

EFL Education Journal

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The Implementation of English Pop Songs to Enhance the Grade IX-C Students' Listening Comprehension Achievement at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul

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Abstract: This research investigated the improvement of the students' listening comprehension achievement by using English pop songs. The research design was Classroom Action Research. The research area was SMPN 2 Tanggul and the subjects of this research were Grade IX-C students chosen purposively by using purposive method. The data were collected from listening test, observation, interview and documentation. The results of this research showed that the students' participation and their listening comprehension achievement improved from cycle 1 to cycle 2. In cycle 1, 60.56% of the students actively participated in the teaching learning process. Meanwhile, there were 51.42% of the students who achieved the target score. In cycle 2, there were 79.68% of the students who actively involved during the teaching learning process, and 75.75% of the students achieved the target score. This means that using English pop songs could improve the students' participation and their listening comprehension achievement.

Keywords: English Pop Songs, Listening Comprehension Achievement

Listening is a daily need in human life. Everyday, people listen to for example some news, other people talking, announcements, or songs for some particular purposes. For instance, they listen to something in order to get some information they need, and this requires a good listening ability. Without having a good listening ability, it is difficult for them to comprehend the spoken language and there might be a gap of communication. Therefore, listening plays an important role in human life. In other words, if people have a good listening ability, they may get as much information as possible which is provided all over the world. Through listening, they can enlarge their knowledge and communicate with others well.

However, for the EFL students, listening comprehension can be a difficult subject to master. It is supported by Vandergrift (2007:191) who states that listening is often perceived by language learners as the most difficult skill to learn and consequently can become a source of anxiety. Moreover, based on the result of a preliminary study by interviewing the English teacher conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul, the students in the ninth grade especially class IX-C had a problem in listening skill. The English teacher said that they were less motivated in the teaching learning process of listening because of lack of vocabularies.

Meanwhile, when the teacher conducted listening activities, the teacher usually gave the listening materials in the form of monologues or dialogues from the text book. The listening materials given had similar lines, the theme was monotonous. When teaching dialogues, the teacher simply read the lines of the dialogues and performed in turn. As a result, the students were not interested in learning listening, and they could not improve their listening comprehension achievement because the materials were boring. Consequently, they did not perform well in the test, and their average score was still low. Based on the information from the English teacher, of the five classes in the ninth grade, class IX-C with 35 students had the lowest mean score that was 61.71 on listening comprehension test conducted by the English teacher.

The students' participation in the teaching learning process of listening was unsatisfactory. It can be seen from the result showing that not all the students got involved in the listening class. Meanwhile, the school requirement showed that 75% of the students had to be actively involved during the teaching learning process in listening class, but in fact, it was only 34.28% of students in the class

who participated actively in listening activity. The main problem was the materials given were relatively monotonous and not interesting. So, this situation made the students get bored to learn listening and make them to be passive in listening class.

Dealing with the existing problem, the teacher and the researcher agreed to conduct a Classroom Action Research (CAR) collaboratively to solve the classroom problem. The aims of this research were to improve the grade IX-C students' participation so as their listening comprehension achievement from fewer than 75 into ≥ 75 . In this research, the researcher and the English teacher used English pop songs as an instructional material in order to encourage the students to get involved actively in listening class.

English songs might be interesting because students are usually familiar with songs. Wherever we are, song does exist; in restaurant or café, in shopping mall, in our car. Movies, such as high school musical movie or even Korean movie present songs. Song brings enjoyment that can be highly motivating for students to learn English. Rost and Wilson (2013:49) state that songs are incredibly rich resources for teaching listening. They add that music may bring a great tune, rhythm, a story, a beautiful voice or heart felt emotions, all of which can be highly motivating for students. In addition, Karim and Hasbullah (1986:625) argue that songs can increase the students' motivation in learning language, mainly that of the poor students. English songs can be applied by the teacher in order to make the teaching and learning process enjoyable.

Songs can also be effective materials for learning English since they provide the language they face in real life and offer multiple opportunities to understand the

lyrics. On this point, Cakir, in Sevik (2012:332), says that songs are wonderful materials and they provide the occasion of real language use in meaningful situation. In addition, Wilson (2008:50) says that choruses in songs mean song listeners hear the same phrases with the same emphasis several times, giving the students multiple opportunities to understand the lyrics.

There are many kinds of English song. They are pop songs, rock songs, kid songs, jazz songs, R&B songs, reggae songs, rap songs, and etc. Students in junior high schools, who are considered to be teenagers mostly, love to listen to pop songs because it is easy to listen. As a result, English pop songs were used as the material for listening activities in this research.

Some researchers have done a research on using songs. One of them was Fransiska (2011), who conducted an experimental research by using English songs on listening comprehension achievement. She found that English songs gave a significant effect on students' listening comprehension achievement. Another study was done by Indriagni (2009) in her classroom action research, she proved that songs were an effective teaching material for teaching listening and it could increase the students' listening comprehension achievement and also their active participation.

From the explanation above, a research entitled “Improving the Grade IX-C Students' Participation and Their Listening Comprehension Achievement by Using English Pop Songs at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul” was conducted.

Research Method

The design of this research was Classroom Action Research (CAR) which was intended to improve the IX-C students' participation and their listening comprehension achievement by using English Pop songs at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul. Elliot (1991: 69) defines action research as the study of a social situation, with a view to improve the quality of action within it. Moreover, McMillan (1992:12) states that its purpose is to solve a specific classroom problem or to make decision of a single local site. The design of this classroom action research was adapted from the cycle model proposed by Lewin in Elliot (1991: 69). Concerning the research implementation, each cycle covered four activities, namely: the planning of the action, the implementation of the action, classroom observation and reflection of the action.

In this research, the action was conducted collaboratively with the English teacher of the ninth grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul. The subjects of this research were the IX-C students at SMPN 2 Tanggul in the 2014/2015 academic year. They were taken by using purposive method. The number of the students in this class was 35. The minimum standard score requirement was 75.

There were two kinds of data in this research. They were primary data and supporting data. The primary data in this research was gathered by administrating a listening test and by observing the class in each cycle. While the supporting data was collected from interview and documentation. Based on the way of scoring, the listening test in this research used objective test in the forms of multiple-choice and True-False.

This research was conducted in two cycles. The students' participation and the students' scores in the first cycle did not fulfill the standard score requirement, so that the actions were continued to the second cycle to achieve the target of this research. The activities of the research used the following procedures: the first step was doing the preliminary study by interviewing the English teacher of the ninth grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul to get the supporting data. The second step was planning the action (constructing the lesson plan, preparing the listening material and preparing the observation checklist). The third step was implementing and observing the action (teaching listening through English pop songs and observing the action). The fourth step was administering listening comprehension test. The fifth step was analyzing the results on the observation and listening test. The sixth step was reflecting the results of the observation and listening comprehension achievement.

Research results

This research was conducted in two cycles to achieve the target criteria of this research. The research results showed that the average percentage of the students' participation in cycle 1 was 60.56%. In other words, the result of the research observation in the cycle did not achieve the success criteria of the research.

In this research, the students' participation was evaluated based on six indicators namely: 1) listening to the song, 2) mentioning the unfamiliar word, 3) identifying the meaning of unfamiliar word, 4) mentioning the general overview of the song, 5) doing the exercises and, 6) singing the song together. Based on the result of observation in cycle 1, it was known that the indicators 2, 3 and 4 were found the low indicators. Some factors that caused the weaknesses of the

three indicators include the fact that in the indicator 2, most of the students did not understand the unfamiliar words from the song. Meanwhile, the indicator 3 depends on the indicator 2 in the sense that if the students found more unfamiliar words, they could not certainly understand the meaning of the words as well. Besides, for indicator 4, most of the students could not mention or tell the general overview of the song based on their understanding because they were afraid of making mistakes or they were not brave enough to mention or tell it to the class.

Therefore, to solve these problems, the researcher and the English teacher implemented some revision to get the better result in cycle 2. For indicator 2, the researcher and the English teacher played the song several times to put the students at ease before they learnt listening by giving them enough time following the melody or rhythm of the song. After they finished following the melody or rhythm of the song, the researcher and the English teacher told the students to pay more attention to the lyric of the song. Dealing with indicator 3, the students had to mention the unfamiliar words as many as possible, and also, the researcher and the English teacher told the students to bring dictionary to know the correct meaning of unfamiliar words. Besides, for indicator 4, the researcher and the English teacher explained more to the students that they were allowed to tell everything about the general overview of the song based on the information they got from the song or based on their understanding, and told them it was fine whether the answer was right or wrong. The students who tried to give the answer would be appreciated.

Meanwhile, based on the students' listening comprehension test results in cycle 1, the students' listening comprehension test result in cycle 1 did not meet the

success criteria that was 70% of the students who should get the score ≥ 75 in the listening comprehension test. The results of students' listening comprehension test in cycle 1 showed that 51.42% of the students who got score ≥ 75 . Therefore, it was necessary to continue the action to the second cycle by revising some problems found in cycle 1. For the students' listening comprehension achievement in comprehending general information and specific information, most of students failed in comprehending specific information because the percentage of the students who answered incorrectly the specific information was higher than the general information. Therefore, the researcher and the English teacher asked the students to recall the information in detail by giving more explanation about the bottom-up process which depended more on the words they heard in order to lead them towards the meaning of the song.

Some revision of the problems found in both students' participation and listening comprehension achievement in cycle 1 could solve the problems, so that the results in cycle 2 were better than cycle 1. The results of cycle 2 showed that the average result of the students' participation was 79.68% and the percentage of the students who got score ≥ 75 was 75.75%. It can be stated that the use of English pop songs improved the students' participation in joining the teaching learning process of listening and their listening comprehension achievement. Thus, the result achieved the objective of the research.

Discussion

The result of data analysis in this research showed that using English pop songs could improve the grade IX-C students' participation and their listening comprehension achievement at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul. The improvement can be seen from the results of the observation from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. The students'

participation increased from 51.42% in Cycle 1 to 75.75% in Cycle 2. In other words, the average percentage result of students' participation increased from 60.56% in Cycle 1 to 79.68% in Cycle 2. There was an increase as much as 19.12% of the average percentage result of students who were active in teaching learning process.

Similarly, their listening comprehension achievement also improved, and the result can be seen from the percentage of students who could pass the target criteria of this research. The percentage increased from 51.42% in cycle 1 to 75.75% of the students who got score 75 or higher in cycle 2.

The improvement of the students' listening comprehension achievement was because English pop songs could attract the students' attention in teaching learning process of listening. In line with this, during the teaching and learning process of listening, the students showed more attention to the lesson and showed good responses through active participation, in which the responses increased in every meeting. Therefore, it can be said that teaching listening by using English pop songs could improve the grade IX-C students' participation and their listening comprehension achievement. Hence, the results of the action in Cycles1 and Cycle 2 proved the action hypotheses that the use of English pop songs could improve the students' participation and their comprehension achievement in teaching learning process of listening at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul.

The result of this research was relevant to the theories suggested by some experts. As Keskin (2011:379) states that songs amuse students; they reduce the level of boredom existing in ordinary language teaching and increasing students towards studying. In addition, Rost and Wilson (2013:49) state that music may

bring a great tune, rhythm, a story, a beautiful voice or heart felt emotions, all of which can be highly motivating for the students. In line with it, Karim and Hasbullah (1986:625) argue that songs can increase the students' motivation in learning language, mainly that of poor ones. Further, the results of this research are relevant to the previous research results conducted by Fransiska (2011) and Indriagni (2009). This means that using English pop songs improved the grade IX-C students' listening comprehension achievement at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings as discussed before, teaching English using English pop songs at SMP Negeri 2 Tanggul could improve the grade IX-C students' participation and their listening comprehension achievement. This means that using English pop songs in English language teaching (ELT) is one of the potential alternatives to solve the listening comprehension problems of the students like those who learn English at the target school of this research.

The English teacher should use English pop songs as alternative instructional materials in teaching English especially listening activities in order to improve the students' listening comprehension achievement. Besides, it can help the teachers to make the situation in teaching learning process comfortable. Besides, their students might enjoy listening to English songs and understand the words from the song lyrics easily. In other words, English pop songs may increase their motivation and interest in learning English through listening.

Furthermore, the future researchers who have problems in teaching listening comprehension are suggested to use English pop song as the instructional materials in their for example experimental research because songs are so

enjoyable that the students as their respondents might be highly motivated learning English especially listening. With songs, the students have fun and at the same time they may learn the language of the song lyrics.

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