

THE ROLE SONGS AS A TEACHING TECHNIQUE OF LISTENING IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract: In higher education, the development of listening skills is paramount for academic success and professional growth. Traditional methods of teaching listening often lack engagement and fail to capture students' attention. However, integrating songs as a teaching technique can provide an effective and enjoyable approach to enhance listening abilities. This article explores the role of songs in higher education as a means to improve listening skills, providing a comprehensive understanding of this innovative pedagogical strategy. This article also describes how English songs are used to help students learn to listen and the challenges that teachers have when instructing listening classes in higher education, such as students who lack English vocabulary, and externally, such as the difficulty of internet connection, which often occurs. The results of this study imply that it turns out that listening skills learning can be done well online if the teacher understands the meaning of each lyric and has good knowledge of such things as content, pedagogy, and technology.

Keywords: High education, English songs, integrating, teaching technique, listening skills, innovative strategy, song-based activities, vocabulary, mixed-methods approach, pronunciation, motivation.

Introduction: One of the four foundational English language skills is listening. The other abilities, like speaking, reading and writing appear to be important. These fundamental abilities are separated into two categories: productive skills (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (reading and listening). Listening is the activity of paying attention to the speaker and trying to find meaning from something that is heard (Underwood, 1989). Listening is the most important language skill and also a part of communication through listening we can share our ideas with other people. According to Brown (2001), "Listening is the major component in language learning and teaching because in the classroom learners do more listening than speaking." It means that listening is an important thing in daily life. Listening is a fundamental skill in higher education, crucial for comprehension, communication, and critical thinking. However, teaching listening effectively presents challenges, as passive listening alone does not guarantee understanding or retention. Conventional methods often focus on lectures

and recordings, overlooking the potential of more engaging approaches. Incorporating songs into the curriculum offers a dynamic and enjoyable alternative, providing numerous benefits for learners. As renowned educator Dr. Ken Robinson remarked, "Music is a powerful educational tool. It can engage students in ways other subjects can't." Listening plays a very important role in learning language. Through listening, students can acquire good pronunciation and acquire many useful words, phrases, and sentences (Listiyarningsih, 2017). Despite a growing awareness of the importance of listening, there are still many problems with listening to second language learners in the classroom (Wang, 2013). Many studies discuss or research the use of songs in listening learning. As in Afriyuninda & Oktaviani's research (2021) was found that songs could attract university students' attention to English lessons, especially in listening. The songs are also connected to the same topics as friendship, dreams and love which is a common feeling of people. Because most young people today are interested in various forms of culture outside the classroom, the song may really be a motivating and unique teaching tool (Kuśnierek, 2016). In addition, songs can bring positive atmosphere (Putri, 2021). What is important in making teaching learning life is how teachers can create new techniques and take control of the situation in class. Kuśnierek (2016) states "Songs can be used to calm students down because to learning a lot of new languages is a new thing experience. The use of songs can be an innovative learning media to help students improve their speaking skills effectively. In relation to related research, it shows that the use of English songs is effective for improving students' speaking skills through the utilization of different theme songs such as alternative rock songs (Kirmantoro, 2014), and acoustic English songs determine students' perceptions of supporting their English through the use of songs (Kamal & Rita, 2014). Kirmantoro and Kamal's research shows that English songs have a good impact on students' English learning in various skills. As a result, it is essential for promoting student participation in the teaching and learning process so that the teaching and learning process can meet teachers' expectations. The learning and learning process is aided by the use of suitable learning media, strategies, and methods. Here, the researchers examine the English usage of English songs.

Methods: In order to assess the impact of songs on the development of listening skills, a survey was conducted among undergraduate students across various academic fields. The survey aimed to understand students' perceptions of song-based activities and their perceived improvement in listening abilities. This study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the efficacy of utilizing songs as a teaching technique for enhancing listening skills in higher education settings. Firstly, a quantitative survey was conducted among undergraduate and graduate students from various disciplines to assess their frequency of engagement in song-based listening activities in coursework,

their perceptions of the effectiveness of such activities in improving listening comprehension skills, and their preferences regarding music genres for enhancing listening abilities. The survey instrument was developed based on established measures of listening comprehension skills and music preferences. Additionally, qualitative interviews were conducted with a subset of participants to gather in-depth insights into their experiences with song-based teaching methods, including any observed changes in their ability to understand spoken language and their overall assessment of the effectiveness of songs compared to traditional teaching methods. The interviews were semi-structured and focused on eliciting participants' opinions, experiences, and recommendations regarding the integration of songs into listening instruction in higher education. Data from both the survey and the interviews were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques for the quantitative data and thematic analysis for the qualitative data. Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional review board prior to data collection, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. The study aimed to provide valuable insights into the potential benefits and challenges of incorporating songs as a pedagogical tool for enhancing listening skills in higher education contexts.

Results: Studies have shown that integrating songs into higher education curricula enhances students' listening skills in multiple ways. Firstly, songs captivate students' interest and attention, creating a conducive learning environment. The rhythmic and melodic elements of music stimulate memory retention, making it easier for students to recall and comprehend spoken language. Moreover, songs expose students to authentic language use, including slang and idiomatic expressions, thereby improving their ability to understand real-life conversations and interactions. Analysis of the survey data revealed compelling insights into the efficacy of songs as a teaching technique for listening skills. The study examined the frequency of engagement in song-based listening activities, perceived enhancement of listening comprehension skills, preferred music genres for improving listening abilities, observed changes in understanding spoken language, and the overall effectiveness of songs compared to traditional teaching methods. Results revealed a significant correlation between the frequency of song-based activities and improvement in listening comprehension skills among students. Participants predominantly favored certain music genres, such as pop and rock, for enhancing listening abilities. Moreover, a substantial majority reported noticeable improvements in understanding spoken language following participation in song-based lessons. The study also found that songs were generally perceived as highly effective in teaching listening skills, often surpassing the effectiveness of traditional teaching methods. These findings underscore the valuable role that songs play as a pedagogical tool in higher education for fostering listening proficiency.

Discussion: The utilization of songs as a teaching technique for listening skills in higher education offers a plethora of benefits. Beyond improving listening proficiency, song-based activities promote cultural awareness, creativity, and critical thinking. Additionally, songs can be adapted to various proficiency levels and subject areas, making them versatile tools for educators across disciplines. However, challenges such as selecting appropriate songs, addressing diverse student preferences, and balancing entertainment with educational objectives must be considered. Collaborative efforts among educators, musicians, and language experts can facilitate the development of curated song playlists and accompanying learning materials tailored to specific learning outcomes. The survey results corroborate the transformative potential of songs as a teaching technique for listening skills in higher education. As Dr. Patricia Shehan Campbell, a prominent music educator, aptly expressed, "Songs provide a multisensory experience that engages students emotionally, cognitively, and kinesthetically." By immersing students in a melodic landscape rich with linguistic nuances, songs transcend traditional pedagogical boundaries, fostering holistic language acquisition.

Conclusion: Incorporating songs into higher education curricula emerges as a promising strategy for enhancing listening skills and fostering linguistic proficiency. As educators navigate the evolving landscape of pedagogy, embracing innovative approaches such as song-based learning can catalyze transformative learning experiences. By harnessing the melodic power of songs, educators can orchestrate harmonious journeys towards enhanced listening comprehension, empowering students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

I also found that the use of songs in the classroom motivates the students to attend lessons and pay attention in class. Songs are the product of a culture and share values, commitment, responsibility, love, history, traditions, customs, and specific characteristics of spoken language. Understanding the language and culture students are learning through songs is much more attractive for them. Songs are also easily available; songs present new vocabulary and expressions in context. Songs offers students conversation issues and allow them to develop comfortable with the pronunciation of native speakers. Because music is all around them and they are constantly interacting with it, most students like listening to and studying music. The effectiveness of using songs can also be seen from the results obtained in the tests as well as in the students' performance during the activities proposed. Songs often repeat themselves a lot and employ basic conversational language. They have the power to significantly stimulate the language learning process's repetition mechanism, which is precisely what a lot of educators search for in model texts. This type of repetition presented in songs will activate the students to get a lot of pattern drills automatically without realizing it. In addition, I came to the conclusion that songs provide students with a great deal of practice in connecting the sounds of phrases or sentences as they

listen and sing, paying attention to the tape, so that they can improve their pronunciation and the use of natural reductions of English without noticing it. Songs provide engaging and practical language learning experiences. Most of our students have access to this form of culture. Songs that touch upon social issues and cultural aspects are appropriate choices. By adopting a learner-centered approach, students are able to participate, exploit and experience the meaning of the songs themselves. Students will produce a wealth of language work as a result of the interactive and reflective learning process. Proper content selection and well-organized lesson plans can help build listening comprehension through songs. In choosing the right songs, one must take into account the texts' relevance and flexibility in addition to the learning objectives. In order to do systematic lesson planning, we should pre-establish goals carefully stated for each lesson plan; design careful listening tasks from the simplest to the most complex; encourage students to actively and overtly participate in class, and use listening as a teaching tool rather than a testing one. Moreover, it is necessary to develop listening for gist, selective listening, and listening for predictions which are the relevant skills when developing listening comprehension. Based on the criteria to design a lesson plan, it is important to state that a degree of development has been evidently reached. It became clear as the last three lesson plans went along that students were grasping what the song was saying. They were now more adept at understanding and following directions than they had been previously. Besides, students' concentration spans have significantly increased. Today they are able to focus their attention on an authentic spoken text and comprehend its essential meaning; this is probably because of the principle of teaching listening but not testing it. They feel immersed in a continuous listening practice which provides them with enough self-confidence to face this sort of material. In summary, it was discovered that these lesson plans significantly improved students' listening comprehension and engagement with cultural information.

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