



Contents lists available at [Journal IICET](#)

**JPGI (Jurnal Penelitian Guru Indonesia)**

ISSN: 2541-3163(Print) ISSN: 2541-3317 (Electronic)

Journal homepage: <https://jurnal.iicet.org/index.php/jpgi>



## The implementation of songs in teaching listening for young learners in online learning environment

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### Article Info

#### Article history:

Received Mar 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Revised Apr 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Accepted May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022

#### Keyword:

Listening skills

Online class

Young learners

Songs

### ABSTRACT

There are currently a variety of technologically-based techniques for creating an attractive English-learning environment for young learners. Using songs as an engaging technique in audiovisual offers meaningful sources of interesting and relevant listening materials. This study investigates what learning principles young learners observe in songs and how they respond to songs during the online learning experience. Twelve students were included in a case study at a private elementary school in Jakarta. This study revealed that the materials presented in songs and videos align with the learning principles of young learners, such as they have short attention and are easy to distract, they can gain understanding from direct experience through objects and visual aids, they are enthusiastic and positive about learning, and they are being responsive to the instruction. These findings contribute to facilitating a more creative learning environment. Students generally responded positively by intimately watching videos and participating in activities. They enjoyed learning English through songs. Therefore, songs are recommended in EFL classrooms as supplementary activities or at home for self-study.



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### Introduction

As one of the worldwide languages spoken in Indonesia, English plays a crucial role in the realm of education. The same as in Indonesian primary school education. The national test for junior high and high school students includes English as a subject (government regulation number 32 of 2013 Chapter 70, paragraphs 3 and 5). It was in Minister of Education and Culture No. 59 of 2014 about the 2013 Curriculum. It becomes a required topic taught from primary school through college. Therefore, mastering spoken language is highly crucial in communicating. However, to master spoken language, in language programs, listening tends to be disregarded. Many language teachers believe that listening is automatically gained when learners learn to speak a language. It seems that it is not easy for teachers to choose the right methods and activities because they have to consider what students like and what methods appeal to them without losing the essence of learning. (Alzamil, 2021) states that listening is ranked as the most challenging. Listening is one of the ultimate decisive skills to experienced, since listening needs to be mastered. It is not just hearing activity, but comprehending the meaning. As the key communication tool, listening is one of the abilities that junior high school students must learn (Lippke, 1974; (Susanto and Rachmadtullah 2019)).

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Songs have been known by all circles as a medium to help students to easily remember words in learning English. They can make students like to memorize and pronounce words. The progress of listening is deliberated in terms of the capability to understand the words what the speaker said. This is in line with (Gilakjani and Ahmadi, 2011) who believes that listening is the three dimensional process. It is a co-ordinate function involving listening, thinking and seeing (ears, mind and eyes). It is an active process and not an isolated action. Listening is one of the abilities to be taught at the elementary level in Indonesia in accordance with the 2013 basic curriculum. Based on the writer observations and classroom experiences in listening class, pupils are less motivated during the teaching and learning process. It can be found when the teacher offered a listening test, the students continued to converse with their peers and paid little attention to the subject delivered by the instructor. Some students continue to miss answers and do poorly on the task. Additionally, the children lack motivation for listening activities. Additionally, it lowers their enthusiasm and interest in listening. Consequently, pupils struggle with their learning tactics and aspirations (Luis and Moncayo, no date). To address the aforementioned issue, the researcher decided to conduct the study to the second grader of elementary school. The teacher utilized the songs and video as a teaching media and they recognized the song's meaning and words. In addition, the song's lyrics employed simple language so that kids can determine the meaning of the phrases and comprehend the song's substance.

Several similar investigations have been undertaken by researchers in the past. The majority of the research conducted face-to-face learning. However, the current study focuses on the process of singing an English song in an online class in order to enhance their listening ability. A comprehensive pedagogy for music education has not yet been devised (Johnson, 2017; Susanto et al. 2022). However, as previously stated, social constructivism is an essential element of a healthy online learning environment. Johnson (2016) proposes an online music education paradigm to reconcile general online learning pedagogy with music pedagogy. Her research reveals that design, communication, and evaluation are three essential elements of online music education. It was determined that these characteristics are essential for the effective planning and delivery of online music courses to facilitate student learning. This research-based study provides an introduction to the evolution of an online music pedagogy. While the song has a number of positives, it also has a number of problems. If the music is constantly played in class, it might get quite noisy, especially if it is played loudly. Prior to utilizing a song as a medium, the song should be carefully chosen. Additionally, the teacher should examine whether the song is appropriate for students based on its theme, genre, and age, as well as its physical features such as speaker and sound quality; the song should be clear and loud. This is in line with the study of singing-along using music conducted by Pawley and Müllensiefen (2012).

In this study, researchers chose songs based on the moral value of the song. Tempo and genre are also criteria for song selection. By using songs, students not only learn but also relax their minds. It is also supported by Ransom (2015) made a statement that by combining music and language, songs have the innumerable priority of attention that students deserve. Therefore, the use of music in the classroom can help students relax their minds and bodies and increase their enjoyment of listening activities. English songs have beautiful melodies and lyrics that are simple to imitate and memorize. English songs are excellent material for young students, who are easily moved and inspired by singers, music, rhythm variations, and popular themes (Shen, 2009). The songs are comprehensive, enjoyable, genuine, and full of the language they will encounter in daily life. English songs are a wonderful way for young students to develop a strong interest and motivation in the target language, as well as linguistic intelligence and language awareness, when used appropriately by the teacher. Consequently, using English songs helps students develop their listening skills.

The discussion will be presented in accordance with five young learners' learning principles observed in songs, including: their short attention and easily to distract, their ability to understand the lesson from direct experience, through objects and visual aids, their enthusiastic of learning new things, and responsive to the instruction (Course, 2018; Fajarina, 2017; Musthafa, 2013; Pustika, 2021; Submitted et al., 2011; Sukmawati, 2018; Understanding, 2009; Uysal & Yavuz, 2015; Arinda & Sadikin, 2021; Gunawan Putri et al., 2019; I. Sadikin, 2015).

#### **Young Learners can gain understanding from direct experience, through objects and visual aids**

Young students learn from direct experience and direct physical activity; children's thoughts are embedded in the context of the here and now; children learn holistically. Young students gain knowledge from direct experience. In contrast to adults, who can generally learn from decontextualized abstractions, children acquire knowledge through direct experience: what they can perceive with their senses and what they encounter firsthand (Course, 2018). According to Musthafa (2013), the learning principle has significant implications for the selection of topics and the creation of materials by teachers. In addition, young learners can respond naturally to the meaning of conversations and topics, based on their language proficiency, in relation to specific themes.

**Young Learners are enthusiastic and positive about learning**

When they learn English through song and video, young students are more motivated and have a positive attitude toward the language. (Erlangga 2021; Han et al. 2010). Songs, which contain both music and lyrics, are regarded as particularly effective language-learning tools for teaching young students to listen. Music can facilitate language learning because musical rhythms and sentence patterns have similar shapes and have mathematical balance while lyrics help students understand and listen because they must be listened to carefully. By using songs in learning English in the classroom, it will definitely increase the enthusiasm and positive attitude of the young learners.

**Young learners are being responsive to the instruction**

Young learners have a responsive character to the instructions given. (Mehmet, 2017) stated that variety of teaching also enables rapid development of student responses, encourages flexibility, sets clear goals for instruction, and fosters the exchange of ideas between teachers and young learners. With productive learning, the responsive and positive attitude of young learners will be developed. Therefore, learning through music, from early childhood to senior high school, it is directed to the opportunity to make music, students learn through singing, drawing and moving activities. Several methods that can be used among others, playing musical instruments and singing and helping them listen with movements, song snippets or pictures; help students form a "mind mapping" by moving their fingers in the air to the rhythm music and its transfer on a paper and write experiences, stories or interpretations based on songs that they choose in combination with students' personal experiences. By paying attention to pointers and providing opportunities for students to "music" more than following material through books – parents, teachers and students will have a fun atmosphere while building a solid foundation to carry out the learning process (Ifadah & Aimah, 2012)

**Method**

A qualitative study is required to examine this phenomenon through the perspective of distant education students (Alvarez, 2020). Additionally, he believed that qualitative research's objective is to characterize, learn about, and explain the phenomenon. By explaining and exploring phenomena through narration, one can gain a knowledge of them. This refers to the research technique that results in descriptive data written or spoken by participants, as well as observed behavior. Additionally, it is a descriptive study that aims to gather current information, identify problems, make comparisons or evaluations, and learn from others' experiences in order to reach a decision. The song is played at three separate meetings on Monday and Friday of each week. The sessions commencing in May 2022 are displayed in Table 3.1. The use of songs in the English classroom is supported by substantial empirical evidence (Schön et al., 2008; Wallace, 1994).

**Results and Discussion**

In this study, observation was used to record the behavior of young students. This coincides with what (Ransom 2015) previously proposed that observation can be used for three main purposes. Therefore, this study follows three main aspects: (1) the behavior of children who show a response through the use of songs, (2) the development of children who show a positive increase in their vocabulary mastery using the target language, and (3) the learning process that acquires more experience and facilitate students to go beyond lessons better. Data from observations showed that most of the young students (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5) showed enthusiasm in listening to songs because the videos were interesting, the rhythms of the songs were fun and this could be seen in the form of animated scenes and cartoons. Observational data shows that the classroom atmosphere increases positively during the teaching program with the application of audiovisual. This evidence is in line with Graf (2015) who believes that an educator should better understand in preparing the learning resources like music video or songs because the students are able to process information in a clear, structured and systematic format while listening to songs.

The influence of the song is shown by the students who are active and enthusiastic in watching song videos, imitating song lyrics, and following songs. They often smile, laugh, and respond to conversations, repeating words and songs. This is in accordance with what was stated by A.Nasution (2015) that children feel their interest is increased when a language is presented in a lively way, as in some video songs on YouTube. The students can also express themselves through their own experiences by hearing and seeing English words. It can help young learners to be active and enjoy doing things in English. Most of them try to keep up with every moment and action. They have a curiosity for the next song that can be listened to at every meeting.

The data also revealed that the most effective vocabulary used was when the lyrics of the song video were easy and interesting. In this condition, students are motivated to listen to the song and see the visualization of the song because they don't want to miss the opportunity to be involved in the video and the whole activity.

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These aspects support the theory that watching videos increases students' motivation and curiosity in learning because they show a desire to use and practice the language they hear and see (Hernawati et al. 2021; Ho et al. 2021; Kosterelioglu 2016). This evidence was also revealed when students were given vocabulary exercises, most of them did well on assignments or worksheets and they were able to remember the content better and get more information to clarify thinking ideas, feelings and events when the researcher gave questions.

This is in accordance with Harmer (2002) that videos make students motivated in learning a language, so that most of them show a desire to use and practice the language they have heard and seen. In terms of topics in song videos, the topic 'weather' is a good example of a YouTube video that attracts a high level of active attention by singing, dancing, pointing, mimicking behavior, talking back to the video, and generally reacting with great enthusiasm. joy. This is in line with Purvis (2020) who asserts that the material given to young learners must provide a pleasant learning situation. As children gain more teaching experience by listening to songs, their ability to understand the content and translate its meaning into learning improves significantly. In addition, songs are played as something that helps young learners to relax and unwind. It keeps them entertained without having to try hard.

Especially, song videos have a special role in children. Presented briefly and easy to match, fun and funny (the visualization contained in the video song can make children happy and excited). This is in accordance with Çakir et al (2006) which states that videos help learners to provide realistic material, imitate models and increase awareness by teaching appropriateness and conformity. Overall, most of the songs on You tube have relaxed and easy-to-follow lyrics as can be seen from their facial expressions.

In addition, data from observations show that songs could help young learners to pay attention to the and make them motivated, therefore it can be seen from their motivation to learn English. During listening to the song, they were enthusiastic and actively involved by listening and watching, then in practice activities, their active participation was shown by repeating some and answering quizzes and questions. This is found every time the student is about to start listening to a song; most of them prepare to listen to the song while Zoom. For example, two students (R2, R4) were found to be muttering words softly by reading the text on the video. One thing that is more important is that the vocabulary learned in videos provides an opportunity to learn in a context that is fun and easy to find in real life (Myae Han, 2006).

After listening to the song, students were given several questions related to the song. Most of them participated well and tried to give correct answers. This is as revealed by the interview data, some students feel proud and happy because they answered the questions given by the teacher correctly. Regarding this evidence, Agustina (2014); Irmawati (2019) inserts that the application of audiovisual builds confidence. In general, the use of You tube videos can increase student motivation in the learning process because the learning atmosphere is more interesting, attractive, and dynamic and makes it easier for students to understand and go beyond lessons better. These findings support previous research.

In terms of learning principles of young learners, data from observations revealed that YouTube videos have produced learning principles of five young learners. These principles are in line with several previous researchers (Stempleski and Tomalin, 1990; Pinter 2006; Brewster, Brumfit, Moon and Tongue 2005; Superfine and James 2003; Musthafa 2002; Harmer 2002; Harris, Golinkoff, Pasek, 2011) namely: learning indirectly and responsively, learning remains intact, learning with motives fulfills immediate goals (here and now principles), learning is fun, and attention span is limited. This is shown by the same result when they watch a video of about 10-15 minutes. Most videos are presented through songs, stories and conversations where students have to complete quizzes and assignments or worksheets from watching the video.

In terms of learning principles of young learners, data from observations revealed that songs have produced learning principles of five young learners. These principles are in line with several previous researchers (Course, 2018; Fajarina, 2017; Musthafa, 2013; Pustika, 2021; Submitted et al., 2011; Sukmawati, 2018; Understanding, 2009; Uysal & Yavuz, 2015; Arinda & Sadikin, 2021; Gunawan Putri et al., 2019; I. Sadikin, 2015). namely: 1) They have short attention and easily to distract, 2) They can gain understanding from direct experience, through objects and visual aids, 3) They are enthusiastic and positive about learning, 4) They are being responsive to the instruction. This is shown by the same result when they listen to a song of about 3-5 minutes. Most of the songs are related to the students' lessons where students have to complete quizzes and answer the questions from the song.

Data from interviews support data from observations. In that case, most of the students gave a positive response to the song being played. They said that they felt happy, interested, and motivated to learn when they learned English by listening to songs. The data from the interviews also noted that the use of YouTube helped them improve their vocabulary mastery. R1, R2, R3, and R5 said that they could recognize and memorize words better.

As previously mentioned, from all the data obtained, it is clear that all students gave positive responses to the songs on YouTube. They actively participate in all activities presented in YouTube songs, such as watching, listening, repeating some words and expressions, pointing, answering questions or quizzes, dancing, and singing. Most of the respondents' favorite activities are watching funny and interesting cartoon stories, answering questions and singing. To support the description above, here are the respondents' answers to their favorite part:

Table 1 &lt;Respondents' Favourite Part&gt;

Resp 2A	Respondents' favourite part	Resp 2B	Respondents' favourite part
R1	Singing because it was easy to follow	R1	Singing because she like to sing
R2	The pictures was so colorful	R2	The rhythms is so fun and make him happy
R3	Singing because she like to sing	R3	Presentation because it was good and fun
R4	Presentation because it was attractive and fun	R4	The video is so fun, and she already know about the songs
R5	The video is so fun, and he already know about the songs	R5	The rhythms is so fun and make her happy
R6	Presentation because it was good and fun	R6	Presentation because it was interesting and fun

The students liked the activity of listening to songs because it contained lessons that attracted high levels of active attention by singing, dancing, pointing, imitating behavior, talking back to the video with great joy. Furthermore, young learners position themselves as sophisticated viewers, capable of 'seeing through' the media. So as children gain more audiovisual experiences, their ability to understand the content and translate those meanings into learning improves. Despite the positive responses that students gave to YouTube songs, data from interviews revealed that students still faced some difficulties regarding songs and movements, and long expressions in videos. The difficulties are as mentioned below.

The first difficulty is about the song. Students cannot enjoy the song because some videos contain uninteresting and uninteresting songs so they are boring. When the researcher asked further in the interview session, R6 said that in fact he liked some of the videos he watched but he did not like the videos containing songs and movements because the activities were for kindergarten children.

In general, young students like YouTube songs, there are parts they don't like. When respondents were asked if they found a part in the YouTube video that they did not like, six respondents said none (R1,R3,R4) 2A ,(R2, R4, R5) 2B, two students (R6) 2A and 2B said their difficulties with long expression. which is difficult to memorize and contains difficult or foreign words, one student (R6) 2A said the activity was repeating, and also one student (R6) 2B said the singing activity was because the song was rather fast and long.

It can be concluded from the explanation above that it is unavoidable that there are parts of the song that young students do not like during online classes. The part that they don't like is the rhythm of the song that is too fast for them, the repetition of the song and the singing activity. Although students find it difficult to understand every word, some students understand what to do even though they do not know all the expressions. The repetition of the song that is heard actually helps them grasp the meaning of the phrase. However, they realized that listening to the song was useful for improving their English vocabulary because the example sentences and the repetition of the lyrics provided by the song on YouTube helped them to understand and guess the meaning of new words.

## Conclusions

The use of songs is in accordance with the learning principles of young learners. This can be found in terms of the four learning principles of young learners. The learning principle is that they have short attention and easily to distract, they can gain understanding from direct experience, through objects and visual aids, they are enthusiastic and positive about learning and they are being responsive to the instruction. In addition, songs are presented in a relatively short time during distance learning. They have specific topics, provide songs with interesting animations. Therefore, the benefits of songs, which are rich in linguistic input, can help students build context, songs, movements, which are various characters can help students improve their vocabulary

mastery. In addition, with respect to young learner responses, the data reveal that: students respond positively, this shows that students can express themselves through their own experience by listening to the song and seeing the lyrics of the song, therefore they are able to observe how the intonation of the song's tone matches facial expressions. They are also able to answer the teacher's questions properly. The implementation of songs in online class could motivate students to perform better so that they are eager to participate, and contribute in the classroom even if they are doing distance learning. Data from observations show that some students unconsciously say or sing songs that have been learned in online classes to their teachers and friends after several times listening to songs.

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