However, there are 19.6% of students who cannot decide whether they always listen to the latest song from their favorite singer. Furthermore, there were no other students who disagreed with the fourth statement. Thus it can be seen that 56,5% in the fourth statement that most students always listen to the latest songs from their favorite singers.

Based on the research findings above, the fifth statement showed that 97% of students agree that they like listening to English songs because it helps them improve their listening and pronunciation skills in a fun way. there are no other students who disagree with the fifth statement.

The sixth statement showed that 91.2% of students agree that they often listen to music using applications such as (Joox, Spotify, SoundCloud, etc.) because the types of songs are different. As well as a study conducted by (Astutik, 2019), found that playing English songs via JOOX could help students memorize the pronunciation of the words. However, there were 7.8% of students who could not decide whether to always listen to songs using the application or not, and there were also no other students who disagreed with this sixth statement.

In addition, in the seventh statement almost half of the participants 81.3% agreed to listen to popular songs (pop, jazz, rock, metal, etc.) in English to improve their listening/listening skills in English. playing English songs can help students memorize/understand the pronunciation of words that they think are less familiar to hear. However, 17.6% of students cannot decide whether to listen to popular songs (pop, jazz, rock, metal, etc.) in English to improve their listening/listening skills in English. and there are no other students who disagree with this seventh statement.

Next, the eighth statement showed that 64.7% of students often listened to English songs every day. One participant said that in his spare time he listens to music. However, 31.4% of students cannot decide whether they listen to songs every day or not, with this statement. It is evident from the data above that almost all participants often listen to music almost every day.

Then, the ninth statement showed that 53% of students agreed that listen to English songs more often than Indonesian songs. One participant said that in his spare time he listens to English music by following the current popular music. However, 43.1% of students cannot decide whether they listen to English songs or Indonesian songs because most of them listen to both songs.

Moreover, almost 56,8% of the students agreed with a statement from the tenth table about English songs can make them active in class, (I feel interested). because the additional songs in the classroom create a fun and enjoyable atmosphere to start learning. and there were about 38.2% of students who cannot decide whether they are interested or not with the statements presented in this tenth statement.

It can be concluded that the first aspect analyzed in this study is about students' interest in English songs. This aspect is used to determine students' interest in listening to English songs. and it can be seen also The results above show a positive response. Songs can also be used as a tool because they can be listened to and accessed from music applications used by students, such as Joox, Spotify, and others. To espouse it (Sinaga and Oktaviani, 2020) The use of media in learning English in general will increase students' motivation and attention.

2. English songs for students English learning

Table 2. Data from the questionnaire

No.	Statement	Alternative Answer					Total
		SA	A	N	D	SD	
11	I listen to English songs to improve my listening skill because the song can be media to improve listening skills.	24,5%	63,7%	10,8%	0%	0%	100%
12	I listen to English songs to add the vocabulary, improve pronunciation, and can make comprehend in listening skills and there is a way to improve listening skills.	30,4%	59,8%	9,8%	0%	0%	100%
13	I can improve my listening skill as one of my meaningful strategies to overcome my problems in listening skills.	21,6%	57,8%	18,6%	0%	0%	100%
14	I Learn songs in English and I feel the effectiveness, like easy to memorize lyrics, and also increases my motivation for further learning.	24,5%	53,9%	19,6%	0%	0%	100%
15	English song is effective to improve my listening skills	25,5%	63,7%	10,8%	0%	0%	100%

In the second aspect the researcher wants to know whether English songs affect their English skills especially like listening skills. The eleventh statement about listening to English songs can improve their listening ability because songs can be a medium for improving listening skills. In this statement, almost 88.2% of students agreed, and only 10.8% of students could not decide whether they were interested or not with the statements presented in this eleventh table.

The twelfth statement showed that 90.2% of students listen to English songs to increase vocabulary, improve pronunciation, and can understand listening skills and there are ways to improve listening skills. In this statement, almost all students agreed, and only 9.8% of students could not decide whether they had an improvement or not with the statements presented in this statement.

In the thirteenth statement, there were 79.4% of students can improve their listening skills as a meaningful strategy to solve the problem of listening skills. In this statement, only 18.6% of students could not decide whether they could solve their problem or not with the statement presented in this statement.

In the Fourteenth statement, there were 53.9% of students who can learn songs in English and feel their effectiveness, such as easily memorizing lyrics and also increasing motivation to learn further. In this statement, only 19.6% of students could not decide whether they could feel its effectiveness, such as easily memorizing lyrics and also increasing motivation to learn or not with this fourteenth statement. They also agreed with statement number fifteen about the effective English song to improve their listening ability, there are 89.2% of students who agree with this, and the rest answer neutral as much as 10.8%

From the results of the second aspect, it can be seen from the average student answers, almost all students agree that listening to English songs can practice their listening skills, especially in listening class. in his research (Brown, 2006) said that Practice reading lyrics, learning vocabulary, and listening to various songs can also help students become more familiar with popular songs and make them more confident in their ability to listen and understand the world around them.

3. The use of English songs on students' listening mastery

Table 3. The use of English song on students' vocabulary mastery

No.	Statement	Alternative Answer					Total
		SA	A	N	D	SD	
16	Do you agree or not when someone learns about the English language, they should comprehend listening skills because listening is one of the skills that must comprehend in learning the English language.	29,7%	55,4%	14,9%	0%	0%	100%
17	Practice reading lyrics, studying vocabulary, and listening to various songs can help me become more familiar with the meaning of the words.	28,7%	64,4%	0%	0%	0%	100%
18	English songs help me to connect with what I heard with my ideas, experience and encourage interpretive and critical listening and reflective thinking.	12,7%	63,7%	22,5%	0%	0%	100%
19	English song can make me active in the class, and interest in class, and also I can do a listening task well.	8,8%	45,1%	45,1%	0%	0%	100%
20	Using songs in the learning process especially in the listening lesson it makes a pleasant atmosphere in the class and makes me easy to understand the material.	17,6%	57,8%	23,5%	0%	0%	100%

For the last aspect is about the use of English songs on students listening mastery. sixteenth statement showed 85.1% of students agreed that when someone learns English they should understand listening skills because listening is one of the skills that must be understood in learning English while as many as 14.9% of students answered neutrally in this sixteenth statement.

The seventeenth statement showed that 93.1% that almost students practice reading lyrics, learning vocabulary, and listening to various songs can help them become more familiar with the meaning of the words. They stated that they practiced reading lyrics, studying vocabulary, and listening to various songs. such as research conducted by Andriani et al (2018) who found that listening to English songs can improve student pronunciation. in this statement almost all students agree, there are no other students who disagree with this statement.

The Eighteenth statement showed that 76.4% of students agreed with the statement "English songs help me to connect with what I hear with my ideas, experiences and encourage listening and interpretive and critical reflective thinking" to the statement they realized that by listening to songs English has a lot of benefits that they can jam improving their listening skills. In this statement, only 22,5% of students could not decide the statement.

Furthermore, in the nineteenth statement, it can be seen that 53.9% of students agreed that English songs can make students active in class, and interested in the class, and they can do their listening tasks well. in this statement, there were no students who disagreed, while those who answered neutrally were only 45.1%. Thus, it can be seen that in this statement most students have stated that by listening to English songs they had an increase in learning listening skills by 53.9%.

The last, in the twentieth statement, it can be seen that 75.4% of students agreed that the use of songs in the learning process, especially in listening learning, makes the classroom atmosphere pleasant and makes it easier for them to understand the material using the listening method. This is because English songs help students to improve their listening skills and pronunciation in a fun way. In this statement, there were no students who disagreed, while only 23.5% answered neutrally. Thus it can be seen that in this statement most students stated that by listening to English songs they could understand the material well.

From the results of the questionnaire, it can be seen from the average student answers, almost all students agree with listening to English songs, in listening class people can know the meaning of the words spoken by the speaker because many people know the vocabulary of the song they are listening to. and also make students active in class, they are interesting, so they can do good listening work. However, using songs in the listening process has challenges, such as; unscientific pop songs, sound inefficient systems in schools can cause problems listening to songs, the types of music that students like may not match each other, etc.

Practicing lyric reading, studying the vocabulary, and listening to various songs can help students become more familiar with popular songs and make them more confident in their ability to listen and understand the world around them (Brown, 2006). The other benefits of using songs in the classroom are songs can be used:

- a. to present a topic, a language point, lexis, etc.
- b. to practice a language point, lexis, etc.
- c. to focus on common learner errors in a more direct way
- d. to encourage extensive and intensive listening
- e. to stimulate discussion of attitudes and feelings
- f. to encourage creativity and use of imagination
- g. to provide a relaxed classroom atmosphere
- h. to bring variety and fun to learning

From the explanation above, it's considered that songs have many benefits. Some of them are songs that can motivate the students and make them more confident in their ability to listen to the materials.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study are focused on the use of English songs in teaching listening that listening to English songs can help improve their listening skills, not only that they can also practice good and correct pronunciation, and can learn new vocabulary by practicing listening to English songs to improve their skills. they listen to them. As a result, it was easier for them to memorize the pronunciation of these words by singing a song. The purpose of this study was to determine how much influence English songs have on improving listening skills for English students. The results of the study on 100 students showed that there was a positive relationship between the use of English songs and listening skills.

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