

A Case Study: Students' Perceptions on the Use of English Songs for Enhancing Speaking Skill

Ida Rosalinda¹, Ratih Laily Nurjanah²
^{1,2}English Literature Department, Universitas Ngudi Waluyo
Email Correspondence: ratihlaily@unw.ac.id

Abstract

The use of songs in English learning has become a popular phenomenon. This study investigates students' perceptions of using English songs as a tool to enhance speaking skills on four aspects as stated by Brown (2001) namely pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and vocabulary, and to determine which aspect that most influenced. Conducted with 35 students from class XI.10 at SMA N 2 Ungaran, selected with convenience sampling technique. This study employs a qualitative case study approach, utilizing observations and questionnaires with 16 question items to gather data. The findings show high agreement among students: 93% for pronunciation, 94.75% for fluency, 88.5% for accuracy, and 94% for vocabulary. Fluency emerged as the most influenced aspect. Additionally, observations indicated that English songs significantly increased students' motivation and encouraged more frequent, natural English speaking, thereby improving their overall speaking ability.

Keywords: Perception, Song, Speaking, Vocabulary

Introduction

In the era of globalization, effective communication across diverse cultures and languages has become increasingly crucial. Language serves as a fundamental tool for human interaction, allowing individuals to convey ideas, express emotions, and share information. Aitchison (2008) defines language as a structured system of arbitrary sound signals that facilitate communication through creativity and cultural transmission. Similarly, Fasold (2006) describes it as a finite set of elements and principles enabling speakers to construct meaningful sentences. In Indonesia, while local languages often form the foundation of early communication, English has emerged as a vital foreign language due to its global significance and the growing influence of science and technology.

English, recognized internationally as a key language for global communication, is taught extensively in Indonesian educational institutions from elementary to university levels. The instruction encompasses all four fundamental language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Rao, 2019). Of these, speaking is particularly emphasized due to its role in effective verbal communication. Wallace (1991), as cited by Suadi (2020), identifies speaking as the primary goal of foreign language learning, given its importance in expressing oneself and interacting with others.

Effective language learning requires appropriate teaching methods and resources. Among these, learning media plays a significant role in enhancing student engagement and comprehension. Media tools should be designed to make learning enjoyable and prevent boredom (Suryanida & Suyatiningsih, 2022). One of the learning media that can be used to learn English, especially to improve speaking skills, is using songs. The use of songs in English learning has become a popular phenomenon. Brewster et al. (2002), as referenced by Melalolin et al. (2020), highlight that songs can enhance linguistic skills, including pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar, while also serving as motivational and cognitive resources. Songs' inherent rhythm and melody make language learning more engaging and less intimidating, potentially boosting students' confidence and enthusiasm.

Despite these advantages, there remains a gap in understanding how specific educational settings utilize songs to improve speaking skills. This study aims to fill this gap by examining students' perceptions of using English songs to enhance various aspects of speaking, including pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and vocabulary (Brown, 2001). By focusing on SMA N 2 Ungaran, where textbook-based methods dominate, this study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of song-based learning as an alternative approach. This study will explore how songs impact their speaking abilities and identify which aspects of speaking are most influenced by this method. This study is expected to provide valuable insights into the practical application of songs in language teaching, offering educators and learners alternative strategies to foster a more dynamic and effective learning environment.

Method

This study was conducted using a qualitative approach with a case study design. According to Moleong (2017) qualitative research is study that aims to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects. In qualitative research, the results of study are presented in a descriptive and in depth-manner. A case study involves detailed analysis of an individual, group, or organization to gain a comprehensive understanding of the context, events, and interactions involved. this research approach was chosen because it aims to find out students' perceptions on the use of English songs for enhancing speaking skill.

The respondents of this study have been selected using convenience sampling technique, there were 35 students from class XI.10 SMA N 2 Ungaran Therefore, to collect the data, the researcher used observation, questionnaire, and documentation. The questionnaire consists 16 question items which was adopted from Pandey et al. (2022), Makasoe et al. (2022), Sekeon et al. (2022), and Putri et al. (2022). The researcher used Likert Scale starting from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

Validity

To determine the statistical significance of correlation coefficient, significance tests are usually conducted at the 0.05 level. This means that if an item's correlation with the total score is significant at this level, then the item is considered valid and worth using in the measurement instrument. If $r \text{ count} \geq r \text{ table}$ (2-sided test with sig. 0.05) then the instrument or question items are significantly correlated to the total score (declared valid). The test results can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. Result of Validity Test

Questions (n)	R - Item	R - Table	Result
Through English songs, I know how to pronounce words properly like a native	0.729	0.396	Valid
By singing English songs can improve my pronunciation	0.822	0.396	Valid
English songs could be an enjoyable media to learn pronunciation	0.742	0.396	Valid
Learning pronunciation by English songs will not make me feel bored	0.644	0.396	Valid
I use English songs as one of my media to improve my fluency in speaking English	0.632	0.396	Valid
English songs can help me to be more fluent in speaking English	0.742	0.396	Valid
With the support of English songs, I could improve my fluency skill quicker than before	0.576	0.396	Valid
I enjoy using English songs as my learning media in improving fluency	0.822	0.396	Valid
I sing English songs to practice my accuracy skill in speaking	0.617	0.396	Valid
My accuracy has improved because of listen and sing English songs	0.719	0.396	Valid
English songs help me to speak accurately like a native speaker	0.664	0.396	Valid
I feel comfortable using English songs as my learning media to improve accuracy skill	0.743	0.396	Valid
Singing English songs help me to enhance my vocabulary mastery	0.729	0.396	Valid
Through English songs make me more familiar with the English vocabulary	0.632	0.396	Valid
It will be easier to memorize vocabulary by singing it	0.719	0.396	Valid
English songs could be a good media of learning vocabulary because I can apply it anywhere and anytime	0.617	0.396	Valid

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that all items are valid, as each item shows the $r_{xy} > r_{table}$ product moment.

Reliability

The reliability in this study was tested by using the reliability of Cronbach's Alpha method. If the alpha value is > 0.70 , it means sufficient reliability, while if > 0.80 , it suggests that all items are reliable and the entire test consistently has strong reliability. The reliability test results can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Result of Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.930	16

Findings and Discussion

Students' Perceptions on English Songs to Their Pronunciation

The results of the questionnaire on the students' perceptions on English songs to their pronunciation, are presented in the form of a table below:

Table 3. The results from questionnaire on the students' perceptions on English songs to their pronunciation

QUESTIONS	SA	A	D	SD
Through English songs, I know how to pronounce words properly like a native	26%	66%	8%	0%
By singing English songs can improve my pronunciation	51%	49%	0%	0%
English songs could be an enjoyable media to learn pronunciation	57%	40%	3%	0%
Learning pronunciation by English songs will not make me feel bored	26%	57%	17%	0%
Average	40%	53%	7%	0%

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the question items in questionnaire showed results dominated by agreement from 35 respondents with a total result of 93%. From these results, it can be concluded that most of the participating students had positive experiences in using English songs as learning media.

Through observation activities, the researcher found that English songs boosted students' confidence in speaking English. Students seemed enjoy with the learning process and showed improvement in the pronunciation of song lyrics. The songs not only helped them improve their speaking skill but also made the learning activity more fun and prevented them from getting bored. English songs also encourage students to be more active in learning to speak English by singing the songs. This shows that English songs can be an effective tool in improving students' pronunciation skills.

Students' Perceptions on English Songs to Their Fluency

The results of the questionnaire on the students' perceptions on English songs to their fluency, are presented in the form of a table below:

Table 4. The results from questionnaire on the students' perceptions on English songs to their fluency

QUESTIONS	SA	A	D	SD
I use English songs as one of my media to improve my fluency in speaking English	31%	60%	9%	0%
English songs can help me to be more fluent in speaking English	34%	66%	0%	0%
With the support of English songs, I could improve my fluency skill quicker than before	20%	74%	6%	0%

QUESTIONS	SA	A	D	SD
I enjoy using English songs as my learning media in improving fluency	34%	60%	6%	0%
Average	29,75%	65%	5,25%	0%

Based on the 4 question items on the table above, 94.75% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed. Since each item reached more than 90% agreement, it shows that almost all respondents use English songs as a learning media.

During the learning activities using song media, students became enthusiastic in improving their speaking skills, by listening to pronunciation of song lyrics they were practicing fluency. In addition, they also benefited from using English songs, as they felt it helped them to be more fluent in speaking English. Thus, it can be concluded that English songs have an important role in helping students to improve their speaking fluency in English.

Students' Perceptions on English Songs to Their Accuracy

The results of the questionnaire on the students' perceptions on English songs to their accuracy, are presented in the form of a table below:

Table 5. The results from questionnaire on the students' perceptions on English songs to their accuracy

QUESTIONS	SA	A	D	SD
I sing English songs to practice my accuracy skill in speaking	26%	66%	8%	0%
My accuracy has improved because of listen and sing English songs	14%	77%	9%	0%
English songs help me to speak accurately like a native speaker	14%	66%	20%	0%
I feel comfortable using English songs as my learning media to improve accuracy skill	37%	54%	9%	0%
Average	22,75%	65,75%	11,5%	0%

The result of the questionnaire on accuracy was 88.5% of respondents gave positive perceptions. This shows that the majority of respondents agree that listening to and singing English songs has a positive impact on their ability to speak English more accurately.

The results of observations conducted by researcher showed that the use of English songs as learning media could improve students' accuracy in speaking English as they find out the pronunciation from teachers or peers. In addition, the comfort that students felt in using English songs as learning media also shows that this method is not only effective but also well received by students.

Students' Perceptions on English Songs to Their Vocabulary

The total results of the questionnaire on the students' perceptions on English songs to their vocabulary, are presented in the form of a table below:

Table 6. The results from questionnaire on the students' perceptions on English songs to their vocabulary

QUESTIONS	SA	A	D	SD
Singing English songs help me to enhance my vocabulary mastery	34%	57%	9%	0%
Through English songs make me more familiar with English vocabulary	31%	69%	0%	0%
It will be easier to memorize vocabulary by singing it	34%	57%	6%	3%
English songs could be a good media of learning vocabulary because I can apply anywhere and anytime	34%	60%	6%	0%
Average	33,25%	60,75%	5,25%	0,75%

The results of the questionnaire on the table above showed 94% agreement, both strongly agree and agree. Each item on the questionnaire received more than 90% agreement, demonstrating a very positive perception among students. Overall, students perceived great benefits from the use of English songs in enriching their vocabulary.

During the observation activities, the researchers noticed that some students noted the new vocabulary which is acquired through the song lyrics. They sought help for meanings from the teacher or google translate. Students can use lyrics to determine the primary idea of a text and identify the words that contributed to their conclusion. This method not only provides an interesting and enjoyable context for learning but also allows for flexible learning that can be done anytime and anywhere.

The Aspect of Speaking Skill That Most Influenced by The Use of English Songs

Based on the results from questionnaires of this study, the use of English songs as learning media greatly influenced the improvement of the fluency aspect in students' speaking skills. The highest agreement from respondents at 94,75% indicates that students felt a significant improvement in their speaking fluency through the use of the English songs. The second most affected aspect is vocabulary with 94% agreement, followed by the pronunciation aspect which got 93% agreement, and the last one is accuracy aspect with 88.5% agreement.

Conclusions

Based on the data findings and discussion previously described, it can be seen that students' perceptions of the use of English songs to improve speaking skills are positive with a percentage of 92,56%. First, using english songs in learning boots students' confidence and improves their pronunciation, making the atmosphere more comfortable, enjoyable, and engaging. Second, English songs help students improve their speaking fluency faster by listening to and repeating the pronunciation of the lyrics. The researcher also concluded that students enhanced their speaking accuracy through regular practice using English songs, aiming for native-like pronunciation, although some still challenges with correct pronunciation. Additionally, singing English songs improves vocabulary acquisition and everyday communication skills by introducing students to diverse words and facilitating practical application. Based on the information collected and analyzed from the questuonnaires and observations, it can be concluded that fluency received the highest approval from respondents at 94,75%.

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