

Teaching Showing Ability Through Songs: How Effective Is It for Students Listening Comprehension?

Komang Ayu Trisnawati*

Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha
Indonesia

ayu.trisnawati@undiksha.ac.id

I G A Lokita Purnamika Utami

Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha
Indonesia

lokitaurnamika@undiksha.ac.id

G.A.P. Suprianti

Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha
Indonesia

gap.suprianti@undiksha.ac.id



*Corresponding author

Abstract

The aim of this research was to investigate students' listening comprehension through the use of song as a media under the topic of showing ability for EFL student. This research was a quasi-experiment involving 80 students (40 in control and experiment group). Test of listening comprehension was used to collect the data. The samples were chosen using multistage cluster sampling. Findings showed that there is a significant difference in post-test scores between the two groups, namely the group that favors the experimental group. The independent t-test proved that the value of sig two-tailed its 0.000 was lower than 0.05 which interpreted that Songs has a significant impact on students' listening comprehension. In addition, students t students had positive attitudes and responses towards the use of songs in listening classes. Students felt that the songs given as material succeeded in making students enthusiastic and moving their bodies. It was an interesting activity including listening practice which was meaningful for them so that they felt more motivated and happier in learning English. Suggestions for teachers and further research are encouraged in this article.

Keywords: EFL; Listening Comprehension, Showing Ability, Songs

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INTRODUCTION

Learning English has become an essential subject for Indonesian learners. Various skills should be taught to create advanced English skills (Sanjaya et al., 2022). Listening is one of the language skills and becomes a fundamental part of language acquisition learning (Andriani et al., 2024). The listening comprehension process should be taught at any level of learning a language because the first step in learning a language is to listen to information. A listener needs a deep understanding to comprehend the meaning of the information conveyed by the speaker (Lokanita et al., 2020). Listening comprehension has a significant role in acquiring a foreign language, as it is one of the mediums for transmitting information that allows students to enrich the knowledge of the language (Rashidova et al., 2021). Therefore, listening is important skills to be mastered in language learning process.

Similarly, [Gonzalez \(2019\)](#) argues that listening comprehension involves sender and receiver who communicate in the same language and understand to convey the message explicitly. Intellectual activity is the process of using existing knowledge and associating it with experiences, thinking and learning. Listening comprehension is an interactive process that entails bottom-up/top-down operations that occur in parallel ([Díaz-Galaz, 2014](#)). Several definitions from experts suggest that listening comprehension is a vital skill in language learning. It involves understanding/conveying messages and then associating the existing knowledge with the incoming information. The process of listening comprehension requires a complex interaction between the speaker and the listener.

Listening tasks can often be discouraging and demotivating, particularly for students who have experienced prior negative experiences. It is essential to provide learners with frequent opportunities to develop their listening skills in a supportive environment that helps them develop their listening skills. Research suggests that songs encourage learners to engage in repeated listening and to mimic the pronunciation of their preferred singers ([Suwartono & Mayaratri, 2019](#)). [Şevik \(2011\)](#) also believes that the best way to teach listening comprehension is through songs. Learning from songs is fun and may help learners understand or associate the lyrics with the common language. Songs, as authentic sounds sung in various timbres and musical styles, are one of the mediums for improving students' English language proficiency ([Jannah et al., 2019](#)).

Listening to songs requires recognizing the meaning of words, phrases, clauses, whole sentences and complex discourse. There are positive aspects to using songs as a learning tool. Songs are seen as an effective way of learning because they help learners to develop language. [Tasnim \(2022\)](#) remarked that the use of songs has multiple advantages, for instance, (a) providing diverse favorable effects by establishing an amusing classroom environment, (b) promoting authentic materials by integrating real-life affective factors, (c) boosting learners' self-esteem, (d) encouraging motivation, and (e) strengthening the students' grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and memory skills.

The impact of applying English songs in English listening class is to promote students' learning ability. It can be applied as a medium for learners to improve their proficiency in English. [Harmer \(2007\)](#) claims that song is known to be a potent stimulus for students in enhancing students' enthusiasm to learn a particular subject. Teachers are skilled practitioners who are aware of both their own and their pupils' needs. Songs contribute in creating a different atmosphere in the classroom and provide entertainment. Additionally, [Albaladejo et al., \(2018\)](#) asserted that songs have become a viable medium for foreign language teaching in the classroom, especially in the listening part. The media has a big impact on how people learn languages. There are three categories of learning media: audio, visual, and audio-visual ([Suprianti, 2020](#)). The component of song contributes to both an effective relaxation activity and offering a broader scope for English learners to enhance, nurture, and promote their vocabulary, pronunciation, accent, intonation, sociological and cultural knowledge ([Hendrawaty, 2019](#); [Khudriyah, 2022](#); [Rizkiani, 2022](#); [Thi et al., 2023](#))

These few studies include [Nurteteng et al., \(2019\)](#), who examined the effectiveness of song on listening skills among 7th grade students of SMP N 11 Sorong and found that song had a significant effect on listening skills. A further study was analyzed by [Ulfa \(2020\)](#), which

concerned English songs used to teach listening. The study examined the influence of English songs on students' listening. In the results, (1) there was a significant difference in mean score between experimental group=76.17 and control group=54.50; (2) t-observed value is higher than t-table value. On the basis of these results, it could be specifically proved that the use of English songs has a substantial impact on students' listening ability. Furthermore, prior study was reviewed by [Teppa et al., \(2022\)](#) that aimed to discover the effectiveness of lyrics of songs in improving students' listening skill. [Rohana and Saharani \(2023\)](#) examined the utilization of songs as learning media in teaching listening skills to EFL students. Those relevant research proved that songs have positive impact on learners' listening skills. To help students grasp the subject matter and meet the teacher's expectations regarding the learning objective of the material, teaching or instructional media are used ([Sepang et al., 2022](#)).

Therefore, the proposed research seeks to fill this gap by investigating the impact of songs on students' listening comprehension at a public junior high school in Singaraja, Bali. Despite this, the difference in the settings of the previous research results in different responses to the effect of songs on listening comprehension. These songs are produced by native speakers, which provide learners with the best opportunity to learn listening comprehension. With regard to the purpose of the study, there are two research hypotheses; these are the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis. The null hypothesis could be described as follows: There is a significant effect or not of using songs on students' listening comprehension between the experimental group and those who were taught without using songs in the controlled group.

METHOD

Design

This study was set in one public school in Singaraja, Bali. The design of this study was experimental research with a post-test only control group design. The control group learned through conventional ways while experimental group was treated specially with songs as the media of listening activities.

Population and Sample

The research population entails 416 eight-graders. Eighth grade refers to students in the age range of twelve to thirteen. The eighth graders represent the point where children move from the preadolescent category to teenage learners. As they have experience in learning to listen, albeit with limited media, they are considered the research population. Multistage cluster sampling was used as the sampling technique in this study. The sampling of the study has two equal classes with a total of 80 students.

Data Collection/Instruments

The data were collected using a listening comprehension test. The researcher done the treatment without any song as media in control class, while for experimental class, the treatment employed with song. The main instrument was post-test with essay and multiple-choice test. Each post-test contains 40 questions: multiple choice, fill in the blank, fill-in-the-blank, fill-in-the-diagram and fill-in-the-blank with two options. Before administering the post-test, the instrument was evaluated through ANATES in fulfilling validity and reliability test. The multiple-choice test consisted of 30 questions while essay test was only 10 questions. The multiple-choice test achieved r_{xy} value of 0.80 which was categorized as high validity. In addition, the reliability test of multiple-choice was 0.92 with high category. It means that the 30 questions of multiple-choice test were classified as valid and reliable instrument. Further,

the finding of essay test showed the validity of 0.70 (high category) and reliability value of 0.70 with moderate category. These results concluded that the essay test can be applied as valid and reliable instrument to assess students' listening comprehension.

Data Analysis

The results of the post-test were analyzed descriptively and inferentially aided by IBM SPSS Statistics 22. The mean and standard deviation of the experimental and control groups were determined for descriptive statistics. Meanwhile, the inferential statistics proposed to analyze the hypothesis testing through t-test.

As a next step, the effect size generated by the use of songs in listening comprehension was analyzed with the aid of the Effect Size application. It provides an overview of how significant the effect is after treatment with songs. Before inferential statistics can be conducted, data needs to undergo screening to test for normality and homogeneity in the distribution of data. The normality test utilized Kolmogorov-Smirnov. Further, homogeneity test was fulfilled through analyzing *Levene's Statistics* with IBM SPSS Statistics 20.

Based on the normality test, the control group had a significance value of .137, and the experimental group had a significance value of .184. According to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test criteria, a significance value greater than 0.05 indicates that the data can be considered normal. Since both the control group (.137) and the experimental group (.184) had significance values higher than 0.05, it can be inferred that the data in both groups were normally distributed. Moreover, the homogeneity test indicated that the significance value of the Levene statistics was .493. Comparing this with the criterion level of 0.05, since the significance value of the Levene statistics was higher than 0.05, it indicates that the data were homogeneously distributed. Since the data met the requirement of t-test, the hypothesis testing can be done inferentially.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the findings and discussion of the study in response to the research question, divided into three emergent themes: (a) descriptive statistics results, (2) inferential statistics results, and (3) effect size calculator results. Each of these themes is presented below, along with the data and discussion, as potentially answering the research question:

The Results of Descriptive Statistics

In both groups, the descriptive statistics consisted of analyzing the mean and standard deviation. These findings of descriptive analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Control	40	23.00	60.00	83.00	71.50	7.86097	61.795
Experimental	40	25.00	70.00	95.00	82.07	7.29730	53.251
Valid N (listwise)	40						

Table 1 displays the statistics for both the control and experimental groups. The control group had a range from a minimum score of 60.00 to a maximum score of 83.00, with a mean score of 71.50 and a standard deviation of 7.860. In contrast, the experimental group had scores ranging from a minimum of 70.00 to a maximum of 95.00. The mean score for the experimental group was 82.07, with a standard deviation of 7.297. The mean difference

between the experimental and control groups indicated that there was a significant difference in listening comprehension in both the control and experimental groups.

The Results of Inferential Statistics

The t-test was employed to address the research question and demonstrate the influence of songs on students' listening comprehension. Criteria for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis adhered to the significance standards outlined by Hatch and Lazaraton (1991). Given that the assumptions of normality and homogeneity were satisfied, the independent samples t-test was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 22. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The output of Inferential Statistics

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	.474	.493	6.236	78	.000
	Equal variances not assumed			6.236	77.572	.000

Table 2 demonstrates that for the t-table ($df = 78$), the critical t-value was 1.990, while the calculated t-value was 6.236. Additionally, the significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) was .000. According to hypothesis testing principles, a significance value lower than 0.05 indicates rejection of the null hypothesis. Since the calculated t-value exceeds the critical t-value from the table, it can be concluded that there is a significant impact on students' listening comprehension between the control group taught using conventional methods and the experimental group taught using songs.

Effect Size Test

To assess the magnitude of songs' effect on students' listening, the mean and standard deviation were computed using the effect size test. Based on the result analysis, the Cohen's d value was 1.39, and the effect size r was 0.57. According to Cohen's classification, if Cohen's d is greater than 0.80 or if r exceeds 0.410, the effect can be considered large. Given that Cohen's d is 1.39 and r is 0.57, it can be concluded that the use of songs has a significant, large effect on students' listening comprehension.

The descriptive statistics results showed that the experimental groups' mean scores were higher than those of the control groups', and their standard deviations were lower than those of the control groups'. These results indicated a significant difference between the experimental and control groups. This prediction was further supported by the independent samples t-test, which indicated that the significance value (Sig. two-tailed) was below 0.05, in compliance with the criteria set by Hatch and Lazaraton (1991). On the basis of these results, it can be inferred that the experimental group, which was taught through the use of songs, was performing better than the control group, which was taught through the use of conventional teaching methods. This rejection of the null hypothesis - "there is no significant effect of the use of songs on students' listening comprehension compared to those taught without songs in the control group" - indicates a positive and significant impact of songs on students' listening comprehension. The effect size calculator also confirmed a large effect of song integration on students' listening comprehension. These findings strongly conclude that integrating songs into language learning significantly impacts on students' listening comprehension.

These findings align with [Nemtchinova \(2013\)](#) who highlights songs as a popular choice for teaching listening comprehension in classrooms, facilitating natural training of listening skills. Listening to simple songs is part of strategies for extensive listening, as outlined by [Rost \(2011\)](#), providing learners with comprehension strategies to manage large amounts of input effectively. Similarly, [Mailawati and Anita \(2022\)](#) found that students' listening skills were improved after the learning is accompanied with songs.

Three reasons exist as to why songs can positively impact the students' listening skills. First, the repetition of vocabulary in songs can significantly contribute to students' comprehension as they encounter certain words multiple times within the song. This repetition aids students in learning and understanding vocabulary more effectively. Second, listening activities enhance learning enjoyment through rhythm and melody. [Sisdianty and Anifah \(2018\)](#) also found that using song can create joyful learning environment thus enhancing students' motivation in learning English. Last, Songs contain unique elements which enable them to offer effective recreational activities and to develop students' ability to learn English. Previous studies have shown that songs serve as effective recreational activities and offer extensive opportunities to improve, develop, and enrich various aspects such as vocabulary, pronunciation, accent, intonation, as well as social and cultural knowledge ([Hendrawaty, 2019](#); [Khudriyah, 2022](#); [Rizkiani, 2022](#); [Thi et al., 2023](#)).

The findings of the study are consistent with research conducted by several scholars. [Nurteteng et al., \(2019\)](#) demonstrated a significant difference in scores between students who used songs as a teaching media (experimental group) and those who learned through conventional methods (control group) in terms of listening skills. [Ulfa \(2020\)](#) similarly confirmed that the use of English songs has a substantial impact on students' listening skills. These results are further supported by the research of [Huda and Huda \(2022\)](#), who asserted that songs are effective for teaching listening and contribute positively to students' listening comprehension. Additionally, the positive effects of songs on listening comprehension, making words easier to understand, were highlighted by [Ridhani et al. \(2023\)](#).

The research findings offer positive implications for implementing songs on listening comprehension. Integrating songs implies employing creative learning strategies that English teachers should consider incorporating into their classrooms. However, several considerations are crucial for teachers. They must carefully select appropriate and relevant songs to the learning topic. It's also important for teachers to ensure that students are comfortable with this instructional strategy. Furthermore, teachers should maintain effective learning management to foster active and enjoyable student learning experiences.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, integrating songs into teaching listening comprehension significantly enhances students' listening skills and their ability to grasp material effectively. This was proved by the independent sample t-test, which rejected the null hypothesis. The positive and significant impact on students' listening comprehension can be attributed to the unique elements of songs and the repetition inherent in song lyrics. In sum, songs in showing ability lessons positively and significantly affect listening comprehension.

Based on the findings and discussions, several suggestions can be proposed for teachers, English teacher education programs, prospective teachers, and other researchers.

Teachers can employ this strategy in their instructional practices to facilitate the teaching of listening comprehension skills to their students. Further, English Language Education Program institutions should incorporate the creation of song media as a listening teaching tool into their curriculum for material development courses. Other researchers may consider applying this strategy to teach other language skills, such as writing or speaking, and further explore its strengths and weaknesses.

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