

BENEFITING EFL STUDENTS IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION THROUGH ENGLISH SONGS

Movi Riana Rahmawanti¹, Inggar Berlia Sari²

^{1,2} Universitas Ibn Khaldun Bogor

E-mail: movi.riana@uika-bogor.ac.id¹, inggarberls@gmail.com²

Abstract

Keywords:

*Song, Music, Media,
Learning, Learning
Atmosphere*

This study aims to analyse the benefit of listening to English songs to improve their listening skills. This study uses qualitative case study methodology. Qualitative case study methodology enables researchers to conduct an in-depth exploration of complex phenomena within some specific context. Data collections by giving questionnaires and written interviews in this study were ten students of 4th-semester education class A, English Education Department, one of the private universities in Bogor for the 2020-2021 academic years. This study shows benefits for students in listening to English songs; it can improve English language skills, help students focus more on learning, motivate learning, relax the body, all students agree that listening to English songs can be obtained by listening to English songs as a learning medium.

Kata Kunci:

*Lagu, Musik, Media,
Pembelajaran,
Suasana Belajar*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis manfaat mendengarkan lagu berbahasa Inggris untuk meningkatkan keterampilan mendengarkan mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi studi kasus kualitatif. Metodologi studi kasus kualitatif memungkinkan peneliti untuk melakukan eksplorasi mendalam tentang fenomena kompleks dalam beberapa konteks tertentu. Metode studi kasus adalah yang paling banyak digunakan di dunia akademis bagi para peneliti yang tertarik pada penelitian kualitatif, menurut Baskarada yang dikutip dalam Rasyid. Pengumpulan data dengan pemberian angket dan wawancara tertulis dalam penelitian ini adalah sepuluh mahasiswa pendidikan semester 4 kelas A Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris salah satu Perguruan Tinggi Swasta di Bogor tahun ajaran 2020-2021. Penelitian ini menunjukkan manfaat bagi siswa dalam mendengarkan lagu berbahasa Inggris; dapat meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa inggris, membantu siswa lebih fokus belajar, memotivasi belajar, merilekskan badan, semua siswa setuju bahwa mendengarkan lagu bahasa inggris dapat diperoleh dengan mendengarkan lagu bahasa inggris sebagai media pembelajaran.

INTRODUCTION

Some skills must be mastered in learning English such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Listyaningsih, 2019). One of the essential skill to improve English Competence is listening skill. Listening is not only about hearing but also understanding (Putri, 2018). Students are interested in music, and many teachers have chosen to use music in the classroom (Rahbar, 2013). The song is the art of tone or sequential sound; expressing feelings combined with music or instruments and conveyed accompanied by rhythm, tone, and produces a temporal relationship. Songs are known to be the best media to express someone's feelings when someone is happy or sad, from which they can feel relaxed. If someone is comfortable, it can make student learning more effortless and can motivate students. In general, English songs are a good language and incorporate vocabulary, grammar, and much more. This English song can be used as a media to improve language skills. Holden (2004, p. 4) cited in Putri (2018) said that adults spend 40-50% of their communication time engaged listening, 25-30% speaking, 10-15% reading, and less 10% writing. So, it can conclude that listening is the most common communicative activity in daily life.

Listening is considered the most challenging skill; according to Walker (2014) listening is one of most difficult skills to master. It because students prioritize speaking, reading, and writing skills over listening skills. The students realized that understanding listening is not easy to learn because they mostly ignore it. It becomes a problem in world education, especially for students. Everyone thinks if someone can speak well, that means someone can communicate well.

Some teachers utilize many media in teaching listening. As Bokiev (2018) mentioned that some of them uses songs to introduce or strengthen grammar structure, provide the class with a relaxed atmosphere, discuss topics of the song, provide practice with some of the sounds in the song or how the native speakers sound, and give an idea for a composition. Then, the teacher can use the song to raise one of the four skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking).

Some previous researches emphasized on the use of music and song in listening activities, and it is proven to be effective in listening class. One of previous study is by Millington (2011) that is resulted the effective usage of song and music in teaching

English for young learners. This study shows that English music and song can be effective media in teaching English, particularly in listening activities.

English song is often used for young learners in mediating their English learning as stated in previous study. In this study, the researchers try to find out about the benefit of English songs to students' listening skills, particularly when it comes to Higher Education Students. While other study might focus on Young learners, this study focuses on more mature and adult students as participants. In this paper, the researcher tries to find some information about some of the benefits of songs that can improve English skills, especially listening skills.

Listening Comprehension

There are reasons for using a song in the classroom. According to Krashen (Krashen in Kuśnierek), Songs can create a positive atmosphere in the classroom and thereby reduce effective filters. In addition, the belief that songs can help improve the atmosphere in the classroom can help develop language skills has also been noted by other authors. (Griffie, 1992; Domoney & Harris, 1993; Gardner, 1993; Speh & Ahramjian 2011).

Eken (1996 p.46) cited in Gilakjani & Sabouri, mention eight reasons for using songs in language class:

1. In the speech, it is necessary to present a new word to serve as a topic.
2. To act.
3. In listening, it is necessary to implement components extensively and latently.
4. Learner mistakes should not be focused periodically in a more direct manner.
5. In the discussion of stimulating can be about feelings and attitudes.
6. A relaxed atmosphere in the classroom is required.
7. Fun to bring the atmosphere into the classroom.
8. Imagination and creativity are required during foreign language lessons to encourage users.

In language patterns, a song can lead to automatic recognition for users, According to Kusnierek, A (2016). Songs as an automation process can quickly assist language improvement. The environment can influence students to be able to use language communicatively.

Listening Comprehension Process

Schemas are cognitive structures that serve as frameworks for knowledge of places, objects, and events. Schemas can help people organize their understanding of the world and make sense of new information. Listeners can use the schema as a textual structure to understand a sentence. Linguistic and situational cues can also extract schemas. There is a guiding structure to know at the time. There are several basic modes of information processing in the schematic results: Bottom-up, Top-down and Interactive processing.

Bottom-up process

New data enable this process. Data entered into the system through a schematic. In its formation, the scheme is formed from the bottom to the top. In this process, the full text is meaningful through listening and translating from the unit's voice. Therefore, word making is linked by phonemic, making phrases related with phrases, connecting phrases can make a speech, and to make text complete and meaningful can also connect lesson. Phonological, Morphological, Lexical, and Syntax can form incoming sounds that precipitate schemata. Words are used as knowledge. Bottom-up processing is done in grammatical form. (Pourhosein Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011).

Top-down process

This process uses background knowledge to understand the meaning of a message. Top down processing is built on a schema to find the appropriate information. The listener actively constructs meaning, and the speaker also uses new input. Knowledge of the topic and the speaker includes the relationship of context. In understanding, the listener can only depend on his linguistic expertise and cannot extract. Relying on the top-down

can only lead to experience failure. (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983 as cited in Pourhosein Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011).

Interactive process

Interactive processing according to processing, to improve listening comprehension processing can be done from the top-down and the bottom up must be combined. If the content is already well known, it can use it to make new predictions as knowledge. If the content is not well-known, it can use linguistic knowledge as a lexical and syntactic to understand information. (Pourhosein Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011).

Perceptual processing can be interpreted as a continuous feature of chunks of speech. Language starts from code analysis that converts input into representation (Anderson, 1995 as quoted in pourhosein Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). A proposition can be interpreted as understanding in listening to the meaning indicated syntactically, semantically, and phonologically, called segmentation. Listeners can understand spoken language through native speakers with segmentation rules (Anderson, 1995 as quoted in Pourhosein Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011).

The utilization process connects mental representations involving auditory meaning to existing knowledge. A proposition or schema can be interpreted as a long-term memory of stored knowledge. In short-term memory, it will be connected to long-term memory if it is connected to a new meaning, according to Coakley and Molvin (1986, as cited in Pourhosein Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Linguistic knowledge and cognitive processes can involve understanding listening.

Song

One that can affect learning motivation is interested in music. It is undeniable that music has had a comprehensive impact on society. Music provides entertainment for the listeners and can also be a means to convey moral messages, criticize the government, express feelings, and encourage or motivate someone to do something both positive and negative. Therefore, music cannot be considered as something that is ruled out in the process of forming a person's character (Marchita Y, 2013).

Music is a basic need for every human being because music can make people feel happy, happy, and comfortable. Music can be influential in academia by helping to shape learning patterns, overcome boredom and deal with external distractions. Making music actively affects the mental and physiological development of the brain. This activity helps establish the neural pathways connected in the brain and promote the formation of connections between brain cells. It can increase a person's mental and physical growth. Music can also help us feel energized, confident, reduce fear, relieve stress, release stress, and reduce fear and anxiety (Rismi U, 2012).

The song reflects the existing description in the world of native speakers. It reflects fears, worries, difficulties, pleasure, profit, reflections, and ideas. Therefore through the study of songs, other cultures are more deeply understood. According to teachers' experiences, songs can help to clarify many problems in teaching English. Songs can help to remove the distance between the foreign teacher and students, immediately and easily learn new words and phrases, reduce stress factors for learning, reset lesson time, keep students attention focused on the topic currently presented, make learning things-complex things made easier, and increase student motivation and enthusiasm for learning. We can create a more accessible, more enjoyable, exciting, engaging, and impactful learning environment with the song.

METHOD

This study was participants by ten college students at one of the private university in Bogor in the academic year 2020-2021. The research method used in this study was case study Qualitative case study methodology enables researchers to conduct an in-depth exploration of complex phenomena within some specific context. The case study method is the most widely used in academia for researchers interested in qualitative research, according to Baskarada 2014, cited in Rashid. According to Mudjia Rahardjo, the case study comes from the translation in English "A Case Study" or "Case Studies". The word "Case" is taken from the word "Case," which, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (1989; 173), is defined as 1. "instance or example of the occurrence of sth., 2). "Actual state of affairs; situations," and 3). "Circumstances or special conditions relating to a person or thing." From the

elaboration of the definition, it can be concluded that a case study is a series of scientific activities carried out intensively, in detail and in-depth about a program, event, and action, either at the individual level, a group of people, institutions, or organizations to gain in-depth knowledge about events. Usually, after this referred to as cases, the selected events are real-life events, which are currently on-going, not something that has passed. According to Karim 2021, a case study is simply defined as an in-depth, detailed, and detailed investigation or examination of a particular or special event that occurred. Case studies can be obtained from formal research methods. Many disciplines use case studies in their research processes, both social sciences, and exact sciences. After the data in the form of the questionnaire results were considered complete and perfect, the researchers conducted data analysis. The researchers themselves can only do case study data analysis and qualitative research in general. Because, as a critical instrument, only the researchers themselves know in depth all the problems being studied. Data analysis is the most crucial stage in any research and, at the same time, the most difficult. Because from this stage, important information will be obtained in the form of research findings. Failure of data analysis means the failure of the research as a whole. The ability to analyse data is largely determined by the breadth of the researcher's theoretical insight in the field being researched, research experience, lecturer guidance, and the vital interest of the researcher to produce quality research. The data has collected by giving a questionnaire, a written interview on the answers to the questionnaire, and observation. Roopa & Rani, 2012 cited in Muslimah, explain that a questionnaire consisted of several questions to find a topic. The researcher uses the technique of share links to the questionnaire in the Whatsapp group. From the method of filling out this questionnaire, ten students became the research participants. The material is made based on the questions of this study. In addition, filling out the questionnaire was not long enough; it's only about two to three days. The researcher has researched the students who preferred listening to English songs, the benefit of listening to a different kind of music genre, and why they listen to English songs. On the other head, the researchers also research why students were not listening to English songs.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

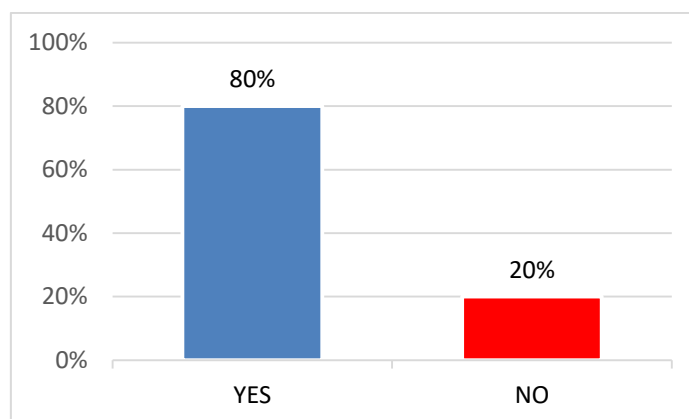
In his book entitled "The Mozart Effect," Don Campbell (1997) reveals many research results related to the influence of music on individual development and provides many beneficial effects of certain types of music. In the book, the benefits obtained from music used in learning, in among them are increasing test scores, speeding up learning time, calming hyperactive children and adults, reducing error rates, increasing creativity and clarity in thinking, healing the body faster, integrating both hemispheres of the brain for more efficient learning. Activate all parts of the brain and make you feel more active. The results of this study are so attractive that the book *The Mozart Effect* by Don Campbell (1997) is so monumental. According to a neurologist from Harvard University, Mark Tramo, M.D. cited in Sumartini (2020), musical vibrations that enter through the ear can influence the psyche. It happens because millions of neurons of circuits are uniquely activated in the human brain when we hear music. These neurons spread to various brain regions, including the auditory canter in the left and right hemispheres.

Based on the analysis of research results obtained from music experts, an understanding was found that the role of music in the formation of character was influential. This conclusion emerges based on historical analysis and analysis of the mechanism of behaviour occurrence. Music has a strong enough influence on the physical and mental individuals and the character of society. The role of music in the formation of behaviour is primary character building. Music acts as a "foundation" in character formation, forming moral feelings, and forming behaviour of justice, love and gentleness. Music and character have a strong relationship in beauty, harmony, and the principle of size and proportion. The world of education, especially early childhood education, should begin to pay attention to this phenomenon and start choosing and using music as part of learning programs. Listening, appreciating, and enjoying good music can have a significant potential impact in helping to improve the quality of human resources. Therefore, music in education is an important part that will effectively contribute to realizing national education goals if appropriately used. For this reason, through this research, a model for teaching national ideology and the spirit of struggle

will be developed through learning by integrating music (songs of love for the homeland and work) at the elementary school level.

After giving a questionnaire and a written interview to the students, the researchers can observe some results which will discuss according to the table below.

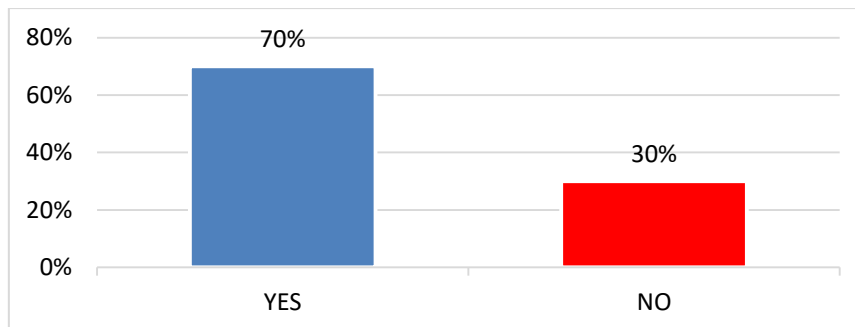
Question No. 1: How often do you listen to English Songs?



These respondents divide into two groups between students who often listen to English songs and always listen to English songs. In table 1, we can see that out of 10 participants, eight students (80%) prefer to listen to English songs, two students (20%) were not. Respondents who answered yes said that it was very entertaining, very comfortable to listen to, can relieve boredom when studying or doing task, and can making up their mood feel be better. Respondents who answered no said that they like to listen to music, but it's in Indonesian songs.

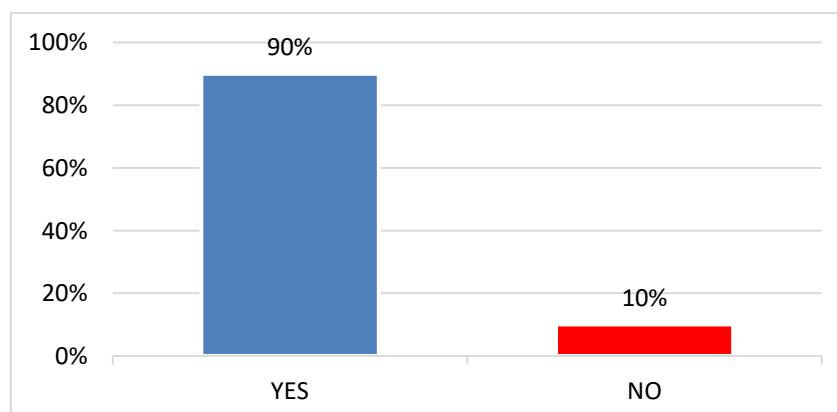
It means that all of the students enjoy listening to music but that most of the students prefer to listen to English songs, and 2 of 10 students prefer to listening to Indonesian songs. Music is a magical art because music can affect people when they listen to it. Several theories suggest that the information learned in unique moods associated with emotional stimuli will be easier remembered. Therefore, music that can be a mood stimulus will be needed in the learning environment to facilitate the recall process (Chafin et al., 2004 cited in Dharmawan).

Question No. 2: Do you think English songs affect your listening ability?



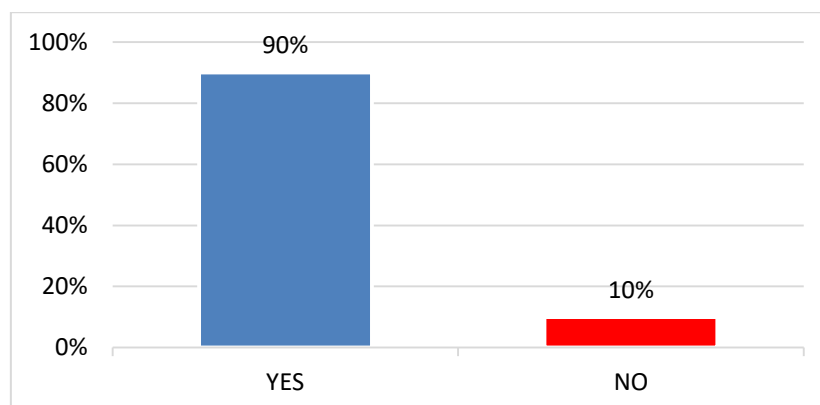
In table 2, we can see that out of 10 participants, seven students (70%) answered yes, and three students (30%) answered no. Respondents who answered yes said listening is the same with practice, but respondents who answered no said that listening while reading the lyrics will have more influence. It can conclude that most students feel it because of the effect of listening to English songs often after they listen and think that music can improve their listening skills. A study at Winona State University, America, said that music that the classic version is more influential in improving memory than music performed with the original version (Mjoen, 2011 cited in Dharmawan). It is in line with an experiment conducted on a group of people with an average age of 81 years. The group that listens to classical music is more remember more things than those who don't listen to music (Mammarella, 2006 cited in Dharmawan).

Question No. 3: Is there any improvement in your listening ability after listening to English songs a few times?



In table 3, we can see that out of 10 participants, nine students (90%) answered yes, and one student answers no. It means that after the respondents listened to English songs several times, their listening skills increased significantly. The fact about classical music is the reason for researchers to do this research. Because if it is linked back to the benefits of classical music above, then. Classical music can be used to improve short-term memory in children teenagers. If listening to classical music is proven to improve long-term memory short for teenagers, listening to these instruments can be used as one of the methods that can be applied in the learning process to make it easier to remember a subject matter, especially when facing exams. Because, according to Walberg and Greenberg's social environment or class atmosphere is a major determinant of affect academic learning (Qaimah, 2008 cited in Dharmawan).

Question No. 4: Have you ever tried to improve your listening skills by using English Song?

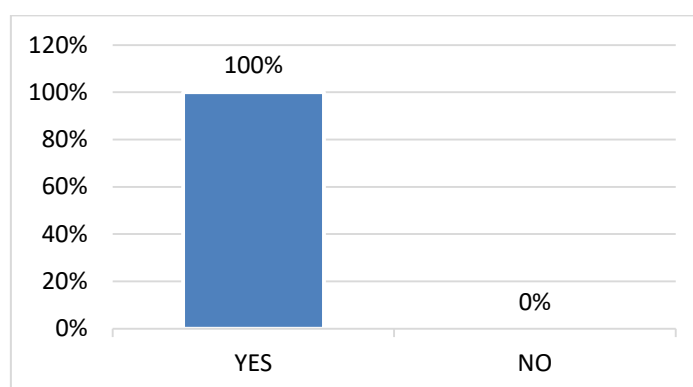


In table 4, we can see that out of 10 participants, nine students (90%) answered yes, and one student (10%) answered no. It means that respondents use English songs to improve their listening skills. Campbell (1996) suggests that improving musical intelligence in students can be done in various ways, including through:

1. Introducing music in the classroom.
2. Listening to music.
3. Making instrumental music in class.

While Chris Brewer (1995) provides an example of a very effective way to integrate music into learning, the class is enriched with music using a variety of different techniques for each purpose. The use of music in the classroom will help increase students' excitement in learning and, at the same time, increase the effectiveness of achieving goals.

Question No. 5: Do you think we can learn listening skills by using English songs?



In table 5, we can see that out of 10 participants, all students (100%) answered yes. It means all of students agree that English songs can be obtained by listening to English songs as a medium of learning. Music can be a means to increase student motivation in spurring memory (Carr & Rickard, 2010 cited in Dharmawan). The rhythmic stimulation of the music being heard can also improve language skills, improve creativity, and improve concentration and memory (Campbell, 2002 cited in Dharmawan).

CONCLUSION

Unlike other previous researches that emphasizes the use of music and songs for Young Learners, this study try to focus in finding out the benefit of the use of English songs for Higher Education Students. The researcher concluded that here are several benefits on the use of English Songs for students in Listening Activities. Some students stated that English Songs improve Their English language skills in learning reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It's also help students focus more on learning and

motivate them in learning English. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher would like to propose some suggestions. For teachers, this media is appropriate to be applied in the classroom. It helps teachers to improve students' listening skills and provides teaching materials. So, songs are recommended to improve our listening skills. For further study, other researchers can explore more specific genre of song that they want to apply in the classroom. They also can figure out the benefit of using Songs on other skills other than listening skills.

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