

IMPROVING STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY THROUGH ENGLISH SONGS AT THE EIGHTH GRADE OF SMP

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Abstract: The objective of this research is to discover the effectiveness of using songs in improving students' vocabulary mastery. This research is conducted at the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 7 Manado in the academic year of 2020-2021. There are 20 students engaged to be the subject of this study. The researchers select one class to get treatment in order to achieve the objective of this study. The data are obtained through pre-test and post-test. Before giving the treatment to the students, the researchers firstly measure their knowledge by giving a pre-test. Then after doing the treatment, the students are required to do a post-test to find out whether the treatment has a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery or not. Memorizing songs can be utilized in English learning to improve students' vocabulary mastery. Thus, the learning objectives can be reached successfully. Improving vocabulary mastery using songs is not only beneficial but also pleasant for students. They become more interested in studying and not easy to get bored. The relationship between teachers and students also becomes closer because students tend to feel more comfortable asking questions to their teachers about the difficulties or new words they find. It can be seen from the students' scores in post-test that are higher than the pre-test. The average score of the pre-test is 3,85 and the average score of the post-test is 12,65. Finally, the researchers conclude that songs give a significant impact in improving students' vocabulary mastery.

Keywords: *Vocabulary Mastery, English Songs, Memorizing.*

INTRODUCTION

English is one of many languages that exist on earth, and Indonesia has adopted English as a tool of communication to establish its relationship with other countries (Liando, 2012). People need language to communicate with others and English functions as a global language to connect people worldwide. Moreover, in this

globalization era, English is essential since the competitiveness in looking for jobs is getting harder, and also the qualification becomes higher from year to year. Moge, T. (2019:9) mentions "*English is an international language used all over the world, for education, technology, political, and commercial purposes.*" From her statement, it can be seen that everyone, especially students, should master English.

They should be able in English communication, and lack of vocabulary knowledge can cause some difficulties for their future, since the limitation of language that they have.

According to Hampp, there are several aspects that should be considered in learning English. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Besides those four basic skills, grammar and vocabulary also hold an important role in English learning (Paula L. Hampp, 2019). Vocabulary and grammar are able to facilitate students in mastering those four basic English skills. In learning English, students should have enough vocabulary as the basis of their communication. As Wilkins claims that “*Without grammar very little can be conveyed, but without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed*” (Wilkins, 1972). Even though students do not master grammar really well, but if they have already known lots of vocabulary, they will be able to understand what other people say.

In English grammar, we recognize tenses to indicate time reference. Simple past is one of the English tenses which is important to be understood by students to help them arrange correct sentences according to the form of simple past tense. To achieve it, they have to know the transformation from the first form of verb into the second form. To know the verb transformation in sentences, they need to know the time reference first.

According to Tahrin A, Wowor D. J, & Liando N. V. (2018:2), in practice, students often feel difficult to comprehend vocabulary knowledge. They find it hard to memorize vocabulary because most teachers still use the old method in teaching, such as by writing the material down on a whiteboard, then ask the students to translate and memorize the words. This problem inspires the researchers to teach vocabulary in a more enjoyable and fun way by using

songs. When students learn English for the first time, they will find a difficulty in memorizing a lot of vocabulary. It is quite hard to memorize new words. Teachers should find appropriate ways to help students memorizing new words, and songs sound great to be used here. One of learning principles according to Brown (2000) is *automaticity*. According to him, the factors that tend to hinder the emergence of *automaticity* are too many languages analyze, language forms (structure/grammar), and language rules memorizations. In this case, songs can help the occurrence of automatic processing of a language in which students do learning activities accidentally.

Another convenience of using songs in English learning is that songs are good for both short and long-term memory (Murphey, 1992). Songs can help students in memorizing new words because songs tend to be more familiar for students. Songs are also able to bring a good mood for students. When you feel afraid or tense, you will probably forget, even if you perform at the moment (Lewis .M and Hill. J 1992). Hence, they will be more interested in learning English. It will be much easier for them to learn new things. Songs can also help students in improving their speaking skills. It is because when students sing a song, they will follow its pronunciation.

In this research, the researchers provide an enjoyable song in which the lyrics can be memorized by students in helping them learning vocabulary. The use of songs in learning activities can make the classroom atmosphere become fun, reduce the level of students' stress in learning, and ease them in memorizing vocabulary. It does not feel like they memorize the words. They enjoy the song and acquire the vocabulary unconsciously.

While students sing the song, they already memorize each word in the lyrics of the song. Besides, it is also able to help them develop their pronunciation. This is in line with Shen (Shen, 2003) that *“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.”*

Research Question

The research question is formulated as follow: Does the use of English song in English learning effective to improve students' vocabulary mastery?

The Objective of the Study

Based on the research question above, the objective of this study is to find out the effectiveness of using English song in English learning to improve student's vocabulary mastery.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a set of words that usually used by someone to communicate with each other. English itself has an important role to link people from various countries in the world to interact, communicate, convey ideas, and cooperate (Agutinus Tahrin, Diana J. Wowor, Nihta Liando, 2018). Vocabulary has become a requirement in learning a language because without vocabulary people cannot understand what others are saying or how to release their idea become words. The limitation of vocabulary can lead to an interruption of the

communication process. The more people listen and practice vocabulary, the more they can memorize them better. Thus, the process of communication will get harder when someone does not have sufficient vocabulary.

The importance of vocabulary in language teaching and learning cannot be overstated. It implies that through acquiring vocabulary and grammar, students are able to generate a large number of sentences, either spoken or written. Even more, the primary component of language that gives meaning to the language is vocabulary.

Neuman and Drawyer in Bintz (2011:44) claims that vocabulary can be defined as words that someone should know in order to communicate effectively. Words in speaking are recognized as expressive vocabulary, while words in listening is receptive vocabulary. It means that there are two types of words, the words that are express through speaking and the words which are receive from listening to a particular information.

Meanwhile, Richards and Renandya (2004: 255) mentions that vocabulary is the component of language proficiency. It provides the basis for how learners try to speak, listen, read and write. When people want to start learning English, they have to know or master more vocabulary to create and understand sentences.

The Importance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of the English components that should be learned and taught. Someone who has poor vocabulary knowledge will be harder to master a certain language compare to those who have more vocabulary bank. Mastering vocabulary is the first step to take before any other elements of language. Zimmerman in Coady and Huckin (1997: 5) mentions that vocabulary is the central of language and a

fundamental thing for typical language learners.

According to Burns and Broman (1975: 295), a person's level of understanding of words and when to apply them in an appropriate way to a particular location, time, and situation can define an individual's status in society. It indicates that language can determine our social status.

Mc Charty (1990: Viii) says that "*no matter how successfully sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way.*" Students' abilities to speak, read, write, and listen are generally determined by their vocabulary bank. In reading, vocabulary makes students able to understand texts. In writing, vocabulary helps them to develop their ideas then on their paper. In listening, they can understand what people say because they have got enough vocabulary banks. While speaking, vocabulary facilitates them to explain their thoughts orally.

According to Ellis (1998: 502), mastery is something correlated to comprehensive knowledge or use of a certain subject or instrument. In this case, learning new words requires the knowledge of word components too. She also says that the knowledge of words includes meanings, spoken form, written form, grammatical behavior, word derivation, collocations, word register, spoken and written, word connotation or associations, and word frequency.

Simple Past Tense

Simple past tense is one of the 16 types of tenses in English grammar which should be learned by everyone who intend to be fluent in English, both spoken and also written. Simple past tense is very important

for students, especially when they learn English, because it is used for talking about actions at a specific time in the past. Frost (2010:7) opines that simple past is used for expressing finished actions or situations in the past time. It is used to show that the event was done in the past.

To arrange a simple past tense sentence, students need to master a lot of vocabulary, especially verbs in past simple form. Meanwhile, past simple verbs are divided into two types, they are regular verbs and irregular verbs. Regular verbs usually add '-ed' or '-d' at the end of the words. Whereas, for irregular verbs, the changes are sometimes very different from the infinitive, or even they can have no change at all.

Song

In this research, the researchers use song to be a medium for teaching vocabulary in order to make learning activities in class become more fun and effective. Song consists of certain numbers of words written by a song writer to be sung. Hornby defines song as a short poem or a number of verses set into music and is intended to be sung (Hornby, AS 1995). Song lyrics are usually written for one or more voices and performed with musical instruments.

Related to that statement, Jamalus (1988: 5) proposes that songs can be said as artwork when they are sung and accompanied by musical instruments. According to the Encyclopedia of Americana (1998), song is a brief musical piece that is set to a lyrical text, with equal emphasis on the music and the lyrics. Based on the aforementioned criteria, the researchers conclude that song is a type of art that consists of words as the lyric and performed with or without instruments.

A song can be used as a medium to teach English. It may help teachers to create fun

and relaxing atmosphere in the classroom. The language used in song is also easier to grasp. Above all, song can motivate students and strengthen teachers-students relationship. This relationship later will affect on students' confidence in sharing anything to their teacher, including discussing the material that they learn. This is in line with Siti Tarwiyah (2008) who opines that song in foreign language classes can be used to motivate students and create more relaxing classroom atmosphere.

Lyric

Lyric is a collection of words contains in songs. Lyric is not only functioned as a song complement, but it also holds an essential part in the element of music that defines the theme, character, and mission of songs. Lyric harmonizes together with music when it is sung. We can enjoy the rhythms, melodies, harmonies, and vocal of the performers which can be beneficial for understanding the meaning contained in the song lyrics.

The compositions of songs are not necessarily consisting of lyrics set with melody. Musical instruments are also considered as one of song compositions which do not involve lyric in their melody. The musical elements of songs have an appealing feature, and it is language. Language itself consists of a series of words, added to a new depth of music that cannot be found in other compositions, such as a musical instrument. Lyric of song is a non-musical element. Furthermore, in adding a new dimension, its existence in music is not only as an attached element but also as a component of the music itself.

Most of the songs are inspired by language or great poetry. Song lyrics are basically the same as poetry. The distinction is that song lyrics are written and mixed with

music, while in poetry, they reflect and show feelings, experiences, and imagination.

Song Lyrics as Media to Teach Vocabulary

According to Asnawir and Usman (2002), numerous instructional media may be split into several types, so they can be classified into three types, which are explains as follows:

- 1) Visual aids, are visible material such as pictures, realia, Google Earth, flashcards, newspapers, and so on.
- 2) Audio aids, are educational media that can be listened, like radio, music or song, recorder, Music player, and so on.
- 3) Audio visual assistance, is educational material that can be seen and listened, such as short videos, films, TV news, and so on.

According to the descriptions above, this study applies song lyrics to be used in teaching and learning process. Since it can be seen and listened, thus, it falls under the category of audio visual aids. According to (Arsyad's Sudjana and Rifai 2001), the use of songs in teaching and learning process provides these following advantages:

- 1) Teaching process will be more interesting and attractive for students, thus, they become more motivated to learn the material given by their teachers. By using learning media, teachers can attract students' attention to the material that they give. From the explanation above, it is expected that using media in teaching and learning process can motivate students to learn sincerely. The more they learn it sincerely, the more maximum result they will get.

- 2) The media of learning enables the students to understand the material given by their teachers. Media hold a role as a mean of teaching material used by teachers.
- 3) Teaching and learning process become more varied. The variation of learning method will avoid students from boredom. Students will be easy to get bored when their teachers always use monotonous teaching methods. By creating more variations in teaching and learning process, students will be more enthusiastic to engage in the class too.

From the sources and statements above, the findings reveal that instructional media are required for the importance of teaching and learning process. Students are more encouraged to study and ready to comprehend the learning material. Teaching-learning process also becomes more varied and it enables students to involve more in classroom interaction.

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Songs in Learning

The advantages of using songs in learning are such as:

1. Songs avoid students' from boredom in learning.
2. Songs make classroom environment becomes safe and comfortable for the students to learn. Songs are able to make classroom atmosphere becomes fun and enjoyable. Hence, students will be more enthusiastic to learn.
3. Songs promote positive learning environment and encourage students to learn. Music assists learners in focusing on the topic that is being presented and increasing their attention in learning.
4. Songs introduce students to the subject materials that they learn. Students are

required to comprehend the material through song lyrics.

5. Songs decrease students' level of learning stress. When learners are bored, teachers can encourage them by playing music to get them back into the game.
6. Since students are familiar with the songs, emotional associations can be used to deepen their knowledge and strengthen their memory. So, students will be much easier to understand the material.
7. Songs encourage students' creativity and inventiveness. Music is an excellent stimulus for imagining and can help students to develop their creativity.

Meanwhile, songs also have some disadvantages in learning, they are:

1. For some students who are not into musics, this method probably is not effective to be implemented in learning, or even they can feel uncomfortable.
2. Playing too loud music can hurt eardrums.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In conducting this final project, the researchers use quantitative approach. As Aliaga and Gunderson (2002) mention that quantitative research is an inquiry into a social problem, explaining phenomena by gathering numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods, e.g. in particular statistics. It means that quantitative research requires numeric or statistical approach.

The researchers use pre-experimental research design by choosing one group of pre-test and post-test type design. Those research designs take two stages, before treatment and after treatment. In this case, the researchers compare the result of before treatment and after treatment. Meanwhile, the purpose of using pre-experimental

design is to test whether the treatment affects the students in improving their vocabulary mastery or not.

Subject of the Study

The subject of this research is the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 7 Manado that consists of 20 students.

Instrument of Data Collection

The researchers collect the data through test. The test consists of some questions used to measure the knowledge and ability of a person or group to collect the data. This test consists of pre-test and post-test.

Pre-test (T1) should be done before the treatment begins to measure students' knowledge. After the students get the treatment or experimental teaching process, they are required to do a post-test. Post-test (T2) is aims to discover the change of student's ability after utilizing English song to learn vocabulary.

Tabel 1. Pre-test and Post-test design

Pre-test	Treatment	Post-test
T ₁	X	T ₂

(Adapted from Gay, 2006:257)

Note:

- T₁ : Pre-test score
- X : Treatment
- T₂ : Post-test score

Data Analysis

Mean is a group explanation technique based on the average value of the group. The average (mean) is obtained by adding up the data of all individuals in the group, then dividing it by the number of individuals in the group.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

- \bar{x} : Mean score
 - $\sum X$: Total number of students score
 - N : Total number of students
- (Gulo. W. 2002)

Research Procedure

This research is conducted in SMP Negeri 7 Manado. The researchers take one class consists of 30 students as the subject. The treatment is begun after the pre-test. It aims to measure the ability of the students before conducting the treatment. The detail of the research procedure is explained as follows:

1. First Meeting
In the first meeting, the researchers introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the treatment. The researchers then give the pre-test to measure students' ability. The students are required to answer the test in the form of multiple-choice containing simple past tense material. After that, the researchers explain the schedule of the next meeting.
2. Second Meeting
In this meeting, the researchers explain a brief explanation about simple past tense. They listen "Simple Past Song". Then, students are invited to sing along while reading the lyrics. After the students have been quite familiar with the song, the researchers explain the meaning of the song lyrics.
3. Third Meeting
In this third meeting, the researchers replay the song and ask the students to give the meaning of certain words in the lyrics randomly. Here, the researchers can feel the class atmosphere become more alive

because the students are enthusiastic in waiting for their turns.

4. Fourth Meeting

In this meeting, the researchers replay the song just like in the third meeting. The difference is that the students have already got used to the song. They begin to memorize the song since it is fun and easy. At that time, the students have already understood the meaning of each word in the song lyrics.

5. Fifth Meeting

In this last meeting, the researchers give an instruction to the students to do a post-test.

Result

The first step of calculating the data is converting the result of both pre-test and post-test score as described in the table below:

Tabel 2. Students' Pre-test and Post-test score

Student's Number	Pre-test	Post-test
1	4	11
2	6	15
3	6	10
4	6	14
5	4	13
6	7	15
7	4	9
8	5	14
9	6	11
10	5	10
11	5	14
12	5	12
13	4	13
14	4	11
15	6	15
16	5	14
17	5	13
18	5	14

19	4	12
20	4	13
$\Sigma X = 77$	$\Sigma X = 77$	$\Sigma X = 253$

There are 20 students who take part in the test. Based on the table presented above, it can be seen that the highest score for the pre-test is 7 and the lowest one is 4. Meanwhile, the highest score for post-test is 15 and the lowest one is 9. It can be said that applying song as a learning medium in teaching and learning process gives a good effect on students' vocabulary mastery. It is proven by the post-test score which is higher than the pre-test.

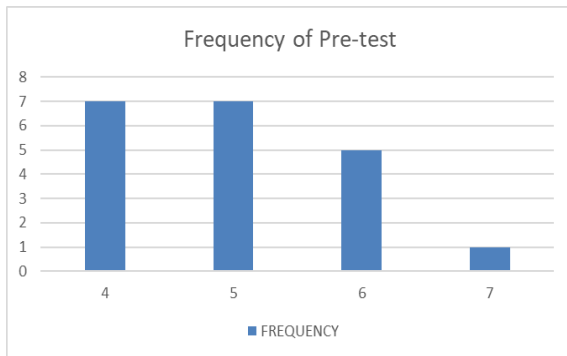
Frequency Distribution of Pre-Test

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of pre-test

Score	TALL Y	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
4	III III	7	7	35
5	III III	7	14	35
6	III II	5	19	25
7	I	1	20	5

The result of the pre-test scores calculation indicates that from 20 samplings of students, 7 or 35% of them get 4, another 7 or 35% of them get 5, 5 or 25% of them get 6, and 1 of them or 5% get 7. Visually, the distribution of pre-test data is shown in figure 1.

Figure 1. Frequency of pre-test chart



$$\bar{x} \text{ (pre-test)} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{77}{20} = 3,85$$

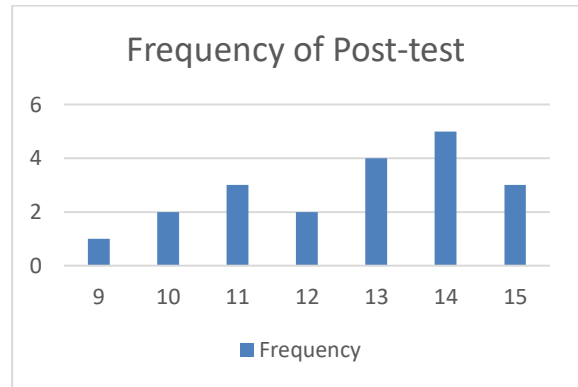
Frequency Distribution of Pre-Test

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of post-test

Score	TALLY	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percentage
9	I	1	1	5
10	II	2	3	10
11	III	3	6	15
12	II	2	8	10
13	IIII	4	12	20
14	IIII	5	17	25
15	III	3	20	15

The result of the post-test scores calculation indicates that from 20 sampling of students, 1 of them or 5% gets 9, 2 or 10% of them get 10, 3 or 15% get 11, 2 or 10% of them get 12, 4 or 20% of them get 13, 5 or 25% of them get 14, and 3 or 15% of them get 15. Visually, the distribution of the post-test data is shown in figure 2.

Figure 2. Frequency of post-test chart.



$$\bar{x} \text{ (pre-test)} = \frac{\sum X}{N} = \frac{253}{20} = 12,65$$

Result of Mean Score

Table 4.4 Frequency Distribution of pre-test

	Pre-test	Post-test	
$\sum X$ (T1)	77	$\sum X$ (T2)	253
N	20	N	20
Mean score	3,85	Mean score	12,65

Discussion

This study is conducted at the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 7 Manado in the academic year of 2020/2021 in the second semester. The researchers hold five meetings with the students. The first meeting is to introduce the students about the research and the benefit that they will get. The second meeting until the fourth meeting are used for the treatment. The fifth meeting, it is used to measure the students' improvement after the treatment. In doing those steps, the researchers have already prepared all the things that are required in the process of learning such as syllabus, material from textbooks, and the song that is used.

In the implementation, the meeting are divided into two groups because there are some students who need their parents' gadget to join the meeting. The first group is for those who have their own gadget. At the same time, the second group is for those who use their parents' gadget. The reason of differentiating the time of the meeting is because they can not join the meeting before their parents finish their work.

In the teaching process, students sing the song together, and this method is evidently able to make students enjoy the learning activity. Even though the song is unfamiliar for them, but they are curious about the meaning of the song and desire to learn further. They are enthusiast about finding new words to enrich their vocabularies. Besides, they also become more active in seeking for the meaning of the difficult words they find and the words that they do not understand.

According to the findings of this study, the total score of the post-test is higher than the pre-test. The test is attended by twenty students. In the pre-test, the highest score is at the number of seven reached by one students (5%) and the lowest score is five got by seven students (35%). There are seven students who get five (35%), and five students who get six (25%). In the post-test, the highest score is 15 reached by three students (15%) and the lowest score is nine got by one student (5%), two students get 10 (10%), three students get 11 (15%), two students get 12 (10%), four students get 13 (20%), and five students get 14 (25%). The mean score of the pre-tests is 3,85 and the mean score of the post-tests raises become 12,65. It shows that the post-test result is higher than the pre-test result. As a consequence, the findings of this study indicate that teaching vocabulary through English song is successful and helpful.

CONCLUSION

From the result of this analysis which aims to improve students' vocabulary mastery, the researchers find out that the use of song is helpful and effective. Not only students' vocabularies which develop, but also their pronunciation. Because this method teaches them how to pronounce words correctly by singing while listening to song. Beside the main goal is achieved, students who join this learning activity also feel happy and enthusiastic during the process of learning.

Song as a tool for learning vocabulary can be utilized by teachers in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning process. The process of choosing various songs can affect students' interest to learn. In addition, teaching vocabulary via song is able to boost students' enthusiasm in studying, thus it can enrich their vocabularies. It is proven by this research which explains that students are passionate in participating in the learning activity, including singing, interpreting, recognizing, and memorizing the lyrics.

Based on the findings of this research, the overall result of the students' pre-test is 3.85 and the mean score of the post-tests is 12,65. It indicates that utilizing English songs to improve students' vocabulary is efficient. The mean score of the post-test is greater than the mean score of the pre-test. As a result, it can be concluded that the utilization of English songs is extremely beneficial in increasing students' English vocabulary. Furthermore, it also makes the teaching and learning process become more effective and pleasant.

SUGGESTION

The followings are some suggestions made by the researchers based on the result of the study:

1. Songs can be used by English teachers to help them in teaching and learning process. It supports learners in enriching their vocabulary and helps learning activities become more interesting and enjoyable.
2. Teachers should realize that this strategy is one of many strategies out there that can be used in classroom to help learners comprehend the material that is being taught. As a result, the researchers recommend utilizing this method for teaching English to improve students' vocabulary knowledge.
3. Even though some students feel that English is tough, teachers need to employ attractive media in teaching the materials.
4. Teachers should be careful in choosing the song that will be used. They should also be careful in arranging their schedule.

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