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English Songs As Media to Improve Vocabulary Mastery: A Case Study of One of Junior High Schools in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to improve students' mastery of English vocabulary using English songs. Conducted with two participants at a junior high school in Tasikmalaya City, West Java, Indonesia, the research utilized an interview technique to gather insights on students' experiences. The data obtained from the interviews were analyzed thematically, revealing several key findings. Firstly, students reported that they effectively remember new vocabulary through English songs, which aids in retention and recall. Secondly, the study indicated that vocabulary acquisition is significantly enhanced when students engage with English songs. Additionally, participants noted improvements in their pronunciation skills, allowing them to articulate words they previously found challenging. The research also highlighted that students could correct their spelling through exposure to song lyrics, reinforcing their learning experience. Moreover, students demonstrated initiative by seeking to understand the meanings of the words within the songs, further deepening their vocabulary mastery. Overall, the findings suggest that students tend to have positive perceptions of learning English through songs, as this method not only makes the learning process enjoyable but also effectively supports their language development. By integrating music into language education, teachers can foster a more engaging and productive learning environment for their students..

Keywords: Improve Vocabulary, English Song, Junior High School Students

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PENDAHULUAN

Mastery of vocabulary in English language learning is very important because it serves as the main foundation for effective communication. A rich vocabulary allows students to understand and convey ideas well, both orally and in writing. Without adequate vocabulary mastery, students will have difficulty interacting, understanding reading materials, and expressing their thoughts. Research shows that students with a broader vocabulary tend to perform better in their English skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Handayani, 2024; Mari, 2019). In the context of learning, vocabulary not only plays a role in everyday communication but also in academic aspects. Students who master vocabulary will find it easier to understand lesson materials and participate in class discussions. This is very important considering that English is an international language used in various fields, including education and technology. Therefore, vocabulary teaching should be a priority in the English curriculum at school (Soelistiono, 2022).

In addition, vocabulary mastery also contributes to students' confidence when communicating. With the ability to use various words and phrases, students feel more comfortable interacting with others. This can increase their motivation to learn and actively participate in learning activities. Therefore, effective teaching strategies to enhance vocabulary should be implemented in the classroom so that students can fully benefit from them (Munawi, 2019; Putri, 2016).

Students often face various challenges in improving their English vocabulary. One of the main challenges is the lack of English usage in daily life. Many students are not accustomed to applying new vocabulary outside the classroom environment, making it difficult for them to remember and use those words in real contexts. Research shows that students who are not exposed to active use of English tend to have difficulty expanding their vocabulary (Sholikhah et al., 2025). Additionally, ineffective teaching methods also pose a significant barrier. Many students feel that conventional teaching methods, such as lectures, are not engaging or relevant enough to help them understand new vocabulary. Students often feel alienated and less engaged in the learning process, which leads to a decrease in their motivation. Research shows that the use of more interactive and problem-based learning methods can increase student engagement and help them relate vocabulary to everyday situations.

Another factor that affects vocabulary mastery is laziness and unwillingness to learn. Many students are reluctant to open a dictionary or look up the meanings of new words, which hinders their ability to expand their vocabulary. This is exacerbated by the lack of support from the learning environment, where students do not have friends or mentors to discuss and practice with. Therefore, it is important for teachers to create a pleasant and supportive learning atmosphere, and to encourage students to actively seek and use new vocabulary in different contexts (Nurdiawati et al., 2024).

Media, especially songs, play a significant role in language learning. Songs as a learning medium not only attract students' attention but also create an enjoyable learning atmosphere. Through rhythmic lyrics and catchy melodies, students can more easily remember vocabulary and sentence structures. Research shows that the use of songs in language learning can improve students' listening and speaking skills, as well as help them understand the cultural context of the language being studied (Haptanti et al., 2024; Nurfadhillah et al., 2021). In addition, songs also serve as a tool to enhance overall language skills. By listening to and singing songs, students can learn correct pronunciation, intonation, and appropriate emotional expression in language. Songs often contain new vocabulary and idiomatic phrases that are not always taught in formal contexts, thus providing students with the opportunity to expand their vocabulary in a natural and enjoyable way (Gemilang & Listiana, 2020).

Lastly, the integration of technology in the use of songs further enhances their effectiveness as a learning medium. With the presence of digital platforms, students can access various types of songs from different genres and languages, allowing them to learn in a more personal way that aligns with their interests. This not only increases learning motivation but also allows students to practice independently

outside of class hours. The use of songs in language learning shows that creative media can make the learning process more interactive and effective (Sofia, 2012).

The purpose of this research is to analyze the influence of English songs on students' vocabulary mastery. Songs are considered an effective learning medium because they combine elements of music and language, which can help students remember vocabulary more easily. This research aims to measure the extent to which the use of English songs can enhance students' ability to understand and use new vocabulary. By analyzing the learning outcomes of students who use songs as a medium, this research is expected to provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of this method in English language teaching, particularly in the aspect of vocabulary mastery.

In addition, this research also aims to explore students' responses to the use of songs as a learning medium. Student responses are very important to understand because their engagement and motivation play a significant role in the success of the learning process. This research will explore how students perceive their learning experience through songs, whether they feel more motivated, entertained, or face certain challenges. By understanding student responses, this research can provide educators with insights on how to optimally utilize songs in English language learning, so that this method is not only academically effective but also enjoyable and relevant for students.

The benefits of this research are highly significant in contributing to more innovative and effective English language learning strategies. By analyzing the influence of English songs on students' vocabulary mastery, this research can help teachers design more engaging and interactive teaching methods, thereby motivating students to learn more. In addition, the results of this study also have important implications for teachers and curriculum developers, as they can use the findings related to students' responses to the use of songs as a learning medium to develop a more relevant curriculum. Thus, this research not only enhances the understanding of the role of music in language education but also provides practical guidance for educators to create a more dynamic and effective learning environment.

METODE PENELITIAN

Design

The design of this research uses a case study approach as the main method to analyze the influence of English songs on students' vocabulary mastery. Case studies are a qualitative research method that allows researchers to conduct an in-depth exploration of specific phenomena in real-life contexts. With a focus on one or several specific cases, this research aims to understand how the use of songs can influence students' learning processes in terms of vocabulary. This method allows for data collection from various sources, such as observations, interviews, and document analysis, thus providing a holistic picture of the students' learning experiences.

Research Participant

The research was conducted at a state junior high school in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. This place was chosen because the researcher took part in the pre-service teacher program at the school so that there was accessibility to the research location. Then, the phenomenon of challenges in improving vocabulary in English occurs there. Participants in this study are two 7th grade students, they are students of a Junior high school in Tasikmalaya. The reason for choosing these two students as participants is because they are willing to be the participant of my research and they have more interest in learning English. During the process of learning English, they are more active than the other students. Then, they have the ambition to always be first in the learning practice process.

Technique of Collecting Data

In this research, the data collected by using interviews, because it is can directly talk about the problems and get the information immediately used as a method to generate data to explore research problems and topics. The type of interview used in this study is a structured interview. In this interview, the questions are about how students improve their English vocabulary through English songs.

Technique of Data Analysis

After data collection, then the data will be analyzed using thematic analysis. According to Braun & Clarke, (2006) the data collection process was conducted in several stages such as: Familiarizing with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing potential themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report.

Table 3.1 Generating initial codes

Technique of Collecting Data	**Technique of Collecting Data**	**Technique of Collecting Data**
In this research, the data collected by using interviews, because it is can directly talk about the problems and get the information immediately used as a method to generate data to explore research problems and topics (Conway & Roulston, 2014). The type of interview used in this study is a structured interview. In this interview, the questions are about how students improve their English vocabulary through English songs.	In this research, the data collected by using interviews, because it is can directly talk about the problems and get the information immediately used as a method to generate data to explore research problems and topics (Conway & Roulston, 2014). The type of interview used in this study is a structured interview. In this interview, the questions are about how students improve their English vocabulary through English songs.	In this research, the data collected by using interviews, because it is can directly talk about the problems and get the information immediately used as a method to generate data to explore research problems and topics (Conway & Roulston, 2014). The type of interview used in this study is a structured interview. In this interview, the questions are about how students improve their English vocabulary through English songs.

Table 3.2 Searching for the theme

Theme 1 : effectiveness in remembering vocabulary
More enthusiast in learning English with song
Theme 2 : improving the wrong sentence
correct the wrong pronunciation to be correct
Theme 3 : initiative in learning
students are more initiative to find what they want to know in learning.

Table 3.3 Reviewing potential theme

No.	Reviewing Themes
1.	Effectiveness in remembering vocabulary
2.	Improving the wrong sentence
3.	Initiative in learning

Table 3.4 Defining and naming themes

Defining and Naming Themes
1. Remembering new vocabulary through English songs effectively 2. Improving vocabulary through English songs 3. Improving pronunciation through English songs 4. Improving spelling through English songs 5. Find out the meaning of English songs initiatively

HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

This study aims to determine how students improve their English vocabulary by using English songs. This research found that English songs not only help students expand their vocabulary but also make the learning process more enjoyable and engaging. By listening to and singing songs, students can more easily remember new vocabulary, as well as practice correct pronunciation and intonation. This is in line with findings that show the use of songs in English language learning can increase student motivation and engagement, making them more active in the learning process.

To obtain the desired data, the researcher interviewed two students at one of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya. The results of the interviews were analyzed thematically, following the analysis method proposed by Braun & Clarke. From the interview results, the researcher identified several themes related to students' experiences in using songs as a learning medium. Students reported that they enjoyed learning through songs and were able to remember new vocabulary better after listening to them. In addition, they also noted new vocabulary they encountered in the song lyrics and actively searched for the meanings of those words, showing that the use of songs not only enhances vocabulary but also supports independent learning (Sinulingga, 2020).

Remembering new vocabulary through English songs effectively

In this case students can remember the new vocabulary they get in the songs they hear and learn during the learning process. Because during the learning process besides listening students can also read the lyrics of the songs they listen to, therefore students can find new vocabulary that they did not know before.

P1 : Of course very **effective**, because learning in this way is not boring

P2 : Yes, it's **effective**. In this way I enjoy learning English more

(interview transcript made on November 23th, 2022)

Recent studies have shown that the use of English songs is one of the most effective methods in expanding children's vocabulary. According to (Nurhayati, 2009), by using English songs in class, students not only enjoy the learning process, but also experience a reduction in fear when learning a foreign language. These songs stimulate interest and increase students' motivation, which contributes to more effective learning. Through catchy rhythms and lyrics, students can more easily remember new vocabulary and relate it to a wider context, thus strengthening their understanding of the language.

Furthermore, research shows that the singing method can create a fun and interactive learning environment, so that students are more motivated to actively participate in learning. By involving students in singing activities, they not only learn new vocabulary but also practice their speaking and listening skills. Research by (Widyastuti, 2019) confirms that the use of songs in language learning can help children remember and pronounce vocabulary better, as well as improve their speaking skills. Therefore, the integration of songs as a learning medium in the early childhood education curriculum is highly recommended to achieve optimal learning outcomes.

Improving vocabulary through English songs.

Students said that learning English using English songs could improve their vocabulary by repeating the songs, taking a note of unfamiliar words, remembering the words and made a sentences by new vocabulary that they never known before

Excerpt 2

P1 : When listening English songs with translations and if I listen to them often my English becomes **more correct** and my English vocabulary increases even if it's only a few words

P3 : After I learned English using songs I found more new vocabulary that I had never known before, and I was able to **correct the pronunciation** which was still wrong

(interview transcript made on November 23th, 2022)

Teachers have a very meaningful role in the process of teaching English language vocabulary. Elfeshat and Irahman said that they are the one responsible for helping students to expand and improve their vocabulary. Listening to English songs can improve students' vocabulary mastery. Listeners to English songs acquire more vocabulary, according to their research. They improve their vocabulary by repeating the songs, taking a note of unfamiliar words, and remembering the words. English songs have proven effective in helping students improve their vocabulary through various methods, such as repeating lyrics, noting unfamiliar words, and memorizing those words (Hendrawaty, 2019). Research shows that by listening to and singing songs, students not only expand their vocabulary but also improve their overall English learning skills. This is in line with the views of Al-Efeshat & Baniabdelrahman, (2020), who emphasize that songs help students improve their English skills, making the learning process more enjoyable and engaging.

Improving pronunciation through English songs.

Students said that learning English using English songs could improve their spelling through English songs

> **P1 :** When I listen to English songs, my previous pronunciation is still wrong. After listening to English songs often, **my vocabulary pronunciation is much better than before.**
>
> **P2 :** The previous pronunciation I was often confused about what to pronounce like but after listening to the song repeatedly **I can hear clearly the vocabulary I mean.**
>
> ***(interview transcript made on November 23th, 2022)***

In the elementary schools, teachers select the Basic English for the students so that they can pronounce easily and they can quickly learn the vocabulary of the words because it is a beginning for them to learn English as a language so we should develop their basics first regarding the English language (Burhayani, 2013).

Students said that learning English using English songs could improve their spelling through English songs

> **P1 : ...** by reading the lyrics of a song I can spell English vocabulary per letter
>
> **P2 :** I made a lot of mistakes in writing vocabulary in English. Since learning English using songs, when I read the lyrics of a song, I know that I still make a lot of mistakes in spelling vocabulary.
>
> ***(interview transcript made on November 23th, 2022)***

Finding out the meaning of English songs initiatively

Students are more likely to want to find meaning in the songs they have heard and learned while in class without being instructed by the teacher**.**

Excerpt 3

P1 : Because by listening to English songs the wrong pronunciation can be corrected, the spelling of the vocabulary also turns out to be a lot wrong, I can fix it too and my vocabulary knowledge increases even more, besides that I also have more **initiative to find the meaning of the songs** I learn

P2 : I will listen to it continuously even until I memorize it, sometimes **I will find out the meaning** of the song because singing it will feel deeper if know what it means

(interview transcript made on November 23th, 2022)

In order to engage in the activity they enjoy, they first recognize the new language forms and then wish to learn them. They therefore attempt to comprehend the words by learning what they imply. They then continue to utilize this new tongue while relating it to other song-related terms (Džanić & Pejić, 2016). Because the students could feel enjoyment during the teaching and learning process, acquiring vocabulary through song made it easier for the students to understand and remember its meaning.

KESIMPULAN

The purpose of this research is to reveal students' perceptions about learning English through the use of English songs. The findings indicate that students generally hold positive views regarding this learning approach. Many students express that incorporating English songs into their lessons has several beneficial effects. One of the primary advantages noted is the enhanced ability to remember new vocabulary. Students report that the repetitive nature of songs helps solidify their understanding and retention of words. Additionally, students find that learning through songs significantly improves their pronunciation. Many learners who previously struggled with certain sounds or words notice a marked improvement after practicing with songs. This method not only aids in correct pronunciation but also enhances their spelling skills. Students are able to better spell words they have encountered in lyrics, as the auditory experience reinforces their learning. Furthermore, the research highlights that students actively engage with the material by seeking to understand the meanings of the words and phrases in the songs. This initiative fosters a deeper connection to the language, as students take it upon themselves to explore and comprehend the content they encounter in class. Overall, the study suggests that using English songs as a teaching tool not only makes learning more enjoyable but also contributes significantly to vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation improvement, and overall language mastery. By integrating music into language education, teachers can create a more dynamic and effective learning environment that resonates with students

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