Teaching English Vocabulary Mediated By Song

Antika Sari Marwan[a], Nita Sari Narulita Dewi[b*], Ruslan[c]
[a] SMK Ar-Ridwan Cintamulya,Tasikmalaya, Indonesia
[bc] Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Siliwangi,Tasikmalaya, Indonesia

* Corresponding author*: nitasarinarulitadewi@unsil.ac.id*

Informasi Artikel	Abstrak
Histori Artikel *Submission*:14/11/2024 *Accepted*:20/06/2025 *Published*:30/06/2025 **Kata Kunci** Pelafalan kata; Arti Kata Bahasa Inggris; Penelitian Tindakan.	Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui perkembangan pembelajaran pelafalan kata dan arti kata bahasa Inggris melalui lagu. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah penelitian tindakan. Observasi digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data. Sementara itu, sumber data dalam penelitian ini adalah seorang anak yang berumur sekitar 9 tahun. Data yang diperoleh dari penelitian ini adalah berupa hasil observasi yang sudah ditranskripsi. Setelah semua data dikumpulkan, tematik analisis Braun & Clarke (2006) digunakan untuk menganalisis data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perkembangan pelafalan kata dan arti kata bahasa Inggris melalui lagu mengalami peningkatan dengan cara melafalkan kata bahasa Inggris, menyanyikan lagu yang telah dipelajari, memahami arti kata dengan cara menjawab pertanyaan yang diberikan, memahami arti kata dengan belajar melalui kegiatan fisik. Dari hasil penelitian, peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa penggunaan lagu dalam proses pembelajaran sangat baik dan memberikan pengaruh positif dalam pembelajaran pelafalan kata dan pemahaman arti kata bahasa Inggris.
Keywords *Word pronunciation; English vocabulary meaning; Action research.*	**Abstract** *This research aims to determine the development of English word pronunciation and meaning through songs. The research method used is action research. Observation was used to collect data. Meanwhile, the data source in this study is a child approximately 9 years old. The data obtained from this study consists of observation results that have been transcribed. After all data were collected, thematic analysis by Braun & Clarke (2006) was used to analyze the data. The results of the study show that the development of English word pronunciation and meaning through songs improves by pronouncing English words, singing the learned songs, understanding word meanings by answering provided questions, and learning meanings through physical activities. From the results, the researcher concludes that the use of songs in the learning process is very effective and positively influences the learning of word pronunciation and understanding of English vocabulary.*

Introduction

Learning English vocabulary is a basic element in mastering four language skills. By learning English vocabulary, the learners have many words to be conveyed. "Without grammar very little to be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (Hidayati, 2016) (p. 2). It means that learning English vocabulary is important in order to get new English words to be conveyed. However, Teaching English vocabulary to young learners as a foreign language is a very specialized teaching area. It is because of some reasons, they are: young learners are dependent on the teachers, they spend only short times

involved in tasks, they have difficulty focusing on details, and they are easily distracted. Thus, the teachers need to learn students' characteristics such as needs and interests.

Based on the explanation, the researcher finds the phenomenon at her home that her sister always asks several meanings of English words, such as pencil case, sharpener, scissors, and correction pen. She tells that she is often confused of doing the task given by the teacher at her school because she does not know the meaning. Besides, she faced the difficulties to pronounce the words. It is proven that she makes mistakes when she pronounces the words on her book to ask those meaning such as she pronounces the word "scissors" by /secisor/. That is why she hardly understands and follows any of her classrooms' instructions. Besides, she explains that the media used by the teacher is less interesting that is the teacher asks the students to guess the words into Indonesian and writes the materials provided on the blackboard, and asks to do the exercise in every meeting. Those steps could not increase students' interest.

Song, as one of the instructional media, is indicated as the right medium to increase the student's interest in learning English vocabulary. "Songs are useful teaching aids which raise and maintain students' motivation(2). Fransischa and Syafei (2016) stated, "Using songs to teach English is to make the young learners memorize new words easily. Besides, songs provide many possibilities for constant repetition and revising as important mechanisms of the language acquisition. Words in songs are meaningful to the young learner, which influences the acquisition in a positive way" (p.253). It means, beside song provides how to pronounce the words, the song also can help the students to get meaning easily because it is meaningful for the young learners. The previous study was conducted by (Fransischa, A., & Syafei, 2016) entitled "Using Songs to Teach English to Young Learners." This research result shows using songs to teach English to young learners is the best way to make the classroom activity be alive that can improve the young learners to learn English. Then, it makes the young learners more interested and active while they singing a song. Based on the previous explanations, the researcher is interested in conducting research entitled, "Teaching English Vocabulary Mediated by Song." Similar to the previous research, this research is focused on learning English using song. However this study has different frameworks such as this research uses song to facilitate teaching pronunciation and meaning of English words. It is beneficial to conduct different frameworks to give another reference to the teachers about the teaching English pronunciation and meaning of English words.

Methodology

This research aims at investigating the ways the students learn vocabulary mediated song. Therefore, action research was used in this research as the method of the research. (McNiff, 2006, p 13) stated "Use action research when you want to evaluate whether what you are doing is influencing your own or other people's learning, or whether you need to do something different to ensure that it is". In this method, the researcher wants to evaluate and influence the teaching vocabulary mediated by song. This research used an action research to know the improvement of song used in teaching meaning of English words. A 1998 review by Bassey found an action research as an enquiry which is carried out in order to understand, to evaluate and then to change, in order to improve educational practice(Valsa, 2005) (p. 8). It means the researcher captures how English song can improve her learning and what changes occurred while she learns meaning of English words by using song.). In conducting the action research there were several steps that conducted in order to make this research systematic and well plan. Kemmis and McTaggart model of action research was used as steps of the activities during teaching pronunciation meaning of English words mediated by song. As the whole, the researcher compiled several stages, as follows:

Table 3.1. The step teaching pronunciation meaning of English words mediated by song

Stages	Details	
Stage 1: Planning	Introduction	the researcher prepared the research instruments, designed the lesson plans, selected the English songs
Stage 2: Acting	Implementing the action	(1) Introduced the topic of the song; ask the vocabulary she already know, introduced the song by playing the song video and/or singing the song by the researcher; (2) lead the participant to sing the song line by line until she could memorize the song and could sing independently, and (3) lead the participant to sing the song together
Stage 3: Observing	Observing and recording the participant's activities, progression, and situation	Asked the participant about the contents relating to the materials. It aimed at finding information about the students' response to the use of English songs used in teaching pronunciation and meaning of English words
Stage 4: Reflecting	Analyzing the participant's activities	Reflected stage dealt with the activity to reflect the implementation of the action during a cycle which was obtained through the results of the observations

The research was conducted at participant's house, which is located in Cisayong, Tasikmalaya. In this research, There was a single participant in this research as a participant of the study. The researcher took one of young learners at Cisayong as the source of data. The participant is a female. She is about 9 years old, who is my little sister and she is the third grade of Elementary school. She likes to cycling, singing, and watching videos. She has been learning vocabulary from the first grade until now. During the teaching vocabulary, she faced the difficulties in memorizing the words, pronouncing the words and getting the meaning. Thus, the song is used as a medium in order to solve their problems. The data are obtained from observation. Observation is proper use this research, which relate with teaching learning process, students' activity, and problem, which may arise. The observation was conducted for 23 minutes in two cycles. The first cycle was conducted for 8 minutes and the second cycle was conducted for 15. During the observation, the researcher as a participant observation, it means the researcher participates fully in the activities at the same time the researcher made a note during teaching learning process to get the data.

(Braun, V & Clarke, 2006) "we provide an outline guide through the six phases of analysis, and offer examples to demonstrate the process."

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data

In this stage, the observation result was transcribed into written form. The data were read and re-read by the researcher in order to explore and to generate the initial codes.

Times	Activities	Code
00.04.04 00.04.24	R : (Well this is the song of our body, such as head, shoulders, knees and toes, eyes, and ears, and mouth, and nose. Now try to repeat it, head) (Transcript of video 1) P : Head (The participant repeats the word spoken by pronouncing the word "head"). (Transcript of video 1)	

Figure 3.1. The process of familiarizing the data

2. Generating initial codes

In this stage, the researcher made initial code from the beginning of the data from reading the transcription of observation. In this research, the researcher generated the codes based on the transcription:

Times	Activities	Code
00.04.04 00.04.24	R : (Well this is the song of our body, such as head, shoulders, knees and toes, eyes, and ears, and mouth, and nose. Now try to repeat it, head) (Transcript of video 1) P : Head (The participant repeats the word spoken by pronouncing the word "head"). (Transcript of video 1)	Pronouncing the word
00.06.40 00.06.55	R : (Do you know the song? Do you remember the song? Please, sing the song!) (Transcript of video 2) P : head, shoulders, knees, and toes . And eyes, and ears, and mouth, and nose (the researcher and the participant point their body parts while they song "body parts" song). (Transcript of video 2)	Singing the song
00.04.58	R : Head (the researcher touches her head and asks the participant to touch her head)	Teaching meaning with gesture
00.09.21	R : What is this? (The researcher tries to ask the participant by pointing her nose) (Transcript of video 2)	Asking question
00.09.25	P : Nose (The participant answers the researcher's question correctly) (Transcript of video 2)	Answering the question
00.10.54	P: (the participant tries to draw the word "head") (Transcript of video 2)	Grasping meaning

Figure 3.2. The process of generating initial codes

3. Searching for themes

In this stage, the researcher searched for themes from reading the initial codes of observation related with the research question.

Teaching Pronunciation	Grasping meaning of English words
Pronouncing the words	Teaching with gestures
Singing the song	Answering the questions
	Drawing the body parts

Figure 3.3. The process of searching for themes

4. Reviewing themes

In this step, the researcher reviewed candidate themes that was searched by me, relevant codes into the same themes, some initial codes formed into main themes and others formed into sub themes for the rest.
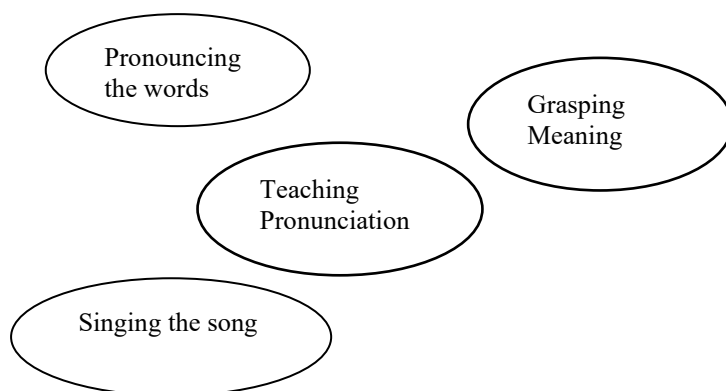

Figure 3.4. The process of reviewing potential themes

5. Defining and naming themes

After reviewing and deleting the candidate theme, the researcher defined and named the theme related to the research questions.

6. Producing the report

The last phase produced the report of the research result based on the findings of what I have done while I collected the data. (Braun, V & Clarke, 2006)

Findings and Discussions
Findings

Drawing on the thematic analysis, the findings answered my research questions about the improvement of a young learner's pronunciation and meaning of English words mediated by song. The data were collected through observation and this research found 2 main themes based on a thematic analysis (Braun, V & Clarke, 2006), they were: teaching pronunciation mediated by song grasping meaning of new English words mediated by song.

The findings revealed that the use of song facilitated her to learn, gain, enrich the vocabularies, and made her interested in learning. Watching the video song encouraged her to have more exercises in pronouncing the English words and sentences. She can improve her pronunciation by listening to the native speakers and imitating them.

A. Teaching Pronunciation Mediated by Song

In this theme, the researcher found that the researcher introduced English new words by playing a song as a medium and after playing the song the researcher pronounced the song line by line and asked the participant to repeat. To ease the process of analysis, several codes were used. The letter "R" stands for "the researcher" and the letter "P" stands for "the participant, as shown in the following transcript:

Tabel 1. Observation

00.04.04	R : Well this is the song of our body, such as head, shoulders, knees and toes, eyes, and ears, and mouth, and nose. Now try to repeat it, head. (Transcript of video 1)
00.04.24	P : Head (The participant repeats the word spoken by pronouncing the word "head"). (Transcript of video 1)
00.04.28	R : Knees (the researcher pronounces the word "knees). (Transcript of video 1)
00.04.29	P : Knees (The participant repeats the word spoken by pronouncing the word "knees"). (Transcript of video 1)

It can be implied that the observation transcript identified that the researcher gave an example how to pronounce the words by pronouncing the words sang on the song, the researcher pronounced line by line and the participant repeated the words spoken. (Kurnia, 2017) stated "The repetition indirectly helps them to memorize the word or expression." The repetition can help the participant get new English words easily and can train her pronunciation of new English words become better. (Džanić & Pejić, 2016) stated, "However, the most important feature of songs is repetition. They contain language patterns, but also develop listening skills, pronunciation and rhythm, and provide a fun atmosphere." It can be concluded that repeating song line by line is needed to give an opportunity for the participant to hear accurate pronunciation of words.

Besides teaching by repeating song line by line, the researcher taught the participant by asking her to sing the song. In the first cycle, the situation during the observation was so silent because the participant was so calm and just sat down and seldom sang the song and move their body along the music. In this second cycle the participant looked more excited in following the activity. It is proven when the researcher asked her to sing "the body parts" song, as shown as in the following transcript:

Tabel 2. The researcher and the participant sing "the body parts" song

00.05.18	(the researcher and the participant point their body parts while they sing "body parts" song) (Transcript of video 2)
00.06.40	R : Do you know the song? Do you remember the song? Please, sing the song! (Transcript of video 2)
	P : head, shoulders, knees, and toes . And eyes, and ears, and mouth, and nose (the researcher and the participant point their body parts while they song "body parts" song). (Transcript of video 2)
00.06.55	

The observation transcript implied that the participant was able to sing the song with the correct pronunciation and demonstrate the movement correctly. It can be concluded that the improvement occurred when the participant sang the "body parts" song in the second meeting. "The rhythm that verses of a song contains aids the development of children's language fluency, while rhyming words of a song

help children focus on pronouncing them correctly. (Green, Nelson and Son, 1986 as cited in Dzanic and Pejic, 2016, p. 42).

B.   Grasping Meaning of New English Words Mediated by Song

Besides teaching by repeating song line by line, the researcher taught the participant by using gestures. After song played on the laptop, the researcher asked the participant to pronounce the words while touching the body parts spoken by the researcher, as shown as in the following transcript:

Tabel 3. The researcher taught the participant by using gestures

00.04.41	R : (Transcript of video 1) Let's try to use the song (the researcher played the song for the second time) (Transcript of video 1) Stand up please!
00.04.45	R : Head (the researcher touches her head and asks the participant to touch her head) (Transcript of video 1)
00.04.58	P : Head (the participant touches her head) (Transcript of video 1)
00.04.59	R : Shoulder (the researcher asks the participant to touch her shoulder)
00.05.00	(Transcript of video 1)
00.05.02	P : Shoulder (the participant touches her shoulder) (Transcript of video 1)

The observation transcript revealed that during the observation the teacher acted as a model to give an example how to pronounce the words correctly and she did choreography like pointed her body parts existed in that song lyric. The teacher sang a song verse by verse while pointed her body parts and then the participant followed all the researcher did. (Musthafa, 2010) emphasized that virtual experiences help the children to ease them in learning, young children's learning is greatly enhanced when the learners are engaged in hands-on physical activities such as playing with physical objects or making physical movements (p. 121). It can be concluded that imitating and learning by using gestures help the participant to remember the English words

After song played on the laptop, the researcher asked several questions to check her comprehension that related to the vocabulary existed on the song lyrics and they answered the researcher's questions, as shown in the following transcript:

Tabel 3. The researcher taught the participant by using gestures

00.09.21	R : What is this? (The researcher tries to ask the participant by pointing her nose) (Transcript of video 2)
00.09.25	P : Nose (The participant answers the researcher's question correctly) (Transcript of video 2)
00.10.03	R : This? (the researcher tries to ask the participant by pointing her ears) (Transcript of video 2)
00.10.04	P : Ears (The participant answers the researcher's question correctly) (Transcript of video 2)

After the participant learned using song. The participant could grasp the meaning. This statement supports the research finding that the participant answered the questions given. Song not only served all vocabularies related to the topic, but also exercises. It let the participant to do the exercises during learning by watching the video or singing the song. The participant directly touched, held, and counted the things as the participant saw from the video or heard from Song.

The data revealed that the participant comprehended the materials and the meaning of new English words existed on the song lyric. It was proven that the participant was able to answer the questions related to the materials she learned on the song. Orlova, 1997 (as cited in Shehadeh and Farrah, 2016, p. 45) Outlined that songs can work as an encouragement for learners to use English. They may help learners

in recognizing words and meaning. It means, song can help the participant to grasp meaning of English words easily.(Shehadeh & Farrah, 2016)

Discussions

Based on the findings, the use of song can improve the participant's pronunciation and meaning of English words. Teaching her by repeating the words line by line existed on the song lyric can train her to pronounce the words correctly. ((Shin, 2017) (p. 20) stated, "Young children learn through repetition. at the younger ages, children often ask to repeat songs they love. It can be fun for YLs when the teacher plays with the different aspects of music, such as tempo, volume, and rhythm. Altering these can also serve as language exercises to help students improve fluency, pronunciation, intonation, and retention." Besides, the improvement occurred during the second meeting. She was not only pronouncing the words, but also she sang the song that she learned before. A 2013 review by (Burhayani, 2013) found that by singing the songs, students can understand the difficult words easily. Students can remember the new words by singing and doing the action of the song. Songs help students understand new words without asking another person or looking them up in the dictionary. Songs also make vocabulary learning enjoyable, fun and interesting. That is how the effectiveness can be achieved by using songs in teaching vocabulary (as cited in Shehadeh and Farrah, 2016, p. 49). In grasping the meaning of the English words, the researcher asked her to pronounce the words with gestures, answered the questions given by translating the meaning of English words into Indonesian. (Kurnia, 2017) emphasized that most young learners love to listen and to sing songs, song is one way to improve young learners' vocabulary that can make easy to memorize. It means, by using song during teaching learning process, the participant was easy to memorize, thus she can comprehend the meaning. Based on findings about the use of song in learning English, we can confirm that integrating the song in teaching learning process was good since its advantages and positive impacts in motivating and enriching the vocabularies was obvious. A review by Ara, 2009 found that songs also help even in associating words and phrases with meanings (as cited in Shehadeh and Farrah, 2016, p. 46). (Shehadeh & Farrah, 2016)

After learning using song, she explained that she enjoyed the learning, and she was likely to be more active and confident in participating at the activities. The participant can remember the new words by singing and doing the action of the song. Songs help the participant understand new words without asking another person or looking them up in the dictionary. Songs also make vocabulary learning enjoyable, fun and interesting. Therefore, the opportunities in gaining and enriching the vocabularies increased more.

At the end of the research, the researcher concluded that the use of song is very effective in teaching pronunciation and meaning of English words to young learner. It was proven by the findings of this research that her pronunciation and her comprehension of the meaning are getting better after the researcher applied this treatment and it was shown by the result of the each meeting. The participant learnt more vocabularies from the song that the researcher used, especially the vocabularies related to the name of the body parts.

Conclusion

The researcher examined the teaching learning pronunciation and meaning of English words mediated by song. The use of song in teaching vocabulary to a young learner is considered to be one of the effective way. It can be seen that the study revealed how song improved the participant in teaching pronunciation and meaning of English words. Songs make the participant easily to remember the new words by sing the song and doing the action of the song, answer the questions given by the researcher,

draw the words existed on the song, and make the participant knows how to pronounce the words correctly.

After conducting the research, the researcher proposed a suggestion for the next researcher who wants to carry out the research about teaching English to young learner mediated by song. This research used a single participant as a source of the data. Further research should be conducted with many participants to gain more insight about teaching learning pronunciation and meaning of English words mediated by song. Also, a research can be carried out to investigate the effect of using songs in developing writing and speaking skills.

References

Braun, V & Clarke, V. (2006). *Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology*. 96.

Burhayani, E. (2013). *The effectiveness of teaching vocabulary through songs to the second years students of Ikatan Keluarga KesejahteraanTentara (IKKT) Elementary School West Jakarta.* 49. www.mendeley.com The Effectiveness of Teaching Voc... preview & related info | Mendeley

Džanić, N. D., & Pejić, A. (2016). The Effect of Using Songs On Young Learners and Their Motivation for Learning English. *NETSOL: New Trends in Social and Liberal Sciences*, *1*(2), 40–54. https://doi.org/10.24819/netsol2016.8

Fransischa, A., & Syafei, A. F. R. (2016). *Using Songs to Teach English to Young Learners. Journal of English Language Teaching* (Vol. 5).

Kurnia, C. (2017). Increasing Young Learners' Vocabulary Mastery By Using English Songs. *JELE (Journal of English Language and Education)*, *3*(1), 42. https://doi.org/10.26486/jele.v3i1.266

McNiff, J. and J. W. (2006). *All you need to know about action research*. 13.

Musthafa, B. (2010). *Teaching English to Young Learners in Indonesia*. 121.

Shehadeh, I. I. A., & Farrah, M. A. A. (2016). The Effectiveness of Using Children's Songs in Developing Elementary Graders' English Vocabulary and Pronunciation in Jerusalem, Palestine. *Journal of Creative Practices in Language Learning and Teaching (CPLT)*, *4*(2). http://www.hebron.edu/staff.htm

Shin, J. K. (2017). *Get up and Sing! Get up and Move! Using Songs and Movement with Young Learners of English. In English Teaching Forum. Vol. 55, N*, 20.

Hidayati (2016). The Use of Charade Game to Teach Vocabulary (An Experimental Study of the Seventh Graders of MTs. Miftahul Khoirot Branjang in the Academic Year of 2014/215. *ELT Forum: Journal of English Language Teaching*, *5* no.*1*, 2.

Valsa, K. (2005). Action Research for Improving Practice. In *A SAGE Publication Campany* (Vol. 36, Issue 6).

Author contribution statement