

INVESTIGATING LISTENING TO ENGLISH POP SONG IN AUGMENTING VOCABULARY MASTERY: A CASE STUDY OF INDONESIAN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' VIEWS

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Abstract:

Mastering vocabulary is one of the difficulties for EFL learners in learning English due to various factors such as diverse cultures, language constructions, and learning motivation. Thus, elevating vocabulary needs promising activities such as listening to English pop songs. This study investigates listening to English pop songs to augment vocabulary mastery in Indonesian undergraduate students' views. This study used a descriptive qualitative study as the research design. The participants of this study were 20 university students from diverse public and private universities with distinct majors in Jakarta, Indonesia. The research instruments in this study employed the questionnaire and interview. The results of this research indicate that listening to English pop songs promotes potential activity for the participants in augmenting their vocabulary mastery and other skills.

Keywords:

Vocabulary; English Pop Songs; Case Study



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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, various ways are utilized to enhance mastering English. One of the ways is that it is beneficial via listening to music and song as Richard and Farrel (2005) argued that by listening to the music and song, the student feels relaxed and comfy in receiving the unfamiliar words. By listening to music and song, the students think more concentration, confidence, and self-esteem improvement (Hadi, 2019). Hockly (2008) advocated that listening to music and song can be conducted individually or collaboratively to accomplish the tasks to raise the students' meaningful interaction, such as generating positive discussion, discovery attitude, and problem-solving. Hence, ample benefits of incorporating listening to music and song in English instruction to achieve the learner's outcome as well.

Mastering vocabulary is still daunting for EFL students due to numerous factors (Anjarini et al., 2022). The elements may come from English as a foreign language (Songbatumis, 2017), cross-culture language (Cao, 2011), and building language construction

(Listiyarningsih, 2017). Meanwhile, vocabulary is the heart of the language and is crucial for language learners. Words are the basis of language because they identify objects, actions, and ideas that people cannot convey the intended meaning of. To understand good and relevant English, students need to master all forms of vocabulary. However, the students should comprehend numerous categorizations of vocabulary concepts, namely illustration/drawing pictures, mime/demonstration, synonyms/antonyms, definition, etymology, translation, and contexts (Halim & Halim, 2019). Therefore, it needs to be more effortful in the pedagogy and practices of teaching and learning vocabulary. Renandya and Widodo (2017) recommended that classroom activities might be conducted through extensive reading, viewing, and listening to augment the students' vocabulary. Hence, the current study investigates the extensive listening to English songs in elevating the student's vocabulary.

Several studies have been conducted focusing on listening to music and song to improve English vocabulary mastery. Gushendra (2017) and Listiyarningsih (2017) reported that applying music and song assists EFL learners in enriching assorted words. In addition, incorporating music and song in learning vocabulary offered an enjoyable (Savitri & Rahman, 2016), relaxed atmosphere (Vitasromo & Jatmiko, 2018), participative (Azmin Md Zamin et al., 2020) and stress-free vocabulary learning (Sari, 2013). Nurkolip and Hanafi (2019) found that the intensity of listening to songs could elevate the student's vocabularies. Wardiansyah et al. (2019) in their study, showed that listening to English songs could assist EFL learners in improving English mastery. Currently, rapid technologies accommodate students with various sophisticated options for listening to music and song to heighten their vocabularies, for instance, via mobile phone applications (Anggraini & Fauzi, 2019); computer software (Cho et al., 2019); and web-based (Yuen, 2022). Comprehensive empirical studies have examined promoting listening to music and songs to improve vocabulary mastery, yet it is infrequent in the learner's perception. Hence, this study aims to investigate listening to English pop songs (one of the music genres that are the most hits at the time (Englishclub.com, 2022)) as a medium for augmenting vocabulary mastery. Additionally, this study focuses on tempting how listening to English pop songs support students' vocabulary mastery from their perspectives.

METHOD

The current study employed a descriptive qualitative case study as the research design that "the central focus of qualitative research is to provide an understanding of a social setting or activity as viewed from the perspective of the research participants" (L.R.Gay et al., 2012, p. 16). Along with consolidating the research design, Yin (2014) asserted that a case study methodology could be conducted with another approach to depicting a particular event or phenomenon. Before hiring the participants, the researchers searched undergraduate students around Jakarta who were voluntarily involved in the research. The participants of this study were 20 undergraduate university students, 9 male, and 11 female students, aged 18-22 years old, and from the diverse public and private universities of the distinct major programs in Jakarta, Indonesia. This research used a questionnaire as the main instrument cited to obtain data information (Isnaini & Aminatun, 2021). The data was collected from the participants via Google Forms. The questionnaire involved 17 questions, including students' interest in English pop songs, the impact of English pop songs on learning English, and how English songs could increase their vocabulary

mastery. Furthermore, the researcher arranged interviews via WhatsApp chat to delve into further information about how students' perspectives on listening to pop songs improve their vocabulary mastery. The interview was conducted in the participant's native language (Bahasa Indonesia) to better interpret the data and avoid misconceptions in the data analysis (L.R.Gay et al., 2012).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire results show that more than 50% of the respondents agree that English pop songs improve their English language skills, especially vocabulary mastery.

Table 1 Questionnaire's Results

No.	Statement	Yes	No
1	I like listening to English pop songs.	95%	5%
2	I always listen to English pop songs every day.	75%	25%
3	I always listen to the newest pop song by my favorite singers.	55%	45%
4	I spend less than 5 hours a day listening to English pop songs.	60%	40%
5	I like listening to English native-speaker singers.	70%	30%
6	I listen to music using applications (Joox, Spotify, Soundcloud, etc.) since there are various types of songs.	100%	0%
7	English pop songs make me interested in learning to listen, speaking, reading, and writing skill.	85%	15%
8	English pop song is media to help me learn English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).	90%	10%
9	English pop songs can motivate me to learn English in every skill.	70%	30%
10	I am happy studying vocabulary through songs.	75%	25%
11	English pop songs help me find the meaning of English words.	85%	15%
12	English pop songs help me learn new vocabulary.	85%	15%
13	English pop songs can increase my vocabulary.	90%	10%
14	English pop songs help me pronounce English words correctly.	90%	10%
15	I listen to popular English pop songs to help me improve my vocabulary.	70%	30%
16	I listen to English pop songs to add to my vocabulary.	65%	35%
17	I like to see the song lyrics in English because it can make me memorize the words.	95%	5%

1. The Students' Interest in Listening to English Pop Songs

The initial aspect relates to the student's interest in English pop songs. Almost all the participants like to listen to English pop songs with a number of (95%). Secondly, 75% of the participants said they listened to English pop songs daily, yet 25% were unlistened. Thirdly, 55% of the participants were always listening to the latest songs from their favorite artists, while 45% responded oppositely. Surprisingly, 60% of the participants stated that they took 5 hours to listen to English pop songs as one of their habits, and only 40% on the contrary responded. Subsequently, 70% argued that they liked to listen to native English singers, and 30% in the disagreement reaction. The final statement showed that all of the participants (100%) enjoyed English pop songs utilizing the various music platforms. The results of the questionnaire were supported

by the data interview that revealed the students favor listening to English pop songs as the following:

"I almost every day listen to the English pop song because I like it. When I feel happy, I savor learning something from it involving in studying English from its songs" (MD, 6/7/2022: 3:28 PM)

"I often listen to the English pop song while doing my activities, and at the same time, I learn English from the songs such as the pronunciation and meaning" (F, 6/7/2022: 4:25 PM)

As documented in the result of the questionnaire, similarly in the interview, the participants implied that they frequently listen to English pop songs because of a pleasant occupation. The participants deployed that they not only learned how to pronounce English correctly from the song lyrics and sounds but also recognized and corrected the errors. Given the excerpt, it is indicated that by repeating the activities regularly, the students can fix their English mispronunciation in joyful circumstances. Thus, the students can enhance their English communication skills with their interlocutors. As a result, it can be concluded. At the same time, the participants enjoyed the music due to listening to their favorite singer's most up-to-date music and songs for more than 5 hours, and they learned English in a fun atmosphere. Additionally, listening to English pop songs indirectly enhances students' interest in self-study because of the ease of access that can be used anytime and anywhere. The result of this part confirms (Gushendra, 2017; Listiyaningsih, 2017) that the more the student's interest in the activities, such as listening to English pop songs, the more they engage in the learning process, particularly in sharpening vocabulary and line with better in achieving the target competence of the vocabulary goals.

2. Listening to English Pop Songs with Learning English

The second aspect examined in the present study is how English pop songs impact learning English, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The statements cover numbers 7 to 9. Firstly, 85% of the participants agreed that English pop songs believed their interest improved in learning listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and 15% had the opposite perception. Secondly, the participants thought that English pop songs were a promising medium that assisted them in learning English skills, as 90% of the participants responded by answering "yes," and 10% answered "no." The final statement in this part revealed that 70% of the participants agreed that English pop songs motivate them to learn English in every skill. As captured in the excerpt that the participants are depicted as follows:

"By listening to the pop songs frequently, I learn diverse words and pronunciations, so I practice and elevate my English skills such as listening and speaking skill." (MD, 6/7/2022: 3:38 PM)

"I achieve an improvement in my English skills that involve listening, speaking, reading, and writing skill due to my habit of listening to English pop songs." (MD, 6/7/2022: 3:38 PM)

From the results above, the participants responded that English pop songs are believed to accommodate the participants to be more interested in practicing English skills. Besides, the participants feel that their skills, such as listening, speaking, reading,

writing, and vocabulary mastery, are improved because they are assisted by listening to English pop songs. This is in line with Nurkolip and Hanafi (2019) that English songs facilitate the students in absorbing the voice of native speakers, improving vocabulary mastery, and pronouncing the words better. In addition, the participants' positive vibes and stable emotions encourage them to promote learning English skills, which occurs when they listen to English pop songs (Hadi, 2019; Hockly, 2008).

3. The English Pop Songs Use in Augmenting the Students' Vocabulary Mastery

The final aspect of the present study concerns the use of English pop songs in mastering vocabulary. The displayed statement begins from numbers 10 to 17. The initial idea relates to the comfortable feeling when the participants learn the vocabulary through English pop songs; 75% of the participants agreed with the statement, and 25% had the opposite view. The second statement indicated that 85% of the participants approved that English pop songs help them to find the meaning of new English words, and 15% in disapproval responded. Next, 85% of the participants concurred that listening to English pop songs assists them in learning a new vocabulary, while 15% in contrary response. The subsequent statement revealed that 90% of the participants claimed that English pop songs enhance their vocabularies, and 10% pointed oppositely. Subsequently, the statement on how English pop songs provide the participants to pronounce the words correctly was responded to by 90% and 10% for the "No" expression. Afterward, 70% of participants said it is easier to heighten vocabulary mastery while listening to English pop songs. The following statement, which they discussed when listening to English pop songs, could increase their vocabulary, resulting in (65%) answering "yes" and (35%) saying "no" to this statement. The final statement stated that 95% of the participants liked to see the lyrics because it helped them learn the meaning of English pop songs. This is supported by the results of interviews with students who said that English pop songs could assist them in understanding the meaning of the words and enhance their vocabulary.

"There are plenty unfamiliar words that I discover from listening to English pop songs. Besides, I much know the words' meaning based on the context through its songs." (MD, 6/7/2022: 3:51 PM)

"While I'm enjoying the songs at the same time, I enrich my English vocabularies. It seems that I add my dictionary storage in my mind, and it helps a lot to augment and master my English vocabulary." (MD, 6/7/2022: 3:38 PM)

The results above revealed that the participants highlighted that the extensive activity in listening to English pop songs enhanced English vocabulary. The result is in line with Wardiansyah et al. (2019) that students who had a high rate of listening to English songs habitually achieved a high rate of vocabulary mastery. Besides, the findings of this study also supported by numerous researchers that the activity of listening to music and song elevates vocabulary exposure with a positive cognitive emotional vibe (Azmin Md Zamin et al., 2020; Sari, 2013; Savitri & Rahman, 2016; Vitasoro & Jatmiko, 2018). Results of the participants' views showed that while listening to English pop songs, they felt entertained and joyful with learning vocabulary. Besides, the participants declared that they unwrap more the meaning of uncommon words based on the context via its songs. However, Cho et al. (2019) advocated that the activities of listening to songs are better supported and guided by the teachers to direct

and develop in mastering vocabulary in the right line, such as following the vocabulary learning goals or competencies that are taught at the university. Hence, the activities align with what the participants learn in the intensive and extensive context.

CONCLUSION

The result of the current study indicates that English pop songs assist the participants in enhancing their vocabulary mastery and other English skills. Their habit of listening to English pop songs extensively affects their English skills. Additionally, the participants viewed the activity of listening to English pop songs as useful, interesting, fun, and enjoyable in augmenting ample English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and vocabulary. The participants pointed out that the more they feel optimistic, the more they encourage their learning motivation, particularly in mastering vocabulary, such as investigating the meaning and practicing the correct pronunciation. This study implies that the utilization and implementation of listening to English pop, whether intensively or extensively, seems a potential consideration to enhance vocabulary mastery in EFL or broader contexts. However, the limitation of this study is that it offers more of a delve investigation, such as in a large number of participants, diverse song genres, distinct domains, or different contexts.

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