

The Using of English Songs to Activate Student's Speaking Skills

Yanti Hidayani Hasibuan¹, Balqis Wandira², and Rafika Dewi Nasution^{3}*

^{1,2,3}Universitas Negeri Medan, Medan, Indonesia

Abstract. This study's objective was to examine how songs were used to teach speaking proficiency to elementary school kids as well as the issues that teachers ran into. The goal of incorporating the song into all learning phases is to help students become accustomed to the English language's vocabulary and pronunciation by employing an enjoyable method—a song that they are already familiar with. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the teacher primarily integrated the song into the learning in three activities, such as the opening, while, and closing activities, by providing the students with the link to a YouTube video and assisting them with translation to motivate the students to learn to speak English by using the song. The problem that mostly occurred in the class teaching song for speaking English was not confident in speaking. Because of that, implementing the song for learning English to activate students' speaking skill.

Keywords: English Song, Speaking Skill

Received [15 Dec 2022] | Revised [15 Jan 2023] | Accepted [21 Jan 2023]

1 Introduction

The song is a media that can help teachers to describe students' interests and build up their motivation to learn. If the students are motivated, they will follow and participate actively during the teaching-learning process. The teacher uses English songs to help them in finding the students' interests during the always class. In the teaching-learning process, the teacher uses media in order to stimulate students' interest. English songs can be more effective than other media in relating one idea to another, building thought and creating a good effect. It can be the student's interest in speaking and improving, and they are more confident to practice and share their idea.

Using English songs in teaching English is expected the students will learn to enjoy, joyfully, and be interested in learning English, focus on vocabulary, and of course, will help the teaching-learning process reach optimally. The students also are able to pronounce the vocabulary

* Corresponding author at: Universitas Negeri Medan, Medan, Indonesia

E-mail address: fikabornast@gmail.com

correctly. The teacher must anticipate how much vocabulary can be taught from the song. [1] state that vocabulary is a list or set of words for a particular language or a set of words that individual speakers of a language might use. It means that vocabulary is one of the important components of language to communication. The teacher can use this activity to make the students understand the meaning of words that students are taught from the song. So, they can use vocabulary in their daily lives and always communicate with the immediate environment.

In reality, most students had low mastery of pronouncing the vocabulary. Not only that, however, the students use Bahasa and English together. The students write the sentence 'I oten eat mie goreng, becos my mother know I oten like it '. The word 'oten' and 'becos' is written incorrectly by the students, but the correct one should be 'often' and 'because', and the pronunciation for spoken incorrectly too. It shows that the vocabulary mastery of the student is still low. It makes low motivation for the students to learn to speak English.

Based on the data above, found some problems related to the teaching-learning process. Such as; (1) The student had low motivation to learn English, especially in speaking and pronunciation, and (2) The teacher's way of teaching English was less varied activities which make the students bored in the classroom. The researcher's alternative to solve the problem is to use Songs in the teaching-learning process. English songs can make the student not only active in thinking but also in speaking. That also helps the teacher to teach the student to speak English easier and more interesting. The students would not be bored because they are active and give, they participate in speaking class during the teaching-learning process. [2] describes that music can increase a child's skill in feeling expressions, academics, and society related to family, community, and culture. The use of songs for the students can improve and activate their speaking well, especially songs.

This research can give a very positive effect on students who study language in speaking ability. The song makes students relaxed, fun, and easy to recognize and remember the lyrics of the song. The problems in this study are stated as follows: How does the procedure the using English song activates students' speaking skills? How does the implementation of the use of English song make activate students' speaking skills? This study presents the use of English songs in teaching strategies for elementary school students. It is going to be very pleasant and interesting for young learners. [3] said that most children love songs. Songs and chants can help learners develop an enjoyable feeling. They keep them in their heads, sing them after class, them on the way home with them, and sing them at home. Based on the reasons above, it is important to conduct the research.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 English Songs

A song is a piece of music written for one or more voices, whether they are supported or unsupported, or "the process or ability of singing," but the word "song" also isn't typically used to refer to big vocal forms like opera and oratorio. [4] claims that a song is a collection of arrangements made up of lyrics and musical components including heartbeat, melodies, rhythm, and expressiveness. The phrase is frequently used in metaphorical and transferable connotations, nevertheless.

We have numerous excellent songs for young children to enjoy, and singing songs is a fantastic method to improve one English speaking [5]. Songs were used as tools to address the children's speech difficulties. Furthermore, ever since he has been able to comprehend, music has been a component of the human experience. Songs can help pupils improve their language skills, according to numerous experts. Songs are now an essential component of learning a language, and when used in conjunction with lessons, they may be quite beneficial. The language of the heart is music. Songs often convey messages about life events and appropriate emotions, including romanticism, sorrow, ambiguity, worry, and assurance. Music teaches us by elucidating our emotions and allowing us to investigate emotions we might not otherwise be able to experience. Famous songs that are easy to listen to would be selected. Students can converse as natives with the aid of songs.

According to [6] and [7], there must be specific song qualities that are ideal for educating kids in English. These qualities are listed below: the song is composed of syllables, words, phrases even sentence with a clear topic; it must be repetitious; it is comprehended so that it has sense; it is sung with motion; it might be performed by other younger students from outside class, and it's quick and upbeat.

According to the expert, songs might be useful as vocabulary learning exercises for three key reasons. The song is a reaction language, to start. It opened up a third way of using spoken language. The song has a purpose, too. The inspirational value of studying music in a second language was clear. The song is a conversation, third. Songs provide unmatched occasions for interaction between lecturers and students as well as amongst students themselves; however, the majority of exchanges have been between lecturers and learners and were started by the lecturer. Identical view to many compliments on the use of music, the researcher believed songs in English classes can be extremely beneficial. In relation to this, songs could aid kids in learning language elements including writing ability, glossary, and understanding. The pupils' vocab would be developed through songs.

The teacher usually instructs the learners to translate, describe, and give examples of expressions and idioms from the songs that had been used in class, and place them in a setting

where their meaning was evident after hearing the songs. Second, songs can aid students in developing their compositional skills (grammar). After the pupils had recently listened to the music, the teacher might ask them some questions about the verbs in the song lyrics and ask them to examine the structure of the song lyrics. Songs as a method of variety in language lessons have several benefits. Songs are used in language lessons to great effect. When students are studying or practicing a structure, they amuse and calm them, and they frequently help to change their unfavorable beliefs about learning.

Utilizing music can help pupils' glossary, accent, pronunciation, and fluency while also enhancing their speaking abilities. "Teaching English via song provides numerous benefits for pupils in enhancing their pronunciation in British and American," according to [8]. Numerous people who don't appreciate music at home, while traveling, or even at work include the song in their everyday lives. Songs can be used by English teachers to start or end classes, illustrate themes and topics, give diversity or a different pace, introduce new words, or reuse previously learned the language. Educators must inspire pupils to talk more clearly by performing a song that increases their desire in doing so and makes using a certain method more fun. This will help students' communication skills.

Numerous important studies have demonstrated the value of using songs as a teaching aid when learning English. [9], singing allows pupils to practice their English pronunciations and speak more fluently. Additionally, students can talk about the various lyrics' themes—such as love, hate, and retaliation—and in this way, they can practice speaking by offering their ideas and thoughts on the songs' themes. [10] lists the following benefits of using songs in the classroom: (1) Trying to practice the English word's rhythm, stress, and intonations; (2) Trying to teach words, particularly in the lexicon conditioning step; (3) Trying to teach grammar; in this regard, songs are especially preferred by teaching staff while conducting an investigation how to use the tenses; (4) Trying to teach conversing; for this reason, songs and primarily their lyrics are utilized as stimulation for classroom discussion; (5) Improving listening, as music can aid in understanding; (6) Improving writing abilities. A song can be utilized for this purpose in a number of different ways, such as making predictions about what might occur to the actors in the coming or addressing the central character in a letter.

Songs can improve linguistic competence and provide delight and amusement to the classroom; therefore, teachers should explore this. [11], "The elements." One of the five theories Krashen offers is the emotive filter. Singing, according to [12] (as cited in [11]), is one of the strategies for achieving an insufficient cognitive load and fostering literacy development. It can be used to display a subject, practice language, prompt conversation about behavior and emotions, create a welcoming environment, and add variety and fun to learning.

2.2 Speaking Skill

Speaking is a tool used by people to interact with one another. It happens everywhere and has ingrained itself into our daily lives. When someone speaks, they engage in conversation and use language to convey their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Additionally, he or she contributes information to other communications. Many activities can be planned to keep the students' component vibrant in the classrooms, where the teacher must foster an environment that can support genuine dialogue. Western music is one of the methods that can be used to educate speaking since, in my view and experience, it would be one of the actions that encourage pupils to express themselves freely.

The author concentrates on the western song based on the aforementioned circumstance. The professors provide kids more chances to take prompted a number during allotted intervals, which is why they use western songs. The author makes the assumption that singing is a mixture of teaching language and entertainment.

Individuals speak because it is a necessary human function to share information. They must communicate and engage with one another. People can communicate by speaking and using the sounds of their language. Speaking is an interactive process of creating meaning that comprises information production, reception, and processing, according to [13]. Its structure and significance are determined by the situation in which it is used, such as the speakers' identities, backgrounds, and purposes.

When there are two or more individuals in one field of language teaching, speaking as an oral contract can be performed. It involves speaker(s) and listener(s) interacting with one another to transfer information or carry out a message. Speaking, [14], typically entails two or more persons interacting and transacting verbally. Additionally, [15] assert that speaking is done to maintain social connections and friendships as well as to convey ideas, opinions, and a desire to take action. Speaking, then, is not merely an utterance but also a communication instrument used to uphold social relationships.

Songs are common and well-liked in contemporary society, not just by the general public but also in the educational community. The majority of individuals enjoy music because it can uplift their spirits and convey their aspirations. In addition to using music to inspire students to learn, inspiration is also necessary to encourage anybody to take action in order to achieve their own objectives. "Song is part of music that you sing through words," said [8]. It is closely related to speaking as talking is the action of using spoken language to communicate with others. Oral communication can be defined as the act of putting words together to create something comprehensible.

There have been some previous studies conducted that discussed the role of western songs in improving students' speaking abilities at junior high school [16], the effect of using English songs on students' speaking skills [17], and using songs in speaking class to improve students' abilities in a relaxing way for university students [5]. From all the research results that have been carried out by several researchers, it can be concluded that there is an increase in students' speaking skills in English through the use of English songs, which are applied by the teacher several times in classroom learning.

Despite the fact that we recognize that foreign language skills must be honed from an early age and get used to using them in everyday life beginning with routine activities at school, no researchers have discussed the use of English songs to activate students' speaking skills at the 1st grade elementary school level. In the morning, for example, when arriving at school with the teacher, students are also used to speaking English to greet and respond with daily phrases from songs such as "Good morning, are you there?" Therefore, researchers are very interested in discussing small things that can provide maximum results for the future lives of students because later, of course, competitiveness will be higher, so that English may not be a foreign language anymore but a second language.

3 Method

This descriptive qualitative study discusses how a teacher used Western music to get kids interested in speaking. This approach is chosen to help students who are struggling with the organization of short stories. From December 1 through December 15, 2022, this model is used with first-year primary school children in two meetings. The four steps of this technique's teaching and learning include planning for teaching English via song to encourage speaking among students and putting the song into practice while teaching English through acting. These actions will encourage each student to speak up for themselves. A camera documents these activities. The captured data is next transcribed and examined in accordance with the phases' classifications.

4 Result and Discussion

The aims of this endeavor were to seek: (1) planning for learning English through song to activate the students' ability in speaking; (2) implementation of the song in learning English to activate the students' ability in speaking.

4.1 Planning for learning English through Song

This song-based activity lesson plan for English language teaching features the song and its official music video. There are two songs used in this activity: Good morning my teacher song,

twinkle-twinkle little star, and Heads, shoulders, knees, and toes. Several planning steps can be made by the teacher to implement songs for learning English such as:

- Activity 1

The teacher took pictures of the parts of the body with the words clearly written beneath. Say the words while pointing to the words. Give out pictures of the parts of the body and separate pieces of paper with the words on which children must match. This can be done in groups of two or three. If the group is bigger some children may not actually participate and be left out.

- Activity 2

The teacher asks the children to draw a person (themselves or maybe the teacher!) and label the body with the words they have learned. They may know some other parts of the body that they can add – the teacher may have to help with spelling.

- Activity 3

The teacher divides the class into teams – ideally nine members in each team. Choose a confident and outgoing child from each team to stand or sit at the front of the class and be **THE BODY**. Other members of the team each get a sticker with a word of a part of the body written on it. Each team stands behind a line away from the front of the class. One at a time a team member has to run to the front and put the sticker on the appropriate part of **THE BODY**. It is a race and the first teams to correctly label their **BODY** are the winners. If the children know other parts of the body, the teacher can also use these words – it can get very funny if they know the word ‘bottom’.

- Activity 4

Another good way to practice the vocabulary is to do a picture dictation. E.g. teacher says: this is a monster. He has two heads and four eyes, etc. Children have to draw the monster according to the teacher’s description. Ensure the teacher uses only vocabulary the children have come across before – this can include numbers, colors, sizes, and shapes e.g. The monster has four, small, blue, triangular ears.

- Activity 5

Children with a larger vocabulary for parts of the body can be encouraged to write a new verse for the song and then perform them to each other using the correct actions. It isn’t necessary to pre-teach all the language individually as long as the teacher model each activity and ensure the children are doing the appropriate actions for each part of the son.

- Activity 6

Sing the song again at the end of the lesson. Begin the next lesson with a check of the vocabulary and sing the song again. Children will enjoy singing a song they already know but do not assume they will all remember the song and the vocabulary. Young children learn quickly and forget quickly if they don't practice.

4.2 Implementing of Song in Learning English

This section covered the data obtained from the observation sheet and interview guide related to this study in this study aimed to identify the implementation of using songs in teaching speaking in SD IT Khairul Imam first grade as well as the problems using songs in teaching English in SD IT Khairul Imam. This study focused on explaining the implementation of the song in teaching English SD IT Khairul Imam Medan in which the observation was done 2 times on Monday, 5 December 2022 and Friday, 9 December 2022.

It can be seen that the use of songs in teaching speaking can be seen in pre-activity when the teacher related the learning theme to the songs (apperception activity) as well as in introducing the material by showing the song from the YouTube link. In teaching greetings, the teacher used a song from YouTube that students are used to hearing from everyday life.

In the main activity, the teacher first asks students to read the lyrics and re-sing the song, and then the teacher asks students to modify the song by using various conditions (good morning, afternoon, evening). The goal of the activity is for students to memorize and adapt the greeting to any situation.

In the main activity, the teacher implements the song by asking the students to sing the song head shoulders knees, and toes based on the YouTube video. The goal of this activity is to create a record for students so that the teacher can easily detect any mispronunciation by the students. This activity was also useful for practicing their spoken grammar because the teacher could replay or pause a section of the song to correct the students. Because the teacher did not want the students to lose interest or motivation to learn if the song was not continued, the teacher continued to implement it. This is consistent with [18] assertion that the influence of students' learning capacities and practical competencies on their motivation to retain information throughout learning activities. A study looked at using video to help pupils with their speaking and listening abilities [19]. A study by [20], which discovered that visual media, such as videos, was able to encourage and motivate children to learn new vocabulary, provided additional evidence for this.

In the post-activity, the teacher concludes the class by singing with the students to maintain the atmosphere of the class that has already been adapted to the activity with song and to make a good last impression for the student so students are motivated to learn again even though the

teacher did not sing a song for a long time in the post activity due to the location in the countryside, which makes it difficult for teachers to even rarely use the YouTube video. Furthermore, some students' lack of response makes it difficult for the teacher to invite students to close the lesson by singing together before the class ends. Based on this explanation, it can be seen that the teacher wanted to create an interesting closing as stated by [21] and [22], in which the song is used to make a comfortable and fun learning climate, the ending of implementing song must be memorable by inviting students to sing the song together so that they feel that the learning activity is meaningful.

The teacher concludes the class by singing with the students in order to maintain the atmosphere of the class, which has already been adapted to the activity with song, and to leave a good impression on the students so that they are motivated to learn again.

Based on three observations, the teacher taught speaking by using a different song on each of the three days. The reason for this was to make it relevant to the lesson and to make students happy rather than bored by the same song. The teacher used a song from YouTube in class. In the pre-activity, the teacher introduced the topic with a song. The teacher then used a song in the main activity to train students' pronunciation by having them sing a song. In addition, the teacher used songs to teach students new vocabulary, particularly vocabulary related to the current topic. Finally, the teacher and the students sang a song together. This is consistent with previous research by [21] and [22], who stated that because the song is used to create a comfortable and fun learning environment, the end of the implementation song must be memorable by inviting students to sing the song together so that they feel that the learning activity is meaningful.

5 Conclusion

Overall, the teacher wished to use the song for all stages of learning English speaking, beginning with pre-activity and ending with post-activity. The goal of incorporating singing at all stages of learning is to get students accustomed to English vocabulary and pronunciation by using a fun method, such as a song that is familiar to the students. The teacher believes that by hearing a real song from a native speaker, the students will be able to imitate the style and pronounce the English word correctly. Based on the results of the observation sheet, the problems with teaching English through song can be seen in the teachers' problem, which is caused by the internet connection and the student's responses. Next, the problem that occurred to the students was the student's understanding of the song in which there are some words in the song that students do not really understand the meaning of the words contained in the song.

In terms of the teacher's issue, due to the location in the countryside, the teacher cannot continue to sing a song for a long time together at the end of the lesson, making it difficult for teachers to

even rarely use the video from YouTube, or PowerPoint showing the video song. Furthermore, some students' lack of response makes it difficult for the teacher to invite students to close the lesson by singing together before the class ends. This is consistent with the findings of the interview guide, in which the teacher attempted to match the current state of the students to the song for learning in order to make them feel at ease with the song and enjoy it.

The vocabulary was varied based on the variation of the song in which the student learned more vocabulary if the students watched and understood more songs, which meant that the teacher needed to consider the choice of the material in which it must keep updated because relying on the same recording or song would not be sufficient. The fun of learning can be maintained by constantly updating the song.

6 Suggestions

6.1 To English Teachers

English teachers should determine what English songs are able to make students activate students speaking English skills by practicing their speaking in meaningful contexts. During the research conducted, the researcher used some media such as laptops, speakers, pictures, and songs. English teachers can implement songs in the teaching-learning process can motivate the students will be more interested in learning English. Besides, that is needed for English teachers to implement various activities in which possible for students can produce the language.

6.2 To Other Researchers

This study is focused on intended to describe how English songs were implemented to improve and activate the speaking skill of the students. The other researchers can follow this study for different contexts to find more actions to improve and motivate the students' speaking skills. This study can be used as a resource before the researchers do action research related to improving and activating students' speaking skills.

REFERENCES

- [1] Hatch, Evelyn, and Brown, Cheryl, *Vocabulary, Semantic and Language Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- [2] D. Campbell, *The Mozart Effect for Parent: Unlocking the Potential Of Your Child*. New York: Penguin Publisher, 2010.
- [3] D. Paul, *Teaching English to Children in Asia*. New York: Longman, 2006.
- [4] S. Parto, *Seni Musik Barat dan Sumber Daya Manusia*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Belajar, 1996.
- [5] D. Dahler, "Using songs in The Speaking Class: Improving Students' Abilities in a Relaxing Way," *ELT-Lect.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 34–38, 2014, doi: <https://doi.org/10.31849/elt-lectura.v1i1.448>.

- [6] A. Rokhim, "Improving The Speaking Skill Of The Ninth Grade Students Of mts Nu Pakis Using Songs," 2014, [Online]. Available: <http://jurnalonline.um.ac.id/data/artikel/artikel1181B6340FEFD58DA6A52FB3F11DA941E.pdf>
- [7] S. Kasihani, *Englis for Young Learners Melejitkan Potensi Anak Melalui English Class yang Fun, Asyik dan Menarik*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2001. [Online]. Available: <http://www.studytechniques.org/wwhy-study-with-flashcard-html>
- [8] D. T. Griffiee, *Song in Action*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall International, 2001.
- [9] M. Cuesta, *Songs in the English Class: A Strategy to Encourage Tenth Graders' Oral Production*. 2006.
- [10] J. McCarthy, "Songs in The Classroom: TESOL Courses," 2006. [Online]. Available: <http://www.tesolcourse.com/tesol-course-articles/songs-classroom/article-01jmc.php>
- [11] K. Schoepp, "Reasons for Using Songs in the ESL/EFL Classroom," *Internet TESL J.*, 2001, [Online]. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309390126_Reasons_for_Using_Songs_in_the_ESLEFL_Classroom
- [12] S. D. Krashen and T. D. Terrel, *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom*. San Francisco: Alemany Press, 1983.
- [13] A. Burns and H. Joice, *Focus on Speaking*. Sydney: National Center for English Language Teaching and Research, 1997.
- [14] J. Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, 4th ed. London: Edinburgh Gate, 2007.
- [15] J. McDonough and C. Shaw, *Materials and Methods in ELT*. Oxford: Blackw ll Publishers, 1993.
- [16] N. Nanda, "Western songs in improving students' speaking abilities at junior high school," 2012, doi: <http://ejournal.unp.ac.id/index.php/jelt/article/view/613>.
- [17] M. Sagita, Ramlan, and N. Vita, "The Effect of Using English Songs on Students' Speaking Skills," *J. Sains Ris. Univ. Jabal Ghafur*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2020, [Online]. Available: <http://journal.unigha.ac.id/index.php/JSR/article/view/216>
- [18] A. Ghanbari and M. Hashemian, "The effects of English songs on teacherng learners' listening comprehension and pronunciation," *Int. J. Lang. Learn. Appl. Linguist. World*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 367–375, 2014.
- [19] P. E. Kristiani and D. A. M. Pradnyadewi, "Effectiveness of TeacherTube as Learning Media in Improving Learners' Speaking Skills," *Art Teach. Engl. Foreign Lang.*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 7–11, 2001, doi: <https://doi.org/10.36663/tatefl.v2i1.97>.
- [20] Winarto, F. Saguni, and A. Syahid, "Effectiveness the Use of Audio Visual Media in Teaching Islamic Religious Education," 2020, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24239/ijcied.Vol2.Iss1.14>.
- [21] M. Mokhtar, M. Mayuasti, and M. K. Ikhsan, "The Implementation of English Song in Building English Vocabulary at Murni Kindergarten Padang," *Tell-Us J.*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 25–35, 2017, doi: <https://doi.org/10.22202/tus.2017.v3i1.2520>.
- [22] I. P. Sari, E. E. Asahra, and Yana, "Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery Using Flash Cards," *Proj. Prof. J. Engl. Educ.*, vol. 2, no. 6, p. 845, 2019, doi: <https://doi.org/10.22460/project.v2i6.p845-851>.