

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF POPULAR SONGS TO INCREASE
STUDENTS' LISTENING SKILL AT THE EIGHTH GRADE OF SMP
MUHAMMADIYAH 7 PALEMBANG**

THESIS

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**ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH PALEMBANG**

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SMP MUHAMMADIYAH 7 PALEMBANG**

THESIS

**Present to
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in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Sarjana in English Language Education**

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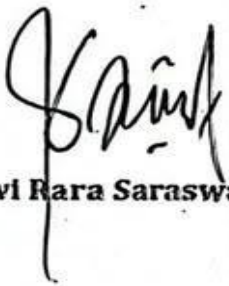
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Menyatakan bahwa skripsi berjudul:

"The Effectiveness of Popular Songs to Increase Students Listening Skill at the Eight Grade of SMP Muhammdiyah 7 Palembang"

Beserta seluruh isinya adalah benar merupakan hasil dan saya tidak melakukan penjiplakan atau pengutipan dengan cara-cara yang tidak sesuai dengan etika keilmuan dalam masyarakat ilmiah.

Atas pernyataan ini, saya siap menerima segala sanksi yang berlaku atau yang ditetapkan untuk itu, apabila di kemudian pernyataan saya tidak benar atau ada klaim dari pihak lain terhadap keaslian skripsi saya.

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Yang menyatakan



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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

Motto:

A good thesis is a finished thesis, not a perfect thesis

Dedication:

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the people who have always been special in my heart and who have supported me throughout this journey

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ABSTRACT

Fransiska F., Aulia Susan. 2026. *The Effectiveness of Popular Songs in Increasing Students' Listening Skills at the Eighth Grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang*. This thesis was completed in the English Education Study Program, (S1), Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang. Advisors: (I) Dr. Tri Rositasari, M.Pd. (II) Indah Windra Dwie Agustiani, S.Pd., M.Pd.

Keywords: Popular Songs, Listening Skills, English Learnin

The title of this research is The Effectiveness of Popular Songs to Increase Students' Listening Skill at the Eighth Grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang. The problem of this study is it effective to use popular songs in increasing students' listening skill. The objective of this study was to find out whether it was effective or not to use popular songs in increasing students' listening skill. This study applied a quasi-experimental method using a one-group pre-test and post-test design. The population of this study was all of the eighth-grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang, and the sample consisted of 25 students from one eighth-grade class selected through purposive sampling. The students were taught by using popular songs as the teaching medium during the treatment sessions. The songs were selected based on several criteria, including their popularity among teenagers, clear pronunciation, appropriate vocabulary level, and suitability for eighth-grade students. The data were collected through pre-test and post-test and analyzed using SPSS 25. The result of the paired sample t-test showed that there was a significant difference between students' pre-test and post-test score. The (Sig. 2-tailed) was 0.000, which was lower than 0.05, meaning that the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. The mean score of the post-test experimental class was higher than the pre-test of experimental class, which indicates that the use of popular songs had a significant effect on students' listening skill. In conclusion, the use of popular songs is effective in increasing students' listening skill and can be used as an alternative teaching medium in English learning.

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The Researcher

Aulia Susan Fransiska F

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents (1) background of the study, (2) formulation of the problem (3) objective of the study, (4) significant of the study, (5) hypothesis of the study, (6) criteria for testing the hypotheses.

A. Background of the study

In learning English, there are four important language skills that students need to master, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these four skills, listening is considered one of the most essential skills because it becomes the foundation for developing other language abilities. Through listening, students can understand pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and meaning in spoken communication before they are able to speak, read, or write effectively. Therefore, listening plays a significant role in helping students acquire and use English in daily communication.

Listening is one of the skills that must comprehend in learning English. There are many ways to improve listening skill, one of them is using songs. Some people like to listen songs and it can be used to improve the listening skill. When listening songs, especially English songs unconsciously it learns the ears to can listen comprehensively and when there are in listening class, people who listen to the English songs can comprehend the meaning of the text in listening. (Listyaningsih, 2017).

However, many junior high school students still face difficulties in improving their listening skill. Students often have trouble understanding spoken English because native speakers usually speak too fast, use unfamiliar vocabulary, and have different pronunciations or accents. In addition, students are not accustomed to listening to English in their daily activities, causing them to lose concentration easily during listening exercises. Many students also feel anxious and lack confidence when they cannot catch the meaning of the audio they hear. These problems make listening activities difficult and less interesting for students.

Another major problem faced by students is the lack of motivation in learning listening. Many students think that listening is one of the most difficult English skills because they must understand words directly without seeing the text. As a result, students easily feel frustrated and lose interest when they fail to understand the audio. Some students also consider listening activities boring because the learning process is often monotonous and less interactive. In addition, the limited use of attractive media in the classroom makes students less enthusiastic about participating in listening lessons. Low motivation can negatively affect students' attention, participation, and achievement in learning listening.

Another problem found in junior high school is the use of conventional teaching methods in listening classes. Teachers sometimes only ask students to listen to recordings from textbooks without using interesting learning media. As a result, students become passive and less motivated to practice listening. The classroom atmosphere may also become monotonous because students only focus on answering questions after listening to the audio. Consequently, students' listening achievement is still low and they are less enthusiastic about participating in listening activities.

Considering these problems, teachers need to find effective and interesting strategies to improve students' listening skill and motivation. One of the strategies that can be used is employing media that are familiar and enjoyable for students, such as songs. Songs can create a fun and relaxing learning atmosphere, increase students' motivation, and help them understand English pronunciation and vocabulary more easily. Listening to songs also allows students to practice listening repeatedly without feeling pressured, making the learning process more enjoyable.

One type of song that is popular among students is pop songs. Pop songs are widely liked by teenagers because they have simple lyrics, attractive melodies, and relatable themes. The researcher specifically selected popular songs because they are familiar to most junior high school students and can increase students' motivation

during listening activities. Compared with unfamiliar listening materials, popular songs are more enjoyable and encourage students to pay greater attention to the learning process. In addition, popular songs usually contain authentic English expressions that help students improve their vocabulary, pronunciation, and listening comprehension in a more meaningful context. The use of pop songs in English learning can help students improve their listening comprehension because students tend to pay more attention and become more interested in the learning process. Through pop songs, students can learn pronunciation, vocabulary, expressions, and sentence patterns in a more natural and enjoyable way.

Several previous studies have shown that pop songs are effective in improving students' listening skill and motivation. According to (Sari, 2023), songs can provide authentic language input and create an innovative learning environment for language instruction (Nadiyya & Suryadi, 2024), explain that listening is the process of giving full attention to spoken language in order to understand meaning and information. In addition, (Simanjuntak & Uswar, 2021), state that listening involves several processes, including hearing, understanding, responding, and remembering information. Previous research conducted by (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021), also found that the use of English songs can improve students' listening ability and increase their motivation in learning English. Furthermore, (Ahmadpour, 2018) explains that appropriate listening strategies can help students understand spoken language more effectively and improve their confidence during listening activities. Therefore, pop songs are considered an effective strategy to help students overcome difficulties in listening activities and increase their motivation in learning English.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study about the use of pop songs as a strategy to improve students' listening skill. The teachers need to find a suitable method to make a conducive learning which makes students can pay attention to the learning process. There are a lot of methods that can make the listening classes enjoyable. One of them is using song to improve students' listening skill. The researcher hopes that the use of pop songs

can help students learn listening more effectively, increase their motivation, and create a more enjoyable learning atmosphere in English classes.

The way to improve students' listening skill is listening to English songs (Listyaningsih, 2017). Using songs can build positive atmosphere and also relax students' mind (Putri et al., 2018a). The use of the songs can give motivation and develop students' interest in listening. That means, by using songs and music can stimulate positive encouragement for everyone who learns languages (Kartawijaya & Yelnim, 2021). Moreover, in this modern era, many genres of songs are present. A teacher can choose the right and suitable songs to be given as stimulation medium for listening class. A songs is a medium that can be used in improving listening skill because nowadays, we can find songs everywhere and use it to train our ears (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021). Listening to English songs can be the beginning to stimulate the brain to recognize words in English. Then, after some practices, the brain will absorb some new words and this can be used to improve the other skills such as speaking and writing (Ilyosovna, 2020).

The use of pop songs provides authentic input and increases students' interest (*The Power of English Music*, 2024), making it a powerful and innovative tool for language instruction (Sari, 2023). Listening is the process of giving one's whole attention to the person speaking and making an effort to decipher the significance of what one has heard. (Nadiyya & Suryadi, 2024), Listening, attending, understanding, responding, and remembering are the five steps that listeners take to process the information they hear (Simanjuntak & Uswar, 2021). Based on the research, the researcher sought for related studies to strengthen the credibility of this research.

According to Solehudin's research, how often and how well students listen is related to how good they are listeners. Listening to English music regularly has a strong correlation with the participants' hearing abilities, according to research conducted by Pesawaran during the 2016–2017 academic year. This demonstrates that making it a habit to listen to English songs has a large positive link and contributes significantly to one's listening abilities.) (p.685)

There are many ways or alternative methods and techniques for teaching English as a foreign language, especially listening. One of them is the technique in which the teacher uses the English songs in teaching and learning process. The songs which are presented to the students can entertain them and avoid them from getting bored. The writer tried to observe the effectiveness of songs used as the instructional media to teach students in order to have English proficiency better. (Ikawati, 2023).

Based on previous research, many researchers such as (Listyaningsih, 2017), (Putri et al., 2018a), and (Simanjuntak & Uswar, 2021) found that many students have difficulty understanding spoken English, especially when listening to native speakers. These problems include limited vocabulary, lack of concentration, and difficulty in recognizing pronunciation or connecting sounds. In addition, students also often feel bored and unmotivated due to a lack of motivation during traditional listening classes that only use textbooks or recordings from exams. This situation causes students' listening comprehension scores to be very low and reduces their enthusiasm for practicing listening.

A similar situation was also found at SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang. Based on initial observations and informal interviews with English teachers, eighth-grade students have low levels of listening skills and comprehension. They often have difficulty grasping and understanding the meaning of English audio, especially when the speaker talks fast or uses unfamiliar words. The lack of interesting learning media also makes it difficult for students to focus and causes them to lose focus easily during listening activities. Teachers still rely on monotonous listening exercises, such as those from textbooks or dialogues that are played repeatedly, without creative media that can motivate students.

To overcome this problem, the researcher proposes the use of popular songs as a learning medium in listening classes. With popular songs, this learning method will make students enjoy themselves more, relax, and have fun. Popular

songs are authentic materials that contain English used in real life, various accents, and natural pronunciation. The rhythm and repetition in song help students recognize vocabulary and increase comprehension. This method also allows students to practice listening in a fun way, both inside and outside the classroom. Through this method, researcher hopes that students' listening skills will increase significantly.

The researcher is interested in using this method because song is universal and appealing to teenagers. Most students are accustomed to listening to English songs in their daily lives. Nowadays, the majority of them are very familiar with social media, which allows them to easily access song such as pop song on YouTube, Spotify, or TikTok.

Therefore, using English songs in the classroom can connect students' interests with the learning process. In addition, previous studies (Kartawijaya & Yelnim, 2021) ; (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021) have proven that the use of English songs can increase student motivation and make learning more effective. That is why researcher is interested and believe that listening to popular song will be an effective and enjoyable alternative to increase students' listening skills.

B. Formulation of the Problem

In this study, the researcher formulated the problems into the following question:

Was it effective to use popular songs to increase students' listening skill at the eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang?

C. Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to find out whether or not it is effective to use *popular songs* to increase students' listening skill at the eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang.

D. Significance of the study

This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits to various parties regarding the use of song as a medium to enhance students' listening skill.

1. The Researcher Herself

The researcher gained valuable experience in conducting this scientific research, from designing the study, collecting and analyzing existing data, to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of using song in training listening skills. This research will increase researcher's knowledge and understanding of the role of songs as an attractive and effective pedagogical tool in improving specific language skills, especially listening comprehension. This research is a requirement for completing a bachelor's degree and contributes to the development of researcher as competent educators in the future.

2. Teachers

Educators, especially English teachers, obtained direct evidence of how effective it is to use innovative and non-traditional teaching methods, involving music or songs, to overcome common problems in listening education. The study offers a practical solution to address student boredom and lack of motivation often associated with conventional listening exercises; the results can serve as a reference and guide for teachers to integrate song into their classroom activities. It also makes listening practice more varied, fun, engaging, and motivating for students.

3. Students

Students in the target class experienced a significant improvement in their listening comprehension skill, including the ability to recognize key concepts, specific details, vocabulary, and phonetic elements (pronunciation, stress, and intonation). Because this approach integrated their specific hobby (song) into the learning process, it was enjoyable, less intimidating, and more inspiring. Outside of class, students can practice independently and improve their listening

skills by using song as an engaging and accessible resource.

4. Other Researchers

The results added factual information to the corpus of literature already available on language learning and the application of real items (such as song) to receptive skill instruction. This study can be a useful guide and starting point for further research on the following topics:

- a. Examining how various song genres or styles affect particular language abilities.
- b. Examining the relationship between language learning and song interest.
- c. Creating and evaluating fresh multimedia-based learning frameworks for teaching listening.

E. Hypotheses of the Study

1. (H_a): It was effective to use *popular song* to increase students' listening skill at the eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang
2. (H_o): It was not effective to use *popular song* to increase students' listening skill at the eighth grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Palembang.

F. Criteria for Testing the Hypotheses

In this study, regulating hypotheses means accepting or rejecting them. The researcher used a t-test. If the obtained t-value is equal to or higher than the t-table, the researcher hypothesis (H_o) should be dismissed. In other words, if the t-table is higher than the t-observe, the null hypothesis can be accepted, and the researcher hypothesis should be rejected.

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