

The Contextual Teaching and Learning Approach as an Effort To Improve The Students' Listening Skills

Aleksandria Bangun
aleksandriabangun@jagakarsa.ac.id

Abstract

The main aim of this research is to investigate how students perceive the use of contextual teaching and learning, specifically in relation to improving their listening skills. The study seeks to provide valuable insights into the students' attitudes towards this approach, particularly in the context of learning English. Additionally, it aims to identify the various sources students utilize to acquire knowledge and enhance their listening abilities. Furthermore, the research endeavors to examine the strategies employed by teachers to foster improvements in students' listening skills within the classroom. Qualitative methods were chosen as the research approach, allowing for a thorough and comprehensive exploration of the social realities and experiences present in the field. The study involved students enrolled at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa as participants. Based on the research title, it can be inferred that song lyrics played a significant role in the development of students' listening skills. The students found the activity of listening to songs enjoyable and engaging, without experiencing fatigue. They actively engaged with instructional materials and participated in various teaching and learning activities aimed at enhancing their listening skills. As a result of this approach, the students displayed noticeable improvement, evident in their enhanced ability to comprehend song lyrics.

Keywords: *contextual teaching and learning, listening, TEFL, University Student, qualitative.*

INTRODUCTION

Language acquisition has always been a subject of interest for individuals who recognize its significance. Language serves as a tool to express and comprehend ideas, thoughts, emotions, both in spoken and written form. In the context of human resource development, language plays a unique role in fostering creativity and facilitating learning (Hyland, 2019). English, being an international language, is widely used in various aspects of life, including science, knowledge dissemination, education, technology, and communication.

The importance of learning English in schools lies in two main functions. Firstly, it provides students with a means to expand their knowledge in the fields of science, technology, and culture (Guan, Song, & Li, 2018). Secondly, it equips students with the skills necessary to

support the development of tourism. English has truly become a global language, as David Crystal describes it, having attained a special status that is recognized worldwide. Almost every country utilizes English as a second or foreign language, making it an international language that permeates multiple domains. As Farzad Sharifian emphasizes, English has reached various parts of the world, serving diverse purposes such as education, scientific advancements, technology, cultural exchange, and even as a prerequisite for employment. Therefore, mastering English is deemed crucial, particularly for accessing and disseminating knowledge and information effectively.

Within an educational context, English is learned to comprehend literature, facilitate communication, and derive personal enjoyment, among other

reasons. Naturally, achieving proficiency in English is essential. English language teaching aims to enhance students' competence in international communication and equip them with global knowledge and information (Brutt-Griffler, 2017). The impact of English in the Indonesian education system is significant. English is taught as a foreign language in nearly all levels of schooling in Indonesia, ranging from local subjects for elementary school students to compulsory courses for junior and senior high school students. This highlights the importance of learning English in the country. In today's interconnected world, English has become indispensable due to the vast amount of information, scientific literature, and references available in the language (Rao, 2019). As an international language, proficiency in English is not only necessary for higher education but also for preparing students to thrive in the era of globalization. Mastery of English is expected to contribute to students' intellectual growth, abilities, and overall personality development.

English encompasses four fundamental skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Each skill holds significant importance, with listening being the foundational skill that must be mastered (Vasylenko, 2017). Listening is a crucial aspect of language learning, as it involves comprehending auditory input through attentive and focused listening. Listening is an interactive process between the speaker and the listener, and it is a skill that is challenging to master. It requires a high level of attention and concentration to understand spoken language. Listening, particularly in a second language, poses difficulties stemming from various factors, such as differences in sounds between the learners' native language and the language they are listening to, limited vocabulary, grammatical awareness, and pragmatic differences between the two languages.

Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is an instructional approach

grounded in brain research. This approach acknowledges that meaningful learning occurs when new information and tasks can be connected to existing knowledge and experiences (Doyle, 2018). Therefore, students learn best when they can relate academic content to their daily lives. Contextual learning seeks to link subject matter content to real-world situations and motivates students to establish connections between knowledge and its practical applications. It engages students in meaningful activities that bridge academic studies with real-life situations. Furthermore, it encourages students to develop their skills and provides ample opportunities for practice.

Considering the benefits of the CTL approach, the researcher opted to apply it in teaching listening skills at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa. The application of the CTL method was limited to a specific seventh-grade class, aiming to foster cooperation, teamwork, and the consolidation and development of students' listening skills (Akdogan, 2017). By connecting the knowledge to their own experiences and sharing knowledge with one another, students were motivated to.

METHOD

This research employed a classroom action research approach, which involves conducting research within a classroom setting to enhance the quality of teaching and learning practices (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2017). The main objective of this research was to address the issues related to teaching and learning listening skills. To carry out this research, the researcher sought assistance from an English teacher at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa. Collaborating with an experienced teacher is recommended for novice researchers conducting action research as it allows for guidance and valuable suggestions throughout the planning, action, observation, and reflection stages of the research process. The participants in this research were

students from Universitas Tama Jagakarsa, predominantly coming from rural areas. These students, who did not have access to language laboratories or extensive listening training in their previous junior high schools, faced challenges in adapting to new study habits quickly.

Therefore, finding an appropriate method, such as using songs, was crucial to making the learning process enjoyable for them. The research instrument utilized in this study was a test comprising song sheets (lyrics) that were administered during the pre-test, action phase, and post-test (Masnijar, 2017). The pre-test and post-test consisted of 30 items, including 15 items for filling in missing words and 15 items for selecting the correct words in bold. The tests for the two action phases had slight variations, with 11 items for filling in the blanks in action 1 and 10 items for choosing the correct words in bold in action 2. Data collection involved both tests and observations. The observation component aimed to gather qualitative data on students' attitudes and behaviors throughout the research process. Meanwhile, quantitative data were obtained from the students' scores in the pre-test, two action phases, and post-test. The pre-test data provided insight into the students' initial listening skills prior to receiving any treatment. The data collected during the action phases were used to assess the students' progress throughout the treatment, and the post-test data were used to evaluate their listening abilities following the treatment.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Prior to undertaking this research, the researcher observed that the students at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa lacked confidence in their listening skills when faced with listening materials. This lack of confidence not only led to low motivation but also hindered their learning progress. To address this issue, the researcher sought to enhance the students' motivation by

incorporating songs into the learning process, with the aim of improving their listening abilities.

The research comprised two cycles of treatment, preceded by a pre-test to assess the students' initial listening skills. Each cycle involved four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Subsequently, a post-test was administered to gauge the students' listening skills after the treatment. The results of the research indicated significant improvement in the students' listening skills. The pre-test yielded an average score of 44.55, while the post-test showed a substantial increase to 75.83. This disparity between the pre-test and post-test scores clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the treatment. Additionally, the treatment in the two cycles significantly enhanced the students' motivation, as they actively engaged in the learning process facilitated by songs. Further details regarding the treatment process will be elaborated below.

Pre-test

Prior to implementing the treatment, a pre-test was administered to assess the students' listening skills. The test consisted of 30 items requiring the students to fill in missing words and 15 items involving the selection of the correct words indicated in bold. During the test, a segment of a song was played, and the students were required to answer questions while listening to the song. It is important to note that the pre-test and post-test utilized the same format. The results of the pre-test are presented in the table below.

Student	Item	Correct	Score	Note
X1	30	12	40	Low
X2	30	14	46	Low
X3	30	14	46	Low
X4	30	13	43	Low
X5	30	14	46	Low
X6	30	10	33	Failure
X7	30	14	46	Low
X8	30	12	40	Low
X9	30	20	66	Moderate
X10	30	13	43	Low
X11	30	17	56	Low

X12	30	10	33	Failure
X13	30	11	36	Failure
X14	30	17	56	Low
X15	30	10	33	Failure
X16	30	11	36	Failure
X17	30	17	56	Low
X18	30	12	40	Low
X19	30	12	40	Low
X20	30	14	46	Low
X21	30	14	46	Low
X22	30	13	43	Low
X23	30	14	46	Low
X24	30	10	33	Failure
X25	30	14	46	Low
X26	30	12	40	Low
X27	30	20	66	Moderate
X28	30	13	43	Low
X29	30	17	56	Low
X30	30	10	33	Failure
X31	30	11	36	Failure
X32	30	17	56	Low
X33	30	11	36	Failure
X34	30	12	40	Low
X35	30	17	56	Low
X36	30	12	40	Low
X37	30	12	40	Low

Total: 1.637

Mean score 40-59 low

The data presented in the aforementioned table reveals that the average score obtained by the students was 40.56, indicating a low level of listening skill. The majority of students scored below 60, with only two students achieving a moderate score, nine students experiencing failure, and the remaining students obtaining low scores. During the pre-test, the researcher also observed the students' attitudes towards answering the questions. While they enjoyed the test, they struggled with identifying the missing words in the questions. Based on both the observation and the students' scores in the pre-test, it can be inferred that listening through songs has the potential to enhance students' motivation. The initial attempt proved to be somewhat successful; however, further interventions involving appropriate song activities are still required to achieve higher scores.

Cycle 1 Planning

The researcher utilized the data from the pre-test to develop a plan for cycle 1. Collaboration with an English teacher from Universitas Tama Jagakarsa was sought to determine the course of action for action 1. After identifying the issues from the pre-test, the song "You're Beautiful" by James Blunt was selected as the material for action 1. This choice was based on specific criteria, including the song's popularity among students and its clear and comprehensible lyrics. A lesson plan was then formulated, focusing on topics such as simple past tense, synonyms, antonyms, and diphthongs. The detailed procedure for the action will be discussed later.

Action

The action was divided into 3 steps; pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening.

Pre-listening

To engage the students, the researcher initiated a warm-up discussion, asking them about their familiarity with English songs and their favorite artists. They were also prompted to compare English songs with Indonesian ones. The researcher provided an explanation of the listening activity procedure and distributed paper materials to the students. The students were given a few minutes to read the material and make guesses about the answers.

While-listening

Following the listening activity, the class collectively reviewed the answers. The researcher replayed the parts of the song that posed difficulty in understanding the lyrics. Grammar points related to the use of simple past tense were addressed, and a discussion on synonyms, antonyms, and diphthongs was led by the researcher. The moral values or themes conveyed by the song were summarized, and the song was played again for the students to sing along.

Post-listening.

The students listened to the song and answered the provided questions. Afterward, a decision was made as to whether the song needed to be played again. If necessary, it was played once more.

Observation

Throughout the action, the researcher observed the students' engagement during the listening session. It was noted that some students enjoyed the material and actively participated by asking and answering questions. However, a few others faced challenges in following the activity and engaged in conversations with their neighbors.

Reflection

In order to assess the extent of the students' achievement in cycle 1, an evaluation was conducted by administering a test. The test comprised 11 items derived from the material used in action 1, specifically from the song. The results of the test are presented in the table below.

Student	Item	Correct	Score	Note
X1	11	5	45	Low
X2	11	5	45	Low
X3	11	6	54	Low
X4	11	6	54	Low
X5	11	6	54	Low
X6	11	3	27	Failure
X7	11	7	63	Moderate
X8	11	5	45	Low
X9	11	8	72	Good
X10	11	6	54	low
X11	11	6	54	Low
X12	11	0	0	Failure
X13	11	4	36	Failure
X14	11	7	63	Moderate
X15	11	5	45	Low
X16	11	5	45	Low
X17	11	8	72	Good
X18	11	5	45	Low
X19	11	5	45	Low
X20	11	6	54	Low
X21	11	5	45	Low
X22	11	6	54	Low
X23	11	6	54	Low
X24	11	3	27	Failure
X25	11	7	63	Moderate
X26	11	8	72	Good

X27	11	5	45	Low
X28	11	6	54	Low
X29	11	5	45	Low
X30	11	0	0	Failure
X31	11	4	36	Low
X32	11	7	63	Moderate
X33	11	5	54	Low
X34	11	8	72	Good
X35	11	5	45	Low
X36	11	5	45	Low
X37	11	6	54	Low

Total : 1.800

Mean score : $0 - 59 = \text{low}$

It is evident that the mean score of the students has improved compared to the pre-test. The number of failing students decreased from nine to five. However, further cycles are still necessary to achieve even better results.

Cycles 2

Planning

Similar to the planning process in cycle 1, the data for cycle 2 was obtained through reflecting on the previous actions. The researcher identified the weaknesses of action 1, such as students lacking focus and struggling with identifying missing words. To address these issues, the researcher selected the song "Human" by Christina Perri, using material from the same source as in action 1.

Action

The teaching process in cycle 2 consisted of three stages: pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. During the pre-listening stage, the researcher conducted a warm-up activity to motivate the students and explained the listening procedure. The while-listening stage involved students listening to the song and answering questions, with the researcher leading a discussion on homophones. In the post-listening stage, the material was summarized, and the song was played once more while all students sang along.

Observation

Based on the second action, it was observed that all students were enthusiastic about learning listening skills. They actively participated and showed great engagement. Whenever they encountered difficulties, they refrained from talking to their peers and instead focused on the lesson, displaying attentiveness and enjoyment of the material.

Reflection

The observation data indicated that students exhibited higher motivation compared to before. This suggests an increased interest and enthusiasm towards the material. However, in order to assess the students' improvement in listening skills more comprehensively, qualitative data is still required. Therefore, an additional evaluation was conducted, consisting of a 10-item test derived from the lyrics of the songs used in action 2. The test results are presented in the table below.

Student	Item	Correct	Score	Note
X1	10	5	50	Low
X2	10	5	50	Low
X3	10	5	50	Low
X4	10	6	60	Moderate
X5	10	5	50	Low
X6	10	5	50	Low
X7	10	6	60	Moderate
X8	10	8	80	Good
X9	10	8	80	Good
X10	10	6	60	Moderate
X11	10	9	90	Very good
X12	10	5	50	Low
X13	10	5	50	Low
X14	10	6	60	Moderate
X15	10	6	60	Moderate
X16	10	6	60	Moderate
X17	10	7	70	Moderate
X18	10	5	50	Low
X19	10	5	50	Low
X20	10	5	50	Low
X21	10	5	50	Low
X22	10	6	60	Moderate
X23	10	5	50	Low
X24	10	5	50	Low
X25	10	6	60	Moderate
X26	10	8	80	Good
X27	10	8	80	Good
X28	10	6	60	Moderate
X29	10	9	90	Very good
X30	10	6	60	Moderate

X31	10	6	60	Moderate
X32	10	6	60	Moderate
X33	10	5	50	Low
X34	10	6	60	Moderate
X35	10	7	70	Moderate
X36	10	6	60	Moderate
X37	10	5	50	Low

Total: 7.180

Mean score is 60 moderate

It was a good result; there was no a failure in this cycle. There was also students got very good and there was students got good score. The next cycle wouldn't be done because the moderate score was enough to do a post-test.

Post-test

A pre-test was given to know students' achievement during the treatment. It consisted of 30 items. 15 items of filling missing lyric songs and 15 items choosing the correct words in the bold. The test was given the same with the pre-test. The result of post-test can be seen in the table below:

Student	Item	Correct	Score	Note
X1	30	20	66	Moderate
X2	30	23	76	Good
X3	30	23	76	Good
X4	30	22	73	Moderate
X5	30	21	70	Moderate
X6	30	21	70	Moderate
X7	30	23	76	Good
X8	30	24	80	Good
X9	30	27	90	Very good
X10	30	21	70	Moderate
X11	30	27	90	Very good
X12	30	19	63	Moderate
X13	30	21	70	Moderate
X14	30	23	76	Good
X15	30	25	83	Good
X16	30	20	66	Moderate
X17	30	23	76	Good
X18	30	23	76	Good
X19	30	23	76	Good
X20	30	22	66	Moderate
X21	30	21	63	Moderate
X22	30	21	63	Moderate
X23	30	23	76	Good
X24	30	24	80	Good
X25	30	27	90	Very good
X26	30	21	63	Moderate
X27	30	27	90	Very good

X28	30	19	63	Moderate
X29	30	21	70	Moderate
X30	30	25	83	Good
X31	30	23	76	Good
X32	30	22	66	Moderate
X33	30	21	70	Moderate
X34	30	24	80	Good
X35	30	23	76	Good
X36	30	20	66	Moderate
X37	30	27	90	Very good

Total : 2.754

$2.754 : 37 = 75$

From the table above, the students were got mean score good. So, there was a significant different between the score of the students' listening skill in pre-test and post-test.

Discussion

As mentioned in Chapter III, the research methodology involved conducting the study within the classroom setting, focusing on the teaching and learning process. This process consisted of three steps, starting with a pre-listening assessment to gauge students' listening abilities before introducing the song-based instruction. Subsequently, the researcher provided treatment to the students by teaching them through song lyrics. This approach was implemented twice, utilizing different songs. Multimedia tools, such as sound, were incorporated to enhance student engagement and expedite the achievement of learning objectives. Additionally, the instructional design allowed students the freedom to select their desired script for self-expression and evaluation purposes.

The treatment process comprised three steps. Firstly, the pre-listening stage involved activities guided by the researcher to activate students' auditory perception before focusing on listening. Secondly, the while-listening activity constituted the main component, where students were provided with multiple scripts from which they freely chose. These scripts were collectively discussed, and the recognition of challenging words was guided based on

the selected script. Lastly, the post-listening activity involved testing the comprehension of the chosen script, reinforcing the students' listening skills.

The final step of the data collection method involved administering a post-test to measure students' listening skills prior to the treatment. This assessment aimed to determine whether any improvements in their listening abilities occurred as a result of the treatment. Upon administering the post-test, the researcher obtained data in the form of pre-test scores. These data were subsequently analyzed using a paired sample test, revealing that the students' listening skills had significantly improved after receiving the treatment. This indicates a notable difference between students' listening skills before and after being taught through songs. The findings from the data analysis strongly support the advantages associated with employing songs as a teaching technique.

The aforementioned advantages demonstrate the positive impact of using songs on students' listening skills. This affirmation is supported by the data analysis results, which indicate a significant difference in students' listening abilities before and after being taught through songs. The use of songs not only benefits students but also facilitates the teacher's understanding of their weaknesses, enabling the provision of effective feedback for listening improvement. Consequently, it can be concluded that incorporating songs into listening instruction is an effective approach for enhancing the listening skills of students at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the collected data, several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, prior to being taught using songs, the students' listening skills were found to be poor, as indicated by the low mean score obtained by 37 students. Secondly, after being exposed to the teaching

method utilizing songs, there was an observable improvement in the students' listening skills, as reflected by a moderate mean score. This improvement can be observed by comparing the scores obtained before and after the treatment. Lastly, the students' listening skills showed significant enhancement after being taught using songs, as evidenced by a good mean score. This suggests that the utilization of songs as a teaching tool has a positive and noteworthy impact on developing listening skills. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to incorporate song-based activities in the teaching of listening skills.

REFERENCES

- Akdogan, E. (2017). Developing Vocabulary in Game Activities and Game Materials. Online Submission, 7(1), 31-66.
- Brutt-Griffler, J. (2017). English in the multilingual classroom: implications for research, policy and practice. PSU Research Review, 1(3), 216-228.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2017). Action research. In Research methods in education (pp. 440-456). Routledge.
- Doyle, T. (2018). Helping students learn in a learner-centered environment: A guide to facilitating learning in higher education. Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Guan, N., Song, J., & Li, D. (2018). On the advantages of computer multimedia-aided English teaching. Procedia computer science, 131, 727-732.
- Hyland, K. (2019). Second language writing. Cambridge university press.
- Masnijar, T. (2017). The Use of English Kids' Song o Improve Students' Listening Comprehension (Doctoral dissertation, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh).
- Rao, P. S. (2019). The role of English as a global language. Research Journal of English, 4(1), 65-79.
- Vasylenko, O. (2017). The parents' role in helping children to develop reading skills. Edukacja Elementarna w Teorii i Praktyce, 12(4 (46)), 71-80.