

**THE IMPACT OF SONGS ON STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS****Sahlah Haris<sup>1\*</sup>, Siswana<sup>2</sup>****<sup>1</sup>sahlahharis@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>siswana@uhamka.ac.id**

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**ABSTRACT**

This quasi-experimental study examined the effectiveness of using English songs to teach writing skills to tenth-grade students at a Jakarta high school. The study involved 68 students over two classes. One class was given the song-based instruction as the experimental group, while the other class functioned as the control group. Both classes had pre-tests and post-tests to evaluate the impact of the treatment. Using IBM SPSS Statistics, the experimental class improved their average scores by 7.56 points compared to 4.59 points in the control group. The data revealed that the 2-tailed significance is  $p$  (0.039), while the alpha significance ( $\alpha$ ) is 0.05. Thus, since 0.039 is less than 0.05, the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted, and the null hypothesis ( $H_o$ ) is rejected. These findings indicate that the use of song into writing class could be a useful method for improving student performance.

*Keywords:* English Song, Impact, Writing Skill

**A. INTRODUCTION**

Writing is the written expression of ideas, information, feelings, and emotions. It combines physical and mental abilities, such as writing words on media and organizing ideas for clarity. Writing serves two purposes: self-expression and meeting the expectations of the audience. Skilled writers can communicate in a variety of methods, including handwriting, typing, and using phone keypads. Physical methods and context have a significant impact on the overall process (Blut et al., 2021). There are various text types such as narrative, descriptive, expository, persuasive, reflective, technical, and academic writing (Mackiewicz & Babcock, 2019). Narrative writing entails creating a story or telling an event, with a focus on character development and story development. Descriptive writing contains rich descriptions of people, places, or objects, with sensory details used to enhance the composition. Expository writing uses facts, data, and examples to explain a topic, Persuasive writing aims to convince the reader to adopt a particular perspective. Reflective writing provides students with an opportunity to articulate their thoughts and emotions, while technical writing conveys difficult information in an understandable and concise way (Martínez et al., 2022)

However, learning to write English is difficult for EFL Indonesia learners because they cannot clearly synthesize the intended ideas, use acceptable collocations, or use more precise grammatical phrases. This assumption is supported by the results of previous writing research revealed by (Hutapea, 2022; Sabanashvili & Garibashvili 2022). Researchers have

conducted observations at a high school in Jakarta. The data from observation showed that writing problems are widespread among students. Lack of vocabulary, difficulty in building sentences clearly, and difficulty in choosing the right title for the composition are all problems. These problems might due to the use of inappropriate teaching method. Therefore, to address these issues, the teacher must employ an effective teaching method for instructing writing skills.

Regarding the learning mentioned, it is good to recommend that EFL Indonesia teachers continue to include teaching and learning activities that are more supportive, fun, and safe for diverse learners. These three essential elements must be present in EFL's various teaching and learning settings to foster a more proficient future generation who have a strong enthusiasm for learning and a sense of independence. Many English teachers recognize the effectiveness of incorporating songs and music into language classes. This method not only makes studying more interesting, but it also improves language acquisition by making it participatory. Singing English songs can help improve pronunciation abilities (Bokiev et al., 2018; Kumar et al., 2022; Al-Efeshat & Baniabdelrahman, 2020).

English songs are frequently used in EFL classrooms. It is also supported by Hampp (2019), who discovered that English songs increase vocabulary, pronunciation, accent, mood, motivation, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills while transmitting new vocabulary, grammatical structures, and cultural information. Furthermore, several studies have explored the impact of song media on language learning. Farmand (2013) found a positive effect on students' oral production and motivation. Similarly, Azab (2023) revealed a significant positive impact on both oral skills and student perceptions of the curriculum. These findings indicate that songs not only engage students but also foster a more interactive learning environment. Thus, this research aimed to assess the effectiveness of utilizing English songs to enhance students' writing skills.

## **B. METHOD**

This study explored the effectiveness of using songs in the teaching of writing. In this present research, songs represented the independent variable, while the students' writing skills were the dependent variable. In this regard, the performance of the experimental class was compared with that of the control class to establish whether the use of songs made any statistically significant difference in terms of improving their writing skills. This was done to determine the effect of this therapy on students' writing skill. The population in the present study is the tenth-grade students of a senior high school in Jakarta, consisting of six classes totaling 312 students. A sample was drawn from this population and consists of 68 students, divided into two groups: X-3 as the experimental group (34 students) and X-4 as the control group (34 students).

The study conducted both a pre-test and a post-test. In the light of that, to ensure the quality and reliability of data, the following data processing processes are applied using SPSS: first, data from the pre- and post-tests were imported to SPSS in order for analysis; secondly, data analysis was conducted through the use of the SPSS menu, namely, normality test, homogeneity test, and t-test. The researcher analyzed SPSS output for the determination of significant differences between the experimental group and control group in pre-test and post-test results.

Consistent with the purposes of this study, the writing test was the main research instrument for measuring students' writing ability both before and after the intervention. Both experimental and control groups were given a pre-test to set the baseline of the students' description skills. The writing test focused on key areas in writing, namely: organization, use of vocabulary, grammar, and coherence. This was followed by an intervention wherein the experimental group received a series of lessons with integrated English songs in writing instruction over a four-week period, and the control group received traditional writing instruction without the use of songs.

### C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data on student achievement was collected from the results of pre-tests and post-tests conducted in both the experimental and control classrooms. This test was designed to see if employing songs affected the writing skills of tenth-grade students at a Jakarta high school during the 2023/2024 academic year. The test findings will be discussed in the next section.

#### 1. Descriptive Statistics

In this research, class X-3 of a senior high school in Jakarta was chosen as an experimental class, where the total number of students participating in the learning process using songs as a medium of learning was 34 students. At the beginning, the pre-test was conducted to find out the students' ability in writing before the treatment. Then, the experimental class was treated in four learning sessions by using songs as an integral part of writing instruction. A post-test was given at the end of these sessions, in order to measure change in their writing performance. Results of the pre-test and post-test for the experimental class and the control classes are summarized in the following table:

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics

Class	Test	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Experimental Class</b>	Pre Test	34	50	86	68.85	9.866
	Post Test	34	56	94	76.41	9.310
<b>Control Class</b>	Pre Test	34	50	80	67.24	8.121
	Post Test	34	52	86	71.82	8.674

As can be seen from Table 1, the descriptive statistics indicate large differences in students' writing performances between the classes taught experimentally and those taught in control conditions. Pre-test in the experimental class had a mean of 68.85 with the minimum score of 50 and maximum of 86 before the intervention. This impressively changed to an average of 76.41 after four sessions of learning where songs were integrated as a teaching medium. Accompanied with the increased mean score, the maximum score increased to 94, while the standard deviation decreased from 9.866 to 9.310, showing that the use of songs in this class not only improved the writing skills on the whole but also leveled the performances of students.

By contrast, the control class receiving traditional instruction method without using songs demonstrated less increase in the mean scores. The pre-test mean was 67.24, ranging from 50 to 80 while the post test mean was quite modestly set at 71.82. While there was some improvement in the writing capabilities of students within the control class, it was weaker compared to the experimental class. Additionally, the standard deviation of the control group

varied only minimally, from 8.121 to 8.674, thus showing that the dispersion in performance did not shrink as dramatically as it did for the experimental group.

These findings now show that the use of songs in writing instruction had a higher positive influence on students' writing competence than the traditional methods. This was shown not only by the higher post-test scores but also by the greater range of improvement reflected by the increased maximum score and the reduced score variability. This then is evidence that songs can indeed be an effective pedagogical tool in increasing student participation and writing competence in EFL classrooms. Also, the smaller gain in the control class further highlights the potential shortcomings of traditional instruction for marked improvements in writing skills.

## 2. Normality Test

The researcher analyzed the results before determining the value of the T-test in this investigation. The normality and homogeneity tests were used to examine if the data was normally and uniformly distributed. This analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 27. The data analysis yielded the following results:

**Table 2.** The Result of Normality Test of Experimental and Controlled Classes

Class	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic			Shapiro-Wilk Statistic		
	cs	Df	Sig.	s	Df	Sig.
Student Learning Outcomes						
Pre-Test Experiment Class	.135	34	<b>.124</b>	.938	34	.053
Post-Test Experiment Class	.121	34	<b>.200*</b>	.962	34	.283
Pre-Test Control Class	.133	34	<b>.133</b>	.940	34	.061
Post-Test Control Class	.099	34	<b>.200*</b>	.963	34	.305

\*. This is a conservative estimate of its true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 2 shows significant values of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for experimental and control classes within both pre- and post-tests. In the experimental class, there were 0.124 significance values in the pre-test and 0.200 in the post-test, and in the control class, there was 0.133 in the pre-test and 0.200 in the post-test. From these, it is apparent that the gain of the experimental group, from 68.85 to 76.41, is higher than the increase in the mean score of the control group, from 67.24 to 71.82. This could be because writing skills developed with songs are more exciting and stimulating. Such an improvement in the performance of the experimental group can be explained by considering the more interactive and engaging nature of the song-based activity, which arguably increases student motivation and enables better retention of language structures and vocabulary. The higher maximum score obtained in the post-test by the experimental group (94) reflects further that some students have benefited significantly from this method.

This is further reflected in the smaller standard deviation in the experimental group's post-test results relative to that of the pre-test, 9.310 and 9.866 respectively, which shows that there is more consistency in the improvement of the group, a playing field effect, so to say, by which the use of songs would help students with different abilities to improve their

writing skills. This result is important because it implies that this teaching approach could be particularly effective in heterogeneous classrooms where students have different proficiency levels.

On the contrary, the control class demonstrated some gain in scores, with more modest increase in mean scores and slight increase in the standard deviation in the post-test results. That would suggest that the older method served all of their various needs less well and produced more disparate results. The fact that the control group performance variation is stable suggests that the teaching method did not very well address the gap between the higher and lower performing students, which could explain smaller overall gains in their writing skills.

Besides, when the significance level is below 0.05, it means that the data follows a normal distribution. Because the significance levels for experimental and control classes are above 0.05, the distribution of pre-test and post-test data in both classes can be concluded as being normally distributed.

### 3. Homogeneity Assessment

Once the data distribution was shown to be normal, a homogeneity test was performed to evaluate the degree of variance similarity between the experimental and control groups. Prior to assessing the effect of the intervention, this test is necessary to make sure that the two groups were equivalent. The homogeneity of variances was assessed using IBM SPSS Statistics 27 and the Levene statistical approach. Table 3 shows the findings.

**Table 3.** Variance Homogeneity Test

	<b>Levene statistics</b>	<b>Levene statistics</b>	<b>DF1</b>	<b>DF2</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>Mean</b>	.394	.394	1	66	<b>.533</b>
<b>Median</b>	.392	.392	1	66	.534
<b>Based on Median and with adjusted df</b>	.392	.392	1	65.933	.534
<b>Based on trimmed averages</b>	.402	.402	1	66	.528

As can be seen from Table 3, the significance value (Sig.) of the comparison of the post-test results of the experimental and control groups is 0.533. Since this value is greater than the level of  $\alpha=0.05$ , the test results verify that the variances of the two groups are homogenous. This would indicate that the spread of the scores in the experimental and control classes was very similar prior to the intervention, strengthening the assertion that any differences found in the outcomes indeed related to method of instruction and not to underlying variability in the data.

Homogeneity of variance significantly allows the researcher to continue with other statistical tests, such as the independent t-test, since it would justify a proper comparison between the groups. The homogeneity result in this study supports the reliability of the experimental findings since it suggests both groups started from the same conditions, which would make the improvement observed in the experimental group the result of using songs in writing instruction.

#### 4. Pair Sampel T-Test

To test the significance of the difference in improvement of writing skills between the pre- and post-tests for both experimental and control groups, a paired sample t-test was done using SPSS 27. The level of significance was set to 0.05. The t-test results are therefore elaborated in the table below.

**Table 4. Results of Paired Sample T-Test**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean Error
<b>Pair 1</b>	Pra-Test Experiments	68.85	34	9.866	1.692
	Post-Test Experiments	76.41	34	9.310	1.597
<b>Pair 2</b>	Pra-Test Experiments	68.85	34	9.866	1.692
	Post-Test Experiments	76.41	34	9.310	1.597

Table 4 presents the outstanding improvement of the experimental group in post-tests, with an average score of 76.41, compared to 68.85 in the pre-tests. The increase, about 7.56 points, describes a high development in the writing skills of the experimental group after receiving the treatment. The small standard mean error of 1.597 gives further indication of the uniformity with which the improvement has come for the group. The control group, on the other hand, had a lesser increase in their mean score, moving from an average of 67.24 in the pre-test to 71.82 in the post-test. As such, while the control group improved, this is less salient when compared with what was recorded for the experimental group.

The t-test results show that the increase in writing scores for the experimental group is higher in the control group since the mean of the difference of the pre- and post-test scores was greater. Hence, this leads to the supportive fact that the utilization of songs as a learning tool had an affirmative impact on the said students' writing skills, leading to more improvements in comparison to the traditional teaching methods.

**Table 5. Independent Sample Test Results**

	Levene Test for Variance Equivalence		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tail)	Significant Differences	Difference in Std.	95% Confidence Interval of Difference	
								Lower	Above
The same variance is assumed	.394	.533	2.103	66	<b>.039</b>	4.588	2.182	.231	8.945
The same variance is not assumed			2.103	65.673	<b>.039</b>	4.588	2.182	.231	8.946

Table 5 presents the independent samples t-test for the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups. In the Levene test of equality of variances, the p-value is 0.533, which is larger than  $\alpha = 0.05$ . By this, the assumption of equality of variances has been met, and the researcher proceeds to the t-test analysis assuming variance equality. The result of the t-test shows a t-value of 2.103 with a p-value of 0.039, less than 0.05 accepted significance. Hence,  $H_0$  should be rejected, and  $H_1$  is accepted. It shows that there is a difference in writing performance by students taught using songs and those using the traditional method.

This is further supported by a positive mean difference of 4.588, showing that the experimental group had an average score approximately 4.6 points higher on average than that of the control group. The 95% confidence interval for the difference lies between 0.231 and 8.945, showing that the real difference in writing scores using the two conditions actually falls somewhere between these two values with 95% confidence. The relatively narrow width of the confidence interval indicates that the gain in writing performance observed in the experimental group is statistically significant and reliable. This provides evidence in support of the hypothesis that integrating songs into the teaching of writing is an effective approach to enhancing students' writing proficiency in the EFL classroom.

The results from this independent samples t-test demonstrate that the use of songs as a pedagogical tool significantly enhances students' writing skills. The acceptance of the alternative hypothesis confirms that songs can create a more engaging and effective learning environment, which leads to better student outcomes compared to traditional instruction methods. This finding aligns with previous studies, such as Surbakti et al. (2018), which highlighted the effectiveness of song media in improving students' writing abilities, particularly in creative writing contexts such as poetry. Similarly, Kurniawan and Nikmah (2023) found that students' writing skills improved significantly following the introduction of song-based learning interventions.

These significant findings of the study suggest integrating songs as a tool in the educators' language instruction, especially for contexts where students find it difficult to learn writing skills through traditional methods. Song will make learning more interactive and pleasant; it motivates students, allowing them to be deeply engaged with the course material. Besides that, the improvement in the writing results could also suggest that songs may overcome the gaps in the writing performance of students and, therefore, allow for a more inclusive approach toward students of different levels of ability. Further research may explain these findings by addressing the long-term impact of song-based instruction on other language skills development, for example, reading proficiency and speaking. Furthermore, research into the usage of other genres of music or song lyrics in relation to different writing tasks would be of interest to further develop this teaching methodology for a wide range of learners.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

The findings of the current study lend strong support to the argument that songs can serve as an effective pedagogical tool in enhancing writing performance in an EFL environment. By demonstrating a greater positive increase of the experimental group in post-test scores, alongside the statistical results showing proof of the effectiveness of the intervention, it has given a great warranty that songs can be one of the effective ways to engage students and provide students with a better understanding of writing concepts. This will mean that the use of music in writing instruction enhances not only student motivation and participation but

also brings about measurable gains in writing competence, as manifested by the greater gain of the experimental group over the control group. In light of these findings, it is suggested that EFL classes teachers may use songs as part of teaching techniques to improve learners' outcomes. Music application could be a creative and interactive way to overcome some common problems faced by learners, such as limited vocabulary, inability to construct sentences, and lack of interest in the process.

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