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VOCABULARY ACQUISITION THROUGH DIGITAL ENGLISH SONGS: INSIGHTS FROM EFL STUDENTS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: Although the use of digital English songs in EFL classes has been investigated by many scholars, limited attention has been paid to the students' perceptions of their role in vocabulary acquisition. This study aims to describe students' perceptions of using digital English songs to support vocabulary acquisition. This qualitative case study involved thirty-eight university students majoring in the English program at a private university in Indonesia. The research instruments were closed-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results showed that students perceived positive attitudes toward vocabulary acquisition through digital English song practices. The students' attitudes covered learning acceptance, perceived effectiveness, learning enjoyment, learning appreciation, and learning satisfaction. It was also found that music videos with audio-visual components enhance material comprehension, memory enhancement, learning effectiveness, and learning accessibility. It can be concluded that vocabulary acquisition classes might use digital English songs as a supplementary tool. The study suggests that selection of English songs is based on students' language proficiency and educational objectives to maximize their pedagogical value.
Keywords: *Vocabulary acquisition; digital English songs; insights; EFL students*

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to students' ability to comprehend and communicate in English. A sufficient vocabulary enables learners to understand spoken and written texts, express ideas clearly, and participate effectively in academic and social contexts (Ghalebi et al., 2020; Rasulova, 2023). Vocabulary knowledge is therefore an important component of language proficiency across educational settings (Kamola, 2024). However, acquiring and retaining new vocabulary remains challenging for EFL learners, particularly because of limited exposure to new words, difficulties in understanding word meanings and forms, and ineffective memorization strategies. These challenges highlight the need for engaging and accessible approaches to vocabulary learning.

Due to this importance, vocabulary knowledge is crucial in reading comprehension for both native and non-native English speakers (Rasulova, 2023). Notwithstanding its significance, students frequently struggle to increase and broaden their vocabulary mastery. Students face problems acquiring vocabulary, including limited exposure to new words, difficulties with word meaning and form, and ineffective memorization strategies. Poor methods and media, weak assessment instruments, and content that is below students' cognitive abilities are all contributing factors to the low quality of education (Jannah & Syafryadin, 2022). These difficulties may hinder students' ability to acquire new vocabulary, leading to frustration and discouragement. This study aims to assess the importance of students' challenges in increasing their vocabulary. By offering useful solutions and insight into the challenges children confront in expanding their vocabulary, this research advances the field of language learning. By expanding students' vocabulary, teachers can help students meet their language needs and learning objectives in the curriculum. Learning tactics are one of the strategies people utilise to get beyond their obstacles

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(Jaikrishnan & Ismail, 2021). Therefore, the teaching and learning of vocabulary needs special attention both from teachers and learners (Rachmawati et al., 2020).

The increasing availability of digital platforms has further expanded the ways in which English songs can be used for vocabulary learning. Digital songs, particularly music videos, combine auditory and visual input and can provide learners with flexible access to authentic English materials (Butar & Katemba, 2023). Platforms such as Spotify and other digital media allow learners to listen to songs repeatedly and access lyrics beyond the classroom. Recent studies have examined digital English songs in relation to language learning and have reported benefits for learners' engagement, listening development, and vocabulary learning (Ammelia et al., 2024; Maulana et al., 2024). However, much of the existing literature has examined English songs as a general instructional resource or has focused on specific language skills rather than students' perceptions of digital English songs for vocabulary acquisition.

Despite these potential benefits, the use of songs for vocabulary learning is not without limitations. Song lyrics may prioritize rhyme, rhythm, or artistic expression over grammatical accuracy, and some songs contain vocabulary that is highly specific to particular themes or cultural contexts. In addition, the usefulness of a song may depend on learners' language proficiency, interests, and the relevance of the selected material to instructional objectives (Triwardani, 2022). These limitations suggest that the effectiveness of digital English songs cannot be considered independently of learners' perceptions of their usefulness, accessibility, and learning value. Yet, previous studies have provided limited insight into how EFL learners perceive these dimensions when digital English songs are used specifically for vocabulary learning.

Previous studies have established the potential of English songs to support vocabulary learning, but important aspects remain insufficiently explored. Studies such as Amien et al. (2022) and Wardiansyah et al. (2019) emphasized the usefulness of songs for vocabulary development, particularly through repetition, engagement, and contextualized exposure. Other studies have examined digital or technology-mediated songs and highlighted their accessibility and potential for supporting language learning (Ammelia et al., 2024; Maulana et al., 2024). More recent research has also considered digital music in broader language-learning contexts (Karim et al., 2022; Mannarelli & Serrano, 2024; Pangaribuan & Chairunnissa, 2023). However, these studies have generally focused on learning outcomes, particular language skills, or the general use of songs rather than examining students' perceptions of digital English songs specifically for vocabulary acquisition. Consequently, there is limited evidence on how learners perceive their attitudes toward digital English songs and the benefits they derive from them in vocabulary classes.

Previous research has examined vocabulary learning from several perspectives, including the importance of vocabulary knowledge for language development (Al-Khresheh & Al-Ruwaili, 2020), the use of learning strategies to overcome vocabulary-learning difficulties (Jaikrishnan & Ismail, 2021), and the role of instructional methods and learning media in supporting language learning (Jannah & Syafryadin, 2022; Klimova & Polakova, 2020). Other studies have examined English songs as a learning resource and reported their potential to support vocabulary development and language learning (Hendrawaty, 2019; Sunra et al., 2026). However, these studies have generally addressed vocabulary learning, learning strategies, or songs as instructional resources from broader perspectives rather than focusing specifically on how EFL learners perceive digital English songs as a tool for vocabulary learning. Limited attention has been given to learners' attitudes toward

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digital English songs and the specific benefits they perceive from using them in vocabulary classes.

To address this gap, the present study examined students' perceptions of using digital English songs through the Spotify platform for vocabulary learning in an EFL context. Specifically, the study explored students' attitudes toward the use of digital English songs and their perceived benefits for vocabulary acquisition. By examining these two dimensions together, the study contributes a more integrated account of students' perceptions, identifying not only why they respond positively to song-based learning but also which features they consider useful and what limitations they associate with this approach. In particular, the findings distinguish students' appreciation of songs as an engaging learning medium from their perceptions of songs as a resource for remembering and understanding vocabulary. This distinction provides pedagogical insights into how digital English songs can be selected and integrated as supplementary resources in EFL vocabulary instruction.

The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What are students' attitudes toward the use of digital English songs for vocabulary acquisition?
2. What are the perceived benefits of using digital English songs in vocabulary classes?

METHODS

Design and Participants

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine students' perceptions of using digital English songs for vocabulary learning. The case was bounded by one vocabulary course in which digital English songs were used through the Spotify platform as part of the learning activities during one semester. The study focused on how students perceived the use of digital English songs, particularly in relation to their attitudes and the benefits they associated with vocabulary learning. The questionnaire data were used descriptively to provide an overview of students' responses, while the interview data provided deeper qualitative accounts of their perceptions.

The respondents were thirty-eight university students enrolled in the English Department at a private university in Central Java, Indonesia. All students were enrolled in the same vocabulary course and experienced the use of digital English songs through Spotify as part of their learning activities. At the end of the course, all thirty-eight students completed the questionnaire. Twelve students were subsequently selected to participate in semi-structured interviews to provide more detailed accounts of their experiences with digital English songs. The interviewees were selected from the questionnaire participants based on variation in their questionnaire responses. Participation in both the questionnaire and interviews was voluntary, and students' identities were kept confidential.

Instruments

Two instruments were used: a closed-ended questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide. The questionnaire was developed by the researchers based on the two research questions and relevant literature on English songs, digital language learning, and vocabulary learning. The items were designed to capture two dimensions of students' perceptions: (1) attitudes toward the use of digital English songs and (2) perceived benefits for vocabulary learning. The questionnaire consisted of 10 statements covering students' acceptance, enjoyment, appreciation, and satisfaction with digital English songs, as well as their perceptions of material comprehension, memory retention, learning accessibility, and other benefits associated with song-based vocabulary learning.

The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly agree* (4) to *strongly disagree* (1). It was administered at the end of the semester after students had experienced vocabulary learning activities involving digital English songs through Spotify. The questionnaire was intended to

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describe the distribution and general tendency of students' perceptions rather than to measure actual vocabulary improvement.

A semi-structured interview guide was also developed based on the two research questions and the questionnaire dimensions. The guide consisted of five open-ended questions addressing students' experiences, attitudes, and perceived benefits of using digital English songs for vocabulary learning. The questions also explored students' views on specific features of the songs, including repetition, audio-visual support, lyric clarity, and the suitability of songs for their learning level. The interviews were used to obtain more detailed explanations of the perceptions identified through the questionnaire.

Data Collection

Before data collection, the researchers obtained informed consent from all participants. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to participate without academic consequences. The use of students' responses for research purposes was conducted only after they had agreed to participate.

During the semester, digital English songs were incorporated into vocabulary learning activities through the Spotify platform. Students listened to selected English songs and engaged with the accompanying vocabulary and learning tasks. The songs were used to support activities related to understanding vocabulary and completing course tasks. The use of digital English songs formed part of the regular learning activities in the vocabulary course rather than a separate experimental treatment.

At the end of the semester, the 10-item questionnaire was administered online through Google Forms. Students were given approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire and were instructed to select the response that best represented their experience and perception of using digital English songs for vocabulary learning. All 38 participants completed the questionnaire.

Following questionnaire completion, 12 students were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. The interviewees were selected according to their questionnaire responses. Each interview lasted approximately 20 minutes and was conducted individually. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to allow participants to express their experiences and perceptions more freely and to minimize potential language barriers. The interviews were audio-recorded with participants' permission and subsequently transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire and interview data were analyzed separately and then considered together to develop an overall interpretation of students' perceptions. Because the study adopted a qualitative case study design, the numerical questionnaire results were used descriptively rather than as inferential evidence of vocabulary improvement. Frequencies, percentages, and mean scores were calculated for each questionnaire statement to summarize the general distribution and tendency of students' responses. These descriptive results were used to identify patterns in students' attitudes and perceived benefits and to support the interpretation of the qualitative interview data.

The interview data were analyzed thematically. First, the interview recordings were transcribed verbatim. Second, the researchers read the transcripts repeatedly to become familiar with the data and identify statements relevant to the research questions. Third, meaningful segments were assigned initial codes based on students' reported experiences, attitudes, and perceived benefits. Fourth, related codes were compared and grouped into broader categories. Fifth, the categories were reviewed against the interview data to ensure that they adequately represented participants' responses. Finally, the categories were organized into the two main dimensions addressed by the research questions: students' attitudes toward digital English

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songs and their perceived benefits for vocabulary learning.

The qualitative findings were then compared with the descriptive questionnaire results to identify areas of convergence and provide a more comprehensive interpretation of students' perceptions. Particular attention was given to recurring perceptions concerning learning acceptance, enjoyment, appreciation, satisfaction, material comprehension, memory retention, learning accessibility, repetition, audio-visual support, and the suitability and clarity of song lyrics. Responses that were unrelated to the research questions were not included in the thematic interpretation. The analysis focused on students' reported perceptions and experiences and therefore did not make claims about actual improvement in vocabulary proficiency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After collecting data from the students using closed-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, the researchers analyzed the data through qualitative processes. The statements in the questionnaire represent students' attitudes and experiences in learning vocabulary using English songs. Also, the interview results were obtained to confirm and deepen the data descriptions from the questionnaires. The tables display the findings from the study on students' perceptions of using English songs to improve students' acquisition.

Table 1. *The Results of Closed-Ended Questionnaires*

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Digital English songs help students learn new English vocabulary.	47.4%	52.6%	0%	0%
Digital English songs can influence students' English vocabulary.	39.5%	57.9%	2.6%	0%
Digital English songs make learning English vocabulary more fun.	42.1%	57.9%	0%	0%
Digital English songs help students understand the use of English vocabulary.	31.6%	68.4%	0%	0%
Digital English songs help students develop English vocabulary mastery.	23.7%	76.3%	0%	0%
Repetition of words in English songs helps students remember new vocabulary.	23.7%	76.3%	0%	0%
The use of audio-visuals, such as music videos, helps students understand the meaning of new vocabulary in English songs.	39.9%	57.9%	0%	2.6%
The use of digital English songs that are appropriate to students' ability level helps them learn new vocabulary more effectively.	26.3%	68.4%	5.3%	0%
Teachers must use English songs that have clear lyrics and are easy to understand.	57.9%	28.9%	13.2%	0%
Teachers should use English songs for various	13.2%	68.4%	18.4%	0%

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	vocabulary learning activities.	

Table 1 shows an overall positive pattern in students' perceptions of digital English songs for vocabulary learning. Students particularly valued songs as a means of encountering new vocabulary and making learning more enjoyable. Their responses also indicated that repeated exposure to words and audio-visual materials was perceived as helpful for understanding and remembering vocabulary. However, students' positive perceptions were accompanied by some reservations about the broader use of songs in classroom activities and the suitability of learning materials. These findings suggest that students viewed digital English songs as a useful supplementary resource, particularly when the lyrics were clear and the content matched their proficiency levels.

Table 2. *Students' Attitudes and Perceived Benefits of Digital English Songs*

Perception	Statements	Mean
Attitude	Digital English songs help students learn new English vocabulary.	3.42
	Digital English songs can influence students' English vocabulary.	3.37
	Digital English songs make learning English vocabulary more fun.	3.34
	Digital English songs help students understand the use of English vocabulary.	3.16
	Digital English songs help students develop English vocabulary mastery.	2.95
Benefit	Repetition of words in digital English songs helps students remember new vocabulary.	3.47
	The use of audio-visuals, such as music videos, helps students understand the meaning of new vocabulary in English songs.	3.32
	The use of English songs that are appropriate to students' ability level helps them learn new vocabulary more effectively.	3.24
	Teachers must use English songs that have clear lyrics and are easy to understand.	3.29
	Teachers should use English songs for various vocabulary learning activities.	3.21

Table 2 further illustrates the patterns in students' attitudes and perceived benefits. Among the perceived benefits, repetition emerged as the most prominent feature, highlighting the perceived value of repeated exposure to vocabulary through song lyrics. Audio-visual support and the clarity and appropriateness of song materials were also viewed favorably. In contrast, students were less convinced that learning through songs alone could develop overall vocabulary mastery. This distinction suggests that students perceived digital English songs primarily as a supportive medium for reinforcing and contextualizing vocabulary rather than as a comprehensive approach to vocabulary learning. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of combining engaging song-based materials with appropriate instructional activities. Furthermore, the results of semi-structured interviews revealed students' attitudes and perceived benefits of digital English songs in EFL vocabulary acquisition.

Students' Attitudes toward Digital English Songs

The attitudes toward digital English songs covered learning acceptance, perceived effectiveness, learning enjoyment, learning appreciation, and learning satisfaction.

Learning Acceptance

Students generally showed positive acceptance of digital English songs as a medium for learning English vocabulary. They considered the use of songs appropriate and relevant to their learning needs. Most students were willing to continue using digital English songs in future vocabulary-learning activities.

"I accept English songs as one of the ways to learn vocabulary because they are

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different from the usual activities in the classroom."

The finding indicates that students generally accepted digital English songs as a relevant resource for vocabulary learning. Their willingness to use songs in learning activities suggests that familiar digital media can be integrated into EFL instruction without being perceived as separate from academic learning. This finding is consistent with previous research reporting positive student responses to English songs as a learning resource (Adu et al., 2023; Setiyadi, 2023). The present study extends these findings by highlighting students' acceptance of digital songs specifically within vocabulary learning. Pedagogically, this acceptance provides a useful starting point for integrating songs into classroom activities.

Perceived Effectiveness

Furthermore, students perceived digital English songs as an effective way to support vocabulary learning. They reported that songs helped them recognize, understand, and remember unfamiliar English words. The combination of lyrics, repetition, and musical context was perceived to facilitate vocabulary acquisition.

"For me, learning vocabulary through English songs can be effective because I can learn words together with their context. When I hear a word in a complete sentence, I have a better idea about how it is used."

Students also perceived digital English songs as helpful for learning vocabulary, particularly when words appeared in meaningful sentences and musical contexts. The interviews indicated that students could use surrounding lyrics to understand how unfamiliar words were used rather than relying solely on isolated definitions. This finding supports previous studies that identified English songs as a resource for introducing and reinforcing vocabulary (Isnaini & Aminatun, 2021; Yuliarini, 2022). Nevertheless, the perceived effectiveness of songs should be distinguished from demonstrated vocabulary gains. Because this study examined students' perceptions rather than objectively measured changes in vocabulary knowledge, the findings indicate perceived instructional value, not proven improvement. For teaching practice, songs may be useful when listening is followed by activities that require students to interpret, explain, and use the target vocabulary.

Learning Enjoyment

Also, students reported that learning vocabulary through digital English songs was enjoyable and engaging. They felt that songs made vocabulary learning more interesting and reduced the monotony often associated with conventional vocabulary activities. This enjoyment also encouraged students to participate more actively in the learning process.

"I enjoy learning vocabulary through English songs because the activity does not feel like a difficult lesson. Listening to music makes the classroom atmosphere more relaxed."

Students viewed learning vocabulary through digital English songs as enjoyable and less monotonous than some conventional learning activities. This positive response suggests that the musical format may make vocabulary practice more appealing and encourage students to participate. Previous research has similarly associated English songs with enjoyable learning experiences and increased learner engagement (Ilinawati & Dharma, 2018; Yuliarini, 2022). The present findings reinforce this pattern while showing that enjoyment formed an important part of students' overall attitudes toward song-based learning. Its pedagogical significance lies in the potential to create a more inviting learning environment. However, enjoyment should support rather than replace explicit learning objectives. Teachers therefore need to connect listening activities with focused vocabulary tasks so that students' interest in the songs is directed toward learning.

Learning Appreciation

Students also expressed appreciation for the use of digital English songs in vocabulary

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learning. They recognized that songs provided both educational and entertaining benefits, making them a valuable learning resource. Several students also viewed songs as a practical way to encounter English vocabulary in a more natural context.

"I appreciate the use of English songs because they provide a different learning experience. Through songs, I can see that English vocabulary is not only something that I have to memorize for a test."

Students appreciated digital English songs because they offered a different way to encounter English vocabulary. The interview findings suggest that students valued the opportunity to meet words in musical and contextualized language rather than treating vocabulary solely as material to memorize. This response is consistent with research identifying songs as useful resources for vocabulary development and language learning (Adu et al., 2023; Setiyadi, 2023). The present study adds a learner-perspective dimension by showing that students' appreciation concerned not only the presence of new words but also the nature of the learning experience.

Learning Satisfaction

Students reported satisfaction with their experience of learning vocabulary through digital English songs. They felt that the approach provided a comfortable and enjoyable learning experience while supporting their vocabulary development. Overall, students indicated that the use of digital English songs met their expectations as a supplementary vocabulary-learning activity.

"I feel satisfied when I learn vocabulary through English songs because I can usually remember some of the words after the activity."

Students' satisfaction with digital English songs reflected their view that the activities provided a useful and comfortable way to encounter and review vocabulary. This perception may be related to the combination of music, accessible digital content, and opportunities to listen repeatedly. Previous research has reported positive responses to song-based learning, particularly in relation to its engaging and accessible features (Ali, 2020; Ilinawati & Dharma, 2018; Yuliarini, 2022). The present findings are consistent with this work but also suggest that satisfaction depends on how songs are incorporated into learning. Teachers should therefore evaluate song-based activities in relation to both students' experiences and the specific learning tasks completed.

Perceived Benefits

In addition to the students' attitude toward digital English song implementation, the perceived benefits consisted of memory enhancement, meaning comprehension, learning effectiveness, learning accessibility, and learning enhancement.

Memory Enhancement

Students reported that digital English songs helped them remember new vocabulary more easily. The combination of lyrics, melody, repetition, and contextualized word use helped students recall unfamiliar words after the learning activities. Some students also indicated that they could remember words from songs even after the classroom activities had ended.

"The repetition of words in English songs helps me remember new vocabulary more easily. When a word appears several times in the lyrics, I become more familiar with its pronunciation and meaning."

Repetition emerged as a particularly valued feature of digital English songs. Students explained that hearing words repeatedly helped them become more familiar with their pronunciation and meaning. Repetition may support vocabulary learning by giving learners further opportunities to notice and recall words, while the melody and rhythm provide additional cues for remembering them. This finding is consistent with previous research suggesting that repeated exposure to words and phrases in songs can reinforce vocabulary knowledge, including word form, meaning, grammar, and pronunciation (Rachmawati et al., 2020; Mantika, 2021). Teachers can use repeated listening

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purposefully by asking students to identify recurring words, explain their meanings, and recall them after listening.

Meaning Comprehension

Students also perceived digital English songs as helpful in understanding the meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary. Lyrics and contextual clues enabled students to infer the meanings of words without relying solely on direct translation. Listening to words within meaningful sentences also helped students understand how vocabulary was used in context.

"Music videos help me understand unfamiliar words because I can see what is happening while listening to the lyrics. The pictures, actions, and situations in the video sometimes give me clues about the meaning."

Students perceived song lyrics as helpful for understanding unfamiliar vocabulary because words appeared within sentences and broader contexts. Rather than encountering words only as separate items, learners could consider the surrounding expressions to infer possible meanings and understand how words were used. This pattern supports previous findings that songs can provide meaningful language input and help learners notice and interpret vocabulary (Mantika, 2021; Isnaini & Aminatun, 2021). At the same time, the findings highlight the importance of lyric clarity: contextual clues may be less useful when lyrics are difficult to hear or interpret. Teachers can strengthen this benefit by providing lyrics, guiding students to identify contextual clues, and discussing possible meanings before asking them to use the words in new sentences.

Learning Effectiveness

In addition, students perceived digital English songs as effective in supporting their vocabulary learning. They reported that songs helped them acquire new words, understand their meanings, and remember vocabulary more easily. The repeated exposure to vocabulary through lyrics and musical contexts was perceived to make the learning process more effective.

"I learn better when the English song is not too difficult for me. When I understand the general meaning of the lyrics, I can focus more on the new vocabulary."

Students perceived music videos and other audio-visual features as helpful for understanding unfamiliar vocabulary. Visual scenes, actions, and situations can provide additional clues that complement what learners hear in the lyrics. This finding is consistent with research suggesting that audio-visual materials can support vocabulary comprehension by connecting language with visual and contextual information (Rachmawati et al., 2020; Mantika, 2021). However, visual material is not automatically beneficial: images may be ambiguous or unrelated to the intended meaning. Teachers should therefore select videos whose content supports the target vocabulary and encourage students to explain how particular visual cues relate to the words. This approach makes audio-visual input a focus for active interpretation rather than passive viewing.

Learning Accessibility

Moreover, students indicated that digital English songs made vocabulary learning more accessible and convenient. Songs could be accessed through commonly available digital platforms, allowing students to practice vocabulary both inside and outside the classroom. This accessibility also gave students greater flexibility to repeat songs and review vocabulary according to their own learning pace.

"I prefer English songs with simple and clear lyrics because I can follow them without too much difficulty. When the words are pronounced clearly, I can connect what I hear with the written lyrics."

The findings also suggest that students valued the accessibility of digital English songs because they could listen to and revisit learning materials beyond classroom sessions. Digital platforms can provide flexible opportunities for exposure, allowing learners to repeat songs and review unfamiliar vocabulary at their own pace. This finding aligns with research indicating that digital media can extend access to English-language input and provide opportunities for

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repeated listening outside the classroom (Kumar et al., 2022). The practical significance is that vocabulary learning need not be restricted to scheduled classroom activities. Teachers can encourage students to revisit selected songs and record unfamiliar words for later review. Providing clear listening tasks and follow-up activities can help students turn convenient access into purposeful learning.

Learning Enhancement

Students also perceived digital English songs as enhancing their overall vocabulary-learning experience. The use of songs provided additional exposure to English vocabulary and created opportunities for students to encounter words repeatedly in meaningful contexts. Students also felt that this approach complemented classroom instruction by making vocabulary learning more varied and engaging.

"English songs can make vocabulary learning more interesting because teachers can use them for different activities. For example, I can identify unfamiliar words, complete missing lyrics, discuss meanings, or use new words in sentences."

Students also emphasized the importance of using songs with clear lyrics and difficulty levels appropriate to their proficiency. This finding suggests that the pedagogical value of songs depends partly on the suitability of the learning materials. When learners can follow the lyrics and understand the general meaning, they may devote more attention to unfamiliar vocabulary rather than struggling to identify the words. Previous research has similarly indicated that clear, understandable songs can help learners notice vocabulary and engage with its form and meaning (Mantika, 2021). Songs can also make vocabulary instruction more varied and engaging, as reported in research on their use in language learning (Ali, 2020). However, students were comparatively less convinced that digital English songs could develop overall vocabulary mastery. This distinction is important because recognizing or remembering words in a song does not necessarily mean that learners can use them accurately in unfamiliar contexts. Songs may offer limited coverage of the vocabulary needed for broader proficiency, and some expressions may depend heavily on musical or lyrical context. Teachers can address this limitation by combining songs with explicit explanation, retrieval practice, sentence construction, and tasks requiring learners to apply new words in different contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study examined students' perceptions of the use of digital English songs for vocabulary acquisition. The findings showed that students generally perceived English songs as a useful and engaging resource for learning vocabulary. They particularly valued repeated exposure to words and the use of audio-visual materials, such as music videos, which were perceived to support vocabulary comprehension and retention. The findings also indicated that students preferred songs with clear and understandable lyrics and content that matched their language proficiency. Overall, the results suggested that digital English songs had the potential to provide students with enjoyable and meaningful opportunities to encounter and learn new vocabulary when they were appropriately integrated into vocabulary learning activities.

Despite these positive findings, the study had several limitations. First, the study involved only thirty-eight university students from one English Department at a private university in Central Java, Indonesia. Therefore, the findings represented the perceptions of a relatively specific group of EFL learners and could not be generalized to students from different educational contexts, proficiency levels, or institutions. In addition, the study relied on a closed-ended questionnaire to investigate students' perceptions. Although the questionnaire provided useful information about general patterns of attitudes and perceived benefits, it did not provide sufficient insight into students' individual experiences, learning processes, or reasons behind their responses.

A second limitation concerned the

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scope of the learning materials and the focus of the investigation. The study focused on students' perceptions of digital English songs and did not directly measure changes in their vocabulary knowledge through a pre-test and post-test or other objective measures of vocabulary development. Furthermore, the effectiveness of songs could have been influenced by factors such as song selection, lyric clarity, students' proficiency levels, and the relevance of the vocabulary contained in the songs. The study also acknowledged that song lyrics could prioritize artistic expression, rhyme, and rhythm over grammatical accuracy, which could potentially create difficulties for learners when interpreting language forms or transferring vocabulary from songs to real-world communication.

Based on these findings, students were encouraged to use digital English songs as a complementary resource for expanding vocabulary and to pay attention to unfamiliar words, repeated expressions, meanings, and contexts rather than relying solely on the entertainment value of songs. Lecturers were encouraged to select songs that matched students' proficiency levels, contained clear lyrics, and were consistent with specific vocabulary-learning objectives. Songs could also have been integrated into a variety of activities, such as identifying unfamiliar words, interpreting meanings from context, reviewing repeated vocabulary, and using newly learned words in subsequent tasks. For future research, further studies were recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, employ mixed-methods or experimental designs, and use objective measures of vocabulary development. Future researchers could also examine different musical genres, proficiency levels, and types of digital song-based activities to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how digital English songs contributed to EFL vocabulary acquisition.

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