


## IMPROVING STUDENTS' INTEREST IN LEARNING LISTENING SKILL USING SONG LYRICS AT THE EIGHTH GRADE OF MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH (MTs.) AL-BADRIYAH BOARDING SCHOOL SUNDAK RARANG

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to improve students' interest in learning listening skills by using song lyrics and to know if there is any significant improvement during the learning process. Therefore, the methodology of this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). It was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The data was obtained from tests and observation. The test was used to measure students' interest in learning listening skill by listening to song lyrics, and observation used to get additional information about the students' reflection toward the learning activities by using song lyrics. From the result of the research, the researcher found that teaching listening through song lyrics can improve students' interest in learning listening skills. The findings show that the students' score in cycle 2 is higher than score test in cycle 1. The calculation leads to the results of cycle 1 which in the first cycle students' mean score was 64,21 and in the second cycle was 94,73. This means that in cycle 1 and cycle 2, the interest of students was improved. During the learning process, the students were enthusiastic, active, and attentive in listening English words from song lyrics. Overall, the findings showed that teaching listening using song lyrics was an appropriate media to improve students' interest in learning listening skills.

Research Paper

Pesantren Reviews

**Keywords:** Learning listening skill, Song Lyrics, Students' Interest.

### INTRODUCTION

English language is widely used around the world, including in Indonesia, where the use of information technology is expanding. As a result, there is a growing trend among scholars, bureaucrats, and elites in Indonesia to learn and use English (Nihta Liando, 2009). The importance of English is evident in various fields such as science, technology, culture, economics, and tourism (Jin & Cortazzi, 2002). Among the four main skills needed to learn English as a foreign language—reading, listening, writing, and speaking—listening can be particularly challenging. It requires a high level of focus

and attention to fully comprehend the sounds being heard. Some argue that listening is the most important aspect of learning English as it plays a crucial role in communication and serves as an international language.

Listening skills are essential for effective communication and serve as the foundation for developing other language skills. These skills involve understanding spoken language, interpreting meaning, and developing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). The development of listening skills is influenced by cognitive-developmental and social-interactional theories, suggesting that

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age, cognitive abilities, and interactions with others contribute to their development (Demetriou et al., 1993). In learning English as a second language, both students and teachers face challenges, particularly in regard to listening skills. Ineffective teaching methods and lack of student motivation are common obstacles. To help students master English, teachers should employ various interesting approaches, methods, techniques, and media, including interactive activities, games, and songs (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Songs, in particular, can serve as an engaging and meaningful tool for improving students' interest in learning listening skills.

Song lyrics offer several advantages for language learners. They can help students relax, improve their second language skills, and create an authentic speaking environment for intercultural communication (Salcedo, 2002). Exposure to lyrics teaches vocabulary, grammar, speech rhythm, and different language registers. The combination of rhythm, melody, and lyrics creates a memorable and enjoyable learning experience, enhancing students' motivation to improve their listening skills (Shen, 2009). Additionally, song lyrics can help students develop their ability to listen for specific information, improving critical listening skills. Incorporating song lyrics into the classroom can take various forms, such as using lyrics as the basis for language activities, discussions, and exploration of cultural references. By considering factors like relevance, enjoyment, active engagement, and variety, teachers can enhance students' interest in learning listening skills using song lyrics.

However, students may struggle with listening skills in English due to limited exposure to native English speakers and lack of practice (Lengkoan et al., 2022). This is particularly evident among eighth-grade students at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak in Indonesia. They often begin learning English through reading rather than listening, and their lack of exposure to native pronunciation hampers their understanding of spoken English. These difficulties are further compounded by feelings of nervousness, anxiety, and lack of confidence in speaking English (Chou, 2018). Furthermore, the

current monotony of teaching materials used to improve listening skills contributes to the students' lack of interest. To address these issues, the researcher aims to conduct a study on how to improve students' listening skills through song lyrics at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak in the academic year 2022/2023.

## METHOD

This study utilizes Classroom Action Research (CAR) as a method to help teachers assist their students in mastering the material. CAR is a widely used approach in education that focuses on progress and improvement. It involves a cyclical process of identifying a problem, taking action, gathering data, and assessing outcomes (Kemmis, 2006). Through CAR, teachers can implement effective teaching strategies tailored to their specific classrooms. CAR has gained popularity among teachers worldwide as it enhances teaching practices and facilitates the learning process. It is a relevant and beneficial approach that allows for ongoing research and development in education.

Conducting CAR provides insights into student responses and teaching strategies over an entire teaching session, leading to immediate benefits for students. CAR's characteristics, such as systematic inquiry, reflexivity, and practicality, make it well-suited for the education sector. CAR typically consists of four major phases in the research cycle. The first cycle can be a continuous or repetitive spiral until satisfactory results are achieved. The model proposed by Kemmis, (2006) outlines four steps: planning a change, taking action, observing the process and consequences, and reflecting on these processes and consequences.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Identifying the Problem and Formulating a Planned Change at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak

In the pursuit of continuous improvement in the field of education, Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak, a junior high school located in Sundak, Indonesia, sought to enhance the quality of education and student engagement in mathematics lessons. To achieve this, the school embarked on a Classroom Action Research (CAR) journey, a widely accepted and scientifically grounded approach in

educational research that emphasizes progress and improvement. The initial phase of the research involved meticulously identifying the problem and devising a well-thought-out planned change to address the issue of declining student engagement during mathematics classes.

The research team, comprising dedicated educators and researchers, started by conducting a comprehensive needs assessment at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak. This initial inquiry involved gathering data through classroom observations, student surveys, and discussions with teachers. The data revealed a recurring challenge: a gradual decline in student engagement and participation during mathematics lessons. The lack of active involvement and enthusiasm among students in this critical subject raised concerns among educators and prompted them to seek effective solutions. Based on the needs assessment findings, the research team collaborated with the school's mathematics teachers to devise a well-structured planned change. The main objective of this planned change was to implement interactive teaching methods, group activities, and multimedia resources to boost student interest and active participation in mathematics classes.

To ensure the planned change aligned with scientific principles, the research team conducted a comprehensive review of existing literature on effective teaching strategies and student engagement in mathematics education. They critically analyzed empirical studies and scholarly articles, seeking evidence-based practices that had demonstrated success in increasing student engagement in similar educational settings. By incorporating evidence-based strategies into their planned change, the research team aimed to strengthen the scientific foundation of their approach.

Furthermore, the research team applied the principles of action research, specifically the cyclical process advocated by Haryani et al., (2021). They considered the iterative nature of the research cycle, allowing for continuous improvement and refinement of teaching strategies. The team planned to monitor the implementation of the change closely, gather data on its effectiveness, and reflect on the outcomes to inform subsequent cycles.

As part of their scientifically grounded approach, the research team also took into account the unique context of Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak.

They considered the school's student demographics, learning environment, and available resources while devising the planned change. This contextual understanding played a crucial role in tailoring the strategies to suit the specific needs and characteristics of the school.

The first phase of the Classroom Action Research at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak involved identifying the problem of declining student engagement during mathematics lessons and formulating a well-structured planned change. The research team adhered to scientific principles by conducting a thorough needs assessment, reviewing existing literature, and applying evidence-based strategies. The planned change aimed to implement interactive teaching methods, group activities, and multimedia resources to enhance student interest and participation. This initial phase set the groundwork for the subsequent action, observation, and reflection phases, all guided by the principles of systematic inquiry and continuous improvement.

#### **Implementing the Planned Change at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak**

With the problem identified and a well-structured planned change in place, Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak embarked on the next crucial phase of Classroom Action Research (CAR): implementing the planned change. This phase involved putting the proposed strategies into action to assess their impact on student engagement and learning outcomes in mathematics classes. The research team collaborated closely with the mathematics teachers to ensure the seamless integration of interactive teaching methods, group activities, and multimedia resources into their instructional practices.

The teachers began by adopting interactive teaching methods during mathematics lessons. They encouraged active student participation by incorporating discussions, group problem-solving activities, and hands-on learning experiences. Through these methods, students were encouraged to take an active role in their learning process, fostering a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts and building their confidence to ask questions and share their thoughts. Furthermore, the teachers introduced group activities to promote collaboration and peer learning among students. Working in groups, students were tasked with solving challenging

mathematical problems, encouraging teamwork and fostering a supportive learning environment. This collaborative approach aimed to cultivate a sense of camaraderie among students and enhance their problem-solving skills through peer interaction.

Moreover, the integration of multimedia resources proved to be a valuable addition to the learning process. The teachers utilized educational videos, interactive simulations, and digital

presentations to visualize complex mathematical concepts. This multimedia approach catered to different learning styles, enabling students to grasp abstract concepts more effectively and making the learning experience more engaging and dynamic. The teachers carefully implemented the planned change over a period of four weeks, allowing sufficient time for students to adapt to the new teaching strategies and for the research team to observe and gather data on the outcomes (Table 1).

**Table 1 Action in Phase 2**

No	Action Activities	Timeline
1	Utilizing interactive teaching methods to explain math concepts	Week 1
2	Conducting group problem-solving activities	Week 2
3	Incorporating educational videos to visualize math content	Week 3
4	Applying math concepts to real-life scenarios	Week 4

After four weeks of diligently implementing the planned change, the research team at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak gathered valuable data and made comprehensive observations on the impact of the interactive teaching methods, group activities, and multimedia resources on student engagement and learning outcomes in mathematics classes. The implementation of interactive teaching methods brought about noticeable changes in the classroom dynamics. Students exhibited higher levels of engagement, actively participating in class discussions and demonstrating increased enthusiasm for learning mathematics. The atmosphere in the classroom was vibrant, with students showing eagerness to solve problems and express their mathematical insights. The introduction of group activities yielded positive results as well. Students readily collaborated with their peers, discussing mathematical concepts and jointly solving problems. Through this collaborative approach, students not only improved their understanding of mathematics but also developed essential teamwork and communication skills.

The integration of multimedia resources proved to be an effective strategy as it enhanced students' understanding of complex mathematical concepts. Visualizing abstract ideas through videos and interactive simulations facilitated a deeper comprehension of the subject matter and piqued students' curiosity. As the implementation phase concluded, the research team was

encouraged by the initial outcomes. The planned change had demonstrated promising results, reflecting the effectiveness of the evidence-based strategies in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes in mathematics classes. The data collected during this phase would serve as a foundation for the subsequent phases of observation and reflection, allowing the research team to make informed decisions on further improvements and adaptations to the teaching strategies. This scientific approach ensured that the research at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak remained systematic, evidence-based, and focused on continuous improvement.

#### **Analyzing the Impact of the Planned Change at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak**

With the successful implementation of the planned change, the research team at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak proceeded to the critical phase of Classroom Action Research (CAR): observation of processes and consequences. During this phase, the team closely monitored the classroom dynamics, student behaviors, and academic progress to assess the effectiveness of the interactive teaching methods, group activities, and multimedia resources on student engagement and learning outcomes in mathematics classes. The research team conducted systematic observations during mathematics lessons, carefully documenting the level of student engagement and participation. They observed that students' active involvement during discussions and group activities had notably increased compared to the

pre-planned change period. Students were eager to contribute their ideas and demonstrated enthusiasm for exploring mathematical concepts. The classroom environment was dynamic, fostering a positive atmosphere conducive to learning.

Furthermore, the research team closely scrutinized the students' participation rates throughout the implementation phase. They noted that a larger number of students were actively participating in class activities, indicating that the planned change had successfully encouraged students to take an active role in their learning. As a result, students showed more confidence in expressing their thoughts, asking questions, and seeking clarification when faced with challenging concepts. The research team also observed a significant improvement in the overall student behavior during mathematics classes. Incidents of disruptive behavior decreased noticeably, and the students appeared more focused and attentive to the lessons. The sense of collaboration fostered through group activities seemed to have a positive influence on the students' behavior, as they were more supportive of one another and respectful towards their peers and teachers.

To assess the impact of the planned change on learning outcomes, the research team administered pre and post-assessments to the students. The results were encouraging, indicating a considerable improvement in the students'

understanding of mathematical concepts. The post-assessment scores showed a marked increase compared to the pre-assessment, reflecting the effectiveness of the interactive teaching methods and multimedia resources in enhancing students' comprehension.

The data collected during the observation phase served as valuable evidence of the positive consequences brought about by the planned change. The research team's rigorous and systematic approach to data collection ensured the reliability and validity of the findings. The observation data reaffirmed the effectiveness of the evidence-based strategies, providing a clear indication of their impact on student engagement and learning outcomes in mathematics classes. The observations also allowed the research team to gain insights into the intricacies of the teaching and learning process. By closely monitoring student behaviors and interactions, the team identified specific strengths of the implemented strategies and areas that could benefit from further refinement. This information would prove invaluable in informing the subsequent phase of reflection, where the research team would collaboratively analyze the data and draw meaningful conclusions about the overall effectiveness of the planned change.

### Reflection on Processes and Consequences

There were several questions asked to the research respondents which were then answered in **Table 2**.

**Table 2 Reflection Questions and Outcomes from Respondent**

No	Reflective Questions	Reflection Outcomes
1	Were the interactive teaching methods effective in enhancing student engagement?	Yes, the interactive teaching methods successfully increased student engagement during math lessons.
2	Did the group activities positively impact student participation?	Indeed, the group activities fostered greater student participation and collaboration among peers.
3	How did the use of multimedia resources influence students' interest in math?	The multimedia resources provided a more engaging and practical way for students to grasp math concepts.
4	Did applying math to real-life scenarios aid students' comprehension?	Yes, students demonstrated a better understanding when they saw the relevance of math in everyday life.
5	What are the next steps to further enhance the quality of teaching and learning?	The next steps include continued adoption of interactive approaches, further exploration of effective teaching strategies, and ongoing assessment of student responses to improve the learning experience.

Based on **Table 2**, the improvement in student engagement was complemented by enhanced learning outcomes, as demonstrated by the notable increase in post-assessment scores compared to the pre-assessment. The research team observed a marked improvement in students' understanding of mathematical concepts, which they attributed to the interactive nature of the lessons and the effective use of multimedia resources. The visualization of abstract concepts through videos and interactive simulations proved instrumental in aiding students' comprehension and providing a more concrete understanding of complex topics. Moreover, the research team considered the evidence-based nature of the planned change, which was grounded in the existing literature on effective teaching practices and student engagement in mathematics education. The alignment between the findings of this study and the established research further validated the scientific foundation of the research, enhancing its credibility and reliability.

To gain a holistic perspective on the effectiveness of the planned change, the research team sought feedback from the respondents, including mathematics teachers and students. The teachers' feedback emphasized their satisfaction with the outcomes of the planned change, highlighting the positive impact on student engagement and learning. They appreciated the opportunity to employ innovative teaching methods that encouraged active student participation and facilitated a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts. While the overall response from teachers was positive, some expressed a desire for continuous professional development to further optimize the implementation of interactive teaching methods and multimedia resources. Acknowledging this feedback, the research team recognized the importance of supporting teachers through ongoing training and resources to enhance their instructional practices continually.

The students' feedback provided invaluable insights into their learning experiences during the implementation of the planned change. The students found the interactive teaching methods engaging and expressed greater confidence in contributing to class discussions. The group activities were perceived as enjoyable and beneficial for collaborative learning,

encouraging students to work together to solve mathematical problems. The integration of multimedia resources was well-received, as students appreciated the visual aids that facilitated their understanding of abstract concepts.

In response to the students' feedback, some expressed a desire for more real-life applications of mathematical concepts to further enhance their learning experiences. Embracing this input, the research team recognized the importance of incorporating practical examples to help students connect theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios. The reflection phase served as a foundation for continuous improvement in mathematics education at Mts Al-Badriyah Sundak.

The research team used the elaborated findings and respondent feedback to inform future iterations of the planned change. Through systematic inquiry and evidence-based practices, the research team demonstrated a commitment to promoting effective teaching strategies and enhancing the learning experience for students. This scientifically grounded approach to reflection reinforced the value of evidence-driven decision-making and emphasized the significance of ongoing research and development in education. The findings of this study would serve as a valuable resource for educators and researchers seeking to enhance teaching practices and student engagement in mathematics classrooms.

### **Increasing Student Interest in Learning Listening Skills by Using Song Lyrics**

During the initial cycle of the study, a pretest consisting of 10 questions presented through song lyrics using the 'fill the blank' question model was conducted. The pretest scores, ranging from 30 to 100, revealed varying levels of students' baseline understanding of listening skills. However, the assessment phase unveiled that 78% of the students (15 out of 19) fell short of meeting the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) in the listening test, with a mean score of 64.21. This significant gap in proficiency highlighted the pressing need for intervention.

In the second cycle of the study, a final test was administered to assess the students' learning outcomes following the implementation of song lyrics. The results of the final test exhibited noteworthy improvement, with scores ranging from 80 to 100. These findings demonstrate the

positive influence of incorporating song lyrics in the learning process, particularly in enhancing students' performance in listening skills. Moreover, after implementing the treatment using song lyrics in the second cycle, all students successfully met the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM), with a significantly higher mean score of 94.73. This improvement further underscores the significant impact of song lyrics as a supportive tool for teaching listening skills.

The findings of this study are consistent with the Motivation Theory, which suggests that motivation plays a crucial role in effective learning. By integrating song lyrics into the curriculum, the learning process becomes more engaging and relevant to students' interests and emotions (Castleberry & Shepherd, 1993). Songs have a unique ability to capture students' attention and increase their motivation to actively participate in the learning process. The rhythmic and melodic elements of music stimulate cognitive processes, making the learning experience more enjoyable and memorable (Portowitz & Klein, 2007).

The Affective Filter Hypothesis, proposed by Krashen, (1982), further supports the use of song lyrics in learning listening skills. According to this hypothesis, learners are more receptive to language acquisition when they are in a relaxed and comfortable emotional state. Songs, with their familiar and enjoyable nature, create a positive and engaging learning environment, reducing anxiety and stress that can hinder language acquisition. The use of song lyrics as a teaching tool can effectively lower the affective filter and promote a more effective language learning experience.

The Multiple Intelligences Theory, proposed by Gardner, (1993), also aligns with the findings of this study. According to this theory, learners have different strengths and preferences when it comes to learning. By incorporating song lyrics into the curriculum, educators can cater to learners' diverse intelligences, particularly musical-rhythmic intelligence. Students who possess musical-rhythmic intelligence may find it easier to absorb and remember new language when presented in a musical context. Additionally, the use of song lyrics activates students' linguistic intelligence as they analyze and interpret the lyrics of the songs.

Furthermore, the findings of this study resonate with previous research conducted by (Adaskou et al., 1990; Brown, 2001; Graham & Macaro, 2008; Purwanto, 2017). These studies highlight the significance of utilizing culturally relevant and engaging song lyrics to improve students' vocabulary comprehension, grammar, pronunciation, and overall listening skills. By selecting song lyrics that resonate with students' cultural backgrounds and interests, educators can enhance students' motivation and engagement in learning English.

Based on the description of the research results presented above, the study titled "Improving Students' Interest in Learning Listening Skill Using Song Lyrics at the Eighth Grade of MTs. Al-badriyah Boarding School Sundak Rarang" has produced a good learning model and student learning outcomes. In this study, the researcher encountered a constraint in the field, which is the limited time that teachers must implement the learning model. Therefore, the utilization of song lyrics as a basis for improving students' interest in learning listening skills can help overcome this constraint or obstacle faced by teachers in enhancing student learning outcomes and activities, leading to improved performance.

## CONCLUSION

The research followed a single-cycle Classroom Action Research (CAR) design, consisting of three face-to-face sessions in cycle 1 and two sessions in cycle 2. Initially, 78% of the students (15 out of 19) failed to meet the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) in the listening test, with a mean score of 64.21. However, after implementing the treatment using song lyrics in the second cycle, all students successfully passed the KKM, with a significantly higher mean score of 94.73. This improvement highlights the significant impact of song lyrics as a supportive tool for teaching listening skills.

These findings align with previous studies emphasizing the benefits of using song lyrics in language learning. The Motivation Theory supports the use of engaging and relevant materials, such as songs, to enhance student motivation. The Affective Filter Hypothesis suggests that song lyrics create a relaxed and comfortable learning environment, reducing anxiety and promoting effective language

acquisition. The Multiple Intelligences Theory confirms that song lyrics cater to learners' diverse intelligences, particularly musical-rhythmic and linguistic intelligences.

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### Author Declarations

#### Author contributions and responsibilities

The authors made major contributions to the conception and design of the study. The authors took responsibility for data analysis, interpretation and discussion of results. The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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#### Availability of data and materials

All data is available from the author.

#### Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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