

## The Use of Songs to Improve Listening Skills in Twelfth-Grade Students of Senior High School Number 8 Jambi

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of using English songs as a teaching technique to improve listening skills among twelfth-grade students at SMA Negeri 8 Kota Jambi, Indonesia. Employing a true experimental design, the research compared an experimental group receiving instruction through songs with a control group receiving conventional instruction. The sample consisted of 73 students, divided into two classes. Data was collected through pre-tests and post-tests, using a listening test that involved completing song lyrics with omitted words. The study utilized quantitative analysis methods, including normality tests and t-tests, to evaluate the impact of the song-based instruction. Results indicate the use of English songs significantly enhanced students' listening skills compared to conventional methods. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on innovative approaches to English language teaching, particularly in improving listening skills in EFL contexts. The findings offer valuable insights for educators seeking to incorporate engaging and culturally rich tools in language instruction, potentially improving overall language proficiency among students.

**Keywords:** *English songs, listening skills, EFL instruction*

### INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, the ability to communicate effectively across languages is crucial for accessing and sharing knowledge globally (Aritonang, Lasmana, and Kurnia 2019) assert, numerous languages are spoken worldwide, with language serving as a uniquely human means of conveying ideas, emotions, and desires through voluntarily created symbols (Aritonang, Lasmana, and Kurnia 2019). The acquisition of a second language, particularly English, is a complex and lengthy process (Mohd Tahir 2024), presenting challenges for many nations, including Indonesia. In Indonesia, where Bahasa Indonesia is the primary language, English is taught as a second or foreign language. Students must master four key skills: writing, speaking, reading, and listening. However, the interrelated nature of these skills often makes daily communication in English challenging. Factors contributing to this difficulty include limited vocabulary, lack of interest in listening skills, and uninspiring listening techniques.

Listening is one of the language skills that need to be mastered. One of the

most important abilities that students should have when learning a language, such as English, is listening. Since listening can help students improve their pronunciation, it is impossible to separate this from the role of listening in helping students build their vocabulary. Building students' vocabulary can be done by listening to songs.

Listening to English songs for students is one of the best ways to help them concentrate during lessons. Since songs contain a wide variety of new words and phrases with various themes, students can pick up on vocabulary, rhymes, and grammar rules related to any subject. The fact that English songs are often short, easy topics that students like and they will learn the song by listening to it many times shows that memorization can occur through repetition. Songs are a great way to teach language to students who cannot fully understand the lyrics, yet they still find the music interesting and keep singing along with their teacher. Nonetheless, teachers should remember that the main purpose of incorporating songs into English teaching is to target students in the classroom. In summary, the researcher thinks that students will learn English more

effectively through songs, and teachers should choose appropriate songs and design interesting learning activities for their students.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **The Concept of Listening Skills**

Listening is classified as a receptive language skill alongside reading, in contrast to the productive skills of speaking and writing. While both listening and reading involve receiving information, they differ in medium - listening utilizes spoken words while reading relies on written text. Kien & Hong (2022) defined listening as the process of communicating while differentiating words from other words. (Tyagi 2013) further elaborated that effective listening involves both receiving messages and engaging in psychological conversation with the speaker.

Cheung (2010) emphasized the critical role of listening skills in learning English as a foreign language, arguing that it should be the primary focus in language acquisition. Good listening skills contribute significantly to workplace productivity. According to (Nuraini 2021), effective listening enables individuals to better understand assignments, build rapport with colleagues, show support, work collaboratively, resolve conflicts, answer questions, and discern underlying meanings in communication.

### **Improving Listening Skills**

Windamayanti & Munir (2022) suggests several strategies for enhancing listening abilities, including maintaining eye contact, minimizing distractions, responding appropriately to show understanding, focusing on the speaker's words, remaining open-minded, and asking clarifying questions. These practices can help students become more aware of their role as information receivers and improve their ability to recall and process auditory information.

## **The Concept of Song in Language Learning**

Elsawati, Santika, & Ni Nyoman Deni Ariyaningsih (2022) defines a song as "a short piece of music with sung words." (Edger 2001) elaborates that songs share characteristics with both speech and poetry, being vocally produced, melodic, and linguistically meaningful. Songs offer a flexible and valuable pedagogical tool for language learners, aiding in vocabulary acquisition, sentence structure recognition, pronunciation practice, and the development of listening skills (Pratiwi 2018).

## **Functions and Advantages of Songs in Teaching**

(Sisdianty and Anifah 2018) highlight the multifaceted benefits of using songs in English teaching, noting their ability to develop students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills while teaching various language elements. Songs create a relaxed learning environment, provide examples of informal speech, offer cultural insights, and serve as authentic literary texts (Nureani and Warni 2023).

## **Guidelines for Using Songs in the English Classroom**

(Tasnim 2022) outlines several principles for effectively implementing songs in language instruction, including selecting songs with clear, audible lyrics, considering vocabulary levels and cultural sensitivities, and gradually increasing complexity for beginner-level students. (Ulfa 2019) provides a structured approach to using songs in the classroom, emphasizing repeated listening, encouraging engagement with rhythm and melody, and facilitating comprehension of song meanings.

Procedure for Teaching Listening Skills Using Songs, The literature suggests a three-stage approach to teaching listening skills through songs:

1. Pre-listening: Explain activity goals, activate prior knowledge, and introduce

the song.

2. While-listening: Provide worksheets, guide students through lyric comprehension, and focus on pronunciation.
3. Post-listening: Address unfamiliar vocabulary, explore song meanings, and address any learning difficulties.

This structured approach aims to maximize the benefits of using songs as a tool for enhancing listening skills in the English language classroom.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative method with a true experimental design approach. Two groups were randomly selected: an experimental group and a control group. Both groups took the same pre-test to determine students' initial abilities. The experimental group then received special treatment (application of music media), while the control group received conventional learning. A post-test was administered to both groups to assess the effectiveness of the treatment.

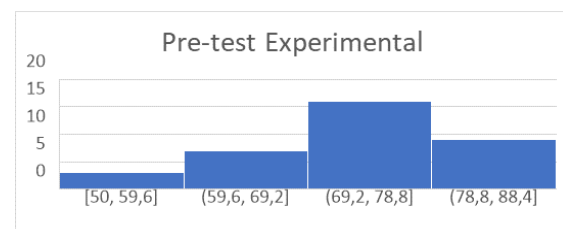
The population consisted of all twelfth-grade students at SMAN 8 Jambi, totaling 189 students across five classes. The sample was selected using simple random sampling through a lottery method. Two classes were chosen: Class 12 IPA 1 (36 students) as the experimental group and Class 12 IPA 2 (37 students) as the control group. The research instrument was a listening test in the form of completing song lyrics with omitted words. This test form was used for both pre-test and post-test. The data collection procedure involved three main stages: 1) Pre-Test: Administered to both groups to assess initial listening skills. 2) Treatment: The experimental group received instruction using the song technique, while the control group used conventional lecture methods. Treatment was conducted four times, twice for each group, with each session lasting 2x35 minutes. 3. Post-Test: Administered to both groups to assess listening skills after

treatment. Therefore, in data analysis technique, this research conducted in several steps, namely: 1) Normality Test: Conducted using SPSS 21 program, employing the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. The significance level was set at 0.05. 2) T-Test: Used to compare scores between the experimental and control groups in the pre-test and post-test. 3) Validity: Content, construct, and face validity were assessed to ensure the test's quality. 4) Reliability: The split-half technique was used, employing the Pearson Product Moment formula and Spearman Brown's Prophecy formula. 5) Level of Difficulty: Calculated using the formula  $LD = R/N$ , where LD is the level of difficulty, R is the number of students who answered correctly, and N is the total number of students taking the test. 6) Discrimination Power: Used to distinguish between strong and weak examinees, calculated using the formula  $DP = (U - L) / (1/2 N)$ , where DP is Discrimination Power, U is the proportion of upper group students, L is the proportion of lower group students, and N is the total number of students.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

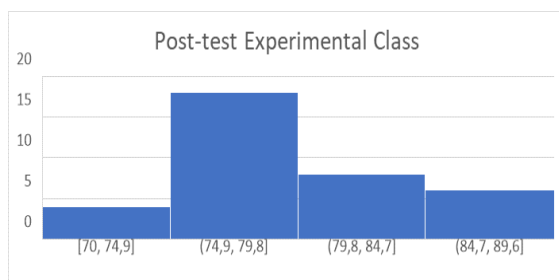
The purpose of this research is to obtain empirical evidence about the effect of song media on the listening skills of twelfth-grade students at SMA Negeri 8 Jambi City in the 2023-2024 school year. The description of the data derived from the test results serves as the output of the study.

### The Result of Pre-test and Post-test in Experimental Class



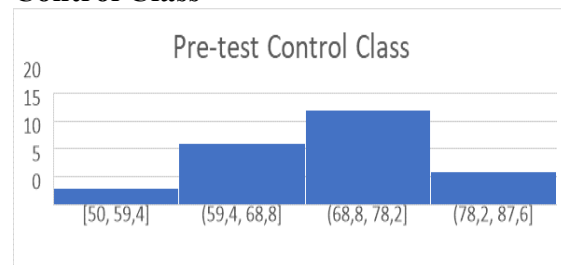
After the experimental pre-test, the following are the scores and graphs of the pre-test test results. From the results of the pre-

test scores, it can be seen that there are several students who get good, sufficient and poor score categories. Students who get good scores start from 72-85. There are 20 students who get good scores. While students who get average scores start from scores 56-70. Students who get an average score are 12 students. There are 4 students who get poor scores, the scores start from 46-55.

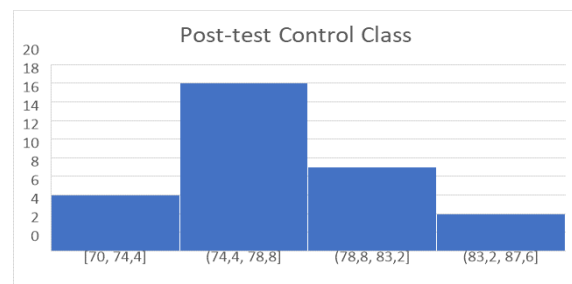


The results of the post-test scores in the experimental class were more improved compared to the pre-test scores in the previous experimental class. Post-test scores in the experimental class are divided into several value categories, namely very good, good and average. Very good scores start from scores of 86-100, good scores start from scores of 72-85 and average scores start from scores of 56-70. There were 2 students who scored in the excellent category and both students were female. There are 31 students in the good category, 26 female students and 5 male students. Finally, there were 3 students in the fair category with 3 female students. Students who scored excellent had high concentration, a high level of confidence, studied diligently and participated in English tutoring activities. Students who scored good had a not so high level of concentration, were not confident because they cheated a lot and did not participate in English tutoring activities. And finally, students who got an average score because there was no concentration in listening, no preparation in learning and no confidence in the content of their answers.

### The Result of Pre-test and Post-test in Control Class



After the experimental pre-test, the following are the scores and graphs of the pre-test test results. From the results of the pre-test scores, it can be seen that there were several students who get good, sufficient, and poor score categories. Students who get good scores start from 72-85. There were 20 students who got good scores. While students who get average scores start from scores 56-70. Students who get an average score are 12 students. There were 4 students who get poor scores, the scores start from 46-55.



The results of the post-test scores in the control class have an increase in value compared to the pre-test scores in the control class. In the control class in the post-test there are several value categories, namely good and average. Good grades start from grades 72-85 and average grades start from grades 56-70. Students who got good grades amounted to 32 students. While students who get average scores amount to 5 students. The students who got good scores were due to a standard level of concentration, not confident in the content of their answers and not participating in English tutoring activities while the students who got average scores were due to no concentration, no preparation in learning English, not participating in English tutoring activities and lack of vocabulary mastery.

**Table 1. Mean Score of Experimental Class and Control Class**

Test	N	Mean	Max	Min
Pre-test Experimental Group	36	69,58	85	40
Pre-test Control Group	37	63,41	75	43
Post-test Experimental Group	36	76,64	88	60
Post-test Control Group	37	76,05	85	65

Based on the table above the researcher got the result of pre-test experimental group and control group. In pre-test experimental group, there were 36 students with the maximum score 85, minimum score 40 and mean 69,58. In the pre-test control group, there were 37 students with maximum score 75, minimum score 43 and mean 63,41. Based on the table 4.2.2 above the researcher got the result of post-test experimental group and control group. In post-test experimental class, there were 36 students with the maximum score 88, minimum score 60 and mean 76,64. In the post-test control group, there were 37 students with the maximum score 85, minimum score 65 and mean 76,05.

**Normality Test**

The analysis of normality test for variable distribution score with the test before treatment and post-test after treatment. Analysis the pre-test and post-test data used statistical of normality test with Liliefors. The standard deviation significant as to reject or accept the normal result or not with  $\alpha = 0,05$ . The compare  $L_0$  Ltable with the criteria : if  $L_0$  is more greater than Ltable ( $L_0 > Ltable$ ) so the distribution population is normal.

**Tabel 2. Test Of Normality**

Tests of Normality

kelas	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Hasil Belajar Listening Pre-test Eksperimen	.186	36	,003	,902	36	,004
Post-test Eksperimen	.216	36	<,001	,906	36	,005
Pre-test Control	.122	37	,183	,941	37	,050
Post-test Control	.210	37	<,001	,930	37	,022

a. Liliefors Significance Correction

Based on the data in table 4.6, the test showed the significance of the experimental class was 0,04 and the control group was 0,05. If the data is higher in a significance  $\alpha = 0,05$  the data was normal distributed. While, significance of experimental class was 0,50 and control group 0,22. If the data is higher in significance  $\alpha = 0,05$  that the data is normally distributed because both classes' significances are above 0,05.

**The Hypothesis Result**

After finishing the normality, the researcher conducted a thesis test of hypothesis to check whether there was a significant difference in the result of pre-test and post-test after treatment were implemented. Software SPSS 21 was chosen and used to test the hypothesis of this research. Then, using the formulation of the experimental and control group mean score, data were input and calculated. Next, the significance value or alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was 5% or 0,05. Then, the result of the t-test can be seen as follows:

**Table 3. T-test Formula**

Hasil Belajar	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Means Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal Variances Assumed	,709	,195	,784	71	,436	,918	1,171	-1,417	3,253
Equal Variances not Assumed			,787	66,676	,434	,918	1,167	-1,411	3,247

The post-test mean score of experimental group was 76,64 while the control group was 75,63. Result the test in the table 4.7 shows that  $L_{value}$  which is 0,78 with the sig. (2-tailed) 0,436. Then  $t_{table}$  is compared to the  $t_{table}$  to know whether song technique give significant

students' listening. The  $t_{table}$  is taken from the requirement which has been standard in analyzing the data. The  $t_{table}$  shows 66,6 with 71 as the degree of freedom (df) in the significance level 0,05. The comparison shows that  $t_{table} (0,78) > t_{table} (66,6)$  and the sig. (2-tailed) value of the post-test score was lower than  $\alpha$ ,  $0,436 > 0,05$ . It means there was significant of song technique on students' listening.

In the description of data taken from 36 experimental group students, table 4.1 shows a description of the experimental group score which had an average pre-test score of 69,58 before the song technique was applied. After the song technique was applied in the class, the average post-test score was 76,64. Meanwhile, the description of the control group scores had a pre-test mean score of 63,41 and a post-test mean score of 76,05. This means that both classes experienced an increase in post-test scores. However, the experimental group obtained a higher score than the control group.

Based on the t-test from the SPSS calculation, it can be proven that  $p$  (sig. (2-tailed))  $< \alpha$ ;  $0,436 < 0,05$ . This means that  $H_0$  – which is the null hypothesis stating that the song technique does not have a significant on student listening in twelfth grade students of SMA Negeri 8 Jambi City – is accepted.

From the results of data analysis, it can be assumed that the song technique can have a significant effect on students' listening skills because the students' listening scores after being taught using the song technique are higher than before the researchers gave the treatment. In addition, this study supports previous research which states that song techniques can improve students' listening skills. In addition, this technique can encourage a learning process that facilitates students to improve their listening skills. This helps them to improve their listening skills in English lessons. The use of song techniques is effective to improve students' listening skills, especially for twelfth-grade students at SMA Negeri 8 Jambi City. The results of the control class and experimental class have different results seen from the pre-test and post-test. From these results, it turns out that the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental class are higher than the control class and the listening results are more improved in the experimental class. This is because each

student has difficulty concentrating. On average, male students find it very difficult to concentrate on listening to music, do not have curiosity about listening to learning and lack vocabulary mastery in learning English while female students have very high concentration, have higher curiosity about listening to learning, have good learning strategies and have motivation in learning English.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the effectiveness of using English songs as a teaching technique to improve listening skills among twelfth-grade students at SMA Negeri 8 Kota Jambi. The research employed a true experimental design, comparing an experimental group that received instruction through songs with a control group that received conventional instruction. The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on innovative approaches to English language teaching, particularly in the context of improving listening skills.

The use of songs as an instructional tool addresses several challenges faced by Indonesian students learning English as a foreign language, including limited vocabulary, lack of interest in listening activities, and difficulties in comprehending native speakers. The results of this study have significant implications for English language teaching practices in Indonesia and potentially in other EFL contexts. By demonstrating the effectiveness of songs in enhancing listening skills, this research provides educators with a valuable, engaging, and culturally rich tool for language instruction. The structured approach to using songs in the classroom, involving pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities, offers a practical framework that teachers can implement in their classrooms. Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of selecting appropriate songs and designing targeted learning activities to maximize the benefits of this approach. The positive impact on students' listening skills suggests that incorporating songs into English

language curricula could lead to improved overall language proficiency, as listening skills are foundational to other language competencies.

While this research focused specifically on twelfth-grade students at one high school in Jambi, the findings may have broader applications. Future research could explore the effectiveness of this approach across different age groups, proficiency levels, and cultural contexts. Additionally, longitudinal studies could investigate the long-term impact of song-based instruction on students' overall English language development. In conclusion, this study provides empirical evidence supporting the use of English songs as an effective technique for improving students' listening skills. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, this research contributes to the advancement of English language teaching methodologies and offers a promising approach to enhancing students' language learning experiences.

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