

# TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF POP SONGS AND ITS CHALLENGES TO TEACH PRONUNCIATION FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

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**Abstract** : The song is one of the exciting media in verbal communication. Songs as media for teaching pronunciation can help add vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar contained in the lyrics. This year, teaching and learning have changed online learning into face-to-face learning. Teachers are asked to prepare interesting learning strategies and be able to face challenges. This study aims to determine teachers' perceptions on the implementation of using pop songs to teach pronunciation and challenge using pop songs to teach pronunciation to young learners. A case study qualitative approach is used in this study through observation and interviews. The research data were collected through observation during pronunciation teaching-learning activities and discussions with three English teachers. The finding shows that using English to teach pronunciation to young learners is very effective, builds self-confidence, and obtains good learning outcomes. In addition, the media used in learning pronunciation does not only use pop songs. Several media are used, including flashcards, drilling, audio, and video. However, the English song of those media still has advantages and disadvantages. The benefits of it include that students are easier to understand, enjoy more, create a pleasant atmosphere, and are easier to remember. Then, the factor becomes obstacles and weaknesses regarding minimal sources, incorrect pronunciation, and unclear writing. In addition, teachers' perceptions of implementing pop songs to teach pronunciation are positive.

**Keywords** : *Pop Songs, Pronunciation, Perceptions*

## INTRODUCTION

Everybody has been learning languages since birth. Everyone is born with a language or mother tongue. In each country, the language is different, while in Indonesia, the first language given by parents is Indonesian. Language is a tool for us to communicate with other people. Language is also a medium for us to convey messages to others. A language is a unique, naturally developed skill that children acquire without realizing it or being forced. The language acquired by each person is qualitatively identical to that of each individual. In addition, language can also unite countries or tribes in a country as a means of communication between tribes.

There are many languages in the world. English is one of the languages that might be extensively used worldwide as a communication method among humans, with a distinctive language to engage with others. For various historical and monetary motives, English has become the world's dominant language in the twenty-first century. National Education has decided that English as a foreign language is taught in Indonesian schools. Now, English in Indonesia is a second language after Mother Language. In Indonesia, English has been implemented in schools in the capital city as communication or everyday speech.

English in Indonesia has been taught from an early age. Learning English has

been taught at primary, junior, and senior high schools. In learning English as a foreign or second language, two aspects must be known and understood: language skills and language components. Language skills are speaking, reading, writing, and listening; language components are vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation. Learning English is often dull because of the lack of media and active teachers.

Furthermore, there are several learning media, namely audio, visual, audio-visual, various media, photographic images, maps, and globes. In this case, the researcher chose one audio-visual medium because the media is vital in improving memory and can increase students' understanding.

Media is a means or tool that can convey information and support teaching and learning activities in English effectively. Teaching techniques for young learners can use songs. The song is the best way to teach young learners. First, young learners love songs, sing, and learn. The second song has characteristics that are enjoyable, fun, and help improve higher memory. The third song can help students imitate the lyrics. Thus, the song becomes a place for children to learn the language and can interpret it in their language Parlakian & Lerner (2010). In addition, songs can be used as a stimulant for them to speak, recite, and even imitate being like native speakers. Some difficulties occur when practicing speaking English. First is the ability to pronounce some words or sentences that are not quite right. Then there is a misunderstanding between the speaker and listener. Last, when speaking and communicating in English, you must have good vocabulary and grammar, and your pronunciation must also be good, so there are no misunderstandings.

Aliaga -Garcia (2007), states that the most challenging skill to acquire and take a long time to improve is pronunciation.

The essential requirement of learner competence is accessible pronunciation. It is the most critical factor in language teaching by Gilakjani, (2016). Pourhosein et al. (2012), state that good pronunciation leads to learning, while wrong pronunciation promotes great difficulties in language learning. According to Cook (1996 as cited in (Gilakjani, 2016)) defined pronunciation is the production of English sounds. In addition, pronunciation is learned by repeating sounds and correcting them when produced inaccurately.

The songs as media for English pronunciation; the music helps very much to learn for young learners. According to Zhang & Yin (2009), teaching pronunciation should be taught primary level because children are more effective than adults. Children are more active and have a higher curiosity to improve memory naturally. While at the age of adults have some difficulties distinguishing native-like sounds after puberty. Based on the opinion above, young learners are susceptible to learning many things; if the parents teach the children something new, the child is straightforward to understand and understand. So, it is very suitable for learning English from an early age.

Under Nadiem Anwar Makarim, B.A., M.B.A., the Minister of Education and Culture said that English would be taught again at the elementary school level based on the new curriculum, namely the Independent Campus. Initially, English was introduced as a local content but will now become a compulsory subject. Children's English subjects are not an obstacle to knowing their mother tongue but help students not to discriminate when their knowledge of English is minimal.

Learning English at an early age is very important. Because the teacher can teach them to use unique learning media and make the students interactive. The generation has an essential role in learning.

Furthermore, children's grasping power is high-speed at an early age, and their learning motivation is very high. Usually, education at an early age means the material taught or learned can be quickly understood.

Although learning English is only done once a week, it is at least enough for children to know and understand it. Learning English is often considered a tedious, challenging, and foreign subject. Teachers in elementary schools make every effort to be able to teach English by using the media. The media used by the teacher is very diverse, namely using pictures, posters, songs, and flashcards. Songs are a suitable learning method for young learners. The songs' characteristics are various, such as fun, sad, and enjoyable. Songs can improve students' memory faster and build self-motivation. Songs can be a medium for learning English, namely vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

In this research, the researcher chose descriptive qualitative as the design of this study. The qualitative research focuses on teachers' perception of implementing pop songs to teach pronunciation to young learners. Qualitative research can also be interpreted as descriptive research and then analyzed with an inductive approach. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative research has the meaning of exploring and understanding individuals or groups characterized by social or human problems. Researchers use qualitative case studies. Baxter et al. (2008) mentioned that a case study is research that explores a phenomenon in its context and is proven as a source of data. Based on this, case studies are usually conducted in a question-and-answer session with the interviewees with a good interview guide and can be answered through an incident.

The subjects of this study were 3, namely Miss N, an English teacher at SD Islam Bintang Juara; Miss K, an English teacher at SD IT Mutiara Hati; and Miss S, an English teacher at the Lab school UNNES. The three teachers used an English song to teach English.

To collect the data, the researcher uses observation and interviews. Observation activities were carried out to obtain information and provide an overview to researchers regarding the application of pop songs to teach pronunciation. Researchers prepared an observation instrument for this study, which was developed based on several articles related to the application of English songs to teaching pronunciation for young learners. An interview is one of the data collection techniques carried out by two people with open-ended questions. Researchers adopted five aspects in Servik's analysis: teachers' beliefs, attitudes, thoughts, accessibility to songs, and frequency of song usage. The research instrument consists of 15 questions.

The researcher asked permission from the three English teachers and students to take English classes offline to make observations regarding implementing English songs to teach pronunciation. Then, the researcher began to observe English teaching and learning activities during the learning process. Next, the researcher recorded documentation during the learning process and wrote down every detail of the information from the observations based on the observation guidelines. In this study, researchers analyzed the results of interviews from interview activities found on several aspects of pronunciation learning using songs for young learners. Discussions in this study used in-depth questions. After conducting in-depth observations and interviews, the researcher will analyze the existing data. Miles and Huberman (1984) suggested that data analysis activity

consists of three procedures. Three procedures such as data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Successful Pronunciation Teaching and Learning Promoted Through Pop Songs for Young Learners**

Researchers took data using observation and depth interviews based on the analysis results. The findings are based on five aspects, namely teacher beliefs, teacher attitudes, teacher thoughts, song accessibility, and song frequency. In 2020-2021, all schools will implement distance learning or online learning. It makes students feel comfortable and happy because they don't have to go to school. However, cases of COVID-19 in 2022 have begun to decline, and the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Anwar Makarim, B.A., M.B.A., has instructed schools to meet face-to-face again. Moving online to offline learning brings many challenges for students and teachers. Some challenges teachers face during offline learning are student focus, anxiety, lack of understanding, and exciting learning. Observations at three schools, SD Islam Bintang Juara, SDIT Mutiara Hati, and the UNNES Lab school, experienced the same problems mentioned above. When doing offline learning, teachers must provide students with a stimulus or icebreaker. Based on the observations, the three teachers gave ice breakers before understanding, which could build students' enthusiasm and was expected to increase student focus. Thus, learning English provides a good impression and creates fun learning for students.

Learning media are media or tools to help deliver learning materials to improve the quality of education. Early childhood learning requires learning media that are fun, active, cheerful, and interactive. In addition, their young children are easily bored, unfocused, and lose concentration.

Moreover, learning English, they will refuse because English is considered an inappropriate or foreign language. However, teachers must have ways or solutions to solve these problems by providing fun and interactive media. Pronunciation is one of the most critical subjects in English. In addition, pronunciation is one of the subjects in English that needs to be taught early. Accent needs to be taught early because correct pronunciation will affect the information conveyed. Meanwhile, young learners are considered easy to understand the material and responsive to learning. Suitable media and interactive teachers determine the success of teaching pronunciation. The three teachers have the right, suitable, and fun media to teach pronunciation. The learning media include; English songs, drilling, flashcards, audio, video, and textbooks. In addition, other media that help in learning pronunciation are student textbooks.

The teacher implements Pop songs as a medium for teaching pronunciation to young learners. Pop songs are considered simple and unique media that can help children become interested in learning. The medium of English songs is used in various ways. For example, students are shown or sing English songs together at the opening to tell students what they will study material. In addition, it is usually used in the main activity; When the teacher explains the material, the students are asked to sing together. It aims to arouse students' enthusiasm, eliminate laziness and boredom, and can increase student concentration.

Each resource person prepares everything to help students teach and learn. The teacher prepares materials, media, and other aids. Before explaining it to students, the teacher prepares an English song to teach the pronunciation of learning media. The three teachers have similarities in finding sources or song references on a

platform such as YouTube and Google. Usually, the platform provides a variety of song choices, but the teacher must choose the song according to the material and level. Of the three schools that were taken, two of them, SDIT Mutiara Hati and SD Islam Bintang Juara, had not yet fulfilled infrastructure such as projectors. So, in conveying material or media, pop songs manually by mouth. But that did not dampen the teachers' enthusiasm; they were more creative and innovative in using songs to teach pronunciation. This problem can solve by creating a song. Teachers usually look for references on YouTube or Google and then study the song before applying it to students.

English songs are a fun medium and attract students' attention. However, the teacher must pay attention to the material and level in preparing English songs. Using English song learning media is relatively easy, but teachers have difficulty finding English songs that match the material and level. However, this does not affect student learning outcomes in pronouncing words or sentences.

Motivation is an encouragement obtained by external parties and makes a person achieve a life goal. English songs are learning media that can influence someone or move someone unconsciously or intentionally to imitate or sing the song. Based on the observations in the three elementary schools, the teacher explained that most students were motivated by the presence of an English song. They sing the song aloud, Together and imitate the exact pronunciation of the lyrics. In addition, English songs have benefits that can help students learn more enjoyably, creating a pleasant atmosphere. Based on the results of interviews in the three schools, students felt happy learning and were more enthusiastic about imitating the pronunciation of songs. Students are expected to have high confidence in pronouncing, have an extensive

vocabulary, and are easier to remember and pronounce correctly. The advantages of the song have been described by one of the speakers above. It can conclude that English songs can provide motivation and benefits for learning pronunciation.

### **Challenges in implementing Pop Songs to Teach Pronunciation in English Classroom**

Difficulties in teaching pronunciation to young learners are experienced by every elementary school teacher. Based on observation and interviews, the three schools have different problems. The first is at SD Islam Bintang Juara; when students are asked to imitate or sing a song, they seem to have not recited it correctly. Students still need the help of the teacher to pronounce first. In addition to pronunciation, the challenge experienced by an English teacher at Labs school UNNES is that students have difficulty writing because pronunciation and writing in English are different. To overcome these problems, at SD Islam Bintang Juara, Miss A's way of dealing with issues related to slow learner responses is by conducting intensive guidance. The solution made by the teacher at Labs school UNNES is to write words on the blackboard and ask students to imitate them.

In addition to using English song media, teachers need to upgrade or explore suitable media in learning pronunciation. There are various learning media, for example, video, audio, conversation, drilling, and flashcard. In addition, the use of audio conversation is given by the teacher to support teaching.

Then develop students' pronunciation skills, the teacher tries as much as possible to provide interactive, exciting, and fun learning. Based on the results of observations and interviews, the teacher chose to explore further related to references on the YouTube platform or the

Internet and look for references according to the material. Cheerful genres to build children's enthusiasm for learning pronunciation. In addition, English teachers expect their students to know or be able to learn accents. Besides developing pronunciation, songs can use to learn the singer's articulation.

Based on the results of interviews and observations in three different schools such as SD Islam Bintang Juara, SDIT Mutiara Hati, and Labs school UNNES, the results are promising. The findings above conclude that using pop songs to teach pronunciation to young learners is very effective, builds self-confidence, and obtains good learning outcomes. In addition, the media used in learning pronunciation does not only use English songs. Several media are used, including flashcards, drilling, audio, and video. However, the English song of those media still has advantages and disadvantages. The benefits of it include that students are easier to understand, enjoy more, create a pleasant atmosphere, and are easier to remember. Then, the factor becomes obstacles and weaknesses regarding minimal sources, incorrect pronunciation, and unclear writing. In addition, using pop songs to teach pronunciation is positive.

In this study, which is in chapter one, the researcher states that two questions must be discussed and answered by the researcher. This study aims to determine the implementation of using pop songs to teach pronunciation and challenge using pop songs to teach pronunciation to young learners. The researcher took three elementary schools in Semarang, Central Java, SD Islam Bintang Juara, SDIT Mutiara Hati, and Labs school UNNES. The researcher interviewed three English teachers and made observations in three different elementary schools. However, the novelty of this research is that focuses teachers' perception of the implementation

of teaching pronunciation to young students using pop songs.

Based on the interview results in the three schools, the researchers concluded that using pop songs can help students learn English, especially pronunciation. In line with Zuliyani (2021) opinion, songs are a medium of using English songs, which can help introduce English to students learning English as a second language. In addition, English songs help students learn English, especially pronunciation. Using pop song learning media makes students more enthusiastic, enjoy, have confidence, and understand the material presented more efficiently. Stanculea, A. N. & Bran (2015), states that using English songs as a medium for teaching English can create fun learning and create a harmonious classroom atmosphere, reduce students' anxiety, develop their interests and talents and motivate them to learn English. Thus, researchers believe that English song learning media can positively impact students.

The first part is teachers' perception of the implementation of using pop songs to teach pronunciation to young learners. A song is a lyric sung with a tone and has an implied meaning made by the author. The song can use as a learning medium for teaching English. Media in learning English are many and varied; for example, pictures, games, flashcards, and English songs. In this study, researchers analyzed pop songs can teach pronunciation. That's because songs can be heard everywhere, for example, on gadgets, on television, etc. The use of English songs to teach pronunciation is very effective; the media is excellent, simple, and helps the teacher deliver the material. As evidenced by opinion, Hermansyah et al. (2018) stated songs can help practical pronunciation that is stored in the brain's memory unconsciously. The three teachers at SD Islam Bintang Juara, SDIT Mutiara Hati,

and Labs school UNNES have different ways of using English songs to learn pronunciation. Teaching pronunciation to young learners is highly recommended and supported by the use of learning media English songs. Murphey (1992) states that songs can be a bridge for young learners to improve their listening and pronunciation skills.

The teachers made preparations when teaching pronunciation using English songs. They search for English songs on a platform, namely YouTube and Google. The three teachers by adjusting the genre, class, and material to be taught. English song has many genres and different lyrics. Tuan & An (2010) stated that several accents need to be exposed by young learners in learning English, namely British English, American English, and Caribbean English. And there are several genres in the song, namely; gospel, soul, R&B, pop, rock, reggae, and jazz. The genre above can be a good accent learning. The teachers give an English song that has an easy vocabulary, is short, and has a short duration.

Thus, teachers often use learning media using pop songs so that students easily accept and understand the pronunciation according to the lyrics. In line with Ulate (2008), songs can be a media or tool regularly used by language teachers to achieve goals such as grammar practice, listening comprehension, and vocabulary enhancement and can be used as material for writing. In addition to making students interested, English songs can motivate students to learn pronunciation, and pop songs can make students more excited. In line with Read (2007), sings songs and rhymes together well to help young learners hear syllables in sentences and distinguish individual voices, and they can also practice hearing complex sounds such as vowels, consonants, and minimal pairs. However, using pop songs to teach pronunciation has

advantages and disadvantages. Using pop songs makes children more enthusiastic about listening, enjoying, and not quickly feeling inferior. In elementary school, students still want to play and learn a little. Agitha (2016) states that early childhood education aims to provide stimulants in all aspects of development, such as physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and language so that young learners can develop well and optimally. Therefore, the teacher uses a fun pop song medium, so students will think they are learning but playing when they sing. Therefore, students are not easily bored and quickly respond during learning student responses when learning pronunciation using English songs are much better in accent. For example, they pronounce vowels how to pronounce words better, and their interest in themes is very high.

The challenges factors experienced by the three English teachers in different schools, including SD Islam Bintang Juara, SDIT Mutiara Hati, and Labs school UNNES, namely the lack of access to find songs that match the material and minimal platforms. However, it does not discourage teachers from finding songs suitable for their students. And the teacher still uses English songs as learning media to teach pronunciation to students. Furthermore, it can conclude that pop songs can give students a positive experience and help them improve pronunciation.

On many occasions, pop songs can help improve students' speaking skills; many students look enthusiastic and interested. It is proven by Farmand (2006) the effect of English songs on English learners' pronunciation. This study investigated to explore the examines whether using English songs can increase students' motivation to learn English and also can use to improve the EFL learners' pronunciation. Meanwhile, Palupi (2022) improves young learners' pronunciation skills through songs. So, it was concluded

that English songs could improve students' pronunciation skills by implementing songs in the classroom. Therefore, the student's motivation and confidence increase after other movements within the songs are implemented in the class.

The result of the present study showed that after getting treatment using English songs, the student's achievement significantly increased. It is proven by Almutairi & Shukri (2016), who revealed that English songs a pedagogical value of using songs in their young learner (YL) classrooms, specifically when teaching oral skills (listening and speaking). Pérez Niño (2010) indicated that the role of music in young learners helps oral production. It supports Shehadeh (2014) suggestion that using children's songs can develop elementary graders' English vocabulary and pronunciation. The explanation showed that English song has some advantages and can influence one of the skills.

The second part is the teacher's challenge in using pop songs to teach pronunciation. Teaching English in Indonesia is very difficult because English has become a foreign language after the mother tongue. The problem faced when teaching is the lack of media, few materials, English is considered a complex subject, and lack of time to practice English. Reflecting on the results of the observations and interviews above, the problem that is often faced by elementary school teachers when learning English songs is the lack of access to songs. The first problem is the lack of songs that match the material. After interviews with the three teachers, English songs that fit the material are minimal or rare. Because the teacher has to adjust the material, the duration is a little; the vocabulary is familiar. The three teachers used the Internet's help, the YouTube app, or other platform to access English songs. Besides being difficult to access or lacking songs,

the second problem is writing. Students are easy to pronounce by imitating the music, but when asked to write the word, it is still tricky. In addition, the next problem is student responses. Students have a different grasp of the material; some students quickly understand the material or are fast learners and are not easy to understand the material or are slow learners. So that solving the problems above can be solved using various ways, including looking for references to different songs on platforms other than YouTube, doing repetition, and being able to write down the pronunciation on the blackboard. The teacher has his way of developing students' pronunciation because it is considered that students must have good pronunciation. Based on the explanation above, the researchers concluded that developing students' pronunciation skills by using English songs as learning media included; repeating songs, applying them in daily life, and looking for more creative ideas in using themes.

However, from the analysis results and several theoretical studies above, researchers have gathered data from teachers' perceptions on implementation, which is the novelty of this research, such as opinions, background, and application of pop songs. For the three teachers in different schools, teachers used learning media other than pop songs to teach pronunciation, including drilling, video, audio, and word wall games. However, the teacher prefers to use English songs apart from other media. In addition, the three teachers at different schools, SD Islam Bintang Juara, SDIT Mutiara Hati, and Labs school UNNES agreed that using pop songs in teaching pronunciation is very helpful and has positive value for students. Using pop songs for pronunciation learning media should be an absolute orientation for other researchers to discuss learning media other than pop songs and

how the learning system in teaching and learning in their research.

## CONCLUSION

This study can draw two conclusions based on the findings and discussion presented in the previous chapter. The first is about the teachers' perception of implementing pop songs. The teacher stated that using English songs as a medium for learning pronunciation was very effective and helped students pronounce words correctly. Then, the teacher prepares songs that match the material with the help of YouTube and Google. In addition, using pop songs in learning pronunciation has advantages and disadvantages. For teachers, the teacher is beneficial with the media in teaching accents because pop songs are easy to use and create a sense of interest in students. For students, pop songs help students easily accept learning, are more enthusiastic, interested in learning pronunciation, and provide a good experience. Then, the factors that become challenges and weaknesses in applying pop songs from sources or platforms are minimal, and practice time in speaking English is little. However, learning can take place even though the results are not entirely optimal, but there are differences in students' pronunciation. In addition, the media used by English teachers when teaching pronunciation include drilling, audio, video, and pictures. But the three teachers prefer to teach pronunciation using English songs.

The second is the challenge of implementing pop songs to teach pronunciation. The three teachers have different challenges: student responses, dissatisfaction with digital songs, and how to write to students. Solving these problems has been explained in the previous chapter: repetition, writing on the blackboard, composing songs, and

breaking them down for students. The students in three different schools, SD Islam Juara, SDIT Mutiara Hati, and Labs school UNNES, are delighted with the application of English songs in the pronunciation learning process.

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