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Facilitating EFL Students' Learning Listening Subject through English Songs: The Audio-Lingual Method Perspectives

Sayit Abdul Karim^{1*}, Suryo Sudiro², Shifani Aisyah Putri³, Axel Syailendra⁴, Putri Lestari⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5} English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Business & Humanities

Universitas Teknologi Yogyakarta, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Jl. Siliwangi (Ringroad Utara), Jombor, Sleman, D.I. Yogyakarta 55285

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*Corresponding Author:

sayit.a.k@uty.ac.id

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Abstract: Listening skill is considered to be a challenging activity for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in the context of English language learning. The present article aims at discussing the utilization of English songs as one of the learning sources for learning listening skills for EFL learners from the perspective of the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM). A qualitative descriptive research design was applied to scrutinize how English songs benefit for EFL learners to facilitate their listening subject. The data were obtained from previous related research findings and documentation studies. Furthermore, it discusses the relationship between song and listening, song as media to facilitate listening skills, the reasons for why using the songs as the learning media, the implication of using the songs to improve listening skills, and the benefits of using English song as a learning media. Review literature shows that the utilization of English songs may improve students' listening skills and pronunciation over time. The ALM may assist learners in systematically learning the language by playing audio files. Students can comprehend brief and easy sentences when music is played in the background. English songs may assist learners in improving their listening skills and can be used for a variety of learning objectives. From the perspective of the ALM, English songs allow students to better understand the language being taught because it needs a high level of concentration as purposed by the ALM teaching and learning characteristics. In conclusion, from the perspective of ALM, English songs may bring positive contribution to the development of EFL students' listening skills for some reasons.



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INTRODUCTION

The English language is one of the most widely spoken by people, and learning English skills is important since it allows learners to interact successfully with other people from all over the world (Nishanthi, 2018). In the context of language teaching and learning in Indonesia, listening is one of the skills taught in schools ranging from primary to tertiary education level. According to Nurteteng *et al.*, (2018), listening skill plays

important rule as foundation and become the basic skill for EFL learners to expand other language skills and components.

However, listening is considered a difficult language skill for Indonesian EFL learners for some reasons, such as; they are not accustomed to hearing the native speakers' accents and pronunciation, and therefore, they find it difficult to comprehend the speakers' messages when they listen or communicate with native speakers of English (Hidayati, 2016; Jannah *et al.*, 2018; Ulfa, 2019). Therefore, EFL teachers need to create the appropriate learning materials, teaching strategies (Solihat & Utami, 2014) and approach the students in a great way, as well as to decide what teaching methods suit them (Karim, 2021) to make the learning more successful and enjoyable. Besides, learning and teaching are still conducted rationally in the absence of great learning resources, for instance, English videos, movies, YouTube, and other interesting sources in the available learning platforms. In addition, listening is significantly more difficult than most people believe (Mee, 1990).

The Audio-lingual Method (ALM), is a famous teaching English method in many countries, including Indonesia. It is also called as the aural-oral, and functional skills, which was formerly thought to be a scientific approach to language instruction. The ALM is assumed that the scientific approach to the study of language consisted of gathering instances of what speakers said. The theory says that students can comprehend brief and easy sentences when music is played in the background. It is stated that the collecting examples of what speakers uttered and analyzing them using the aspect of listening in the ALM. Therefore, in the ALM, the acquisition of the native language should be the same as learning of a foreign language.

English songs which are available on the learning platforms may be utilized by EFL teachers to facilitate and improve their students' listening skills. It is in line with the findings of Rakhmawati's, *et al.*, (2023), who state that videos as one of the media for learning English may be utilized to enhance students' listening ability. Students who learn the English language through songs could improve their listening scores when compared to those who do not utilize it. Moreover, in terms of what motivates students to learn, singing an English language song had the greatest link between enjoyableness and efficacy of all the activities (Green, 1993). Learners must comprehend the variety of languages and their styles as a vital aspect of social life to avoid misunderstandings in society.

Teachers may utilize the ALM to facilitate learners to learn English, especially to improve their listening skills. From the ALM perspective, language learning is a process of habit formation. Therefore, some classroom activities should be created to engage them with the target language. For instance, 1) to improve students' listening skills, teachers may provide English songs: students learn English from the native speakers' voices and more naturally within the context of situation and context of culture; 2) teachers ask students to complete the song's lyrics: students are requested to complete the song's lyrics by filling blanks with the missing words; 3) teachers use minimal pairs: students ask to differentiate the words sounds and pronounce them later on.

Different media may be utilized in listening, and the best media is one that can assist students in achieving their listening goals. According to Nurteteng *et al.* (2018), songs as a learning media can enhance learners' interest in learning English, particularly for listening, and teachers may teach them how to pronounce words correctly. English songs can be utilized by EFL learners as learning sources for learning to listen. Al-Farid (2008) confirms that utilizing songs to teach listening is beneficial and more engaging since the song is a genuine source language. The use of songs in English classroom practice may ignite EFL learners' learning participation (Karim, *et al.*, (2023). The student can use music whenever and wherever they want until they have a natural contact with English and love the process. As a result, music helps learners enhance their listening skills.

Several studies were conducted in connection with the utilization of songs to improve students' listening skills, for instance, a study conducted by Lestary & Seriadi (2019) who used songs to improve students' listening comprehension ability. They confirm that there is a need for incorporating technology into instructional content. As a result, the incorporation of music and songs into an instructional framework through technology gained learners' interest. The findings showed that the utilization of music in foreign language learning generates a nice environment in the classroom and makes it easier for teachers to convey the topic or material when songs are used in the learning process, particularly in listening classes.

Another study was carried out by Pratiwi (2018), who looked into the utilization of songs to enhance learning in English the classroom. The findings revealed that teachers wanted to explore incorporating music into their lessons to assist students in learning English. Learning English through song will make the classroom environment more favorable, and understand what they are learning. Students can comprehend brief and easy sentences when music is played in the background. Furthermore, for learners, learning which employs song in language learning not only expands their vocabulary but also enhances their grasp of English. It implies that a teacher can use music in the classroom to encourage students to enjoy learning English as a second language. To do this, teachers must create a vibrant learning atmosphere for their students so that they enjoy the process of learning English. Providing songs that are easy to remember and sung over and over again with students is the most effective technique for teaching listening.

Kahraman (2017), conducted a study to examine the utilization of songs in improving English listening comprehension. The results showed that the instructional media has a huge impact on the students' comprehension and EFL teacher need to select suitable songs for the classroom. The lower and quieter the instrumentation is, the easier it is to discern what is being played. It is possible that choosing acoustic and/or soft rock music is superior to choosing mainstream songs in terms of clarity and content.

Despite the plethora of studies conducted into the utilization of the English songs to improve students' listening skills, a study which focus on the contribution of English video from the perspective of Audio-Lingual Method in tertiary level of education are still very limited to the best of authors knowledge. For instance, the previous study

conducted by Jurayev (2022), only focused on audio and radio recorders materials in teaching English by using a method of teaching to master the target language. Meanwhile, Lengkoan (2017), conducted a study to examine English songs on the aspect of students' pronunciation, which is one of the components of listening skills. Another study conducted by Hidayati (2016), focused on the use of pop song to improve listening skill of secondary level of education, meanwhile the present study uses different types of English song genres.

The present study is worth conducting as it provides insight for EFL teachers on how English songs facilitate the EFL learners' success in their listening course subject, and to contribute the existing body of knowledge in English Language Teaching (ELT), especially listening skills.

THEORETICAL SUPPORT

A Brief on The Audio-Lingual Method

According to Freeman, (2000), After World War II, the Audio-Lingual Method of teaching English as a second language became well-known as the army's method. It was created as a counter-narrative to the grammar-translation approach to foreign language instruction. Since ancient times, grammar-translation has been used to instruct students, but the process was viewed as taking too long for students to be able to converse in the target language. It was the goal of the ALM to create rapid communication competence through the use of novel methods. From around 1947 to 1967, the Audio-Lingual approach was the most widely used way of teaching foreign languages in the United States.

A detailed overview of several frequent or typical procedures closely related to the Audio-lingual Method is provided by Freeman, (2000). They are as follows: 1) memorization of the dialogue. Learners memorize a beginning dialogue by imitating it and using it in role-playing situations; 2) build up in the reverse direction; 3) teacher divides a line into many pieces, and the students repeat each portion beginning at the last sentence, and adding each part in sequence, as the teacher did.

English songs as an alternative source of learning may help students improve their listening skills alongside pronunciation skills. This article aims to discuss the use of English songs as one of the learning sources for learning listening for EFL learners from the perspective of the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM). Furthermore, it reviews the relationship between song and listening skills, as listening is one of the important and most difficult elements in Audio Lingual Method, then how songs as media for learning can improve students' listening skills, the reasons why using the song as the learning media, followed by the implication of using the song as a media of learning and teaching to improve listening skill, the benefits of using English song as a learning media, and finally providing the conclusion and recommendation for the related parties.

METHOD

To delineate the utilization of English songs to facilitate students' listening skills from the perspective of ALM, the present study utilized a qualitative descriptive research

design. The data were obtained from several relevant previous studies and documentation studies which were further analysed qualitatively. The data were in the form of research reports and findings, as well as relevant documents. All data were gathered and reviewed thoroughly to find out the key points and relate to the nature of the current study. A literature review was used to elucidate the findings from the previous studies. Therefore, the present study reviews the relationship between songs and listening, songs as an instructional media to improve listening skills, and the reasons for why using songs as instructional media for learning to listen. Moreover, the classroom activities of using the song as instructional media for learning and teaching to facilitate students' learning listening subject, and the benefits of using English songs as a learning media are also discussed thoroughly. Finally, several necessary points are addressed in the conclusion part, as well as recommendations for EFL teachers, students, and the next researchers. This article provides a comprehensive discussion of utilizing English songs as instructional media in learning and teaching listening subjects and brings together the researchers' prior findings, and experts' insights, and links the current study to explain English songs as sources of learning English to facilitate EFL students' learning listening subject which in turn to increase students' listening ability.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Relationship Between Song and Listening

Literature review show that students who studied the English language and songs had a high association with their scores when compared to those who did not study songs. In terms of what motivates students, singing an English language song had the "greatest link between enjoyableness and efficacy of all the activities" (Green, 1993). According to Suyanto (2007), a song is a collection of words sung in a certain rhythm and tone. Music is developed with two goals; they are songs written for the sole goal of enjoyment and songs created for learning. Students study on the natural stretching and compacting of the stream of English speech through songs. According to Lems (2001), psychology, listening to music has also been shown to be a good way. Songs bring the often-overlooked feature of right brain exercises into the curriculum, allowing students to use different techniques to analyse and integrate the meaning of new sounds and structures (Purcell, 1992).

Hornby (1990) states that a song is a piece of music that is sung with words. In just a few rhymes, a song may teach us about vocabulary, culture, and grammar. On a hot, and monotonous day, songs can also provide a relaxing lesson. Songs can function as a variety of learning materials (Futonge, 2005). Furthermore, during the past two decades, the prospect of incorporating music in EFL class has been widely considered. It is taken into account because songs contain a wide range of linguistic values (Orlova, 2003).

According to Lynch (2008), three aspects contribute to music to listening comprehension,: 1) incorporation of new vocabulary, idioms, and expressions-grammar, vocabulary, and usage are all included; 2) singer's pronunciation and an accent-no native speaker pronounces or sings with the same accent. Learners may be exposed to an accent that is different from what they are used to hearing in context; 3) incorporation of new

grammatical and structural elements when it comes to the use of grammar, pronunciation, and other language characteristics in songs. This is something that teachers must prepare for.

The utilization of songs in learning and teaching English is still much needed. Students may get benefits a lot from the songs to enhance their vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, and grammar. Thus, the songs and listening comprehension have a very strong connection to each other in teaching and learning English.

Songs as Instructional Media to Improve Listening Skills

When learning the English language, one of the most important skills to be developed is listening comprehension. In the case of students who are not accustomed to hearing English songs, they will find it hard to comprehend the contents of a text. Therefore, students need to train their ear by listening to native speakers' voices on YouTube and other learning platforms to improve their pronunciation, and try to listen to songs very often. Lengkoan (2017), confirms that understanding how native English speakers speak is the great point to learn how to how to pronounce words correctly.

There are various methods to improve students' ability to listen, including trying to practice listening exercises regularly, learning about word pronunciation, practicing listening, and listening to English music. According to Jurayev (2022), EFL teachers must find suitable methods for teaching English and the utilization of audio has a great effect for foreign language teachers in facilitating and stimulating their students to master the target language. Listening to English music is one of the most effective ways to improve students' listening skills, and English music can help them enhance their listening skills. EFL teachers can apply an interesting method of teaching to present their teaching materials to their students so that they will enjoy learning. One of the alternative methods is the ALM (Abdul & Hijrah, 2013). Furthermore, learners who have practiced their listening for longer periods will find it easier to understand the meaning of words or expressions addressed by singers or narrators, for instance in the video on YouTube, and other learning platforms.

When studying the English language, especially listening skills, there are a variety of media available to assist students in improving their capacities to listen, such as videos, movies, and songs, to name a few. Songs as sources of learning English may enhance students' listening skills and increase listening comprehension (Listiyarningsih, 2017).

The Reasons Why Using Song as the instructional Media for Learning Listening

Review literature shows that there are several reasons why the utilization of English songs in English lesson are beneficial for students who learn English, especially listening skills, they are as follows: 1) English songs will motivate students to participate in listening activities because song may create an enjoyable, calm, and relax atmosphere; 2) English songs along with great music may bring immediate impact on the student's long-term memory; 3) Music's rhythmic component helps students recall more

vocabulary, and pronunciation; 4) English songs are an excellent source of genuine language, and it is a part of students' everyday life outside of the classroom. Even your starting students are likely to listen to music with English lyrics, and 5) Songs can help students connect with their teacher and classmates by breaking down barriers. Listiyaningsih (2017), states that through listening, learners may acquire decent pronunciation and learn many useful words, phrases, and sentences.

Other reasons why English songs are important media for learning and listening, namely: 1) Lyric-based music engages both sides of the brain, making it an effective learning aid; 2) Multiple intelligences support the utilization of music to teach a second language. Intelligence can be described as; the ability to understand, ability to interpret, ability to gain from experiences, Sheppard (2005); 3) Most lyrics require interpretation, and consistent practice can help with prediction and comprehension; 4) Songs' lyrics can be used to incorporate cultural characteristics into a lesson in a variety of ways and can be used to incorporate cultural nuances into a lesson; 5) Music may assist language learners in developing effective pronunciation skills. Learners are guided to speak in a native cadence through melodies and rhymes. When students learn new words through songs, they may be able to segment them more successfully. This could be especially useful in the early stages of language acquisition. Incorporating songs into a lesson is great and it's a great medium for enhancing listening skills.

Classroom Activities Using Song as Media for Learning and Teaching Listening Skills.

According to Sheppard (2007), one of the most significant language talents that humans have is the ability to translate the meaning of a word by how it sounds. The experts believe that there are three stages of learning namely 1) recognize words, 2.) pronounce it-read it aloud, 3) recognize full words without having to utter the elements. Meanwhile, Purcell (1992), states that the most widely used approach in this task is the fill in blank activity. Furthermore, some steps for this activity are; a) learners listen to the entire song twice; b) the song is played a third time with a pause after each line to allow learners time to write; and c) the song is played a final time in its entirety to allow learners to check what they have written.

According to Triayulin (2012), teachers may utilize some examples of activities to use songs in the process of learning and teaching in the classroom, for instance after playing the song once, have students write down as many words as they can, pair them up, and have them make up a new song using the words. As students enter the room at the start of a class, play a song, and do nothing with it; this can have a big impact on the students' mood. Another activity that can be performed is to ask students to participate in music selection as well, for a greater sense of ownership and participation by giving them five songs and asking them to vote on the top three. A teacher may ask students to write down, for instance, adjectives, verbs, nouns, and adverbs from the song lyrics and revise the grammar when necessary.

The Benefits of Using English Songs as the instructional Learning Media for learning Listening Subject

English songs as sources of learning English listening are effective educational tools. Songs can facilitate EFL learners with a variety of skills, for instance, listening and pronunciation. In addition, it may potentially help them improve their speaking abilities (Murphey, 1992). Songs may be used to increase learners' vocabulary, learn phrase structures, and sentence patterns, as well as reflecting mother tongue culture. Review literature showed that EFL learners viewed singing English song would be the most pleasurable class activity. It is worth it as a motivational tool in the English classroom. Moreover, instrumental music can also help to create a relaxing environment, including classical music. Besides, songs have several linguistic elements that can aid second language learners (Pratiwi, 2018).

Songs feature actual language, are easily accessible, provide vocabulary, grammar, and cultural aspects, and are enjoyable for learners (Pratiwi, 2018). Songs may assist students improve their listening, and other language skills both in and out of the classroom. The following are some of the main reasons why songs function very well in foreign language classes, a) English Songs, contain authentic, and natural language presented in some forms: with careful screening, it is possible to create a vast collection of music that is appropriate for language learning; b) English Songs are geared at improving students' vocabulary: to increase students' vocabulary with helpful words, terms, and idioms, students can be introduced to a variety of new vocabularies; c) English Songs contain many slang words, idioms, and other colloquial expressions; d) English songs can be selected to meet the specific needs and interests of learners: it is not difficult to locate songs with appropriate subjects, levels of difficulty, and vocabulary because there are so many songs available in English.

Other benefits of utilization of English songs in listenig subject namely; a) Songs may be utilized to introduce grammar concepts as well as cultural issues to students. There is a common theme or story that appears throughout the majority of songs; b) Songs can be used in several different ways: students will be exposed to a wide range of accents throughout the course; c) Accents are well-represented in songs from a wide variety of geographical places, as well as a diverse spectrum of styles and formats. Afriyuninda & Oktaviani (2021) confirm that, as a medium of learning English listening, songs could improve learners' listening skills because songs are easy to be accessed. They went on to say that learners will keep the lyrics in their long-term memory.

These are just a few of the numerous reasons why music may be beneficial in the learning of a foreign language. For students, they are authentic and simply accessible. They teach vocabulary, grammar, and cultural features while still being pleasant. They provide a stimulating environment in which to practice speaking, listening, vocabulary, and language skills. Developing better listening skills can also be used by students as one of their most successful strategies for overcoming their listening challenges. Students might be motivated to participate in class by listening to English songs since they are entertaining.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Some necessary points to be addressed in connection with the present study are as follows: 1) English songs played in the video can be great alternative sources of learning English to improve learners' listening skills, improve their pronunciation skills, and cultural sensitivity to the target language. For instance, to improve students' listening skills, teachers may provide English songs and students can learn English from the native speakers' voices and more naturally within the context of situation and context of culture; 2) From the perspectives of ALM, language learning is a process of habit formation, therefore, some classroom activities should be created to engage them with the target language over time. Thus, in the ALM, the learning of a foreign language should be similar to the acquisition of the native language; 3) Students can utilize English songs with a variety of music genres at any time and place so that they have a natural contact with English speakers which in turn to enhance their listening skills; 4) The utilization of songs in foreign language learning, especially in listening subject generates a great learning environment both in and outside of the classroom. Therefore, there is a need to incorporate English songs as the background of music while gaining learners' interest and motivation as suggested by the ALM.

Bearing in mind the importance of utilization of English-based songs to facilitate EFL learners' learning of listening subjects, and improve students' listening ability, some recommendations are forwarded to related parties including students, teachers, and next researchers. It is recommended that teachers be creative and innovative in teaching, for instance by utilizing English songs in teaching listening subjects as suggested by ALM both in and outside of the classroom. It is intended to develop students' listening abilities as well as grasp what they are hearing. Students are recommended to be exposed more to listening activities with a variety of different English song genres to help them develop their vocabulary and enhance their listening abilities. Furthermore, students must pay close attention and concentrate on what is being uttered and expressed in English songs to comprehend them. The present study has its shortcomings; therefore, we recommend that future researchers to further examine the effectiveness of using English video to increase students' listening ability quantitatively by including a large number of respondents in the tertiary level of education.

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