



# Student's Perceptions of Using the Song "Roar" by Katy Perry to Study Vocabulary at Senior High School

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**Abstract:** This study aims to explore the perceptions of students at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Porong regarding the use of English songs as a tool for vocabulary learning. This qualitative research collected data through observations and interviews. The findings revealed that teachers applied a structured teaching strategy, beginning with the introduction of objectives and key vocabulary, followed by listening activities and completing song lyrics, and concluding with discussions on word meanings and sentence construction. These activities actively engaged students and created an interactive learning environment. Based on the interview results, students perceived vocabulary learning through songs as more enjoyable, and motivating. Songs also enhanced students' pronunciation, listening skills, and speaking confidence. Challenges such as difficult accents or unclear lyrics were manageable with teacher support. Therefore, the use of songs has proven to be effective in enriching vocabulary learning both linguistically, affectively, and socially

**Keywords:** Students' Perception, English Song, Vocabulary Learning

## Introduction

English is generally considered an international communication language that plays an important role in many fields such as education, business, and culture. In the current era, learning English is essential to be able to communicate in an international language with people from different countries around the world (Pajarwati et al., 2021). English is considered important for communication because apart from being used as a language of instruction in colleges, it is also considered to improve one's social status (Boy Jon et al., 2021). In recent decades, English has emerged as a result of globalization learning to speak this language increases the chances of employment and success (Sri Andayani, 2022b). Learning English can be both challenging and rewarding with vocabulary mastery being an important part of this process. To communicate well one must be able to understand and use a wide variety of vocabulary. Vocabulary is considered the foundation of the learning process, and mastering an adequate amount of vocabulary is essential for supporting the acquisition of other skills (Triwardani, 2022).

Vocabulary mastery is an important part of learning English, vocabulary mastery is a key aspect in learning English, learning vocabulary has more impact on the progress of language skills than just focusing on grammar (Isnaini & Aminatun, 2021). Without grammar little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed (Adnyani &

Dewi, 2020). Students who have a strong vocabulary will be better able to understand spoken and written language, vocabulary is very important in English language teaching because without sufficient vocabulary, students will not be able to understand others or express their own ideas. However, many students have difficulty acquiring a wide vocabulary in English, often due to a lack of motivation, enthusiasm or traditional learning techniques. This has prompted teachers to look for more dynamic and engaging approaches, such as using English songs to learn vocabulary. English songs can help students learn new vocabulary because the lyrics give them a fun way to understand the meaning of words (Isnaini & Aminatun, 2021). Songs are also seen as one of the most effective ways to support vocabulary acquisition, as they provide both linguistic and cognitive benefits such as rhythm-based memorization and emotional engagement (Hulawa, 2022).

English songs as learning tools have become popular among students because they are a fun and engaging way to learn their vocabulary acquisition. Among various vocabulary learning media, songs as a tool that is both enjoyable and effective in helping students recall words through melody and repetition (Herliawan & Suprijadi, 2024). Students understand new vocabulary more easily when they hear music with repetitive patterns of rhythm and lyrics. Because of its rhythm and melody listening to songs repeatedly can make learning less monotonous (Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021). Songs support vocabulary learning by presenting new words in meaningful context and pairing them with melody, which can enhance memory and understanding (Wulandari et al., 2024). This method of using songs triggers interest and motivation in students' English learning. By listening to the songs, we can gain a lot of knowledge, such as acquiring new vocabulary and learning to pronounce it (Rachmawati et al., 2020). Therefore, educators can make learning media fun and can increase students' learning motivation, one of which is using songs, songs are one of the teaching methods that can make English lessons fun (Fatonah, 2024).

Perception is our interpretation of how to see and experience the world around us (Pandey et al., 2022). Students' perception means their actions and ability to express what they see, hear, based on their experiences (Makasoe et al., 2022). In language learning, the way students perceive various teaching strategies, such as the use of multimedia resources, greatly affects their ability to understand new vocabulary. The definition of perception is the process of understanding and processing sensory data for understanding of various things (BOLOTIN, n.d.). Positive perception can increase their enthusiasm for learning.

This study aims to find out how students' perceptions view the use of English songs as a tool for learning their vocabulary. English songs can enhance students' vocabulary mastery by encouraging them to explore and understand new words through lyric interpretation, which creates a meaningful and enjoyable learning experience (Karim et al., 2022). Listening to English songs while learning may be a great way to introduce many accents. Songs help students become more familiar with English words and, as a function, improves students' listening skills and vocabulary acquisition (Yuhariah, 2023). Understanding the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as other language elements such as pronunciation and grammar, is determined by the amount of vocabulary students have (Butar Butar & Katemba, 2023). If one wants to use language

effectively, they must have a vocabulary and master it (Lestari & Hardiyanti, 2020). At SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Porong, learning through songs is part of the curriculum, and one of the English songs used in the learning process is Roar by Katy Perry, which was chosen because its theme of personal empowerment aligns with the learning objective of analyzing messages and emotional expressions in English texts. The song is also popular among students, making the learning process more engaging and relevant to their experiences. By researching these perceptions, educators can gain a better understanding of the potential of incorporating English song into English language teaching to learn vocabulary.

According to Tahani (Bsharat, 2021), there are two element of vocabulary that student must have in the learning process, These elements focus on how vocabulary can be effectively taught and acquired through engaging techniques :

a) The benefits of using songs in vocabulary learning

Incorporating songs into English classrooms offers multiple benefits for vocabulary acquisition. Through repeated exposure to lyrics, students can hear and practice the correct pronunciation of words while also understanding their meaning in context. This method not only helps in improving vocabulary but also supports grammar comprehension and speaking skills by familiarizing students with everyday language patterns.

b) The Influence of Songs on EFL Vocabulary Acquisition

Songs play a vital role in enhancing vocabulary acquisition among English language learners. By using songs with engaging lyrics, students are introduced to new words and phrases in an enjoyable and memorable way. This approach makes learning more interactive and helps students retain vocabulary for casual and conversational use, which are essential components of mastering English vocabulary.

According to some previous study this article discusses how teachers in the jenin region of Palestine perceive the use of music and educational songs on student achievement in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) conducted by Tahani et.al (Bsharat, 2021). the research shows the role of music and educational songs in improving students vocabulary and pronouncation as well as teachers attitudes towards this teaching approach. The following methods were used a mix approach, also known as a blended approach, is a combination of quantitative and qualitative method.

Other research conducted by Fajar Alamsyah and W. Taufiq (Alamsyah et al., n.d.). explain that the study, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at SMPN 1 Prambon were surveyed to learn their perceptions of the use of songs in English vocabulary learning. The purpose of this study is to determine how songs can help students expand their vocabulary, this research was conducted through a qualitative method.

The development of the times makes education must also develop, in this research will conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Porong Because these schools use technological media, one of which is song media as a tool for teaching and learning activities. At the time of pre-observation, teachers more often use technological media because students feel very interested in learning. Then, the use of media songs as english learning at this school is in

accordance with what the researchers will discuss, so the researchers is interested in examining students perceptions of the use of english songs to learn vocabulary.

This research and other research conducted by Tahani and Fajar similarities in using media, namely English song. The data collection techniques that distinguish the two are then revealed: Tahina collects data using questionnaires and interviews. While this research uses observation and interviews. Therefore, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How does the teacher use English songs for vocabulary learning in the classroom?
2. How are the students perception using English songs to learn vocabulary?

## Methodology

Qualitative research is a research technique that uses narratives or words to explain and describe the meaning of each phenomenon, symptom, adn certain social situations ((2020), 2023). In this article, a qualitative method is used to explore students perceptions of how english song affect vocabulary learning at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Porong. The qualitative method was chosen because it allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of students experiences and perspectives on this learning.

The two main instrumen used to collect data in this study were observation and interview. Observation was conducted to see firsthand how students interact with the songs used in the learning process. In addition, observations were made to record students reactions and their engagement in the activities. In addition, interview were conducted to get students subjective perspectives on the advantages and difficulties encountered when using english song for learning. The interview also provided an opportunity for students to share their comprehension and how this method affected their desire and drive to learn english.

The subjects in this study were 12<sup>th</sup> grade students at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Porong, with a total of 22 students. The researchers chose 12<sup>th</sup> grade because the learning material was in accordance with the discussion explored by the researchers. The researchers selected several students who were active in class to be interviewed to ensure balanced results in collecting comprehensive data. In addition to interviews, observations were also made to record students' interactions with English songs used in learning and their reactions during the learning process. The data collected from the observations and interviews were then analyzed descriptively-qualitatively by grouping the findings based on emerging themes. The results of this analysis provide a detailed understanding of students' perspectives on the use of English songs to learn vocabulary.

The subjects of this study were two 12th-grade students at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Porong. These students were selected purposively from a class of 22 based on their active participation in classroom activities involving English songs. The selection was aimed at gaining in-depth insights into students' perceptions of using English songs to learn vocabulary. Among the 22 students, Student A and Student B were selected as they met the criteria the researchers were looking for. Both students had an interest in the learning method through song media, which was one of the main reasons for their selection. Based on the interview, Student A and Student B revealed that the use of English songs in learning has its own charm. In addition to interviews, observations were made to record how the

students interacted with the English songs during the lesson as well as to capture their reactions during the learning process. The data collected from interviews and observations were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively by categorizing the findings based on emerging themes. This thorough analysis provided an in-depth understanding of students' perspectives on using English songs to improve their vocabulary acquisition.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **The use of English song for vocabulary learning in the classroom**

The results of the observation show that the learning process begins systematically. The teacher opened the activity by giving greetings and checking the attendance of students. After that, the teacher explained the purpose of the day's learning, which is so that students can learn and recognize English vocabulary through song lyrics. The song used in this activity is Roar by Katy Perry. The teacher introduces the song and relates the theme of the song to the students' daily life experiences to activate their initial knowledge. The teacher also introduces the key vocabulary that will appear in the song and asks the students if they already know the meaning of the vocabulary, so that students can relate the new vocabulary to the understanding they already have.

In the next stage, students are given song lyrics that have been blanked in certain parts that contain key vocabulary. The teacher instructs students to listen carefully to the song and fill in the blanks with the right words based on what they hear. To help students complete this task, the song is played more than once. During this activity, the students seemed focused and enthusiastic, some of whom even followed the lyrics orally while listening. After the song is played, the teacher guides the class discussion to discuss the students' answers and explain the meaning of the vocabulary that is not yet understood. This activity is also an opportunity for teachers to emphasize the pronunciation and use of vocabulary in context.

After the listening and discussion activities are completed, the teacher continues to the closing stage with activities aimed at strengthening students' understanding. Students are asked to create new sentences using the vocabulary they have learned, either individually or in groups. To maintain student involvement, teachers also held brainstorming sessions by asking students' favorite songs or singers. This approach makes learning feel more personal and relevant to their lives. Before closing the lesson, the teacher summarized the main vocabulary that had been learned that day and gave feedback on the students' work. Overall, the results of the observations show that the use of songs as a learning medium not only makes the learning process more enjoyable, but also increases motivation and mastery of students' vocabulary in an interactive and meaningful way.

### **The student perception in using English song to learn vocabulary**

Based on the results of interviews conducted with two grade XII students, it was found that both of them had previous experience in using songs as a medium for learning English vocabulary. Student A said that *"I've used modern songs to learn vocabulary,"* while Student B said *"I usually listen to trending songs like Taylor Swift, Bruno Mars, or songs that go viral on*

*TikTok.*" From the emotional side, student A found learning through songs fun because *"when I look for songs, I usually choose ones that relate to my current situation, so I try to understand the lyrics,"* and Student B added, *"learning feels more enjoyable when using songs."* These findings show that learning vocabulary through songs can create a more meaningful learning atmosphere and motivate students to be more actively involved in the learning process.

In addition, students also said that songs have high effectiveness in helping them master new vocabulary. Student A explained that *"learning through songs helped foster a sense of unity in the class, as students often worked together and supported one another during the activities."* while student B reveals that *"more fun and more active while studying."* Another benefit felt is ease in remembering vocabulary and improving pronunciation skills. Student A said, *"Usually there is a question of fill the blank, so my friends and I think together about the answer, so learning feels more fun,"* and student B states that *"learning through songs is not boring, vocabulary is easier to remember."* However, they also faced some challenges, such as student A expressing that he was *"difficult in his accent, confused about how to read,"* and student B added that *"some of the lyrics were not clear enough to sound but overall good."* However, these challenges can be overcome with guidance from teachers.

Regarding the genre of the song, student A felt that *"pop genre songs are very helpful in learning vocabulary because I hear them often,"* and student B considered that *"the song is easy listening is also very helpful when learning to use vocabulary."* When facing difficulties, the two admitted that they really needed help from teachers. Student A said, *"if you don't know what it means, you can ask the teacher what it means,"* and student B added that *"it's really necessary, for example, if you don't know how to read it, you can ask the teacher directly."* Songs are also considered superior to other learning strategies. Student A stated that *"compared to learning vocabulary that only memorizes, I prefer to memorize vocabulary through songs,"* and student B said that *"I have more fun, enjoy, and not get tired quickly if I learn to use songs."* Not only that, learning through songs also has a positive impact on students' speaking fluency. Student A revealed that *"he became more confident when speaking in English because he knew how to speak and its meaning,"* and student B said that *"he became more confident and because he was used to listening to English songs, he often practiced speaking in English."*

The observation findings are in line with the interview results, where students stated that learning through songs feels more fun and relevant. The songs used in learning generally come from genres or singers they like, such as popular songs or those trending on social media. This not only makes the learning process more interesting, but also makes it easier for them to remember new vocabulary because songs present a meaningful and memorable context. In addition, songs help boost students' confidence in speaking English, as they are used to hearing and mimicking the correct pronunciation of words from the lyrics. Although there were challenges such as accents that were difficult to understand or lyrics that were unclear, students were able to overcome them with teacher support. Overall, the integration of songs in vocabulary learning is proven to not only enrich students' linguistic understanding, but also provide affective and social benefits. Learning becomes more fun, contextualized and effective.

Based on the results of research, it can be discussed that the use of songs as a medium for learning English vocabulary has a significant impact on increasing students' motivation, engagement, and vocabulary mastery. Teaching English songs is one of the best teaching strategies that can be used to help students focus more on their lessons (Ifat et al., 2024). One interesting pedagogical tool for teaching and learning vocabulary is music, as it can increase students' motivation to learn English and also improve their focus in class (Kumar et al., 2022). The result of the observation shows that the teacher applies a structured learning strategy, starting from the introduction of objectives and key vocabulary, followed by core activities such as listening to songs and filling in the blank lyrics, to discussing the meaning of words and their use in new sentences. These activities involve students actively, both individually and in groups, and create an interactive and participatory learning atmosphere. Teachers also utilize brainstorming strategies and interest triggers, such as asking students' favorite song genres, to build emotional connections between the subject matter and students' personal experiences. Numerous studies have explored the integration of English songs in language education, highlighting their role in promoting vocabulary development, student engagement, and meaningful language exposure (Sri Andayani, 2022a).

## Conclusion

The conclusion of the use of English songs in vocabulary learning has a positive impact both in terms of teacher teaching strategies and student perceptions. Teachers at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Porong apply songs in vocabulary learning through structured steps, starting from pre-listening activities such as introducing songs and key vocabulary, followed by core activities such as listening to songs while filling in the empty lyrics, to post-listening activities such as discussing the meaning of vocabulary and making sentences using new vocabulary. This strategy not only increases student participation but also helps them understand vocabulary in real contexts. From the perspective of student perception, songs are considered a fun and effective learning medium for enriching vocabulary. Students feel more motivated and involved in the learning process because the songs used are relevant to their lives, easy to remember, and help them understand the meaning of words through lyrics. Songs also help improve pronunciation skills, listening skills, and confidence in speaking everyday English. Although there are obstacles such as accents or unclear lyrics, students still feel helped by the guidance from the teacher. Therefore, the use of songs in vocabulary learning is highly recommended because it can create an interactive, meaningful, and fun learning experience.

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