

## **Scrutinizing The Effect of Song on Students' English achievement and students' English learning Interest**

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the impact of integrating songs on high school students' English skills and their interest in learning English. The quantitative research involves 118 of tenth grade students from three randomly selected schools in Samarinda. Cluster random sampling was applied, assigning students to experimental and control groups. The experimental group received English lessons with songs, while the control group had lessons without songs. Data analysis, using descriptive and inferential statistics, employed an English proficiency test and an interest questionnaire. Results revealed a significant improvement in both English skills and interest among the experimental group compared to the control group. Post-test mean scores for the experimental and control groups were 82.00 and 76.77, respectively, with a significant difference confirmed by a t-test ( $\text{Sig} < 0.05$ ). The interest questionnaire showed a higher mean score in the experimental group (155.16) compared to the control group (135.84) post-test, with a significant difference ( $\text{Sig} < 0.05$ ). In conclusion, the study indicates a positive impact on English language achievement and students' interest in learning English through the incorporation of songs in the learning process.

**Keywords:** Songs, English Achievement, Learning Interest The effect of songs

## **Introduction**

The Covid-19 pandemic is not over yet. The distance learning system is currently more of an option for schools in East Kalimantan, especially in Samarinda, East Kalimantan. This, of course, is not entirely good. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a decline in children's learning motivation at school and students' cognitive abilities in terms of receiving lessons. This was stated by Lase et al. (2022), which revealed that 48.4% of parents admitted that their children's learning motivation had decreased. Number of tasks to be completed in a short time. In addition, the implementation of learning methods that are less fun, and limited interaction with friends and the inability to learn effectively in online formats are some of the causes of the decline. Ideally, even though students are not physically present in class, the application of the learning process with various learning and assessment approaches is still possible to involve students (Halim & Sunarti, 2021). The return of the implementation of limited face-to-face learning by the government, namely Work From Home (WFH) 50 percent and Work From Office (WFO) 50 percent, is also a

challenge for teachers to prepare learning approaches that regenerate students' interest in learning in classroom.

English lesson in high school is one of the foreign languages that must be taught. Based on the regulations of the ministry of education and culture (Permendikbud) Number 59 of 2014 Curriculum 2013, the formulation of English Content Standards is directed at developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. It is also said that although the name of the subject is 'English', in this subject, students do not learn about English 'language', but learn to do various things that are useful for their lives by using English. Because of this, there are currently developing various methods and approaches in teaching English so that the objectives of teaching English as stated in Permendikbud Number 59 of 2014 can be achieved. Beside that the requirement of English proficiency is growing higher than ever in Indonesia, such as in Japan (Adachi, 2015) Sweden (Henry & Apelgren, 2008), Hungary (Csizér & Kormos, 2008) and many Asian countries (Chen & Cheng, 2010). The context of learning a foreign language is completely different from the context of learning a second language (Adachi, 2015).

Learning EFL is not an easy process, which involves many issues to fully understand. Teachers' assumptions about how foreign languages should be learned tend to influence the way they teach (Yang et al., 2023; Fang, 1996). In the teaching of a foreign language, when a teacher emphasizes learning goals related to communication skills and language proficiency, instructional methods will align more closely with the development of communicative competence (Sercu et al., 2005). English teaching in Indonesia is still a concern in communicative competence, which focuses on students' skill of the target language being taught. This may not be in accordance with the students' goals in learning English (Hesan et al., 2019). Furthermore, Erfiani (2018) explains that having a good English teaching process, the results must also be satisfactory for teaching components such as teachers, students, teaching methods, materials, and others. For this reason, it is important for teachers to always improve their competence in teaching techniques.

Learners learn in various ways and strategies (Ang, et al., 2017). It is inevitable that teaching requires strategies that are needed by students. Especially strategies that foster awareness in learning. Furthermore Ang, et al. (2017) mentions that students also internalize language learning as problem solving, students use more strategies that involve complex learning processes. While, Christianito (2019), in

language teaching, accuracy is needed in determining the approach to be used. Teachers are required to understand well each approach used in delivering lessons. Within the high school curriculum, specific competencies for musical content are outlined, specifically KD 3.10 and KD 4.10, as specified in Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 24 of 2016. These foundational competencies encompass students' abilities to interpret both the social functions and linguistic elements of songs, as well as to comprehend the significance of song lyrics within the context of high school students' lives.

Moreover, there are indicators of competency achievement incorporated to enhance the systematic and effective progression of the learning process (Surabaya, 2021). In addition, Asmaradhani et al. (2019) said using songs in class will make students enjoy the activities and songs can be used in certain work on pronunciation. Furthermore, Forster (2006) justifies the use of songs and chants that can improve systematic learning for young learners as follows: Children will significantly enhance their vocabulary by acquiring a repertoire of lexical items and multi-word structures. These multi-word structures will encompass various age-appropriate sociolinguistic scenarios and cater to student needs, including greetings, farewells, requests, and other language components essential for elementary grade functions and routines; 2) There will be noticeable improvements in the rhythm of speech, intonation, and English pronunciation; 3) The memorization of longer word strings will be facilitated; 4) The integration of music and rhythmic activities into grammatical and language exercises will allow for a lively and creative utilization of class time beyond the designated "English" periods. This provides teachers with greater flexibility and time to instruct, offering additional opportunities for students to hone their new language skills.

Moreover, employing songs as a tool for English instruction has garnered significant attention for its inherent excellence as an authentic resource. It has been underscored for its substantial benefits not only in primary language acquisition but also in second and foreign language learning contexts. Research by (Romero, 2017) highlights its profound nature, while (Forster, 2006) emphasizes its advantages across various language domains. The use of songs has been recognized for its ability to enhance students' motivation and achievement in the acquisition of foreign languages, as noted by Chen & Chen (2009). Reinforced by Lo & Li as cited in Al-efeshat & Baniabdelrahman (2020), songs assume a crucial role

in advancing learners' proficiency across a spectrum of skills, including reading, writing, speaking, listening, pronunciation, rhythm, synchronic linguistics, and vocabulary.

Therefore, the researcher interested in conducting the experimental study using songs as a media to increase students' English achievement and students' learning interest. This study aimed to investigate the effect of using songs on improving students' English language skills and using song as media to increase students' interest in learning English. Therefore, the research questions formulated are: (1) does the use of songs has a significant effect on improving students' English skill, and (2) does the use of songs have a significant effect on increasing students' interest in learning English. Display quotations of over 40 words, or as needed.

## **Method**

Quantitative approach is used in this study. Through pretest-post-test control group design.

## **Research sample**

This study was conducted with a population from three senior high schools in Samarinda, east Kalimantan. By involving three teachers who have been trained in the use of songs as a technique for delivering English lessons. The three schools were randomly selected. The total population is 750 people. The research sample is tenth grade in each school which was taken using cluster sampling technique. Obtained 118 students who will be the sample of this study, which then in each school will be divided into 2 groups, namely the experimental group and the control group.

## **Research Instruments**

Collecting the data needed is a pretest and posttest of English language skills made by the research which is prepared according to the contents of the English textbook used by students of tenth grade. The English questions include vocabulary, listening, and grammar. A total of 20 objective questions, fill in the blanks, and multiple-choice questions were registered. The questions have been tested for validity and reliability first. This instrument will be applied in the study as a pretest and posttest. All characteristics of the English language, including the content items and the number of items is the same, the researcher only changes the order items and options on the pretest and posttest. Another instrument applied in this research is a questionnaire of students' interest in learning English. The question contains 48 questions about students' interest in learning English. The questions cover the aspects

of student interest in learning related to awareness, willingness, attention, and pleasure in learning English. The questionnaire uses a four-point Likert scale, namely "strongly disagree", "disagree", "agree" and "strongly agree". The questions are made by researchers and have been tested for validity and reliability. The student's interest in learning questionnaire was applied to both the pretest and posttest of this study.

### **Procedures for data collection and data analysis**

Groups of students in each school that have been selected and assigned as experimental class and control class will be given a pretest to determine the initial score of English language skill and interest in English learning before being given treatment. The two selected classes will be divided into two conditions: experimental class and control class. In the experimental class students will receive treatment through teaching techniques using songs. Face-to-face meetings will be taught in English which includes skill of vocabulary, listening, and structure from English textbooks used by students.

On the other hand, participants in the control group will learn traditionally without any application of songs. A posttest will be conducted after learning process already completed in six meeting, a test of students' English skill and a posttest of student interest. Tests were held in a form of English items and questionnaires for both, experimental and control, to determine the impact of treatment on students' English skill and interest in learning. The data collected were analysed using the SPSS Tool. First, descriptive statistics such as: calculating means and standard deviations. Second, an independent sample t-test was conducted to measure the effect of treatment on students' English skill and interest in learning.

### **Results**

#### **The effect of using songs on improving students' English skill.**

The collected data were analysed to answer research questions. The results of statistical calculations on English language skill are focused on the aspects of vocabulary, Listening, and structure. The results of the pretest for the two groups are described in the following table:

**Table 1.** Means and standard deviations of two groups of students on the pretest of English skill

	class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
variable_pretest	Experiment	59	61.3729	17.58712	2.28965
	Control	59	66.8983	15.47155	2.01422

Based on table 1, the mean score in the experimental group was 61.37, and the mean score in the control group was 66.89. the mean scores in both groups showed were significantly difference before the treatment was given.

**Table 2.** Independent-samples t-test (pretest of English skill)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
variable_pretest	Equal variances assumed	2.347	.128	-1.812	116	.073	-5.52542	3.04952	-11.56539	.51454
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.812	114.145	.073	-5.52542	3.04952	-11.56642	.51557

Table 2 above shows that the Significance value in this table is more than 0.05. Therefore, it can be assumed that there is no statistically significant difference in the initial test of English proficiency of the two groups.

**Table 3.** Means and standard deviations of two groups of students on the posttest of English skill

	class_posttest	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
variable_posttest	Experiment	59	82.0000	8.31492	1.08251
	Control	59	76.7797	13.13730	1.71033

On Table 3 above, the mean score of two groups on post-test of English skill is shown. The mean score of experimental group is 82.00, and the mean score of control group is 76.77. It was clear that the experimental group performed a higher mean than the control group on English skill at the post-test. Furthermore, a t-test was conducted using an independent sample t-test (see table 4).

**Table 4.** Independent-samples t-test (posttest of English skill)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
variable_posttest	Equal variances assumed	17.984	.000	2.579	116	.011	5.22034	2.02412	1.21132	9.22936
	Equal variances not assumed			2.579	98.043	.011	5.22034	2.02412	1.20356	9.23712

Table 4 shows that Sig (0.01) is smaller than 0.05, it means that there is a significant difference between the final scores of English skills of the two groups. Therefore, it can be concluded that the experimental group has better English skill than the control group.

### The effect of using songs on increasing students' interest in learning English.

**Table 5.** Means and standard deviations of the two groups on the pretest of students' interest in learning English

Group Statistics					
	Students Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Students Score	Pretest Experiment Class	59	136.15	8.532	1.111
	Pretest Control Class	59	132.88	8.757	1.140

Table 5 above shows the mean score in experimental group and control group on the test of students' interest in learning English. The mean score of experimental class is 136.15 and the control class is 132.88. Based on the those mean scores; the two classes have a similar interest in learning English.

**Table 6.** Independent-samples t-test (pretest of students' interest in learning English)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Students Score	Equal variances assumed	.743	.391	2.055	116	.042	3.271	1.592	.119	6.424
	Equal variances not assumed			2.055	115.921	.042	3.271	1.592	.119	6.424

Meanwhile, table 6 shows that the significant value is 0.42 which is higher than 0.05, therefore it can be concluded that both classes have the same interest in learning English before the implementation of the treatment.

**Table 7.** Means and standard deviations of the two groups on the posttest of students' interest in learning English

item		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
kelas	posttest experiment	59	155.1695	10.14745	1.32109
	posttest control	59	135.8475	8.72336	1.13568

Table 7 above shows the mean score in the experimental class, 155.16 which is higher than the mean score of control class, 135.84, on the results of post-test. This shows that there is an increase in students' interest in learning after being given treatment.

**Table 8.** Independent-samples t-test (posttest of students' interest in learning English)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
kelas	Equal variances assumed	.139	.709	11.091	116	.000	19.32203	1.74214	15.87151	22.77256
	Equal variances not assumed			11.091	113.445	.000	19.32203	1.74214	15.87069	22.77338

Table 8 above shows a significant difference, namely Sig (0.00) less than 0.05, this proves a statistically significant difference between the posttest of students' interest in learning from the two groups. Therefore, it can be concluded that individuals in the



experimental group showed good interest in learning English based on their English learning performance on posttest when compared to the control group.

## **Discussion**

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher used an independent- samples t-test. The findings of the study showed that the experimental group that received the treatment of the learning process using songs showed an increase in English learning outcomes in the final score than students who were not treated by using songs in the learning process. This is in line with research by Al-efeshat & Baniabdelrahman (2020), which shows an increase in students' vocabulary skills in English. Furthermore, during the learning process, the song seemed to motivate students to be consciously involved in discussing the learning material. This is also in line with research conducted by (Bokiev et al., 2018).

He continued, Music and songs can be used to enhance the learning of almost every aspect of the target language, to develop cultural awareness and to foster student creativity so that the learning process is even more interesting. Olii (2021) uncovered a significant result indicating that the use of song media proved effective in enhancing students' English pronunciation. Students demonstrated a tendency to leverage songs not only within the classroom but also as a tool for improving their English skills and language components at home. Furthermore, Salwa & Liskinasih (2016) revealed the results of their data analysis that most students (85%) had a positive attitude towards the use of songs as a sufficient medium to help them understand the meaning of figurative language and increase their motivation in learning English.

Songs are effective for teaching vocabulary for adolescent students related to word count, retention, increased attention, environmental friendliness, practice opportunities, and meaningful context (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). Listening to music and songs can improve listening skills in foreign languages, one of the main features needed for language learning. From a linguistic perspective, songs provide learners with language resources to develop students' listening skills, including pronunciation combined with grammar, syntax, and vocabulary development. The results of the research in the explanation above strengthen the results of this study, namely songs are effectively used to improve students' English skill and students' interest in learning English in senior high school students.

In learning, it was found that some students seemed embarrassed in learning how to pronounce words and sentences using songs. Students seem worried about making mistakes and but this is resolved with the rhythm of the song that makes students feel relaxed. They concentrate on finding the correct pronunciation of each word of the song they are listening to. This condition is in line with what was stated in the results of the study (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020), where songs can attract students' attention in acquiring new vocabulary. In his research, Hampp (2019) reinforces the idea that songs can inject interest and fun into classes, heightening students' engagement in learning. Additionally, songs offer exposure to everyday language not typically found in textbooks and have the capacity to integrate multiple language skills simultaneously.

## **Conclusion**

In light of the findings from this study, the researcher has drawn the conclusion that songs serve as a highly effective medium for capturing students' interest in the learning process. The impact of incorporating songs into education extends beyond mere engagement, manifesting in tangible improvements in students' language skills. Notably, the study indicates that exposure to songs enhances vocabulary, refines listening abilities, and contributes to the development of English structural proficiency among high school students. Songs, in this context, function as a bridge facilitating the seamless transfer of language knowledge to students. Particularly noteworthy is the inclusive nature of this approach, as even students with language skills below the average are encouraged to participate in lessons. The relaxed classroom atmosphere, coupled with the use of songs as a medium for content delivery, not only prevents students from feeling overwhelmed but also succeeds in entertaining them. This innovative pedagogical approach transforms the learning of English into an enjoyable experience, fostering excitement and enthusiasm among students. The researcher emphasizes that cultivating students' interest in the learning process holds paramount importance, as heightened interest correlates with a more effective absorption of the educational material. Therefore, the utilization of songs as an alternative learning medium stands out as a valuable strategy, especially when paired with a thoughtful selection of song variations aligned with the specific learning material at hand.

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