

## **THE EFFECT OF LISTENING TO ENGLISH SONGS ON STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY**

**Mayla Karamillah<sup>1</sup>, Hamiddin<sup>2</sup>, Dzul Fikri<sup>3</sup>**

University of Islam Malang<sup>1,2,3</sup>

maylakaramillah@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>, hamiddin79@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>, dzulfik@yahoo.co.id<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:** Vocabulary is the basic language aspects that function as building the blocks of a language and it is important to develop vocabulary. Still, vocabulary is too vast to be learned only at classroom and exposing students to English outside the classroom activities are an effective method to develop vocabulary. English songs are an authentic source of English that is commonly exposed to students. Therefore, this study aims to identify the effect of students' frequency in listening to English songs on their vocabulary mastery. This study was implemented using an experimental quantitative research design using an online questionnaire delivered via Google Form to 40 fourth-semester students of the English department at University of Islam Malang. The data in this study are analyzed using paired sample t-test to measure the difference of pre-test and post-test scores after the treatment. The result concludes that listening to English songs has a positive effect on students' vocabulary mastery. The data shows that the mean score of vocabulary mastery after a week of treatment using English songs is higher compared to the first vocabulary mastery test before the treatment. The mean score is increased by 3.812 points with a very significant value of 0.008 which is significant at 0.01 and considered to be very significant. Therefore, the result confirms the hypothesis alternative that stated listening to English songs has an impact on students' vocabulary mastery. It is suggested for future studies to conduct more study on the effect of other aspects in songs such as tempo, genre to vocabulary mastery for deeper understanding of the effect of specific types of songs on vocabulary development.

**Key Words:** English Entertainment, Benefits, Language Acquisition

## **INTRODUCTION**

Vocabulary is fundamental in the use of language; as learning and the mastery of any language skill is determined by the mastery of vocabulary. Expressing the meaning with no vocabulary is impossible while conveying the meaning without correct structure is still possible, this indicates that the presence of vocabulary is

essential to language effectively. Vocabulary holds special place among language components as words and meaning are the basis of language, thus, learning of new words is vital in language learning (Schmitt, 2010). Vocabulary is the most essential element in every language and mastering vocabulary comes first before the learners continue to learn four English skills (Janitra, 2020). Learning vocabulary based on (Nation 2001) is substantial to the acquisition of foreign language. It is almost impossible to communicate without the required vocabulary.

Learning vocabulary is not only about understand the meaning of a word but also knowing its spelling, pronunciation, collocations and relevance (Nation, 2001). According to Schmitt, (2010), instead of learning all aspects of word knowledge instantaneously, it is important that some aspects being acquired before others Explicit learning activities. Exercises infrequent exposures to L2 vocabulary, are known to be very effective for learning successfully and memorization of new words (Schmitt, 2008). According to Nation (2006) knowing 6000 to 7000 common and word families to comprehend spoken English and 8000 to 9000 word families to comprehend written language material. Van Zeeland & Schmitt (2010) suggested that understanding 3,000-word families might be enough to understand spoken language, it is indicating that most learners in the (EFL) context have difficulties learning 3,000 words let alone near 8,000 or 9,000 of vocabulary size.

This signifies that finding new ways to fill the needs of foreign and second language vocabulary development is necessary. Attempting to learn vocabulary through exposure to large amounts of language input in various types of oral and written material might offers more potential to increase vocabulary development (Webb & Nation, 2017). English language development in Indonesia is still considered as a foreign language, therefore, the basic ability needed to master this language is by recognizing, understanding and knowing the meanings of English words. Major problems regarding Indonesian students regarding to English vocabulary teaching and learning is classroom-limited activity, vocabulary is too vast

to be learnt only within the classroom activity that is limited to context, time and experience. In this case it is necessary to develop learners' autonomy that enable the learners to learn vocabulary unbound by the limitation of classroom. According to Benson (2001), learner autonomy is the capability to effectively set one's own personal study. Based on Nunan (2000), self-directed learner to learns independently on classroom, teacher or learning material. Thanasoulas (2000) also share common conclusions that an autonomous learner is an individual who can independently choose, aims and purposes; able to set learning goals; selecting materials, learning methods and tasks which then implement those choices and purposes in executing the tasks, and can conduct independent learning evaluation criteria for one's work. According to Tuan (2011),

Learner autonomy is a good aid for students in learning, it provides the learner with privileges such as motivation, more lasting influence, enhances the learner to master the basic skills required for long-term learning through acquisition of language. Language acquisition is the result of a subconscious process that requires comprehensible input of meaningful exposure in the target language (Krashen, 1987). According to Krashen, the best method of language acquisition is through meaningful input in low anxiety situations, which can be achieved by exposing students to the language they want to hear or are curious about. In his theory of "Narrow listening", Krashen (1996) stated that repeated listening to the learners' interest at their leisure in a familiar context makes the language input more comprehensive.

In this study, Krashen's theory is related to the acquisition of the English language from repeated exposure through English songs. English songs allow the acquirer of language to get comprehensible input by listening to their favourite songs repeatedly in their leisure time. From this exposure to the target language, the learners are expected to have vocabulary growth. One potential language inputs is songs, listening has the potential to contribute in L2 vocabulary development (Vidal, 2011). According to Maneshi (2017) Songs is a potentially valuable resource for vocabulary

learning, as they can provide large quantities of language input that gathered through repetitive conversation with music that makes the listener enjoy the language input process. Moreover “song-stuck in-my-head phenomenon” which is unconsciously repeated in the listener's head make songs to be an effective source of input for vocabulary learning retention.

In regards to the important role of L2 vocabulary acquisition, the studies on how vocabulary is taught have recently received significant attention from researchers. There are many studies that aims to study L2 vocabulary acquisition autonomously, for instance, subsidiary acquisition of vocabulary through listening by Van-Zeeland and Schmitt (2013) which elaborates on vocabulary acquisition but did not directly implement songs in learning. There are many studies that indicates the potency of using English songs on vocabulary mastery. For instance, studies on student reports and instructors' experiences in Kerekes (2015). revealed many profits of using songs for teaching material for the second language (L2) input. Lestari and Hardiyanti (2020) identified that the participants prefer the slow beat tempo of songs to get a clearer understanding of the vocabulary from words used in the songs.

Moreover, students' retention is improved due to the exposure of authentic material and supported by the presence of feelings, emotion and the sense of enjoyable atmosphere created in the application of the songs. Furthermore, a study by Kaukonen (2016) shows that the participants find the perceive the use of music as a positive thing to be used as teaching material. But students' interest in music is not always necessary for them to enjoy music as learning material in the classroom. A survey of international language teachers' use of songs in classrooms shows that teachers applies songs to exercise comprehension in listening and introduce new vocabulary more often while developing an enjoyable learning atmosphere (Tegge, 2018). Abbott (2002) stated that lyrical characteristics of songs might assist retention when learning a new language. Therefore, knowing the importance of listening to

English songs on vocabulary mastery, this study aims to identify the effect of students' frequency in listening to English songs on their vocabulary mastery.

## **METHOD**

In designing the research approach, the researcher experimental research with one group pretest and posttest research design. The data collected from 3rd-semester students which analyzed quantitatively using the statistic package for social science (SPSS). The treatment is done in a week, one day pretest for about 10-30 minutes and continued to treatment for 7 days by taking notes on how long and how many English songs they listen every day and finalized by posttest for another 10-30 minutes in the end of the week. the researcher to conduct this research on 40 students of 4th grade from the University of Islam Malang especially from the English department as English students have stronger tendency to listen to English songs.

The data collected using the notes written by students based on the questionnaire about frequency of listening to English songs as well as pretest and posttest of vocabulary mastery. The questionnaire about listening frequency is adapted from Dewi (2019) about frequency in watching English movies to listening to English songs. The vocabulary mastery test is in the form of standardized web-based test at [www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/english-level-test/vocabulary](http://www.oxfordonlineenglish.com/english-level-test/vocabulary) that consist of 40 questions. The researcher analyzes the data using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 21. The collected data was then processed into SPSS to know the result of descriptive statistics test using paired sample t-test to measure the significant difference between vocabulary mastery test before and after the treatment and frequency on listening to English songs. The result of this study is presented in deliberation with the result from previous studies and related theories.

## FINDINGS

The result of this study aims to answer the research question whether listening to English songs have the effect on students' vocabulary mastery. The results of the study are presented as follows:

Here is the result of students' vocabulary mastery presented in the following descriptive statistic in paired sample t-test to measure the different mean between the score before and after the treatment.

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	POSTWORD	61,3750	40	16,26060	2,57103
	PREWORD	57,5625	40	18,32302	2,89712

Figure 4.1: statistical data of pretest and posttest in vocabulary mastery

The result indicated that the mean score of pretests for vocabulary mastery is 57.562 while the mean of post-test is 61.375. The data above signifies that the mean score of posttest after one week of treatment on listening to English songs is better than the pretest score before the treatment. Moreover, the researcher also includes the significance of the paired sample correlation which support the result of the study.

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	POSTWORD & PREWORD	40	,882	,000

Figure 4.2: correlation data of pretest and posttest in vocabulary mastery

The data signifies that the paired samples of pretest and posttest are positively and significantly correlated with the correlation value of 0.882 and significant value of 0.000 which is less than 0.01 and signify that both samples are significant at 0.01.

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	POSTWORD - PREWORD	3,81250	8,64150	1,36634	1,04881	6,57619	2,790	39	,008

Figure 4.3: paired sample t-test of pretest and posttest in vocabulary mastery

The study indicates that the post-test mean score was 3.812 points higher from the pretest score with a standard deviation of 8.64150 and t value = 2.790, the paired sample t-test of both variables are significant at Sig = 0.008 which is less than 0.01. The result indicates that music has positive influence on vocabulary mastery.

## HYPOTHESIS TESTING

In answering the research problem, the researcher needs to calculate whether the result confirms the hypothesis or not. Therefore, the points out the hypothesis along with the null hypothesis as follows.

1. Null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>)  
Listening to English songs have no effect on students in vocabulary mastery.
2. Alternative hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>)  
Listening to English songs have an effect on students in vocabulary mastery.

IMB SPSS 2.1 was used to measure the data, from paired sample t-test analysis, it is indicated that there is an increase of vocabulary mastery mean score of 3.812 after a week of treatment with a significance value of 0.008 and significant at 0.01. According to concepts of hypothesis in SPSS calculation:

- a. H<sub>0</sub> accepted and H<sub>1</sub> rejected if N.Sig > 0.05 ( $\alpha=5\%$ )
- b. H<sub>0</sub> rejected and H<sub>1</sub> accepted if N.Sig < 0.05 ( $\alpha=5\%$ )

According to the result, the N.Sig 0.008 clarified that H<sub>1</sub> is accepted which concludes that N.Sig >5%, where H<sub>1</sub> is confirmed and H<sub>0</sub> was rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that H<sub>1</sub> as the alternative hypothesis saying that, "Listening to

English songs have an effect on students in their vocabulary mastery.”, answered the research problem.

## **DISCUSSION**

The analysis of this study presents a clear answer to the research question. that indicated listening to English songs in a week-long have a positive effect students' vocabulary mastery shown by the score of post-tests that is higher than pretests. This finding is congruent with the finding of the study conducted by Tomczak & Lew (2019) which also found that English songs have positive impact on teaching multi word vocabulary. Additionally, the researcher also managed to confirm the positive correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and exposure to English songs which strengthen the research finding.

Moreover, hypothesis testing also confirms that there is an effect of using English songs on vocabulary mastery that confirms the hypothesis alternative and prove that the null hypothesis is rejected. this is in line with the statement of Maneshi (2017) that stated listening to songs in an extent amount of time helps the students to develops vocabulary by memorizing frequent repetition of words in a song. Another study by Hardiansyah (2020) also supports that vocabulary have positive effect on vocabulary mastery where he finds the development of students' retention to the exposure of authentic material supported with positive feelings and an enjoyable atmosphere in the use of songs in the classroom. Kaukonen (2016) also found that the students learn new vocabulary in their free time by listening to English songs. From the finding and discussion, the researcher found that listening to English songs both in free time or in classroom activity has a positive impact on students' vocabulary mastery.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The researcher concludes the result based on the problems of the research. According to the data in the finding and discussion with previous and related studies, the researcher found that listening in English songs has a positive impact on students' vocabulary mastery. This is shown in the data that one week of treatment using English songs managed to improve the mean score of vocabulary mastery by 3.812 points with strong significance of 0.008 using paired sample t test. Thus, the score of post-tests is higher than pretest before treatment of listening to English songs. Therefore, the result confirms the hypothesis alternative that confirms listening to English songs have an impact in students' vocabulary mastery.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

According to the conclusions, the researcher proposes suggestions for the reader as follows.

For the students, it is suggested to listen to English songs not merely for entertainment, but also use it to memorize and learn new vocabulary contained within the songs.

For the lecturer, it is suggested to encourage students to learn vocabulary in their free time as vocabulary is too vast to learn only at school and there are many fun ways to autonomously learn vocabulary, one of them is listening to songs.

For the next researcher, it is suggested to conduct the do more study about the effect of pace or tempo, the genre of music to vocabulary mastery to gain a deeper understanding of the effect of a certain type of music on vocabulary development.

## REFERENCE

- Janitra, T. I., (2020) Exploring Autonomous and Self-Regulation in Vocabulary learning. *Journal of Education and Learning*, Vol. 15 (28) 2020.  
[riset.unisma.ac.id/Index.php/jp3/article/view/9774](http://riset.unisma.ac.id/Index.php/jp3/article/view/9774).
- Kaukonen, S., (2016). Music and Learner Autonomy in EFL Classroom. *Depository JYK. University of Jyväskylä*. 54 (1).
- Kerekes, E. (2015). Using songs and lyrics in out-of-class learning. In D. Nunan, & J. C.
- Krashen, S.D. (1987). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Prentice-Hall International, 1987.
- Krashen, S.D. (1988). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Prentice-Hall International, 1988.
- Krashen, S.D. (1996). The Case of Narrow Listening. *System*, 24 (1)  
[doi:10.1016/S0346-251X\(96\)00063-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(96)00063-2)
- Lestari & Hardiyanti, (2020) Vocabulary Learning Autonomy through Incorporation of English Songs: Indonesian EFL Students' Perspectives, *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies* – Vol 26(2): 94 – 104  
<http://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2020-2602-07>
- Maneshi, N., (2017). Incidental Vocabulary Learning through Listening to Songs. Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository . 4783.  
<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/4783>
- Xia, X. (2018). An effective way to memorize new words—lexical chunk. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 8(11), 1494-1498.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Nation, I. S. P. (2006). How large a vocabulary is needed for reading and listening? *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63,1 –12.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.63.1.59>.

- Nation, I. S., & Webb, S. A. (2011). Researching and analyzing vocabulary. Heinle: Cengage Learning
- Nunan, D. (2000). Autonomy in Language Learning. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Schmitt, N. (2010) Researching Vocabulary: A Vocabulary Research Manual, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tegge, F. (2018). Pop songs in the classroom: Time-filler or teaching tool? ELT Journal, 72, 274–284. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccx071>
- Thanasoulas, D. (2000). What is learner autonomy and how can it be fostered? [http://iteslj.org/Articles/Thanasoulas\\_Autonomy.html](http://iteslj.org/Articles/Thanasoulas_Autonomy.html).
- Tuan, L.T. (2011). An Empirical Research on Self-learning Vocabulary. Theory and Practice in Language Studies, Vol. 1, No. 12, pp. 1688-1695, December 2011© 2011 ACADEMY PUBLISHER Manufactured in Finland. doi:10.4304/tpls.1.12.1688-1695
- Vidal, K. (2011). A comparison of the effects of reading and listening on incidental vocabulary acquisition. Language Learning, 61(1), 219-258. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9922.2010.00593.x
- Webb, S., & Nation, P. (2017). How vocabulary is learned. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press

Malang, September 1<sup>st</sup> , 2021

**Advisor I,**

**Dr. Hamiddin, S.Pd., M.Pd.**  
**NIP/NPP: 122005197932162**