

Improving Students' Vocabulary Through English Song

Mariana
mariana@umnaw.ac.id

Ahmad Laut Hasibuan (corresponding author)
ahmadlauthsb@umnaaw.ac.id

Risnawaty
risnawaty@umnaw.ac.id

English Education Study Program, Postgraduate Program
Universitas Muslim Nusantara Al Washliyah

Abstract

The article deals with improving students' vocabulary through English song at SMK Einstein school . The research aims to improve the twelfth-grade students of SMK Einstein School in mastering vocabulary through English song. The research was conducted by Classroom Action Research (CAR). Techniques used to collect the data are planning, implementing, observing and reflecting. The researcher selected 30 students of class XII-SMK Einstein School academic year of 2020/2021. The instrument used in the research was the song lyrics. Songs can be trusted to help remember vocabulary and used the songs are interested in learning English. Memorizing song can be used to improve English vocabulary so that the purpose of learning English as a communication tool can be achieved optimally. It can be seen from the result of the research showed that there was improvement from Cycle I to Cycle II in the students' participation in introduction, discussion and practice. In the students' achievement Cycle I was 67,43, the average score of the Cycle II was 85. It can be concluded that songs have a significant impact on improving students' vocabulary.

Keywords : CAR, English song, improving, vocabulary

Abstrak

Artikel ini berkaitan dengan peningkatan kosakata siswa melalui lagu bahasa Inggris di sekolah SMK Einstein. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan siswa kelas dua belas di SMK Einstein dalam penguasaan kosakata melalui lagu bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan metode Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK). Teknik yang digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data adalah perencanaan, pelaksanaan, observasi dan refleksi. Peneliti memilih 30 siswa kelas XII-SMK Einstein School tahun ajaran 2020/2021. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah lirik lagu. Lagu dapat dipercaya untuk membantu mengingat kosakata dan lagu yang digunakan tertarik untuk belajar bahasa Inggris. Lagu hafalan dapat digunakan untuk meningkatkan kosakata bahasa Inggris sehingga tujuan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris sebagai alat komunikasi dapat tercapai secara optimal. Hal ini dapat dilihat dari hasil penelitian yang menunjukkan adanya peningkatan dari Siklus I ke Siklus II dalam partisipasi siswa dalam pengenalan, diskusi dan praktik. Pada siklus I pencapaian siswa adalah 67,43, nilai rata-rata pada Siklus II adalah 85. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa lagu memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap peningkatan kosakata siswa.

Kata Kunci : Penelitian Tindakan Kelas, Lagu Bahasa Inggris, Peningkatan, Kosakata

1. Introduction

Vocabulary is one of the important components to be taught to the students. It is the main aspects in acquiring and understanding the language. McCarthy (1990) explains that vocabulary is the biggest component of any language development. Then, teaching and learning of new vocabulary is a challenging process for both students and teachers. It requires lots of efforts from both sides, so that the students can obtain knowledge well.

Teaching vocabulary is a fairly difficult process for students and teachers, a process that requires many ways from both parties so that the teacher can convey it well and students can receive it well. In Indonesia, English as a foreign language has a prominent role in an international communication, especially in the frame of improving a competition force among nations (Suprijadi, 2014). Vocabulary is one aspect of language that must be considered. It is the main aspects of acquiring and understanding language. Vocabulary is generically defined as the knowledge of words and word meanings. More specifically, we use vocabulary to refer to the kind of words that students must know to read increasingly demanding text with comprehension (Hiebert, 2005) as cited in Nurdiansyah, Asyid, & Parmawati. (2019). There are many ways that students can obtain and learn foreign languages for example by using songs. Memorizing songs is believed that not only makes students interested but songs can also help them learn vocabulary more easily (Dewi, 2013).

Songs can be a good learning resource for English classes. Those are because English songs are already known enough by some students. The class also can be fun and joyful learning. It needs not too much time or meeting to do (Agustina, 2016). Teachers are required to be creative in class so that children become more interested in English. Therefore, their interest in English will be an important foundation to achieve more satisfying English skills.

The use of English songs in class can help bring effective learning by providing fun learning classes, reducing student anxiety, fostering students' interest in learning and improving students' motivation to learn foreign language. The popularity of pop songs ensures that they are very potential to motivate students to learn language (Limbong, 2012). So that students will be more interested in learning through English songs that are considered fun and not boring. Some vocabulary that must be mastered by students through memorizing songs, namely the words that are in the lyrics of the song. Memorizing English songs is the way that allows students to repeat and remember the vocabulary. In addition, although most students regard learning by listening to English songs as entertainment, they also learn spontaneously and unconsciously, which is much more fun and efficient way to increase language awareness better than mechanically memorizing tedious course-books of vocabulary and grammar (Shen, 2003). Thus, memorizing English songs can be considered useful to learn vocabulary easily.

According to the points had been explained above, The research aims to improve the twelfth grade students of SMK Einstein School in mastering vocabulary through English song. The research question to be answered here is : "How can English song improve the students' vocabulary?"

2. Literature Review

2.1 Vocabulary

Morgan and Rinvoluceri, (2004: 7) claim that the acquisition of vocabulary is a social process rather than a solitary one. We expand our understanding of word meanings by interchanging and sharing it with other'. The first step when someone learns foreign language is to know vocabulary, so people must know vocabulary itself. Based on the above experts' statements about vocabulary, the researcher concludes that vocabulary is the important thing of English that should be known by the people if they want to speak, because to speak needs vocabulary to arrange it to be a sentence.

2.2 Vocabulary Mastery

According to (Cameron, 2001), the aspects of vocabulary mastery include pronunciation, spelling, and meaning. Vocabulary is a familiar collection of words that we often hear in language to a person. So, the vocabulary is word storage and uses as a tool to communicate. The more vocabulary that is familiar or often heard in the brain, the faster it will remember. Vocabulary is one of the most important things in learning foreign languages, for example learning English.

Vocabulary also has an important role in language learning. Someone that wants to communicate will be very difficult when he tried to translate it to English because he or she doesn't have enough vocabulary storage. The same case will happen when we try to listen to what people say. It will be difficult if we haven't ever heard about a word that he or she says. Without a lot of vocabulary, it's impossible to use English correctly and clearly (Bridge & Burton, 1982). It is proved that vocabulary is very important when we learn a foreign language, especially English language which has a variety of vocabulary.

2.3 The Importance of Vocabulary

According to Thornburry (2002: 13), without grammar very little can be conveyed but without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. While Allen (1983: 2) states that Learners often believed that all they needed was a large number of words. They thought they could master the language by learning a certain number of English words. So, vocabulary is really important because it is main key to understand more about English.

2.4 Song

Songs as learning media that can make learning fun and not boring. Song can balance intellectual and emotional intelligence so that they will provide good results for students. Songs can stimulate brain function, the meaning of songs provide stimulation for the growth of memory functions to learn vocabulary, language, listening and speaking. The learners need a way of teaching that is practical and fun teaching methods so that they can integrate themselves into English, for example singing English songs can make students integrated into English (Gushendra, 2017). There are several benefits of using songs in language learning. First of all, they can encourage students to use English. Furthermore, listening to English songs helps students support words and meanings more easily the compilation of songs is supported by images and actions. Finally, songs can stimulate a positive emotional attitude toward language learning.

2.5 Teaching and Learning English by Using Song

Song and teaching learning is three aspects that relate each other because song could make teaching and learning become easy and relax. Besides that, song can improve several skills of English that one of them is vocabulary. Millington (2011: 134) Songs play an important role in the development of young children learning a second language. A testament to this is the frequency with which songs are used in English Language Teaching classrooms all over the world. This paper begins by looking at why songs can be considered valuable pedagogical tools. In particular, it will discuss how songs can help learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation, and how they can be useful in the teaching of vocabulary and sentence structures.

2.6 The Steps of Teaching English by Using Song

Shin and Crandall (2017: 19), Step for teaching songs to YLs

- Introduce the topic of the song.
- Review the vocabulary students already know.
- Pre-teach the new vocabulary.
- Listen to the song (with the teacher singing, or with an audio recording or video).
- Teach the song line by line.
- If there are multiple verses and a refrain, follow these steps: Teach the refrain line by line.
- Teach the tune of the verse using “la lala” instead of the lyrics (be sure to add the refrain with the lyrics at the end of the verse).
- Teach the verses one by one, always singing the refrain after each one.
- Point out words that rhyme at the end of each line and practice repeating them when teaching each verse.

3. Method

In this research, the researchers used CAR. According to (Cameron-Jone, 1983) action research is research conducted by researchers with a view to improve the professional practice of researchers and understand it better. There are four stages of each cycle, they are: (1) the planning of the action, (2) the implementation of the action, (3) classroom observation and (4) reflecting of the action (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). This research was conducted at SMK Einstein School, involving 30 students with 20 females and 10 males of class XII- academic year of 2020/2021.

- **Planning**

In the planning stage, the researchers prepared the research instruments, designed the lesson plans, selected the English songs, set the criteria of success and made the research schedule.

- **Implementing**

In this stage, the researchers act as a teacher who implements the action, while the classroom English teacher takes a role as an observer who observes the action implementation.

Cycle 1

In this section, the researcher applied the treatment to the students based on the lesson plan prepared through song memorization. There are steps made in implementing the English songs memorization technique. The steps are:

- 1) playing the song video and/or singing the song by the teacher,
- 2) ask the students to do listening exercise given in the students' worksheet and discuss the answer together.
- 3) lead the students to sing the song line by line until the students could memorize the song and could sing independently, and
- 4) lead the students to sing the song together with some fun supportive activities.

a. Meeting 1

Firstly, the researcher asked the students about their favorite English song. The song played first was *Hero* by *Mariah Carey*. It was played 3 times. First playing aimed the students can enjoy music first. After that, the teacher delivered the sheets which contain blank word/ phrase and asked students to fill it. Then the students have to collect the sheets. After that, the teacher delivered the second sheets. The last song was *I have a dream* by *Westlife*. It was done by the same treatment.

b. Meeting 2

In the second meeting, the teacher gave a different song to the students. In this meeting, the material was about comparison and contrast. Here, the same treatment as meeting 1 was applied to the students. The songs that the teacher chose was *Flashlight* by *Jessie J* and *Heal The World* by *Michael Jackson*. In the last 15 minutes, the students were asked to do posttest to know their improvement in vocabulary.

Cycle 2

a. Meeting 1

In this meeting, the students were taught about passive voice. Here, the teacher tried to change the treatment. In this section, the teacher gave the explanation about the material first. After that, the teacher played the song. The song played in many times (up to the students' ability). The teacher also gave blank sheet to the students. And the students had to answer the vocabularies. While their doing the filling, the teacher also made a gesture of the vocab they needed. For example, they try to guess the word "run", so the teacher had to act "run" in front of the students. In the last minutes, they had to collect the sheets. The song would be played were *She will be loved* by *Maroon 5* and *Someone like you* by *Adelle*.

b. Meeting 2

In this meeting, the teacher gave the same treatment to the students, as the previous meeting. In this meeting, the teacher discussed parallel structure. The songs played were *Beautiful in White* by *Westlife* and *Life Is Worth Living* by *Justin Bieber*.

- **Observing**

In this study, the observation of students' new vocabulary mastery was conducted to obtain data and to find out about how well the implementation of memorizing English songs techniques could achieve the research objectives.

In this stage, researchers collected data related to the implementation of actions using several instruments. The first is the observation checklist that is filled by the observer. The second is the field notes made by the teacher. Those two instruments were used to gain the data related to the students' participation. The third is the result of vocabulary tests conducted by students at the end of each cycle, it aims to obtain data about student vocabulary mastery. The fourth is the result of a questionnaire given to students at the end of the study, which aims to find information about student responses to the use of techniques to memorize English songs.

- **Reflecting**

In this stage, the researchers reflects the data from the action with activities reflecting the implementation of the cycle obtained through observations and the implementation of techniques to memorize English-language songs in the teaching-learning process. The results are compared with the designed success criteria. The criteria for success were achieved. If it failed, the researcher will continue the study to the next cycle.

4. **Result and Discussion**

The result of the research showed that there was improvement from Cycle I to Cycle II in the students' participation in introduction, discussion and practice. In the students' achievement Cycle I was 67,43, the average score of the Cycle II was 85.

Table 1. Test Results in Cycle I

No	Explanation	Score
1	The highest score	84
2	The lowest score	52,3
	The average score	67,43

Table 2. Test Results in Cycle II

No	Explanation	Score
1	The highest score	100
2	The lowest score	70,5
	The average score	85

Based on the results obtained on student learning outcomes, student activities and teacher activities in cycle II showed a significant increase due to the use of songs.

Discussion

This study aims to improve students' vocabulary through English songs. Through two cycles, the learning process is carried out and runs well in tenth grade students of SMK Einstein School. Based on the scores obtained, in cycle II it has reached the target score. It is believed that target score achieved by the students is affected by the way teachers comprehensively gave the well-structured instruction, so vocabulary achievement of the students will lead to productive skills, such as; writing, and speaking (lubis et all, 2018). Furthermore, it is also leads to students' higher order thinking since the students have much opportunities to go beyond the core skills, and it will be more useful integrated with social media (Hasibuan et all, 2020; Lubis, 2021). It is also supported by a research by Risnawaty (2020) that revealed an interactive teaching materials becomes one of the major factor affecting English learners' achievement. Therefore, researchers will not continue to cycle III. It is proven that using this method can improve students' vocabulary mastery.

5. **Conclusion**

There are some conclusions drawn based on the data above :

1. First, memorizing English songs can be considered as the right technique to improve students' vocabulary mastery, especially students of class XII in SMK Einstein School. This can be seen from the scores of students on the vocabulary test which increased from the three vocabulary tests given in the preliminary study, Cycle I, and Cycle II.
2. Second, from the revised teaching strategy in Cycle II, it was found that the technique of memorizing English songs would be more promising in helping students' vocabulary mastery problems.
3. Third, memorizing English songs can be a good technical choice in building a crowded classroom atmosphere to generate students' participation in teaching and learning activities. This is because, from the observation checklist, it was shown that the students could actively participate in the teaching and learning activity that was conducted by using English songs memorization.
4. Fourth, the active participation of the students in learning shows their motivation that would be able to build their enthusiasm in learning.

Thus, it could be seen from the results that memorizing English songs can be a good technical choice in teaching and learning vocabulary. They stated that memorizing English songs is a very interesting teaching technique to be used because the material of English songs is fun and easy to be followed.

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