

## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF USING THE SONGS TO IMPROVE PRONUNCIATION

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**Abstract:** Pronunciation is an essential aspect of language learning, and it can be challenging for many students to master. However, research has shown that using songs in language learning can effectively improve pronunciation skills. One reason why songs may be effective for improving pronunciation is that they provide learners with a model for correct pronunciation. When students listen to and sing along with songs, they are exposed to the correct pronunciation of words and phrases, which can help them develop a more accurate pronunciation. This research uses qualitative methods, especially interview analysis. One of the most crucial sources in qualitative research to gain an in-depth understanding of how people experience, feel, and interpret the social world is the interview. According to Oakley, a qualitative interview is a form of framework where practices and standards can be reached, pushed, and reinforced in addition to being documented. This research aims to determine students' perceptions regarding the use of songs as a tool to improve English pronunciation easily. This research was guided by three main research questions: 1. What are the students' perceptions of using English songs to improve their pronunciation? 2. Can English songs help EFL students get better at pronouncing words? 3. How could using music help students pronounce words more fluently? Each song aimed to explore a specific aspect of songs for pronunciation. This study aims to gain insight into the various ways students use songs to learn language, such as saying words and hearing the rhythm and lyrics to facilitate vocabulary learning. Learning can be made more engaging and entertaining by using songs. While learning the target language, pupils feel at ease in a calm environment and pick up the language (as seen by their better pronunciation). They become more open to learning due to lowering their affective filter. Songs also aid students in better comprehending and pronouncing key phonological elements.

**Keywords:** Songs, Pronunciation, Connected speech.

**Abstrak :** Pengucapan adalah aspek penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa, dan ini bisa menjadi keterampilan yang menantang untuk dikuasai oleh banyak siswa. Namun, penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan lagu dalam pembelajaran bahasa dapat menjadi cara yang efektif untuk meningkatkan keterampilan pengucapan (Chen & Liang, 2018 Godwin-Jones, 2019 Lee, 2021 Zahra & Hadi, 2020). Salah satu alasan mengapa lagu mungkin efektif untuk meningkatkan pelafalan adalah karena lagu tersebut memberikan contoh pelafalan yang benar kepada pelajar. Ketika siswa mendengarkan dan bernyanyi bersama lagu, mereka dihadapkan pada pengucapan kata dan frasa yang benar, yang dapat membantu mereka mengembangkan sendiri pengucapan yang lebih akurat. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif, khususnya analisis wawancara. Salah satu sumber paling penting dalam penelitian kualitatif untuk mendapatkan pemahaman mendalam tentang bagaimana orang mengalami, merasakan, dan menafsirkan dunia sosial adalah wawancara (Dong, 2012) Menurut Oakley, wawancara kualitatif adalah suatu bentuk kerangka kerja di mana praktik dan standar dapat dicapai, didorong, dan diperkuat selain didokumentasikan (Nasreen, 2019). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi siswa mengenai penggunaan lagu sebagai alat untuk meningkatkan pengucapan bahasa Inggris dengan mudah. Penelitian ini dipandu oleh tiga pertanyaan penelitian utama 1. Apa persepsi siswa tentang penggunaan lagu bahasa Inggris untuk meningkatkan pelafalan mereka? 2. Dapatkah lagu berbahasa Inggris membantu siswa EFL

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menjadi lebih baik dalam mengucapkan kata-kata? 3. Bagaimana menggunakan musik dapat membantu siswa mengucapkan kata-kata dengan lebih lancar?, yang masing-masing bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi aspek pengucapan lagu tertentu. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendapatkan wawasan tentang berbagai cara siswa menggunakan lagu untuk belajar bahasa, seperti mengucapkan kata-kata dan mendengarkan ritme dan lirik dalam memfasilitasi pembelajaran kosakata. Pembelajaran dapat dibuat lebih menarik dan menghibur dengan menggunakan lagu. Saat mempelajari bahasa target, siswa juga merasa nyaman dalam lingkungan yang tenang dan memahami bahasa tersebut (seperti yang terlihat dari pengucapan mereka yang lebih baik). Mereka menjadi lebih terbuka untuk belajar karena menurunnya filter afektif mereka. Lagu juga membantu siswa dalam memahami dan mengucapkan elemen fonologis kunci dengan lebih baik.

**Kata kunci:** Lagu, Pengucapan, pengucapan yang terhubung.

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## INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation is an essential aspect of language learning, and it can be challenging for many students to master. However, research has shown that using songs in language learning can effectively improve pronunciation skills (Chen & Liang, 2018; Godwin-Jones, 2019; Lee, 2021; Zahra & Hadi, 2020). One reason why songs may be effective for improving pronunciation is that they provide learners with a model for correct pronunciation. When students listen to and sing along with songs, they are exposed to the correct pronunciation of words and phrases, which can help them to develop a more accurate pronunciation themselves. Additionally, songs often use rhythm, melody, and rhyme, which can help learners to remember the correct pronunciation of words and phrases (Godwin-Jones, 2019).

Research has also shown that using songs in language learning can be a fun and engaging way to improve pronunciation, which can help to motivate learners and make the learning process more enjoyable (Lee, 2021). Furthermore, using songs can help learners develop their listening skills, which are essential for accurate pronunciation (Zahra & Hadi, 2020). Despite the potential benefits of using songs to improve pronunciation, it is important to note that this approach may not be effective for all learners. Some students may not enjoy singing or may find it difficult to understand the lyrics of songs in a foreign language. Additionally, it is important to use songs that are appropriate for the level and interests of the learners, as well as songs that use correct pronunciation themselves (Chen & Liang, 2018).

Learning English is a means of communicating with many people. The first language we have is our mother tongue, but of course, we must have a foreign language to be able to communicate with many people. The most widely used language for worldwide communication is now English. Many individuals wish to learn English since it is the most widely used language for communication and has developed into an international language (Anggarista et al., 2022). According to (Sadilah & Gaol, 2021), understanding and conveying information, ideas, and emotions while also advancing science, technology, and culture are all parts of communication.

English aims to facilitate intercultural communication. One of the foreign languages taught around the world, including in Indonesia, is English. Students must devote a lot of effort to perfecting their pronunciation because it is one of the hardest abilities to learn (Gilakjani, 2012). It is one method for enhancing listening abilities. It has always been difficult to pronounce words correctly, especially when learning a new language like English. Compared to Indonesian or other regional languages, English is a vastly distinct language.

The pronunciation is where there is a noticeable variation. The spoken and written forms of English are not usually the same (Rais et al., 2020). Of course, as teachers, we must be able to improve students' pronunciation. Rais et al. (2020) state that when learning pronunciation, the objective is not to have students speak a word like a native speaker. Since there are discrepancies between the symbol and its sounds, pronunciation is one of the most crucial aspects of using English to connect with people. To effectively interact with others, it's important to have a strong vocabulary and clear pronunciation (Kusnandar & Nurhasanah, 2022).

Along with learning English vocabulary and grammar, pronunciation has emerged as a crucial component of the language since it facilitates comprehension of spoken English (Anggarista et al., 2022). Children spontaneously and unconsciously pick up languages, which is a special kind of talent (Moats, 2020). Media is a vehicle or medium that can successfully spread knowledge and aid in English teaching and learning activities (Fleming, 2011). Additionally, utilizing a tongue twister to teach and learn English pronunciation can be tough and interesting because Indonesian ESL students may find it difficult to pronounce words in an English tongue twister as a native speaker due to their mother tongue (Putu Edina Prassista Rasmadiani, 2022).

Language has always been thought of as the foundation of human intelligence to determine whether the pupils believed that English songs could assist them in enhancing their listening skills (Souhuwat et al., 2023). Additionally, there are a variety of learning media, including photographic images, maps, globes, and audio-visual, visual, and audio-visual formats. Similarly to this, Piske, MacKay, and Flege propose that musical talent and imitation work together to influence L2 learning aptitude. The latter, however, "has not yet been identified as one of those variables that have an important influence on the degree of L2 foreign accent," they are aware of. Some scholars have recently become interested in mimicry (Szyszka, 2015). They have discovered mildly favorable associations between pronunciation performance and aptitudes for mimicking sounds in foreign words and sentences, and Students must devote a lot of effort to perfecting their English pronunciation because it is one of the hardest abilities to learn (Gilakjani, 2012).

One of the mediums used by students to enhance their pronunciation, make studying more enjoyable, and help them accept learning by emulating the sound of the song being listened to was listening to English songs. So, one technique to enhance English speech was to listen to English music (Sadilah & Gaol, 2021). The use of language is crucial for effective communication. The Oxford Dictionary defines pronunciation as how a language, a word, or a sound is uttered. Cook explains that pronunciation is the way that English sounds are produced (Gilakjani, 2012). Getting students used to speaking the target language will help them pronounce words more clearly because speaking practice can improve students' pronunciation knowledge. (Rais et al., 2020)

In conclusion, the use of songs in language learning can be an effective way to improve pronunciation skills. By providing learners with a model for correct pronunciation and using rhythm, melody, and rhyme to aid memory and engagement, songs can help students develop their pronunciation skills in a fun and engaging way. However, it is important to consider individual learner differences and select appropriate songs that align with the learners' levels and interests.

One of the key abilities that learners of English must master is listening. Our ears unconsciously listen carefully when we listen to music, especially English songs, and they can understand the meaning of the text that is being discussed in listening classes with ease (Pali & Rando, 2020) Songs are thought of as a way to master and grow the oral vocabulary because they include the most recent words and expressions (Maret &

Repository, 2009) One of the easiest and most exciting methods to engage students, keep their attention, and make pronunciation learning fun is by using songs as an innovative and effective teaching tool for English pronunciation (Džanić & Pejić, 2016) Pronunciation can help with vocabulary development and exercises to ensure that the mouth produces the right sounds, emphasis, and intonation, enabling clear communication between people (Hidayatullah, 2018) For the students who are reluctant to speak in English class, learning English through songs also promotes a welcoming environment (Putu Edina Prassista Rasmadiani, 2022) The main objective of language learning and instruction is to develop students' ability to communicate effectively and critically.

To avoid misconceptions, it is important to have strong pronunciation in addition to good vocabulary and grammar when speaking and writing in English (Panggabean, 2013). Songs can help pupils learn their memories more quickly and become more motivated. Songs can be a useful tool for learning vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in English (Sadilah & Gaol, 2021). It is crucial to start learning English at a young age. The teacher may make the pupils interact and show them how to use special learning tools, claiming that since English pronunciation is given so much emphasis, knowing English pronunciation is crucial.

We can learn sound, stress, rhythm, intonation, and vocabulary when it comes to pronouncing words (Gilakjani, 2012). The researcher, in this instance, selected just one audio-visual medium because it is essential for memory enhancement and can deepen students' knowledge (Purba, 2018). Several theoretical perspectives support the use of songs to improve pronunciation in language learning. One such perspective is the input hypothesis, which suggests that learners acquire language when they are exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly above their current level of proficiency (Krashen, 1985).

Songs can provide this type of input by exposing learners to authentic language in context and helping them to develop their listening skills. Another theoretical perspective that supports the use of songs in language learning is the affective filter hypothesis, which suggests that learners are more successful when they are motivated, relaxed, and confident (Krashen, 1985). Songs can help to create a positive and enjoyable learning environment, which can help learners feel more comfortable and confident when

practicing their pronunciation skills. Additionally, research has shown that music can aid memory and improve learning outcomes (Jentschke, Koelsch, Sallat, & Friederici, 2008). Songs often use melody, rhythm, and rhyme, which can help learners to remember the correct pronunciation of words and phrases.

From a social constructivist perspective, learning is an active and collaborative process that involves making meaning through interaction with others and with the environment (Vygotsky, 1978). Songs can provide a platform for learners to interact with each other and with the language in a social context, which can help to reinforce correct pronunciation and develop communicative competence. Overall, the use of songs to improve pronunciation in language learning is supported by theoretical perspectives that emphasize the importance of comprehensible input, motivation, memory, social interaction, and communication. By providing learners with an enjoyable and engaging way to practice their pronunciation skills, songs can be an effective tool for language learning.

## METHOD

This research used qualitative research, which means the result analysis will use interview analysis. One of the most crucial sources in qualitative research to gain an in-depth understanding of how people experience, feel, and interpret the social world is the interview (Dong, 2012). According to Oakley, a qualitative interview is a form of framework where practices and standards can be reached, pushed, and reinforced in addition to being documented (Nasreen, 2019). This research was conducted to collect as much data and information as possible regarding EFL students' perceptions of songs as a learning platform to improve English pronunciation.

The sampling approach for this study was purposeful sampling since it guarantees a range of perspectives and zeroes on particular characteristics that aid the researchers in discovering the solutions to their research questions. (Palingkas, et.al. 2016)

**Table 1.** Demographic Features of the Participants

<b>Initial</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>College</b>
CD	23	Male	UNAI
JS	20	Male	UNAI
CR	21	Male	UNAI
CS	18	Female	UNAI
KN	21	Male	UNAI
GK	20	Male	UNAI

The research instrument is the interview analysis. Researchers contacted them via WhatsApp to ask about their willingness to become research subjects. Researchers held direct meetings to make it easier to provide information about this process. To guide participants throughout the storytelling process, the researcher prepared a guide and several questions. To collect data, researchers asked questions and answers to participants, and participants answered comfortably according to their thoughts without coercion. This research involved choir students who used English songs as their singing habit.

After collecting data, researchers transcribed it before analyzing it. The researcher transcribed the narrative. The researchers then applied thematic analysis to analyze the data. (Nowell et al., 2017) said that thematic analysis is a useful method for examining the perspectives of different study participants, highlighting similarities and contrasts, and eliciting unexpected findings. (Wicks, 2017) To preserve the participants' privacy, initials were made to report statements.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Results**

The interview analysis approach is used to present the research findings. This study was done to find out how students who participate in choirs feel about using English songs to practice pronouncing words correctly. Six students were interviewed to find out their thoughts on using English music as an online learning platform to enhance English pronunciation. Researchers gather information, arrange it, and analyze it to address research issues. A summary of each study question's analysis and findings can be found below.

### **Aspects in Promoting English Improving Pronunciation Use of Songs**

Certainly, promoting English perception through songs to improve pronunciation can be an effective and engaging method. (Wijaya & Surabaya, 2018) Here are several aspects that can increase its effectiveness:

**Lyrics Selection** : Choose songs with spoken and coherent lyrics. To make songs easier for students to understand and imitate, choose songs that are not too fast or have a strong accent.

Relevance : Choose music that speaks to the learners' interests and inclinations. Learners are more likely to actively and regularly interact with music they appreciate, which improves pronunciation and memory.

Practice and Repetition: Promote frequent singing and listening. Accurate pronunciation patterns are reinforced by repetition, which also develops muscle memory for precise sound production.

### ***Dynamic Engagement***

Using songs to improve pronunciation is fun for students and makes them more enthusiastic about learning English. Like the quote below:

*P1: Yes, I like listening to English songs in my spare time. Yes, I like listening to English songs, and I learn English through these songs.*

*P2: I like English songs, and I listen to them every day.*

For students, listening to English songs is very enjoyable. They listen to them every day, and in their free time; apart from accompanying them in their free time, they also use them to hone their pronunciation skills in English because songs can entertain and improve their mood in their activities. Therefore, the qualitative results are supported by student responses, which show that songs benefit students in various ways, including improving pronunciation skills. The impact of using songs on students' focus, involvement, enjoyment, perceived learning, motivation, and satisfaction was examined by (khoerul ummah, 2022).

### ***Learning Assessment***

Assessing students' learning of English songs involves evaluating their understanding, pronunciation, engagement, and overall proficiency in using the language through song. Based on the students' experience:

*P1: I enjoy singing at Unai. I have been in the choir since the first semester, and I am very comfortable singing in English.*

*P2: English songs are very helpful in improving my pronunciation.*

*P3: I'm not very good at learning English, but through songs, I can pronounce the pronunciation correctly.*

*P4: Something magical for me; I don't really like English lessons, but the songs that I often listen to all this time are in English, and I'm comfortable with that.*



Rhythm and Melody: Songs typically have a distinct rhythm and melody, which can help regulate the pace and flow of speech. The rhythmic patterns in music can assist in syllable stress and timing, leading to clearer pronunciation. Songs, particularly the chorus, give pupils realistic and captivating (catchy) examples of how entire phrases are spoken, sometimes to the point where it becomes challenging for them to identify individual words. (Wijaya & Surabaya, 2018)

*P5: To be honest, I listen to English songs not to improve my pronunciation in English but just for the fun of singing. From there, there are also benefits for me in learning the language.*

*P6: English songs are very interesting in every word, so I chose to learn the language from songs*

Contextual Learning: Songs often provide context for the words and phrases being sung, which can aid in comprehension and retention. When individuals understand the meaning and context of the lyrics, they are better able to pronounce them correctly. (Muhammadiyah & Timur, 2023)

*P2: I like the pop music genre. Pop songs often have lyrics that are easy to understand and melodies that are easy to follow.*

*P6: The music genre that I choose is reggae music. Even though reggae may have a different pronunciation style from other genres, such as pop or rock, reggae music can help improve pronunciation.*

Overall, songs provide a powerful and enjoyable context for practicing pronunciation, and this can help a person improve their speaking skills more effectively. (Kaswari et al., 2023) Apart from the music genre, another important thing is to choose songs with clear lyrics that are appropriate to one's level of English understanding.

All things considered, the songs offer a compelling and entertaining setting for honing your English pronunciation. Music can effectively aid in speaking skill improvement, particularly if the music is selected with understandable lyrics and is suitable for the listener's English understanding level.

### **Students' perceptions of the use of songs as improving pronunciation**

Songs offer repeated exposure to natural pronunciation patterns, helping students internalize them. Singing along reinforces pronunciation and can improve fluency. (Kaswari et al., (2023) lyrics provide context for vocabulary and pronunciation, making it

easier to understand how sounds are used in everyday speech. Songs offer repeated exposure to natural pronunciation patterns. There are lots of applications that can be used for online learning. Learning while enjoying music is a lot of fun, but songs may not address all the pronunciation challenges students face. However, incorporating songs into pronunciation practice can be a valuable tool. Using a variety of genres exposes students to different accents and pronunciations, giving them a broader understanding (Wijaya & Surabaya, 2018).

*P3: Listening to songs has become my habit, so when I learn pronunciation through songs, I no longer feel lazy.*

*P4: For me, songs can teach me the pronunciation of various language accents.*

*P5: With the melody in the song, I can follow the pronunciation well and correctly.*

*P1: Various genres of songs improve my speaking style and help me explore pronunciation.*

Song lyrics are distinct from other types of literature due to their strong connection to rhythm. They can, therefore, be effectively used to teach many characteristics of natural pronunciation. Through song practice, it is simple to recognize and practice all of the characteristics of connected speech, including reductions. Furthermore, several long-term studies on the requirements for language learning in the field of teaching English as a foreign language have revealed that, across a wide range of nations, students' top interests are in pronunciation (Wijaya & Surabaya, 2018).

## **Discussion**

This research aims to determine students' perceptions regarding the use of songs as a tool to improve English pronunciation easily. This research was guided by three main research questions, each of which aimed to explore a specific aspect of songs for pronunciation. This study aims to gain insight into the various ways students use songs to learn language, such as saying words and hearing the rhythm and lyrics to facilitate vocabulary learning. The second research question investigated students' perceptions of the effectiveness of using songs in helping EFL students become better at pronouncing words. This aspect aims to determine how using music can help students pronounce words more fluently. Listening to English songs facilitates students' familiarization with the various accents, intonations, and rates of speech used in the language.

Findings from research on the use of songs as an effective technique to improve a variety of characteristics of student's language proficiency, including motivation, speaking, listening, comprehension, grammar, and cultural awareness, are frequently supported by study findings on the use of songs in language learning. Listening to songs in English helps students become familiar with the various accents, intonations, and rates of speech used in English (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021). Participants considered it a learning application that aroused interest but did not have a strong impact on students' vocabulary development, even though it had a small impact on expanding students' vocabulary knowledge. (Kurniawan et al., 2014) Highlighted that when students add more terms to their vocabulary, they should be able to connect those new words to what they already know.

Educators increasingly emphasize the importance of using songs to improve pronunciation; therefore, listening to songs helps students get used to learning songs as a means of learning pronunciation. Results from studies on the use of music to improve language are consistent with numerous other studies. The advantages of utilizing music in language learning situations have been emphasized by numerous research studies, particularly in foreign languages like English.

## **CONCLUSION**

Learning can be made more engaging and entertaining by using songs. While learning the target language, pupils also feel at ease in a calm environment and pick up the language (as seen by their better pronunciation). They become more open to learning as a result of lowering their affective filter. Songs also aid students in better comprehending and pronouncing key phonological elements. Lastly, it is advised that the songs be carefully chosen, considering a variety of factors such as the student's skill levels, ages, and preferences in addition to the songs' rhythm and degree of difficulty.

Learning through songs can be recommended for students to improve their English learning. Because of the students' responses above, songs are very influential in the development of English pronunciation because when we learn monotonously, it is very difficult for us to imitate, but when we learn pronunciation accompanied by music that has melody and rhythm, it will be easier. Learning through songs will make the class atmosphere more comfortable for learning English and easier to understand. Students can understand short and simple sentences using songs. "Learning using songs in language

learning for the student not only enriches their vocabulary but also increases their knowledge of English" (Hatimah Husnul, 2021).

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