

The Effect of Using Modern English Song Lyrics to The Vocabulary Mastery of Grade VIII

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Abstract: *This study investigates the effectiveness of modern English song lyrics as a medium for improving vocabulary mastery among eighth-grade students at SMPN 3 Praya in the academic year 2025/2026. A quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design was employed, involving two groups: the experimental class taught using modern English songs and the control class taught with conventional methods. Each class consisted of 24 students selected purposively. Data were collected through pre-tests, post-tests, questionnaires, and documentation, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, normality and homogeneity tests, paired sample t-tests, and Mann-Whitney U tests. Findings revealed that the experimental group's mean score increased significantly from 34.79 to 72.08, while the control group improved from 40.58 to 60.83. Statistical results confirmed that the difference between the groups was significant ($p < 0.05$). These outcomes suggest that modern English song lyrics not only enhance vocabulary mastery but also foster student motivation and classroom engagement. The study concludes that incorporating modern English songs into English teaching can create a more dynamic and enjoyable learning environment.*

Keywords: *Junior High School, Language Learning, Modern English song lyrics, Vocabulary Mastery, Quasi-experimental Research,*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui efektivitas penggunaan lirik lagu berbahasa Inggris modern sebagai media pembelajaran dalam meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata siswa kelas VIII SMPN 3 Praya tahun ajaran 2025/2026. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain quasi-eksperimental, yaitu pre-test dan post-test non-equivalent control group. Sampel penelitian terdiri dari dua kelas, VIII A sebagai kelas eksperimen dan VIII B sebagai kelas kontrol, masing-masing berjumlah 24 siswa. Instrumen penelitian berupa tes kosakata, angket, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan dengan statistik deskriptif, uji normalitas, uji homogenitas, uji-t berpasangan, dan uji Mann-Whitney U. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa rata-rata skor kelas eksperimen meningkat dari 34,79 menjadi 72,08 dengan rata-rata gain score 37,29. Sementara itu, kelas kontrol meningkat dari 40,58 menjadi 60,83 dengan rata-rata gain score 20,25. Hasil analisis statistik menunjukkan adanya perbedaan signifikan antara kedua kelompok ($p < 0,05$), yang berarti penggunaan lirik lagu modern lebih efektif dibandingkan metode konvensional. Temuan ini membuktikan bahwa lagu berbahasa Inggris modern tidak hanya meningkatkan penguasaan kosakata, tetapi juga motivasi serta partisipasi siswa dalam pembelajaran.

Kata kunci: Lirik Lagu Inggris Modern, Penguasaan Kosakata, Pembelajaran Bahasa Quasi-eksperimental, Sekolah Menengah Pertama,

1. INTRODUCTION

English plays a vital role as an international language, essential for global communication, education, and technology. In Indonesia, English is taught from primary through secondary levels; however, many students still struggle with vocabulary acquisition, a fundamental component of language proficiency. Without sufficient vocabulary, learners cannot effectively understand others or convey their own ideas [1],[3].

Vocabulary is widely recognized as the foundation of language mastery. Wilkins [2],[3] emphasizes that “without grammar little can be conveyed, but without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed.” Students with limited vocabulary face challenges in reading comprehension, writing, and oral communication. Initial observations at SMPN 3 Praya revealed that many eighth-grade students had low vocabulary mastery, often struggling to understand basic English texts or classroom instructions [12][13]. This issue was compounded by monotonous teaching methods, such as memorizing word lists, which reduced student interest.

Innovative approaches are therefore needed to make vocabulary learning more engaging. One promising method is the use of modern English songs, which are highly popular among teenagers [14],[16],[18]. Students frequently listen to international artists like Ed Sheeran, Taylor Swift, and Bruno Mars through digital platforms, often memorizing lyrics even without understanding their meaning. Research suggests that songs are effective tools for language learning because of their rhythm, repetition, and contextualized language use [3],[4]. Songs also enhance motivation and emotional engagement, making learning more enjoyable [5], [15],[17].

While previous research has examined the role of songs in language learning, many studies focused on children’s songs or were conducted at elementary or university levels[19],[21],[23]. Few have specifically addressed modern English songs in Indonesian junior high schools. This study aims to fill that gap by investigating the effect of modern English song lyrics on vocabulary mastery among eighth-grade students. It seeks to demonstrate that learning vocabulary can be both effective and enjoyable when integrated with media relevant to students’ everyday lives[20],[22],[24].

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test non-equivalent control group. The population consisted of 126 eighth-grade students at SMPN 3 Praya, Central Lombok. Using purposive sampling, two classes were selected: VIII-A as the experimental group and VIII-B as the control group, each comprising 24 students.

2.1 Instruments

- Vocabulary tests (20 multiple-choice items) administered as pre-test and post-test.
- Questionnaires to gather student perceptions of songs in learning.
- Documentation (photos and notes of classroom activities).

2.2 Procedure:

1. Pre-test administered to both groups.
2. Experimental group taught vocabulary using modern English song lyrics over four meetings, while the control group received conventional instruction.
3. Post-test administered to measure improvement.
4. Data analyzed with descriptive statistics, normality and homogeneity tests, paired sample t-tests, and Mann-Whitney U tests using SPSS 29.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

Table 1. Statistic Analysis

Group	N	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Gain Score Mean
Experiment	24	34.79	72.08	37.29
Control	24	40.58	60.83	20.25

The experimental group achieved a significantly higher gain score (37.29) compared to the control group (20.25).

Paired sample t-test (experimental group): $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, indicating significant improvement after treatment. Mann-Whitney U test: $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, confirming a significant difference between experimental and control groups.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the findings of this research, it can

be concluded that the use of modern English song lyrics is effective in improving the vocabulary mastery of eighth-grade students at SMPN 3 Praya in the academic year 2025/2026. This is evidenced by the significant increase in the experimental group's mean score from 34.79 in the pre-test to 72.08 in the post-test, with a gain score of 37.29. Meanwhile, the control group only improved from 40.58 to 60.83, with a gain score of 20.25.

The results of statistical tests, including the paired sample t-test and the Mann-Whitney U test, confirmed that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups [25]-[27]. This indicates that learning through modern English song lyrics had a greater effect on students' vocabulary mastery compared to conventional methods.

Furthermore, modern songs not only enhanced vocabulary learning but also increased students' motivation, participation, and confidence in the classroom [28]-[29]. By presenting vocabulary in meaningful and enjoyable contexts, songs created a positive and interactive learning atmosphere. Therefore, modern English songs can be considered an effective alternative medium for vocabulary instruction in junior high school English classes [29]-[30].

4. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that using modern English song lyrics effectively improves eighth-graders' vocabulary mastery at SMPN 3 Praya (AY 2025/2026), as shown by the experimental group's mean score rising from 34.79 (pre-test) to 72.08 (post-test)—a gain of 37.29—compared with the control group's increase from 40.58 to 60.83 (gain 20.25). Statistical analyses (paired-sample t-test and Mann-Whitney U) confirmed a significant advantage for the song-lyrics approach over conventional methods. Beyond test scores, students exposed to songs showed higher motivation, participation, and confidence, with vocabulary presented in meaningful, enjoyable contexts that fostered a positive, interactive classroom climate. Consequently, modern English songs represent an effective alternative medium for vocabulary instruction in junior high school English classes.

5. CLOSING STATEMENT

The researcher expresses gratitude to SMPN

3 Praya, participating students, and all individuals who contributed to this study. Their support made this research possible and meaningful.

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