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INCREASING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH ENGLISH SONGS: A CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH AT SMAN 1 PAITON

Abstrak

Penelitian tindakan kelas ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris siswa kelas XI SMA Negeri 1 Paiton melalui penggunaan lagu berbahasa Inggris sebagai media autentik pembelajaran. Penelitian dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus menggunakan model Kemmis dan McTaggart yang meliputi tahap perencanaan, pelaksanaan, observasi, dan refleksi. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes berbicara, lembar observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis secara deskriptif, kuantitatif, dan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya peningkatan signifikan dalam kemampuan berbicara siswa, ditunjukkan oleh kenaikan skor rata-rata dari 65,6 pada pre-test menjadi 82,2 pada post-test, serta peningkatan tingkat ketuntasan belajar dari 29,4% menjadi 88,2%. Aspek kelancaran, pengucapan, dan kosakata mengalami peningkatan paling tinggi. Selain itu, siswa menunjukkan kepercayaan diri dan partisipasi yang lebih aktif melalui kegiatan shadowing dan diskusi lirik. Dengan demikian, penggunaan lagu berbahasa Inggris terbukti efektif sebagai media pembelajaran untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa SMA.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan Berbicara, Literasi Musik, Lagu Berbahasa Inggris, Penelitian Tindakan Kelas.

Abstract

This classroom action research aims to improve the English speaking skills of 11th grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Paiton through the use of English songs as an authentic learning medium. The research was conducted in two cycles using the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which includes the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through speaking tests, observation sheets, and documentation, then analyzed descriptively, quantitatively, and qualitatively. The results showed a significant improvement in students' speaking skills, as indicated by an increase in the average score from 65.6 on the pre-test to 82.2 on the post-test, as well as an increase in the learning completeness rate from 29.4% to 88.2%. The aspects of fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary experienced the highest improvement. In addition, students showed greater confidence and more active participation through shadowing and lyric discussion activities. Thus, the use of English songs proved to be an effective learning medium for improving the speaking skills of high school students. Keywords: speaking ability, music literacy, English songs, classroom action research.

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INTRODUCTION

English speaking skills are one of the important productive competencies that students need to master at the high school level. In the context of English language learning in schools, speaking skills are often a challenge because most students are still passive, lack confidence, and face difficulties in pronunciation and vocabulary mastery. These problems are caused by limited interesting learning media and the lack of application of authentic communicative approaches in the classroom (Putra et al., 2022).

Therefore, a learning strategy is needed that can create a fun, interactive learning atmosphere and encourage active student participation. English songs are an effective authentic medium for improving students' speaking skills. Songs have elements of rhythm, intonation, and

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contextual meaning that can help students understand language structure while improving pronunciation and fluency (Safitri & Najwa, 2024). In addition, songs can foster learning motivation and create a positive learning environment. Rahmah and Siswana (2025) explain that the habit of singing English songs correlates with an increase in students' pronunciation and prosody skills (Rahmah & Siswana, 2025). Thus, songs not only serve as entertainment, but also as an effective means of developing oral communication skills.

Previous studies have shown the effectiveness of songs in English language learning. Sinurat et al. (2025) proved that the use of songs combined with problem-based learning methods can improve students' fluency and vocabulary mastery (Sinurat et al., 2025). Moreover, Firmansyah et al. (2024) found that singing and analyzing song lyrics can reduce speaking anxiety and increase students' confidence (Firmansyah et al., 2024). Pandey et al. (2022) also emphasized that students have a positive perception of the use of songs because they provide an authentic context that is relevant to their lives (Pandey et al., 2022).

However, the use of songs as a learning medium is still rarely applied systematically in classroom action research at the high school level. Many teachers do not yet utilize songs as pedagogical instruments, but only as recreational activities. In fact, research by Susanti et al. (2023) shows that integrating songs with performative activities such as role-playing and lyric discussions can improve speaking skills while strengthening students' emotional engagement (Susanti et al., 2023).

This classroom action research aims to improve the English speaking skills of 11th grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Paiton through the use of English songs as authentic media. Through this approach, it is hoped that students will participate actively, speak confidently, and show improvement in fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary mastery. In addition, this study is expected to provide practical contributions to teachers in developing innovative and effective learning models to improve the quality of English language learning in secondary schools.

METHOD

This study used a classroom action research (CAR) approach with reference to the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which consists of four stages, namely planning, implementation of actions, observation, and reflection. This model was chosen because it provides opportunities for teachers to improve learning practices in a sustainable and collaborative manner in the classroom through a systematic cycle of action (Putra et al., 2022). This study was conducted in two cycles, with one pre-test before the action and one post-test after all actions were completed.

This study was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Paiton in the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The research subjects were 34 grade XI students, consisting of 22 male students and 12 female students. The subjects were selected purposively based on initial observations that showed that the students' speaking skills were still low, especially in terms of fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary mastery. The researcher acted as a facilitator and collaborator who interacted directly in the learning process to ensure that the actions were carried out according to plan.

The research instruments consisted of speaking tests, observation sheets, and documentation. The speaking tests were used to measure students' abilities before and after the intervention by assessing five main components, namely fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. These tests are compiled based on a speaking assessment rubric adapted from the Cambridge Speaking Descriptor and tailored to the high school context. Observation sheets are used to assess student participation, enthusiasm, and engagement during learning activities. Documentation in the form of photos, videos, and field notes is used to reinforce the qualitative data from the observations.

Learning activities are carried out through the use of English songs as an authentic medium to improve students' speaking skills. Each stage of learning uses different songs to suit the level of language complexity and student motivation. In the pre-test stage, the song Love Story (Taylor Swift) was used to measure students' initial abilities in pronunciation and fluency. In cycle I, the song Brave (Sara Bareilles) was used as the main medium in shadowing and sing-along activities to train students' courage and articulation. Furthermore, in cycle II, the song Fight Song (Rachel Platten) is used to strengthen confidence, expand vocabulary, and improve

speaking intonation. The same song (Fight Song) is also used in the post-test stage to measure the improvement in skills after the action is taken.

Each cycle consists of one meeting with a duration of 60 minutes. The learning process involves three main stages, namely (1) listening and imitation by repeating song lyrics using the shadowing technique, (2) lyric discussion and vocabulary exploration to understand the meaning of the song and enrich vocabulary, and (3) performance and reflection through speaking activities based on the meaning and message of the song. This activity aims to encourage students to express their opinions verbally and improve their pronunciation.

Data analysis techniques were carried out descriptively, quantitatively, and qualitatively. Quantitative data in the form of pre-test and post-test scores were analysed by calculating the average increase in scores. The results of the analysis showed that the average student score increased from 65.6 on the pre-test to 82.2 on the post-test, with an increase in learning completeness from 29.4% to 88.2%. Qualitative data obtained from observation and documentation were analysed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to identify changes in students' behaviour, motivation, and confidence in speaking English.

Data validity was obtained through triangulation of techniques and sources by comparing test results, observations, and field notes. The involvement of collaborating teachers in the reflection process was carried out to avoid researcher bias and ensure the objectivity of the research results (Susanti et al., 2023). The validity of the results was also strengthened through peer discussions and inter-rater checks to ensure consistency in speaking assessment.

The selection of songs as a learning medium was based on linguistic and psychological considerations of the students. Songs are considered an effective authentic means of facilitating natural pronunciation, intonation mastery, and improved fluency in speaking (Safitri & Najwa, 2024). Several previous studies have also shown that the use of songs can reduce speaking anxiety and increase students' confidence in communication (Firmansyah et al., 2024; Rahmah & Siswana, 2025; Sinurat et al., 2025). Therefore, the application of the songs Love Story, Brave, and Fight Song in this study is expected to support the achievement of speaking learning objectives in a fun, meaningful, and effective way for high school students.

$$\text{Percentage} \sim \text{Completion} = 30 \div 34 \times 100 = 88,2\%$$

The criteria for the success of the action are determined if there is an increase in the average score of at least 15% from the pre-test to cycle II, and at least 80% of students achieve a KKTP (Criteria for Learning Objective Achievement) score of 78. Based on the calculations, the average score increased from 65.6 (pre-test) to 77.8 (cycle II) and 82.2 (post-test), with a learning completeness of 88.2%. These results indicate that the systematic use of English songs contributes significantly to improving students' speaking skills.

These findings are in line with the research by Sinurat et al. (2023), which shows that songs can effectively improve students' speaking skills through problem-based activities (Sinurat et al., 2025). Similarly, the results of research by Firmansyah et al. (2024) prove that the use of English songs can strengthen students' vocabulary and pronunciation skills naturally (Firmansyah et al., 2024).

The validity of the data was tested using source and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and student speaking tests. Method triangulation was carried out by using more than one data collection technique to assess the same phenomenon. The member checking process was carried out together with the collaborating teacher to ensure the consistency of the research results and reduce the researcher's subjective bias.

This triangulation approach is in line with the views of Rahmah and Siswana (2025), who emphasize that cross-source validation is necessary to ensure the reliability of findings in language research (Rahmah & Siswana, 2025). In addition, the results of research by Safitri and Najwa (2024) highlight the importance of using a method triangulation approach in authentic media-based learning, such as songs, to strengthen the empirical evidence of research results (Safitri & Najwa, 2024). A similar view is expressed by Ramlan and Nora (2020), who states that the use of English songs in action research can improve speaking skills while strengthening

the validity of the results through a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches (Vita Ramlan, Nora, 2020).

Thus, the application of triangulation in this study reinforces the credibility of the findings that the use of the songs Love Story, Brave, and Fight Song in stages can significantly improve high school students' speaking skills in linguistic, affective, and motivational aspects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

This classroom action research was conducted in two cycles with the aim of improving the English speaking skills of grade XI students at SMA Negeri 1 Paiton through the use of English songs as authentic learning media. The songs used included Love Story in the pre-test, Brave in cycle I, and Fight Song in cycle II and post-test.

The results of the study showed a significant improvement from the pre-test to the post-test. In the pre-test stage, the average score for students' speaking skills was 65.6, with 10 students (29.4%) achieving the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP = 78). After implementing learning using the song Brave in cycle I, the average score increased to 72.3, and 18 students (52.9%) were declared to have achieved the learning objectives. This increase shows that the use of English songs began to have a positive impact on student motivation and participation.

In cycle II, the Fight Song was implemented with a more focused learning strategy through lyric comprehension, role performance, and peer correction activities. The results showed an increase in the average score to 77.8, with 24 students (70.6%) achieving learning completeness. This improvement reflects that students are becoming accustomed to using English in a more natural communicative context.

After the comprehensive implementation of the action, the post-test showed very satisfactory results. The average score increased to 82.2, and the number of students who achieved learning completeness increased to 30 students (88.2%). This shows that song-based learning is able to create a fun and effective learning atmosphere in improving students' speaking skills.

Table 1. Summary of Results of Improvement in Speaking Skills of Grade XI Students at SMAN 1 Paiton

Stage	Average Score	students of completed	Percentage of completed
Pre-test	65,6	10 students	29,4%
Cycle I	72,3	18 students	52,9%
Cycle II	77,8	24 students	70,6%
Post-test	82,2	30 students	88,2%

The data in Table 1 shows that the average speaking skills of students gradually improved at each stage of learning. The increase in scores from the pre-test to the post-test reached a difference of 16.6 points, and the number of students who achieved learning completeness increased from 29.4% to 88.2%. These findings indicate that the use of English songs is effective in helping students improve their speaking skills.

In cycle I, students began to show improvement in speaking fluency, although they still faced difficulties in pronunciation and vocabulary mastery. Some students still appeared hesitant and lacked confidence in speaking in front of the class. Based on the teachers' reflections, the learning strategies in cycle II were improved by adding activities such as individual presentations, discussions on the meaning of lyrics, and repetition exercises for certain parts of the songs. These strategies encouraged students to speak more boldly and increase their active participation during learning.

In addition, in cycle II, students showed greater enthusiasm for the learning process. The songs *Brave* and *Fight Song* not only helped improve linguistic skills, but also fostered motivation and enthusiasm for learning among students. The classroom atmosphere became more lively and communicative, which had a positive impact on overall learning outcomes.

Discussions

The improvement in students' speaking skills in this study proves that English songs can be an effective and enjoyable learning medium. Songs are able to integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects simultaneously, so that students not only learn the language but also enjoy the process. This is in line with the findings of Safitri & Najwa (2024), who emphasize that songs are an effective medium for creating a natural learning context and motivating students to communicate orally (Safitri & Najwa, 2024).

The results of this study are also in line with the study by Sinurat et al. (2025), which shows that the use of English songs in problem-based learning can improve students' fluency and enrich their vocabulary (Sinurat et al., 2025). In the context of this study, the songs *Brave* and *Fight Song* were proven to be able to increase students' confidence in speaking English because the positive messages in the lyrics encouraged them to be more courageous in expressing their opinions.

In addition, this study reinforces the findings of Rahmah and Siswana (2025), which state that the habit of singing English songs is closely related to improvements in students' pronunciation skills (Rahmah & Siswana, 2025). Songs also help improve intonation and pronunciation through the repetition of sounds in a natural rhythm. Similar findings were reported by Firmansyah et al. (2024), who found that learning through songs can reduce speaking anxiety and improve articulation clarity (Firmansyah et al., 2024).

Overall, the increase in the average score from 65.6 in the pre-test to 82.2 in the post-test, with the completion rate increasing from 29.4% to 88.2%, shows the effectiveness of using English songs as a learning medium in improving students' speaking skills. Songs such as *Love Story*, *Brave*, and *Fight Song* have been proven to help students understand language structure, expand their vocabulary, and improve their fluency and pronunciation naturally.

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CONCLUSION

The results of classroom action research conducted in two cycles at SMA Negeri 1 Paiton show that the systematic use of English songs can significantly improve students' speaking skills. The use of the song *Love Story* in the pre-test stage, *Brave* in cycle I, and *Fight Song* in cycle II and post-test had a positive impact on students' speaking skills, in terms of fluency,

pronunciation, and vocabulary mastery. The increase in the average score from 65.6 in the pre-test to 82.2 in the post-test shows an improvement of 16.6 points, while the learning completeness percentage increased from 29.4% to 88.2%. These results show that the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP) target of 78 was achieved in the post-test stage, with most students showing significant progress.

These findings reinforce the view that English songs are an effective learning medium for developing speaking skills because they involve emotional elements, rhythm, and authentic contexts that motivate students to actively participate in the learning process. Songs create a fun and communicative learning atmosphere, so that students are more confident in expressing themselves and interacting verbally using English. The results of this study are in line with the findings of (Sinurat et al., 2025), who stated that the use of songs can improve speaking skills through a problem-based approach that emphasizes active student involvement.

In addition, research by Rahmah and Siswana (2025) also shows a positive relationship between the habit of singing English songs and students' pronunciation skills (Rahmah & Siswana, 2025). This is reinforced by the findings of Firmansyah et al. (2024), which prove that the use of songs in speaking lessons improves students' fluency and confidence in speaking in public (Firmansyah et al., 2024). In the same context, Safitri and Najwa (2024) explain that songs have conceptual potential to strengthen speaking skills because they integrate linguistic and affective elements simultaneously (Safitri & Najwa, 2024).

Based on these results and discussions, it can be concluded that the use of English songs in speaking lessons is effective in improving students' fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Songs such as Brave and Fight Song not only help students practice their linguistic speaking skills, but also build motivation, confidence, and a positive and interactive learning atmosphere. Theoretically, the results of this study reinforce the concept that musical media can be an effective tool in second language acquisition because it involves both affective and cognitive processes simultaneously. From a practical standpoint, English teachers are advised to integrate relevant and meaningful songs into their teaching in order to improve students' speaking skills in a sustainable and contextual manner.

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