

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING ENGLISH POP SONGS TOWARD STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT AT THE SEVENTH GRADE OF SMP NEGERI 38 PALEMBANG

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## Abstract

*The objectives of this research were to know (1) whether there was any significant improvement in students' listening comprehension achievement after being taught by using English pop songs at the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang; (2) whether there was any significant mean difference in students' listening comprehension achievement between the students who are taught by using English pop songs and those who are not. The research design of this research was a quasi-experimental design. The population of this research was all the seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang. Sample of this research was class 7.1 as the control group, which consisted of 34 students, and class 7.2 as the experimental group, which consisted of 34 students. Technique of collecting the data used in this research was pre-test and post-test. Then, the data were analyzed by using paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test through SPSS v.25 programs. The result of paired sample t-test in the experimental group showed that  $t_{obtained}$  was  $19,380 > t_{table}$  ( $df = 33$ ) at the significance level of 0,05 was 2,034. It means that there was a significant improvement in students' listening comprehension achievement after being taught by using English pop songs. Furthermore, the result of the independent sample t-test showed that  $t_{obtained}$  was  $7,858 > t_{table}$  ( $df = 66$ ) at the significance level of 0,05 was 1,996. It means that there was a significant mean difference between the experimental group and the control group. The research findings showed that teaching listening using English pop songs was effective in improving students' listening comprehension achievement at the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang.*

## Keywords:

Efektivitas  
Lagu Pop Inggris  
Pemahaman Mendengarkan

## Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui (1) apakah ada peningkatan yang signifikan pada nilai pemahaman mendengarkan siswa setelah diajar dengan menggunakan lagu-lagu pop Bahasa Inggris di kelas 7 SMP Negeri 38 Palembang; (2) apakah ada perbedaan yang signifikan pada nilai rata-rata pemahaman mendengarkan siswa antara siswa yang diajar dengan menggunakan lagu-lagu pop Bahasa Inggris dan yang tidak. Desain penelitian dalam penelitian ini adalah quasi-experimental design. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah seluruh siswa kelas 7 SMP Negeri 38 Palembang. Selanjutnya, sampel dalam penelitian ini adalah kelas 7.1 sebagai kelompok kontrol yang terdiri dari 34 siswa, dan kelas 7.2 sebagai kelompok eksperimen yang terdiri dari 34 siswa. Kemudian, teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pre-test dan post-test. Selain itu, analisis data menggunakan paired sample t-test dan

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independent sample t- test melalui program SPSS v.25. Hasil uji-t sampel berpasangan pada kelompok eksperimen menunjukkan bahwa  $t_{\text{diperoleh}} = 19,380 > t_{\text{tabel}} (df=33)$  pada signifikansi 0,05 adalah 2,304. Artinya ada peningkatan yang signifikan terhadap nilai pemahaman mendengarkan siswa setelah diajar dengan menggunakan lagu- lagu pop Bahasa Inggris. Selanjutnya, hasil uji-t sampel independen menunjukkan bahwa  $t_{\text{diperoleh}} = 7,858 > t_{\text{tabel}} (df=66)$  pada signifikansi 0,05 adalah 1,996. Artinya ada perbedaan yang signifikan pada nilai rata-rata antara kelompok eksperimen dan kontrol. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengajaran mendengarkan dengan menggunakan lagu-lagu pop Bahasa Inggris efektif dalam meningkatkan nilai pemahaman mendengarkan siswa di kelas 7 SMP Negeri 38 Palembang.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

English is an international language, which is commonly used by all the countries in the world. According to Patel and Jain (2008, p. 6), English is one of the most widely used international languages. Furthermore, Harmer (2007, p. 1) states that English is an international language that is widely used for communication between people of different languages. It means that English is a means of communication that is used internationally by people to communicate with others to transfer ideas, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, or messages.

In Indonesia, English has an important role in education. The Indonesian government emphasizes that English is one of the compulsory subjects taught from Junior High School to University. In addition, in learning English, there are four skills that teachers have to teach and students have to learn. These skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Harmer (2007, p. 265), these skills are divided into two parts, namely productive and receptive skills. Productive skill is the term for speaking and writing, skills where students actually have to produce language themselves, while receptive skill is a term used for reading and listening, skills where meaning is extracted from the discourse. From these skills, the researcher only focused on listening skills for this research.

Listening is a skill that should be completed with comprehension. Hamouda (2013, p. 117) defines listening is a process that involves understanding the speaker's accent or pronunciation, the speaker's grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of meaning. Furthermore, Helgesen (2012, p. 24) defines listening is the activity of making sense of what people hear. This activity should be in active and purposeful processing. Additionally, Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011, p. 978) defines listening is the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear. In addition, Rost (2013, p. 279) defines listening is the mental process of constructing meaning from spoken input. It can be concluded that listening skill is an active process in which the listeners pay attention to the speaker and understand what the speaker is saying.

Listening is one of the most important skills in learning English. It is important because listening is a basic skill in learning English. As stated by Hamouda (2013, p. 113) that listening is one of the fundamental skills in learning English. Additionally, Brown (2006, p. 247) states listening is the major component in learning English. It means that listening skill is the first step in learning English.

If students are able to achieve listening skills well, all other skills will follow. Unfortunately, most students are not able to achieve listening skills well. It is because students face a lot of problems when they listen to the English language. According to Hamouda (2013,

p. 113), the results of the study showed that unclear pronunciation, speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, the different accents of speakers, lack of concentration, anxiety, and bad quality of recording were the major listening comprehension problems encountered by EFL Saudi learners. Furthermore, Nadhira (2021, p. 186), the findings of the research showed that the problems in listening skills faced by students include unfamiliar words, rate of speech, unfamiliar accent, unclear pronunciation, bad quality of the recording, and inadequate facility. Additionally, based on the interview with the English teacher of SMP

Negeri 38 Palembang (Yessi Meliasari, S.Pd, Personal Communication, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022) that listening was a skill that felt difficult to be mastered by students. It was because students have limited vocabulary, lack of concentration, the different accents of speakers, unclear pronunciation, the students' anxiety, and speed of the speaker. Furthermore, students did not actively participate in listening learning and students did not show high motivation in listening learning. Then, the learning media used by the teacher was monotonous and not interesting. In addition, another factor was the lack of facilities at the school. SMP Negeri 38 Palembang does not yet have supporting facilities such as a language laboratory and loudspeakers.

English songs are known as one of the learning media that can improve students' listening skills and overcome students' listening problems. It has been proven by many researchers that the use of English songs was effective to improve students' listening skills. Furthermore, English songs are believed can reduce students' anxiety, foster students' interest, and motivate students to learn English. English Songs can also make the class more fun. Shen (2009, p. 90) argues that using English songs in the classroom can create a pleasant classroom atmosphere, reduce students' anxiety, foster students' interest, and motivate students to learn English. Students consider English songs as part of entertainment rather than work, therefore learning English through songs is fun and enjoyable. Moreover, using English songs in the classroom encourages the students to learn actively. As stated by Solihat and Utami (2014, p. 89) that using English songs in the classroom can make students become active. The students have to explore and find out more information of the material by themselves in individuals. And also, using English songs in the classroom can help students concentrate more on the material they are learning (Griffie, 2001, p. 5). In addition, learning English through songs can improve students' vocabulary and students' English pronunciation (Listiyarningsih, 2017, p. 46-47). Additionally, there are many genres of songs that can be used in the classroom, one of them is pop songs. Pop songs are often addressed to students since pop songs have a nice rhythm, tone, and lyrics. As stated by Xiao (2013, p. 18), pop songs have beautiful melodies and lyrics. Besides that, English pop songs can touch their heart and express their feelings. Through English pop songs, the researcher can meet the challenges of teenage needs in the classroom.

Therefore, related to the explanations above, the researcher intended to conduct experimental research to know whether using English pop songs is effective in improving students' listening comprehension achievement at the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang. Thus, the title of this research was *"The Effectiveness of Using English Pop Songs Toward Students' Listening Comprehension Achievement at the Seventh Grade of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang"*.

According to the explanation above, the research questions of this research were as follows:

- 1) Was there any significant improvement in students' listening comprehension achievement after being taught by using English pop songs at the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang?
- 2) Was there any significant mean difference in students' listening comprehension achievement between the students who are taught by using English pop songs and those who are not?

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### a. Research Design

The research design used in this research was a non-equivalent control group design which belongs to a quasi-experimental research design. Then, the variables of this research were English pop songs as the independent variable and students' listening comprehension as the dependent variable.

### b. Population and Sample

The researcher decided all the seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 38 Palembang as populations, which consisted of 270 students. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to select the sample as the experimental group and control group. According to Sugiyono (2017, p. 85), purposive sampling technique is a technique that determined by certain considerations. Thus, the considerations used to select this sample, namely: (1) they are taught by the same English teacher, (2) the total of students are the same, and (3) based on a recommendation of the English teacher of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang. Then, Arikunto (2010, p. 112) states sample size for experimental research, if the subject is less than 100 people, all of them should be taken, if the subject is large or more than 100 people can be taken 10-15% or 20-25% or more. So, the sample of this research was class 7.1 as the control group, which consisted of 34 students and class 7.2 as the experimental group, which consisted of 34 students.

### c. Instrument of the Research

Instrument used in this research was a test. The test consisted of pre-test and post-test. Furthermore, the test used in this research was a written test in the form of gap-filling. The gap-filling is a test consisting of a portion of text with certain words removed, where the researcher asked the students to restore the missing words. In addition, each test consisted of 40 questions. The scores were given to the students who answered the question by filling in the blanks with the right words. One correct answer was given a score of 2,5.

#### d. Validity and Reliability Test

According to Fraenkel & Wallen (2009, p. 147), validity refers to how accurately an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. The validity of the test used in this research was content validity. In order to judge whether the instrument has content validity or not, the researcher asked some experts to express their opinion on the instrument of the test. The experts are people who know better in the field of this study, they were the English teachers of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang. The researcher asked the validator to assess the instrument by using the Likert Scale (Scale 1 to 4). After the instrument was validated by the validators, then it was analyzed. The results showed that most of the questions were very valid. Thus, these questions were appropriate for the listening test.

According to Creswell (2012, p. 159), reliability means that scores from an instrument are stable and consistent. In this research, the researcher checked a reliability test before applying the instrument to the experimental and control groups. The researcher conducted a trial of the instrument in different samples, namely: in the class of 7.3, which consisted of 34 students. After conducting a trial, the researcher used Cronbach Alpha Formula through SPSS v.25 programs to check the reliability of the test. The result of this research was 0.904. It can be concluded that the test was very high reliability.

#### e. Technique of Collecting the Data

Technique of collecting the data used in this research were pre-test and post-test in gap-filling form which is consisted of 40 questions. Pre-test and post-test contain the same test items only with different time allocations. The researcher used the English pop song of Bruno Mars with the title "Count On Me" for the pre-test and post-test. This song was chosen because the genre of this song is pop song and this song tells about a friendship which is closely related to the lives of junior high school teenagers. The purpose of pre-test was to know the students' listening comprehension achievement before the treatment was given. Meanwhile, the purpose of post-test was to know the students' listening comprehension achievement after the treatment was given.

#### f. Technique of Analyzing the Data

After collecting the data, the data was analyzed by using t-test through SPSS v.25 program. The researcher employed paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test.

### 3. DISCUSSIONS

#### 3.1 FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The researcher used t-test through SPSS v.25 programs to analyze the data. Before the calculated t-test, the researcher did normality and homogeneity tests first. The normality test is used to determine whether the data from the sample is normally distributed or not. To know the normality, the researcher used Shapiro-Wilk through SPSS v.25 programs by looking at the significance level. If the significance level is higher than 0,05. It means that the data is normally distributed. Furthermore, the homogeneity test is used to determine whether the data of pre-test and post-test in both experimental and control groups are homogeneous or not. To know the homogeneity, the researcher used descriptive statistics through SPSS v.25 programs by looking at the significance level. If the significance level is higher than 0,05. It means that the data is homogeneous. The results of normality and homogeneity of pre-test and post-test are described in Table 1.

**Table 1.** *Normality and Homogeneity of Pre-test and Post-test*

	Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)				Homogeneity	
	Experimental Group		Control Group		Statistic	Sig.
	Statistic	Sig.	Statistic	Sig.		
Pre-Test	0,973	0,547	0,982	0,825	1,058	0,307
Post-Test	0,978	0,700	0,972	0,532	3,870	0,053

Table 1 above presents the results of normality of pre-test and post-test in both experimental and control groups. The results of normality of pre-test and post-test in the experimental group and the control groups showed that all the significance level were higher than 0,05. It could be stated that the data were normally distributed. In addition, the results of homogeneity of pre-test and post-test also showed that all the significance level were higher than 0,05. It could be stated that the data were homogeneous. So, the data was qualified to be analyzed.

##### 3.1.1 Descriptive Analyses of Listening Test Results

##### 3.1.1.1 Descriptive Analyses of Pre-Test and Post-Test in the Experimental Group

The following table shows the results of pre-test and post-test in the experimental group.

**Table 2.** *The Results of Pre-Test and Post-Test in the Experimental Group*

Pre-Test	The Lowest Score	35
	The Highest Score	77,5
	Mean	57,794
Post-Test	The Lowest Score	62,5
	The Highest Score	95
	Mean	80,515

Based on Table 2, the mean of post-test in the experimental group (80,515) was higher than the mean of pre-test in the experimental group (57,794). It means that there was a significant improvement in students' listening comprehension achievement after being taught by using English pop songs.

### 3.1.1.2 Descriptive Analyses of Pre-Test and Post-Test in the Control Group

The following table shows the results of pre-test and post-test in the control group.

**Table 3.** *The Results of Pre-Test and Post-Test in the Control Group*

Pre-Test	The Lowest Score	25
	The Highest Score	80
	Mean	52,647
Post-Test	The Lowest Score	37,5
	The Highest Score	85
	Mean	61,838

Based on Table 3, the mean of post-test in the control group (61,838) was higher than the mean of pre-test in the control group (52,647). It means that there was improvement in control group, but not as significant as in experimental group.

### 3.1.2 Statistical Analyses of Listening Test Results

The researcher used t-test through SPSS v.25 programs to analyze the data. Paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test were applied in this research.

#### 3.1.2.1 Paired Sample T-Test

To answer research question number 1, the researcher used paired sample t-test in the experimental group. Paired sample t-test was used to find out whether the use of English pop songs improved the students' listening comprehension achievement at the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang. The statistical analysis of paired sample t-test in the experimental group was shown in presented Table 4 below.

**Table 4.** *Paired Sample T-Test in Experimental Group*

	t	df	Sig.	H <sub>0</sub>	H <sub>a</sub>
LCA	19,380	33	.000	Rejected	Accepted

Based on Table 4 above, it could be stated that there was a significant improvement in students' listening comprehension achievement after being taught by using English pop songs.

#### 3.1.2.2 Independent Sample T-Test

To answer research question number 2, the researcher used independent sample t-test. Independent sample t-test was used to see whether there was any significant mean difference between the experimental group and control group. The statistical analysis of independent sample t-test was shown in presented Table 5 below.

**Table 5.** *Independent Sample T-Test*

	t	df	Sig.	H <sub>0</sub>	H <sub>a</sub>
LCA	7,858	66	.000	Rejected	Accepted

Based on Table 5 above, It could be stated that there was a significant mean difference between the experimental group and the control group.

### 3.2 INTERPRETATIONS

There are several factors that might cause the improvement of students' listening comprehension achievement. The first is the selection of English songs that will be used in the experimental group. Choosing the right song can help the teachers to achieve their teaching goals. In selecting songs, the researcher chose English songs based on genre and closely related to the lives of junior high school teenagers. The genre of the songs used in this research was pop songs. Pop songs are often addressed to students since pop songs have a nice rhythm, tone, and lyrics. As stated by Xiao (2013, p. 18), pop songs have beautiful melodies and lyrics. Besides that, English pop songs can touch their heart and express their feelings. Second, using English pop songs in the classroom can help students concentrate more. As stated by Griffie (2001, p. 5), one of the benefits of using English pop songs is students can concentrate more on the material they are learning. Third, English songs are an excellent 'tool' to help students to learn English, more specifically English songs are believed can reduce students' anxiety, foster students' interest, and motivate students to learn English. English songs can also make the class more fun. Shen (2009, p. 90) argues that using English songs in the classroom can create a pleasant classroom atmosphere, reduce students' anxiety, foster students' interest, and motivate students to learn English. Students consider English songs as part of entertainment rather than work, therefore learning English through songs is fun and enjoyable. Fourth, teaching listening by using English pop songs encouraged the students to learn actively. As stated by Solihat and Utami (2014, p. 89) that using English pop songs in the classroom can make students become active. The students had to explore and find out more information of the material by themselves in individuals. Meanwhile, the teacher was a facilitator. The teacher was not active in explaining the material, but only explains the guideline of the material or helps the students when they get problems. Furthermore, the most important feature of songs is repetition. Listening to English songs can improve students' vocabulary. As stated by Listiyaningsih (2017, p. 47) that learning English through songs can improve students' vocabularies mastery. To improve vocabulary by listening to English songs, students can acquire it by remembering the vocabulary repeated in the song. Thus, the students got the new vocabulary and understood the lyrics of the song. In addition, listening to English songs can also improve students' English pronunciation. As stated by Listiyaningsih (2017, p. 46) that learning English through songs can help students improve their English pronunciation. While listening to the song, students can follow the singer's sound and practice pronouncing it immediately.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

### 4.1 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings, the researcher concluded that there was a significant improvement in students' listening comprehension achievement after being taught by using English pop songs. It can be seen from the mean of post-test in the experimental group was higher than the mean of pre-test in the experimental group. It was also supported by the result of paired sample t-test in the experimental group showed that  $t_{\text{obtained}}$  was higher than  $t_{\text{table}}$  ( $df = 33$ ) at the significance of 0,05 or sig. (2-tailed) lower than 0,05. Furthermore, there was a significant mean difference in students' listening comprehension achievement between the students who were taught by using English pop songs and those who were not. It can be seen from the mean of post-test in the experimental group was higher than the mean of post-test in the control group. It was also supported by the result of independent sample t-test showed that  $t_{\text{obtained}}$  was higher than  $t_{\text{table}}$  ( $df = 66$ ) at the significance level of 0,05 or sig. (2-tailed) lower than 0,05. So, it can be stated that teaching listening by using English pop songs was effective in improving students' listening comprehension achievement at the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 38 Palembang.

### 4.2 SUGGESTIONS

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher would like to suggest to the English teachers, the students, and the other researchers related to the study. First, the English teachers are suggested to use English pop songs as the learning media. Second, the students should have high motivation to practice their listening whether in class or at their home. It is because the more they practice, the better their listening comprehension will be. Third, the other researchers should be careful in selecting English pop songs that will be used in the classroom.

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