

Analysis of Students' Responses to Vocabulary Learning Through Songs "Hero" by Mariah Carey for Senior High School in Cianjur

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Abstract

English, as an international language, plays a crucial role in various aspects of life, from education to the workplace. This study aimed to explore how eleventh-grade high school students respond to mastering English vocabulary through songs. The research employed a quantitative method, collecting data through questionnaires completed by 21 students. The results indicated that most students responded positively to using songs as a learning medium. It was found that songs not only increased their motivation but also enhanced their concentration and vocabulary skills. These findings support the integration of songs into language learning, making the process more interesting and effective. Additionally, regularly using new vocabulary in daily conversations helps students retain it and avoid forgetting previously learned words. This practice is crucial for ensuring long-term vocabulary retention and overall language proficiency. Integrating songs and encouraging daily use of new words can significantly enhance students' language learning experiences.

Keywords: Students' Responses; Vocabulary; Song

INTRODUCTION

English has become an international language that plays a crucial role in various aspects of life, from education to the workplace. In Indonesia, proficiency in English is one of the essential skills needed to prepare students for global challenges. According to Mika and Mardiana (2023), given the significant role of English, it is important that English proficiency is seen as an individual investment for success. A critical aspect of learning English is the acquisition of vocabulary, which is the foundation for reading comprehension, speaking, writing and listening. According to Hestiana and Anita (2022), Vocabulary is a crucial component in learning English, and it must be mastered to achieve proficiency. With an adequate vocabulary, students can recognise and understand the meaning of words used in specific contexts, whether in educational or professional settings, for which they need to prepare from an early stage. However, high school students frequently face a number of obstacles when learning vocabulary in English. These obstacles include the continued use of the same instructional strategies, low student motivation, and trouble remembering new language. Similarly on the researcher's observation in grade 11 in one of the schools located in Cianjur prior to this study, the researcher highlighted students' challenges in understanding the lesson due to the limited context provided by traditional teaching methods, which indicates the need for diverse instructional approaches to engage students effectively and tried to apply songs as a medium to improve students' vocabulary acquisition ability. Consequently, in order to capture and inspire pupils to learn language, interesting teaching tactics are required. In an enjoyable learning environment with innovative techniques, students are able to think freely and broadly without worrying about making mistakes, as stated by Fitriiningtias and Umamah (2019). This kind of independence in the classroom is really beneficial for the growth of original and inventive thought. A number of tactics, including the use of flashcards, technology-based learning

approaches, and traditional teaching methods, have been used to enhance vocabulary acquisition. Enhancing language acquisition and proficiency requires effective teaching methods (Holidazia & Rodliyah, 2020). The use of songs in English language learning has been proven effective in helping students master vocabulary in a fun and motivating way. Through song lyrics, students can learn new words in a natural context, improving their ability to understand and remember the vocabulary. Listening to and singing songs also help to improve students' listening and pronunciation skills. Well-chosen songs can cover a wide range of topics and themes, giving students the opportunity to expand their vocabulary in a variety of areas. According to Kumar et al. (2022), songs and music are effective listening activities with multiple benefits, music makes teaching concepts enjoyable and engaging. One key advantage is that it captures students' attention and keeps them excited about learning. To understand more about the effectiveness of using songs in teaching listening skills, this research refers to various previous studies that have examined similar topics. Each study provides a different perspective, but overall supports the idea that songs can be an effective tool in language teaching, especially in listening skills. The following is a summary of some relevant previous studies to provide a clearer picture of the contribution of songs in English language learning. The comparison of the 10 previous studies with this research shows that almost all studies utilizing songs in learning reported positive results. For instance, Lolong (2019) found that most of the 15 participants experienced positive effects in improving vocabulary skills through English songs, while Dadang Solihat (2014) demonstrated the effectiveness of English songs in enhancing students' listening skills, supported by a higher t-count than t-table and a 92% approval rate among students. Similarly, Apin Hidayat (2013) concluded that songs significantly improved listening skills, while Mellasari Hadian (2015) noted positive student responses to song lyrics in teaching listening despite some challenges. Lisnawati & Sumirah (2018) showed that English songs effectively improved students' pronunciation with a significance value of 0.00, and Setiawan (2019) confirmed the effectiveness of songs in improving vocabulary mastery through listening. Islami (2019) revealed that using songs in the Total Physical Response (TPR) method elicited positive responses from students, with high enthusiasm and involvement, while Hadrian & Aryani (2019) found a 75% success rate in improving listening ability using songs after two classroom action cycles. Hakim (2019) reported that YouTube is effective in vocabulary teaching, with strong vocabulary mastery and high student motivation, and Hadi (2019) concluded that songs significantly improved English skills among junior high school students, with an average score increase from 60 to 80 after two cycles. The key differences between this study and previous research lie in the research subjects, materials, focus, and methods used, but overall, the use of songs in learning consistently yielded positive outcomes across various studies. The use of music and songs in language learning provides a strong emotional context, which can strengthen memory and make the learning process more effective. Using songs in the listening section will be one of the ways in motivating students to learn more seriously and take a part in given activity Güler and Bozkurt (2021). With the integration of songs in vocabulary teaching, students not only learn new words but also engage more deeply and actively in the language learning process. Based on previous research by Kumar et al., (2022), there is an impact of the use of songs as media on English language learning. In addition, according to Adnyani and Dewi (2020), songs can be used as a valuable teaching and learning tool. This method is not only effective, but also increases students' motivation to learn English. The song used in this study is "Hero" by Mariah Carey. This song is also included in the learning materials for the 11th grade in accordance with the 2013 curriculum. It was chosen because of its meaning, which can help motivate students. Putri (2023) states that the significance of a song is to provide a positive influence on its listeners, whether by offering entertainment, motivation, comfort, or even influencing behavior. A song with a strong and relevant message can have a

positive impact on listeners, whether by increasing social awareness, addressing personal issues, or shaping cultural and national identity. This study aims to examine students' responses to learning English vocabulary through the aforementioned song. It is expected that this research will contribute to the development of more creative and student-centered English teaching strategies.

METHOD

In this study, quantitative method was used. The participants of this study were 21 students from 11th grade of senior high school in Cianjur. The students were selected purposively, which means that the result of this study cannot be generalized. This study used a questionnaire as a data collection tool, consisting of 10 statements to measure students' responses with yes and no options. Data collected were analyzed with descriptive statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

All participants responded to all ten statements. The responses of the student participants to the given questionnaire are shown in the table below;

Table 1. The Result of Students' Responses

No	Statment	Yes	No	Yes (%)	No (%)
1	Interesting English songs	18	3	85.71%	14.29%
2	I like listening to English songs	15	6	71.43%	28.57%
3	Listening to English songs makes me more excited	19	2	90.48%	9.52%
4	I believe English songs will be useful for me	16	5	76.19%	23.81%
5	English songs can make me improve my concentration	21	0	100.00%	0.00%
6	I can feel the benefits of using learning media with songs	12	9	57.14%	42.86%
7	English songs can improve my vocabulary	20	1	95.24%	4.76%
8	I am more diligent when using song media	17	4	80.95%	19.05%
9	Song media in learning makes me like it more	14	7	66.67%	33.33%
10	The learning process becomes more interesting	13	8	61.90%	38.10%

In general, the questionnaire results show that views on the use of English songs in learning are positive. The majority of respondents agreed that the song "Hero" by Mariah Carey provides significant benefits in various aspects of learning. The two statements that respondents agreed with the most were "English songs can make me improve my concentration" with 100% agreement, and "English songs can improve my vocabulary" with 95.24% agreement. This shows that most students felt an increase in concentration and vocabulary acquisition when using English songs in learning.

In contrast, the two statements with the lowest number of agreement were "I can feel the benefits of using learning media by using songs" with 57.14% agreement, and "The learning process becomes more interesting" with 61.90% agreement. Although the majority still agreed, these percentages were lower than the other statements, which may indicate that not all students felt the same benefits in these aspects.

Discussion

The use of songs in teaching vocabulary garnered significant attention due to its potential to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. The results of this study indicated a generally positive response from students towards the use of song media in vocabulary learning, which aligned with existing literature on the benefits of integrating music into language education. The findings from the questionnaire, which consisted of ten statements, revealed various insights into students' perceptions and experiences. A high percentage of students found English songs interesting (85.71%) and enjoyable (71.43%), underscoring the appeal of using music as a learning tool. This is consistent with the findings of Astika et al., (2024), who noted that students became more engaged and enthusiastic after incorporating songs into 11th-grade English lessons. The motivational aspect was further supported by the fact that 90.48% of students felt more excited when listening to English songs, suggesting that music can inject positive energy into the learning environment. Moreover, the belief among 76.19% of students that English songs were useful for their learning reflected an understanding of the practical benefits of music in education. This belief is validated by Afryuninda and Oktaviani (2021), who found that multimedia, including songs, can enhance their listening skills, improve pronunciation, and introduce new vocabulary. Similarly, research by Bennett (2019) highlighted that music can aid in vocabulary retention by creating a more engaging and memorable learning experience. Notably, a study by Astika et al., (2024) specifically examined the impact of the song "Hero" by Mariah Carey in language learning settings, revealing that the emotional and lyrical content of the song significantly contributed to vocabulary acquisition and retention. The song's inspirational message and relatable themes helped students connect more deeply with the language, thereby improving their overall learning experience. Additionally, a study by Bao (2023) demonstrated that songs used in language learning contexts fostered better concentration and cognitive engagement among students, which aligns with the observed unanimous agreement (100%) that English songs improved concentration. However, the varied responses to the perceived benefits of songs as learning media (57.14% positive) and the improvement of vocabulary (95.24% positive) suggested that while songs were generally effective, their impact differed among individuals. This variation may be influenced by personal preferences and learning styles. The increased diligence reported by 80.95% of students further emphasized the role of songs in fostering a disciplined and dedicated approach to learning.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study demonstrated that the use of the song "Hero" by Mariah Carey in teaching vocabulary received overwhelmingly positive responses from students, highlighting its effectiveness as a learning tool. The high levels of interest, enjoyment, and perceived usefulness among students indicate that the song can significantly enhance motivation, concentration, and vocabulary acquisition. Despite some variations in individual responses, the overall findings support the integration of music into language education to create an engaging and effective learning environment. These results align with existing theories and suggest that incorporating songs can cater to diverse learning preferences, ultimately improving students' vocabulary mastery and learning experiences. Teachers are encouraged to present the song

"Hero" by Mariah Carey more interactively in various vocabulary skill exercises, while students are expected to use the song to integrate vocabulary into the basic English skills of writing and speaking. Future researchers can explore the song "Hero" and other learning approaches to identify easier memorization methods for students and conduct long-term research to determine the lasting effects of using the song on vocabulary acquisition and English language skills.

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