

## The Use of English Song to Improve Listening Comprehension Achievement of Junior High School Students

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### Abstract

This research investigated improving the students' listening comprehension achievement by using English songs. The research design was Classroom Action Research (CAR). The research area was Madrasah Ibtidaiyah which is under the auspices of the Alyasini Integrated Islamic Boarding School Foundation located in Pasuruan and the subjects of this research were Grade VIII-E students chosen purposively by using purposive method. The data were collected from interview, listening comprehension test, observation, and documentation. The results of this research showed that the results of observation showing that out of 30 students in the class, 25 students (83.33%) participated actively in the teaching-learning process by using English songs. Then, in the listening comprehension test, there was an increased from 19 students, or 63.33%, who achieved the target score before the action of the cycle to 26 students, or 86.67%, who achieved the target score after the action of the cycle model. This means that using English song could improve the students' participation and their listening comprehension achievement.

**Keywords:** Listening Comprehension Achievement; English Song

### Introduction

Listening is one of the language skills that is an essential part of communication that students should master. Through listening, students can acquire information and develop what the speakers are saying. Listening is key to receiving messages effectively. It is a combination of hearing what another person says and psychological involvement with the person talking (Tyagi, 2013). Listening comprehension is a student's ability to understand what they have listened to. Nadig (2013) as cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) defined listening comprehension as the various processes of understanding and making sense of spoken language. These involve knowing speech sounds, comprehending the meaning of individual words, and understanding the

syntax of sentences. Diaz-Rico (2004) explained that listening is divided into three types based on the purpose: 1) listening to repeat, in which students hold listening activities to repeat the words heard during the practice, the pressure of this type of listening on proper pronunciation; 2) listening to understand, in this type of listening the goal is to improve and practice students' comprehension. The typical strategy used in this type of listening is by giving task-based listening, where students are given a listening material and asked to answer to complete a task - based on the information given in the listening material; and 3) listening to communicate, this listening activity is aimed at repairing students' communicative competence and their ability to communicate fluently and meaningfully.

Listening comprehension is one of the most important and difficult skills for learners. Faisal (2019) mentions the difficulties that students face in learning to listen. There are two factors that influence listening: first is the internal factors, which include students not liking English, not understanding English, unclear pronunciation by the speaker, limited vocabulary, not understanding grammar, not knowing the topic of conversation, language style, and speaking speed. The second is the external factor, which includes the lack of quality of the equipment used such as speakers. In addition, the most common difficulties experienced by students in listening are that they quickly forget what they have just listened to, they understand the words but do not understand the meaning of the message, they ignore the next part while thinking about the meaning, concentrate too hard or cannot concentrate (Goh, 2000). Listiyaningsih (2017) states that listening to English songs is one way to improve listening comprehension because listening to English songs can increase vocabulary and improve pronunciation. Then, vocabulary improvement can be obtained because people will later get used to listening to English songs and this can add new vocabulary, pronunciation improvement can be obtained because when listening to English songs, the singers are native English speakers and they will pronounce English well, so that people can use these English songs to improve their abilities.

Using songs to improve listening comprehension is a fun and effective way to improve language skills. Using English songs as a medium helps students enjoy learning and listening and also can bring a positive atmosphere. According to Listiyaningsih (2017), listening to English songs can bring more benefits to the students, especially for their listening skills, because songs contain grammar and also develop listening skills, pronunciation, and rhythm,

and provide a fun atmosphere. For this reason, listening to songs is a very useful type of activity.

Listening skills are still rarely taught in Islamic Junior High School Pasuruan because the time is limited, and the teachers are more often active in reading and writing skills. Based on the preliminary study by interviewing one of the English teachers at Islamic Junior High School in Pasuruan, got the data that the school has been applying the 2013 curriculum. The English teacher taught English subject once a week. The minimum requirement score at this school is 78. In addition, the class with the lowest listening score and participation percentage was VIII E. The percentage of students listening to this class was 63.33%, based on the student's previous listening test scores belonging to the English teacher's data. The student had problems with limited vocabulary, inability to concentrate while listening, and boredom. The English teacher of Islamic Junior High School Pasuruan used audio with dialogue only and never used other media such as songs in teaching listening. This is a challenge for the teacher to find a way to teach English, especially in teaching listening. The teacher should help students to understand the materials easily and improve their listening comprehension. Song is one of the suggested media that can be used for teaching listening. According to Arévalo (2010), practicing listening to songs gives students experience and tools to understand more details during any speech. The ears become more acute, and comprehension becomes easier for them. Students also become familiarized with sounds and natural reductions of English that can be put into practice when speaking.

The issues of using songs as a medium in teaching listening have been investigated by some researchers. They are Sartika (2017), Simanjuntak & Usuar (2021), Putri, et. al (2018), Ariani & Iswandi (2020), and Yelnim & Kartawijaya (2021) who used Classroom Action Research design. Sartika (2017) did the research and found that the use of English Islamic songs improved the second-semester students' listening skills. Simanjuntak & Usuar (2021) found that the use of English songs improved senior high school students' listening skills. Putri, et. al (2018) reported that the use of English songs improved the teaching-learning process in vocational schools. Ariani & Iswandi (2020) found that the use of English pop songs was significant in improving the listening skills of IPS 1 students at SMAN 10 Mataram. Yelnim & Kartawijaya (2021) reported that students' listening skills improved after implementing songs in listening teaching in the second semester of STIE-SAK.

From the explanation above, a research entitled "The Use of English Song to Improve Listening Comprehension Achievement of Junior High School Students" was conducted.

## **Method**

The researcher used a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design to conduct this research. CAR is kind of research that is conducted by researcher that focus on solving problems faced in the classroom (Arikunto, 2019). The researcher applied classroom action research with a cycle model to reach the objective of this research. As stated by (Arikunto, 2019), in conducting classroom action research, the researchers need to do it collaboratively with another researcher or team. Related to the statement above, the researcher conducted this research collaboratively with the English Teacher of Islamic Junior High School Pasuruan. The researchers used Arikunto's Model (2019), in a cycle there are four components, namely: the planning of the action, the implementation of the action, classroom observation, and reflection of the action. The participants of this study were students of class VIII-E in Islamic Junior High School Pasuruan who had problems with listening comprehension. This information will be proven from their average score on the listening test 63.33, while VIII A is 82.97, VIII B is 80.90, VIII C is 79.52, and VIII D is 84.52, while the minimum standard score is 78.

There are two kinds of data in this research. They are primary data and supporting data. Primary data are data that are collected for the specific research problem at hand, using procedures that fit the research problem, while secondary data is collected for purposes other than the problem at hand (Hox & Boeije, 2005). Listening comprehension test and observation were used to collect primary data. Meanwhile, interview and documentation were used to collect the secondary data. The listening test in this research was conducted in the Fill blank item and True-False item. Then, the researcher collaborated with the English teacher to observe the student's participation in the teaching and learning process of listening comprehension by using English songs.

## **Results**

Based on the result of the observations during the teaching learning process and the listening comprehension test, it could be concluded that there was an improvement in the teaching and learning process by using English song.

Based on the actions in a Cycle, in Meeting 1, the observation of the results showed that 25 students (83.33%) were categorized as active, and 5 students did not participate actively in the teaching and learning process of listening comprehension using English songs. The results observation of the cycle model showed that students fulfilled the target criteria of 80% active students during the teaching and learning process in the listening class.

In addition, the results of students' listening comprehension scores before the action of the cycle model were 19 students who achieved the target and 11 students who unachieved the target. On the listening comprehension test scores after the action of the cycle model, 26 students achieved the target, and four students did not achieve the target. The complete scores can be seen in Appendix D (before giving the action of the cycle) and F (after the actions of the cycle).

The difference in the percentage of students' listening comprehension achievement before the action of the cycle and listening comprehension achievement after the cycle can be seen in this graphic below.

Table 4.2 The Different Percentage of Students' Listening Comprehension Achievement

<b>Achievement</b>	<b>Before the Action of the Cycle Model</b>	<b>After the action of the Cycle Model</b>	<b>The Improvement</b>
The Students' Listening Comprehension Achievement	63,33 % Or 19 students	86,67% Or 26 students	23,34% Or 7 students

From table 4.2, it can be seen that before the action of the cycle model, there were 63.33% or 19 students who had not reached the target score of  $\geq 78$  (this information was obtained from the English subject teacher). Meanwhile, there was an increase in score achievement after the action of the cycle model, namely there were 86.67% or 26 students who reached the target score  $\geq 78$ . Thus, there is an increase in score achievement, namely there are 23.34% or 7 students who have reached the target score  $\geq 78$  in listening comprehension achievement after the action of the cycle model.

The result of the student's participation and the student's listening comprehension test in the action of the Cycle model achieved the success criteria of this research.

## **Discussion**

The use of English song in the teaching and learning process of listening comprehension showed that there was an improvement on the students' listening comprehension achievement and their participation.

The finding was relevant to the theories suggested by some experts. They are, Eken (1996) in Schoepp (2001) explained that there are many advantages of using songs in teaching listening, namely: 1. present a topic, new vocabulary, or a language point; 2. can be used as a practice of lexis; 3. can be used to focus on frequent learner errors in a more indirect way; 4. can be used as a material for extensive and intensive listening; 5. songs are a perfect source for stimulating discussions about feelings and attitudes; 6. students can talk over with another in pairs or small groups what happened in the song and then share their opinions with the rest of the students; 7. to encourage the use of imagination and creativity during foreign language lessons; 8. provide a relaxed classroom atmosphere and contribute to fun and variety in language teaching. In addition, the researcher's findings are partially in line with the expert, namely songs present topics about motivation for the students, adding new vocabulary for the students, the English songs have been used as materials for intensive listening, the students can discuss together to discuss the learning they get from the song, the students can share opinions from the songs that they listened to, the songs bring the classroom atmosphere to be more relaxed so that students feel comfortable in listening class. Then, it could be seen from the result observation that the student's participation improved. English songs make students enjoy the materials because English songs can make the teaching and learning process fun. The VIII E students were interested and enjoyed learning listening comprehension materials using English songs.

Another expert, Listiyaningsih (2017) the use of English songs in the teaching and learning process of listening comprehension can enhance the student's listening comprehension achievement and the student's participation because listening to English songs can bring more benefits to the students, especially for their listening comprehension and English song contain grammar, pronunciation, rhythm, and also provide a fun atmosphere. This theory is relevant to the results of this research, which found that using English songs



improved the listening comprehension of junior high school students. It was proved by the increase in students' listening comprehension test, from 63.33% in the listening comprehension achievement before the cycle to 86.67% in the students' listening comprehension achievement after the cycle.

In addition, the result of this research were in line with the previous studies. They are, Sartika (2017), who conducted a classroom action research by using English song on the second semester of the English Language Education Department of FKIP Islamic University of Ogan Komering Ilir. Simanjuntak & Usuar (2021), the research subjects were the first-grade students of the Imelda Medan Senior High School. The research was conducted in two cycles. Putri, et. al (2018), the research subject, were students of Class Eleven Multimedia of SMK Mandiri Pontianak in 2017/2018. Ariani & Iswandi (2020), the research subject was first-grade students IPS 1 of SMAN 10 Mataram, which consisted of 25 students. Yelnim & Kartawijaya (2021), the research participant, was students in the second semester of the STIE-SAK academic year 2021/2022. Those studies showed improved students' listening comprehension, especially using English songs as media in the learning process.

In conclusion, based on the results of data analysis and discussion, it could be said that the use of English songs could improve the students' participation and the students' listening comprehension achievement in the process of teaching and learning listening. Hence, English songs could be used as an alternative of instructional materials for teaching listening comprehension.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the research results as discussed before, the use of English songs in teaching listening comprehension could increase the participation of students in class VIII-E Islamic Junior High School Pasuruan. This was proved by the observation of the results showing that out of 30 students in the class, 25 students (83.33%) participated actively in the teaching-learning process by using English songs. It achieved the success criteria of this research, that was, 80% of the students were actively involved in the listening class.

The use of English song in teaching listening could improve the VIII-E students' listening comprehension achievement at Islamic Junior High School. It was proved by the improvement of the students who got score  $\geq 78$  in the listening comprehension test. There was an increase from 19 students or 63.33% who achieved the target score before the action of the cycle to 26 students or

86.67% who achieved the target score after the action of the cycle model in the listening comprehension test using songs.

Moreover, English teachers are suggested to use English songs as a medium in teaching listening comprehension, because English songs can enhance students' listening comprehension and students' participation in class because it provide a fun atmosphere and make students enjoy and relaxed in class. This interests students and helps them to learn the material more easily. English teachers can find many materials from English songs on the internet, so they have a variety of materials to teach listening.

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