An Analysis on the Ability of the First Year Students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in Listening to English Songs

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to find out the ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in listening to English songs. The design of this research was descriptive in nature. The population members of this research were 38 first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University. In selecting the sample, the researcher used simple random sampling technique. The number of sample members was 19 students. The result of the data analysis showed that the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University were classified into having moderate ability. It was proved by the fact that 20 students (80%) had moderate ability. Specifically, the students’ ability in comprehending the verse in listening to song was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 22 students (88%) had moderate ability. The students’ ability in comprehending the chorus in listening to song was moderate. It was due to the fact that 19 students (76%) had moderate ability. The students’ ability in comprehending the bridge in listening to song was high. It was proved by the fact that 23 students (92%) had high ability. Based on the results of the research, the English lecturers are suggested to develop material about song, give more exercises and motivation to the students. The students are expected to learn more and to do more exercises in listening to song. Furthermore, the researcher suggests the next researchers to find out students’ difficulties in listening to song and try to solve the problems.

Key words: Analysis, Ability, Listening, Song

Introduction

Teaching English is based on the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening is very essential. It gets the first position of the four skills because we get language sound first when we learn language. It is a functional tool for communicating and gathering information. It is difficult to answer someone’s question if we cannot listen well. We need to comprehend what other people say in English in order to achieve the goal of good and successful communication.

We should have good listening to support our communication more fluently. However, most Indonesian people including the students face difficulties in communication using English. For example, the students still cannot understand listening materials, like listening a song in English. They hear and enjoy the English song, but they do not know the meaning and spelling of the words. They do not understand what their teacher says although they listen well and
give attention to their teacher. So they do nothing because they do not comprehend their teacher’s explanation and instruction.

To solve the problem, according to Underwood in Elsa (2014, 2), there are several ways of improving students’ listening ability such as: listening to the news, listening to the stories, listening to the music and song in English. Harmer (2002:228) states that improving students listening skills is important since it helps students to gain many valuable language inputs.

In this research, the researcher used listening to a song to solve the problem. Learning English with song can make the students enjoy themselves and decrease their mental blocks. By listening song, students collect new vocabularies and know how to pronounce them well. Usually they will find new words in the song then search for the meaning and its spelling immediately. In term of the song parts, the students have to understand the intro, the verse, the pre-chorus, the chorus, the bridge, and the outro.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher was interested in conducting a research entitled “An analysis on the ability of the first year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in listening to English song”

Song is a kind of entertainment. It can be done with or without musical instrument, just by clapping hands. A song is a short musical composition. It is typically for a solo singer, a duet, trio, or more voices. Part of song includes intro, verse, pre-chorus, chorus, bridge and outro. Intro is the introduction, always appearing at the start of the song. Verse is to tell the story of the song. Every song has a story or a message to convey and the verse is where you do it. The pre-chorus happens between the verse and the chorus. It is used to add an additional level of dynamics. Chorus is where you convey the main message of the song. Then, bridge comes after the second chorus of your song and its main purpose is to add contrast. The end of a song can sometimes be referred to as an outro.

To avoid misunderstanding and to clarify the problems, it was important to set some limitation of the problems. This research was limited to the first year students’ ability in listening to English song focusing on Pop songs. They are “I Have a Dream” song by Westlife and “Anytime You Need a Friend” song by Mariah Carey. The researcher limited her study on the ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University to listen to the verse of “I Have a Dream” song and “Anytime You Need a Friend” song, the chorus of “I Have a Dream” song and “Anytime You Need a Friend” song, and the bridge of “I Have a Dream” song and “Anytime You Need a Friend” song

The purpose of the research was to find out the ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in listening to English song. The specific purposes of this research were to find out the ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University to listen to the verse of “I Have a Dream” song and “Anytime You Need a Friend” song; to find
out the ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University to listen to the chorus of “I Have a Dream” song and “Anytime You Need a Friend” song; and to find out the ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University to listen to the bridge of “I Have a Dream” song and “Anytime You Need a Friend” song.

**Research Method**

The design of this research was descriptive method. Gay (1987:189) states that descriptive method involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. In this research, the researcher found out the ability of the first year students of English Department in listening to English song at Bung Hatta University.

Population is the group to which the researcher is going to conduct the research and the result of the study can be generalizable to that group. Sampling is the identification of the population, determination of required sample size and selection of the sample (Gay, 1987:118).

The population of this research was the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University. They were chosen as the population because they had learned about listening to English song at junior and senior high school. The total number of the population members was 38 students. They had been divided into 2 classes. The distribution of the population members is shown in Table 3.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>PING 15 A</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>PING 15 B</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this research, the researcher used simple random sampling because every individual has the same probability of being selected and selection of one individual does not give affects to the selection of another individual. According to Creswell (2012:143), simple random sampling is when the researcher selects participants for the sample so that any individual has an equal probability of being selected from the population. In term of proportion, researcher takes 67% of 38 students because it could describe the whole students’ ability. To choose the sample, the researcher wrote the name of all population members in 38 pieces of paper. Then, she rolled them and after shaking it, the researcher took 25 pieces of paper randomly with closed eyes. The selected names were the sample of this study.

In this research, the researcher collected the data through listening test in the form of short answer and allocated 60 minutes for students to do the test. The instrument consisted of 18 items covering the three parts of song.
A good test should be valid and reliable. A test is valid if it measures what is supposed to be measured. The researcher used content validity in this study. Gay (1987:129) states that a test with good content validity adequately samples the appropriate content area.

Gay (1987: 135) states that reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it is measured. To know the reliability of the test, the researcher uses inter-rater technique by using two scorers (scorer 1 and scorer 2). The first scorer is the researcher and the second scorer is Aulian Syaiful Acheen. The researcher chose him because he got good grade in listening. To find out the correlation index of the instrument, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula as suggested by Arikunto (2012: 87) as follows:

\[
 r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{(n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2)(n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}} 
\]

\[
 r_{xy} = \text{the coefficient of correlation of variable x and y} 
\]

\[
 n = \text{the number of the students} 
\]

\[
 x = \text{the score from the first scorer} 
\]

\[
 y = \text{the score from the second scorer} 
\]

\[
 \sum xy = \text{the total cross product of xy} 
\]

Finally the researcher used the coefficient of correlation based on Arikunto’s idea (2012; 89).

| .81 - 1.00 | = very high correlation |
| .61 - .80 | = high correlation |
| .41 - .60 | = moderate correlation |
| .21 - .40 | = low correlation |
| .00 – .21 | = very low correlation |

In collecting data, the researcher distributed the listening test as instrument to the students. Before the researcher asked the students to do the test, the researcher explained the direction of doing the test to the students. The researcher played the CD containing the song “I Have a Dream” and “Anytime You Need a Friend”, then let the students do the test. There were some steps in collecting the data, they were:

1. The researcher distributed the test sheets to the sample.
2. The researcher let the students do the test.
3. The researcher collected the test and answer sheets.
4. The researcher made copies of the students’ answer sheets in order to be able to evaluate them at the same time
5. The researcher and the second scorer checked the students’ answer.
6. The two scorers gave score for students by using certain criteria as shown in Table 3.3
7. The researcher and the second scorer counted each students’ score.
8. The score assigned by the first scorer and second scorer was the data of this research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.  | • The question is answered correctly based on the song and the purpose of question.  
   • The answer has an excellent language; grammar, spelling and punctuation. | 2 |
2. The idea is correct but there are some grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. 1

3. • The idea is not correct.
   • There are numerous grammatical errors. 0

In analyzing data, the researcher used the procedures as follows:
1. The researcher presented the raw scores from the two scorers.
   \[
   \text{Students' score} = \frac{\text{first scorer's score} + \text{second scorer's score}}{2}
   \]

2. The researcher calculated mean (M) by using the following formula:
   \[
   M = \frac{\sum x}{N}
   \]
   Where:
   - M = Mean
   - \(\sum x\) = Total score of students
   - N = Number of students

3. The researcher calculated Standard Deviation, by using the following formula:
   \[
   SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{N} - \left(\frac{\sum x}{N}\right)^2}
   \]
   Where:
   - SD = Standard deviation
   - \(\sum x\) = Total score of the students
   - N = The total number of students
   - \(\sum x^2\) = The sum of all squares: square each score and add up the entire sum

4. The researcher classified the students’ ability into high, moderate, and low by using the following categories:
   - \(M + SD\) = High Ability
   - \((M - SD) \rightarrow (M + SD)\) = Moderate Ability
   - \(M - SD\) = Low Ability

5. The researcher calculated the percentage of the students who got high, moderate, and low ability, by using the following formula:
   \[
   P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%
   \]
   Where:
   - P = The percentage of the students who had high, moderate, and low ability
   - F = The sum of the students who got high, moderate, or low ability.
   - N = The sum of the students.

Findings
The test was held on Thursday in November 5, 2015 at 04.00 pm. It took place in Bung Hatta University. The data were collected by giving a short answer test to 25 students who were participated in the test. There were 18 items in the test. Each item has maximum 2 points. It means that the total score that the students supposed to have with all correct answer is 36.

The highest score achieved by the students was 35 and the lowest score was 25. The mean was 30.30 and the standard deviation was 2.30. There were 2 students who had high ability in listening to song and the percentage was 8%. There were 20 students who had moderate ability and the percentage
was 80%. There were 3 students who had low ability and the percentage was 12%.

The highest score of students’ ability was found in comprehending the verse in listening to song was 12 and the lowest score was 9. The mean was 6.76 and the standard deviation was 5.13. The result was that 3 students (12%) had high ability, 22 students (88%) had moderate ability and no students (0%) had low ability.

The highest score of students’ ability was found in comprehending the chorus in listening to song was 12 and the lowest score was 7. The mean was 6.2 and the standard deviation was 4.81. The result was that 6 students (24%) had high ability, 19 students (76%) had moderate ability and no students (0%) had low ability.

The highest score of the students’ ability was found in comprehending the bridge in listening to song was 11.5 and the lowest score was 8. The mean was 4.96 and the standard deviation was 3.21. The result that was 23 students (92%) had high ability, 2 students (8%) had moderate ability and no students (0%) had low ability.

Discussion

As already discussed previously, the researcher found that students’ ability in listening to song was moderate. It is supported by the fact that majority of students (80%) had moderate ability. It means that this finding indicates 20 students of moderate ability and 3 students of low ability still have difficulties in listening to song. Those are probably caused by their lack of understanding or background knowledge to a song, problems of interpretation to the songs and also their lack of understanding to make a good sentence with good grammar.

It was shown that students’ ability in comprehending the verse in listening to song was moderate. It is supported by the fact that majority of students (88%) had moderate ability. It means that this finding indicates that 22 students of moderate ability still have mistakes in comprehending the verse in listening to song. They should have a full concentration to understand what the verse tells about. For examples:

1. If you're lonely and need a friend
   And troubles seem like they never end
   Just remember to keep the faith
   And love will be there to light the way

   Question: What does the word “they” in the verse refer to?
   They answered: They refer to friends
   The correct answer: The word “they” in the verse refers to troubles

   Description: The students answer that because this song talks about friends

2. I have a dream, a song to sing
   To help me cope with anything
   If you see the wonder of a fairy tale
   You can take the future even if you

   Question: What is the synonym of the word “fail”?
   They answered: Fail is success.
   The correct answer: The synonym of the word “fail” is lose.

   Description: The students answer that because this they do not know the meaning of fail
exactly and the students also do not understand what “synonym” means.

Another finding of this study is students’ ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in comprehending the chorus in listening to song is moderate. It is supported by the fact that majority of students (76%) had moderate ability. It means that 19 students of moderate ability still get problems in comprehending the chorus in listening to song. It may be caused by limited knowledge to comprehend the chorus in the song. For examples:

1. Anytime you need a friend I will be here
   You'll never be alone again so don't you fear
   Even if you're miles away I'm by your side
   So don't you ever be lonely, love will make it alright
   **Question:** What will make everything alright?
   **They answered:** Friends will make everything alright
   **The correct answer:** Love will make everything alright
   **Description:** Because the theme of the song is about friend, so the students can answer that. But the correct answer is love exactly.

2. If you just believe in me
   I will love you endlessly
   Take my hand, take me into your heart
   I'll be there forever baby
   I won't let go I'll never let go
   **Question:** What is the closest meaning of the word “endlessly” in the bridge of the song?
   **They answered:** Sometimes
   **The correct answer:** The closest meaning of the word “endlessly” in the bridge of the song is forever
   **Description:** The students answer that because this they do not know the meaning of fail exactly and the students also do not understand what “the closest” means.

2. I believe in angels
   Something good in everything I see
   I believe in angels
   When I know the time is right for me
   I'll cross the stream
   I have a dream
   **Question:** Based on the chorus, what does “stream” mean?
   **They answered:** Stream means dream
   **The correct answer:** Based on the chorus, stream means troubles.
   **Description:** Because the theme of the song is about someone’s dream, so the students can answer dream. But the correct answer is troubles exactly.

   Based on the data analysis, this study also found that 92% of students had high ability. It means that 2 students of moderate ability still get problems in comprehending the bridge in listening to song. To comprehend the bridge in listening to song, they should listen carefully and know the context. For examples:

1. I have a dream, a fantasy
   To help me through reality
   And my destination makes it worth the while
   Pushing through the darkness still another mile
**Question:** What does the word “it” in the bridge refer to?

**They answered:** It refer to dream.

**The correct answered:** The word “it” in the bridge refers to reality.

**Description:** The students answer that because this song talks about someone’ dream

**Conclusions**

Having the result of the data analysis, the writer concludes that:

1. In general, the ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in listening to song was moderate. The data describes that there were 2 students (8%) had high ability in listening to song, 20 students (80%) had moderate ability in listening to song and 3 students (12%) had low ability in listening to song.

2. The ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in comprehending the verse in listening to song was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 3 students (12%) had high ability, 22 students (88%) had moderate ability and 0 students (0%) had low ability.

3. The ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in comprehending the chorus in listening to song was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 6 students (24%) had high ability, 19 students (76%) had moderate ability and 0 students (0%) had low ability.

4. The ability of the first year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in comprehending the bridge in listening to song was high. It was proved by the fact that 23 students (92%) had high ability, 2 students (8%) had moderate ability and 0 students (0%) had low ability.

**Suggestions**

Based on finding of the research, the researcher proposes some suggestions as follows:

1. Based on the result of the study on the ability of the students in listening to song, students’ ability was moderate (80%). The researcher suggests the lecturers to motivate the students, to give more exercises in song in listening class. So, the lecturers can improve their teaching listening especially about song.

2. Based on the data analysis and the findings above, the researcher suggests the students to pay attentions, to learn more, and to do more exercises about song especially about verse, chorus, and bridge.

3. The result of the data analysis shows students’ ability in listening to song was moderate (80%). Therefore, further researchers are suggested and hoped to do the researches to find the factors that improve the ability of the students in listening to song and find good solutions to solve the problems.
Bibliography


