

THE EFFECT OF USING SONGS ON STUDENTS' VOCABULARY AT SMP NEGERI 1 BERASTAGI

Sri Asih Sitepu¹, Frida Dian Handini Lubis², Fiscilla Sembiring³

^{1,2,3}PBI FKIP Universitas Quality Berastagi

sriasihsitepu1108@gmail.com, fridadianhandinilubis@gmail.com,

friscillasembiring@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of using songs on students' vocabulary mastery at SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi. This research applied a quantitative approach with an experimental design, involving two groups: an experimental a class and control class. The sample consisted of eighth-grade students, with 30 students in each class.

The instrument used in this study was a vocabulary test in the form of multiple-choice questions. The data were collected through pre-test and post-test. The experimental class was taught by using songs as a learning medium, while the control class was taught using conventional methods without songs.

The results of the study showed that the mean score of the experimental class increased from 48 in the pre-test to 82,5 in the post-test. Meanwhile, the control class increased from 52 to 76. The hypothesis testing using the t-test showed that t-count (7,16) was higher than t-table (2,00), which means that the alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected.

It can be concluded that the use of songs has a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery. Songs can improve students' vocabulary because they provide repetition, meaningful context, and an enjoyable learning atmosphere, which increases students' motivation and engagement in learning English.

Keywords: Songs, Vocabulary Mastery, Experimental Research, English Learning.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hasil belajar peserta didik dari pengaruh lagu terhadap penguasaan kosa kata siswa di SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain eksperimen yang melibatkan dua kelompok, yaitu kelas eksperimen dengan kelas kontrol. Sampel penelitian terdiri dari siswa kelas VIII dengan jumlah masing-masing 30 siswa.

Instrumen yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah tes kosa kata dalam bentuk pilihan ganda, pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui pre-test dan post-test. Kelas eksperimen diajari menggunakan lagu sebagai media pembelajaran, sedangkan kelas kontrol diajari menggunakan metode konvensional tanpa menggunakan lagu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata kelas eksperimen meningkat dari 48 pada pre-test menjadi 82,5 pada post-test. Sementara itu, kelas kontrol meningkat dari 52 menjadi 76. Hasil uji hipotesis menggunakan uji t menunjukkan bahwa t-hitung (7,16) lebih besar dari t-tabel (2,00), sehingga hipotesis alternatif (H1) diterima dan hipotesis nol (H0) ditolak.

Dapat di simpulkan bahwa penggunaan lagu memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap penguasaan kosa kataa siswa. Lagu dapat meningkatkan kosa kata siswa karena memberikan pengulangan, konteks yang bermakna, serta suasana belajar yang menyenangkan sehingga meningkatkan motivasi dan keterlibatan siswa dalam belajar bahasa inggris.

Kata Kunci:Lagu, Penguasaan Kosa Kata, Penelitian Eksperimen , Pembelajaran bahasa Inggris.

A. Introduction

English has become an essential international language used for communication, education, technology, and global interaction. In Indonesia, English is taught from elementary to senior high school as part of the national curriculum, and students are expected to develop the core language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To successfully develop these skills, students must have sufficient vocabulary, because vocabulary is the foundation of language learning. According to Nation (2019), vocabulary knowledge is a key indicator of students' ability to understand and use a language effectively. Without an adequate vocabulary, students cannot comprehend texts, express ideas, or participate confidently in classroom activities.

Vocabulary learning remains one of the most challenging aspects for junior high school students. Many students still find it difficult to remember new words, understand word meanings in context, and use vocabulary accurately in communication. Research by Fitriani (2020) shows that traditional teaching methods—such as memorization, reading lists of words, or drilling—often make students feel bored and unmotivated, resulting in low vocabulary retention. Similarly, Sari & Widodo (2021) state that students

need engaging learning media to help them connect new vocabulary with meaningful contexts.

At SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi, preliminary observations indicate that many students struggle with English vocabulary. Students often have difficulty understanding English texts, song lyrics, and classroom materials because their vocabulary mastery is limited. Teachers also report that students tend to forget newly learned words quickly and rarely practice vocabulary outside the classroom. These problems affect students' overall English performance and reduce their motivation to learn.

To address these challenges, teachers need learning media that are enjoyable, meaningful, and capable of attracting students' interest. One effective medium widely recommended in recent studies is the use of English songs. Songs provide repetitive exposure, contextualized vocabulary, and authentic language input. According to Putri & Yuliana (2022), learning English through songs significantly improves junior high school students' vocabulary mastery because the combination of melody and context helps students remember words more easily. Similarly, Dewi (2023) found that songs create a fun learning atmosphere, reduce students' anxiety, and increase motivation, which leads to better vocabulary acquisition. Research by Nurhayati (2020) also emphasizes that songs introduce

natural pronunciation, expressions, and word usage that students can apply in daily communication.

Furthermore, songs are highly relatable to students' daily lives. Music naturally attracts adolescents, making them more willing to listen, repeat, and internalize new vocabulary. The rhythm and repetition in songs help strengthen memory, while meaningful context enhances comprehension. These characteristics make songs an effective teaching medium for improving vocabulary mastery among junior high school students.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to determine whether the use of English songs can significantly improve students' vocabulary mastery and to understand how students respond to vocabulary learning through songs. Specifically, this research seeks to: (1) describe the current state of vocabulary mastery among students before intervention, (2) analyze changes in vocabulary knowledge after exposure to song-mediated learning, and (3) verify if song-based teaching is an effective strategy for vocabulary enhancement at SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi. This study is limited to examining the effect of using selected English songs on students' vocabulary mastery, focusing on vocabulary improvement rather than other language components such as grammar or pronunciation.

Bagian-bagian yang dimaksud di atas tidak harus diuraikan dalam bentuk poin-poin terpisah. Ketajaman bagian ini merupakan pondasi bagi reviewer untuk menilai naskah yang dikirim.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with an experimental design. The research used a control group pretest-posttest design. The experimental class was given the treatment using songs as a learning medium, while the control class was taught using conventional methods without songs. A pre-test was administered before the treatment to determine the extent to which students had mastered the material, and a post-test was administered after the treatment to determine the effect of using songs on vocabulary mastery. The research design can be described as follows:

Class	Initial Test (O)	Learning (X)	Final Test (O)
K1 (Control)	O1	X1	O2
K2 (Experimental)	O3	X2	O4

Where:

K1 = Conventional Class (VIII-2)

K2 = Experimental Class (VIII-1)

O1 and O3 = Pretest

O2 and O4 = Posttest

X1 = Learning without Song Based Learning model

X2 = Learning with Song Based Learning model

1. Place and Time Of The Research

The research was conducted at **SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi**, a junior high school located in Berastagi, North Sumatra. This school was selected as the research site because it provides a suitable environment for studying the use of songs in improving students' English vocabulary. The English teachers and students at this school actively participate in English learning

activities, making it an appropriate setting for implementing the use of songs as a teaching technique.

2. Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of all eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi in the academic year 2025/2026. The eighth grade was chosen because the students at this level are already familiar with basic English vocabulary and are considered ready to receive additional vocabulary learning through songs. The sample consisted of 60 students (30 students in each class), selected through purposive sampling based on the consideration of the English teacher regarding class similarity in terms of ability level, number of students, and learning schedule.

3. Research Instrument

The main instrument used in this research was a vocabulary test, designed to measure students' ability to understand and use English vocabulary before and after the treatment. The test consisted of 10 multiple-choice questions that were validated through a validity test in class VIII-1 of SMP Negeri 2 Berastagi with 20 students. The Product Moment Correlation formula was used with a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$). The reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha showed a value of $0.757 > 0.05$, indicating that the instrument was reliable.

The selected song for the treatment was "A Million Dreams" by Benj Pasek & Justin Paul, because the lyrics contain simple daily vocabulary, descriptive words, and phrases suitable for Grade VIII students. The test was divided into two parts: pre-

test (administered before the treatment to determine students' initial vocabulary ability) and post-test (administered after the treatment to measure improvement).

4. Data Collection Techniques

In this study, the researcher used several techniques to collect the data needed to measure the effect of using songs on students' vocabulary mastery. The techniques were chosen to ensure that the information gathered was accurate, reliable, and relevant to the objectives of the research.

Data collection techniques included:

- Administering a pre-test to measure students' initial vocabulary ability
- Giving the treatment by teaching vocabulary through English songs (experimental class) or conventional method without songs (control class)
- Administering a post-test to measure improvement in vocabulary mastery
- Observation during learning activities
- Documentation through photographs

5. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted to determine whether the use of English songs has a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery. Several statistical procedures were applied:

Normality Test: Using the Liliefors test to determine whether the data is normally distributed.

Homogeneity Test: Using the F-test to determine whether the variances of the two groups are homogeneous.

Hypothesis Testing: Using the t-test formula to determine whether there is a significant difference between the two variables:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{s \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}}$$

Class	Average Student Grades
VIII-A	48
VIII-B	52

Where:

- $\bar{x}_1$ = Mean of sample 1
- $\bar{x}_2$ = Mean of sample 2
- n_1 = Number of students in experimental class
- n_2 = Number of students in control class
- ss = Combined variance calculated using:

$$s^2 = \frac{(n_1 - 1)s_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)s_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}$$

C.FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Description of Data

The research was conducted from January 26th to January 27th, 2026 at SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi. Class VIII-1 was assigned as the experimental class taught using songs as instructional media, while class VIII-2 was assigned as the control class taught using conventional methods through descriptive text material without songs.

Validity Test Results: Out of 20 multiple-choice questions tested, 10 were declared valid and 10 were invalid. The valid questions (numbered 2, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20) were used as the research instrument.

Reliability Test Results: The reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha showed a value of $0.757 > 0.05$, indicating that the 10 questions were reliable as a research instrument.

2. Pretest Results

The pretest was conducted before the treatment to measure students' initial vocabulary ability. The results showed:

3. Posttest Results

After the treatment, a posttest was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the learning methods. The results showed:

Table 4.8 Average Posttest Scores for VIII grade Students

Class	Learning Model	Average Score
VIII-B	Without Model <i>Song Based Learning</i>	76
VIII-A	With Model <i>Song Based Learning</i>	82,5

The posttest data in both classes were normally distributed (without Song Based Learning: $0.073 < 0.173$; with Song Based Learning: $0.706 < 0.173$) and homogeneous ($F = 1.21 < F_{table} = 1.92$).

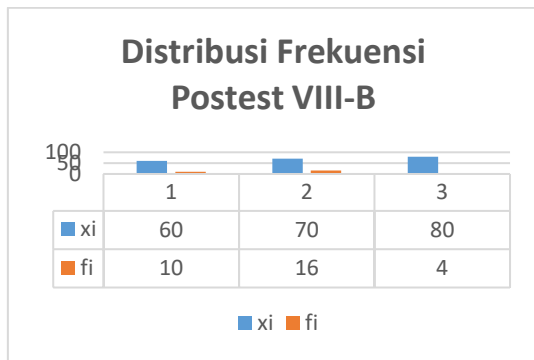


Figure 4.4 Posttest Bar Chart for Class VIII-B

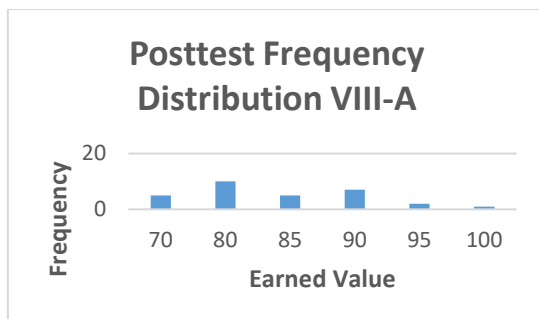


Figure 4.4 Posttest Bar Chart for Class VIII-A

4. Hypothesis Testing

Based on statistical calculations, the t-test results showed:

Class Comparison	t-count	t-table	Conclusion
Experimental vs Control	7.16	2.00	H0 rejected, H1 accepted

Since t-count (7.16) > t-table (2.00), the alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted and the null hypothesis (H0) was rejected. This means there is a significant effect of using songs on students' vocabulary mastery at SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi for the 2025/2026 academic year.

5. Discussion

The research findings demonstrate that the use of songs as a learning medium has a significant effect on students' vocabulary mastery. This is supported by several observations during the learning process:

- Increased Student Engagement:** Students in the experimental class showed higher levels of participation and enthusiasm compared to the control class. The combination of melody, rhythm, and meaningful lyrics naturally attracted students' attention and motivated them to learn.
- Enhanced Vocabulary Retention:** The repetitive nature of songs helped students remember new vocabulary more easily. The experimental class showed a significant improvement from pre-test (48) to post-test (82.5), which was higher than the control class improvement (52 to 76).
- Positive Learning Atmosphere:** Songs created a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment, which helped lower students' anxiety and increased their willingness to participate in vocabulary learning activities.
- Meaningful Context:** Song lyrics provided authentic and meaningful contexts for vocabulary learning, enabling students to understand not only the meaning of words but also how they are used in natural communication.

These findings are consistent with previous research by Setiyadi (2023), Zaharani (2023), and Tampubolon & Tamba (2022), which also found positive effects of using songs on vocabulary mastery. The results also support Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which states that enjoyable activities such as listening to songs help lower students' anxiety

and make them more receptive to new language input.

The significant improvement in the experimental class can be attributed to several factors: the combination of melody and repetition which enhances memory retention, the authentic language input which provides natural pronunciation and usage models, the meaningful context which helps students understand word meanings, and the positive emotional engagement which increases motivation and participation.

E. CONCLUSION AND

SUGGESTIONS

1. Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The implementation of the Song-Based Learning model significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery at SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi. The average pre-test score of 48 (low category) increased to 82.5 (very good category) in the post-test for the experimental class, while the control class showed a smaller improvement from 52 to 76.
2. There is a significant influence of the Song-Based Learning model on student learning outcomes in class VIII, as evidenced by the t-test results showing $t\text{-count} (7.16) > t\text{-table} (2.00)$. This indicates that the use of songs is more effective in increasing student motivation and vocabulary mastery compared to conventional learning methods.
3. The Song-Based Learning model proved to be more effective than conventional learning in helping students understand and retain new vocabulary. Students in the

experimental class were more active, engaged, and able to grasp the lesson more quickly, even among lower-achieving students.

2. Suggestions

Based on the research findings, the following suggestions are offered:

1. **For Schools:** It is hoped that teachers and students will improve the quality of learning by using the Song-Based Learning model at SMP Negeri 1 Berastagi to enhance vocabulary teaching and learning outcomes.
2. **For Teachers:** Learning should be conducted using a variety of learning models to create a learning process that doesn't tend to be boring. Teachers should create icebreakers to prevent students from getting bored or feeling sleepy, and to improve their concentration during the learning process.
3. **For Students:** By using the Song-Based Learning model, students are expected to play an active role in learning, so that the material is well understood and learning becomes more enjoyable.
4. **For Researchers:** Further research should be conducted on areas that have not been optimally achieved in the use of the Song-Based Learning model to improve student learning outcomes by increasing vocabulary skills using songs and PowerPoint. This will help ensure that the learning process in the classroom can run smoothly and conductively so that the school can produce the best and highest quality graduates.

REFERENCES

- Al Talib, A. (2022). The Importance of Vocabulary in Language Learning. *Journal of Language Teaching*.

- Dewi, N. (2023). The Effectiveness of Songs in Improving Vocabulary. *Journal of English Teaching*, 9(2), 101-110.
- Fitriani, S. (2020). Traditional Methods in Vocabulary Learning. *Journal of English Education*, 7(1), 21-29.
- Ghaleb, R., et al. (2021). Vocabulary Definition and Learning. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 13(2), 112-120.
- Hasanah, U., et al. (2023). The Use of Songs in English Language Learning. *Journal of Language Teaching*, 11(3), 145-160.
- Heni, S. (2021). Definition of Song in Language Learning. *Arts and Language Journal*, 4(1), 15-22.
- Huyen, N. T. T., & Nga, K. T. T. (2003). Learning Vocabulary Through Games. *Asian EFL Journal*, 5(4), 90-105.
- Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Loebis, R. (2020). Song as Artistic Expression. *Music and Language Journal*, 3(1), 10-18.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2019). *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nurhayati, N. (2020). Songs in Vocabulary Learning. *Journal of English Education*, 6(1), 50-60.
- Pino, D., et al. (2023). The Role of Music in Language Learning. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 14(2), 200-215.
- Putri, D., & Yuliana, R. (2022). The Effect of Songs on Vocabulary Mastery. *Journal of English Learning*, 8(2), 120-130.
- Rachmawati, E., & Firmansyah, D. (2021). Teaching Vocabulary Through Songs. *Journal of English Teaching*, 7(2), 89-97.
- Sari, R., & Widodo, H. (2021). Engaging Media in Learning. *Journal of Education*, 9(3), 88-96.
- Setiyadi, A. (2023). Effect of Using Song in Improving Students' Vocabulary Mastery. *Language Journal*, 2(2), 83-91.
- Sukirno, S., & Handayani, D. (2022). Vocabulary Mastery Aspects. *Journal of Language Education*, 11(1), 55-63.
- Tampubolon, & Tamba. (2022). The Effect of Songs on Learning Outcomes. *Journal of Education Research*.
- Webb, S., & Nation, I. S. P. (2020). *How Vocabulary is Learned*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zaharani, H. (2023). The Effect of Using Songs to Elevate Students' Vocabulary Skill. *Journal of Classroom Action Research*, 2(2), 52-65.