

Investigating the Effect of Using English Islamic Pop Songs on Students' Vocabulary Size

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Abstract: *English is a foreign language in Indonesia. Students need to know more about its vocabulary to use English to communicate. One of the strategies to improve students' vocabulary size is through English Pop songs. This study investigated the effect of English Islamic Pop songs on students' vocabulary size. The method employed was experimental research with a Pre-Experimental design. The population was the first-year students of an Islamic senior high school, and the samples selected were 20 students using a simple random technique. This study used two vocabulary tests to collect data: pre and post-test and Vocabulary Level Test (VLT). Data gained were analyzed using data analysis techniques through SPSS Statistical V22.0. The result indicated that using English Islamic Pop songs improved students' vocabulary size; however, this was not followed by the level improvement. Students' vocabulary size level remained at 2000 words. Various songs by different singers will be needed for further research. Therefore, using Islamic Pop songs in teaching vocabulary is suggested to introduce Islamic English words and phrases to students.*

Keywords: *English teaching, Islamic Pop Songs, Vocabulary size*

INTRODUCTION

The importance of vocabulary cannot be underestimated, especially for those who want to learn English. As a foreign language in Indonesia, English words differ from Bahasa. Learning vocabulary plays an important role in English because fluency and proficiency in the language cannot be achieved without it. Moreover, having a limited vocabulary in a foreign language may prevent effective communication. It is well-known that a wide range of words is a must for those learning a new language (Hadi, 2017). Therefore, English teachers used various strategies to improve students' vocabulary size, including Pop songs.

English pop songs are a good choice for students to listen to because of their flexibility and accessibility. They can be enjoyed anywhere and at any time. Additionally, Pop songs have been used in education to teach English vocabulary (Ma'rifat, 2017). Students instructed in English vocabulary using songs were more capable of remembering newly acquired phrases (Shakerian et al., 2016). Despite using various pop songs, many students still lack vocabulary in Islamic context, making it difficult to understand the meanings conveyed through English Islamic Pop songs. The lyrics of English Islamic Pops serve as an inspiration for music lovers to listen more frequently. Naralita & Azis (2020) reported that using Islamic songs positively impacted students' comprehension, motivation, and

classroom atmosphere. English Islamic Pop songs have the potential to stimulate learners' interest and provide new vocabulary words that are integrated into Islamic values.

Furthermore, this current study aimed to investigate the effect of English Islamic Pop songs on students' vocabulary size. The results could assist teachers in effectively and engagingly teaching vocabulary to Islamic students by providing appropriate contexts. Most schools in Indonesia are Islamic senior high schools or Islamic boarding schools, which follow most citizens' beliefs (Muslims). The outcome of introducing Islamic context words can also enhance the collection of Islamic songs, an innovative medium for teaching English vocabulary. Thus, this study enhanced awareness regarding the significance of incorporating Islamic values into English language teaching.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the core of a language. Hatch and Brown (1995) defined vocabulary as a relevant list or set of words used in a particular language or by individual speakers. In addition, vocabulary is a collection of lexemes, including single words, compound words, and idioms (Richard & Schmidt, 2010). Those definitions refer to the fact that vocabulary is the basic element of a language. A person cannot know or speak fluently without it because a word or a collective of words conveys a message.

Moreover, having vocabulary is necessary for learning English. Viera (2017) said that vocabulary is crucial in acquiring a second or foreign language because learners struggle to comprehend others or express their thoughts and emotions without understanding words. Richard & Renandya (2002) also stated that vocabulary is the central aspect of language proficiency and provides a substantial foundation for how well language learners speak, listen, read, and write. These two statements indicate that vocabulary is the words in a particular language that someone uses to communicate effectively. Therefore, vocabulary is the first skill students must acquire in learning English.

Vocabulary Size

Vocabulary size is related to the extent of a person's mastery of words, particularly when learning a foreign language. It refers to the breadth of vocabulary knowledge, the overall size of a person's vocabulary, or the number of words he/she has at least a basic understanding of (Qian, 2002). Indonesian high school curriculum does not specify categories and numbers of words that students have to know; however, they are required to have the ability to communicate in English and comprehend text in the national examination.

Regarding the students' vocabulary size in senior high schools in Indonesia, some previous researchers mentioned the results of their studies. Afriando et al. (2015) found that only one in eighteen schools reached the 3000-word level. Meanwhile, Mustafa (2019) identified that the expected vocabulary size for junior high school graduates was 2000 words and 3000 words for high

school graduates. These findings indicated that students still have limited English vocabulary. This condition needs teachers to provide more effective vocabulary-building strategies to improve students' vocabulary size.

Vocabulary size can be measured using a vocabulary size test. According to Nation (2013), the vocabulary size test is designed to estimate the vocabulary size of second and foreign-language learners in general or academic English. The vocabulary size is closely linked to proficiency in using English in different contexts. Thus, the measurement of vocabulary size is crucial for planning, diagnosis, and research.

Vocabulary Level Test (VLT)

Vocabulary Level Test (VLT) is a recognition test where students are provided with test words in a foreign language and a corresponding list of explanations to match them with (Schmitt et al., 2001). According to Novianti (2016), VLT research aimed to capture additional aspects of learners' performance in language learning. In analyzing the vocabulary competence of language learners, VLT was created to assess the size of students' English words and evaluate their vocabulary knowledge in both receptive and productive ways. Meanwhile, this study tested students' words related to the Islamic context in general.

VLT assesses students' understanding of words at different levels. The levels of VLT used were specifically 2000, 3000, 5000, and 10000 (Dóczy & Kormos, 2016). These levels are beneficial for placement and identifying vocabulary gaps because they estimate vocabulary quantity. Dóczy & Kormos (2016) draw inferences about the learners' vocabulary knowledge by examining the number of terms that the students correctly identified within each frequency zone. Since VLT is used to assess vocabulary size, teachers or lecturers apply various strategies or techniques in teaching vocabulary, such as using English Islamic pop songs.

English Islamic Pop Songs

Pop songs are one of the music genres that can be used to learn English. It originated from 'popular' music, abbreviated as 'Pop' (Kayyis, 2015). Pop songs are a great choice for students to listen to because they can be enjoyed anywhere and anytime. Engaging with this genre of music can boost their confidence levels and enhance their enjoyment of learning English in their homes and the classroom setting (Kamil, 2020). Additionally, Pop song has been utilized in education, particularly in teaching English vocabulary (Ma'rifat, 2017). Many teachers use various genres of songs to engage students in learning English vocabulary.

Islamic Pop songs refer to the English lyrics integrated into Islamic values. The term 'Islamic Musical Arts' is used by some experts to refer to music that incorporates Islamic nuances, characteristics, qualities, or inspiration from Islam (Lahpan, 2009). The significant worries concerning the concept of Islamic songs occur when particular performers define the term 'Islami' in a larger context, acknowledging that Islam serves as inspiration for entire musical genres in

addition to the instruments, tonal systems, and Islamic themes of songs. Islamic song is anything that aligns with Islamic beliefs.

Furthermore, Islamic pop music has characteristics in delivering messages through songs. Hutomo (2013) stated that Islamic songs employ percussion and Pop rhythmic music to create a distinct and captivating performance. Despite the Pop beat and percussion accompaniment, the songs' lyrics still praise God and His Messenger. The lyrics of English Islamic Pops serve as an inspiration for music lovers to listen more frequently. It offers valuable insights into Islam, specifically targeting teenagers and adults. Therefore, English Islamic Pop songs stimulate learners' interest, bring them joy, enhance classroom atmospheres, and introduce new vocabulary words integrated into Islamic values.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed an experimental research method. Experimental research is the sole type of research that can be tested. It represents the strong chain of reasoning regarding the relationships between variables (Mills and Gray, 2016). In addition, Experimental research methods are used to determine the effects of specific treatments on others in a controlled environment (Sugiyono, 2013). Furthermore, this study used a Pre-Experimental research design with a one-group pre-test and post-test.

Population refers to subjects or objects with specific qualities and characteristics. According to Sugiyono (2013), population refers to all the qualities possessed by the subject or object under study rather than just the number of objects or subjects being researched. In addition, Samples represent the population's size and characteristics, especially when the population is too large for the researcher to study every individual (Sugiyono, 2013; Mills and Gray, 2016). This study's population was the first-year students of MA (Islamic senior high school) As'adiyah No. 21 Kampiri, Wajo Regency in South Sulawesi Province. Furthermore, using a simple random sampling technique, the samples selected were 20 students from two classes (10 students from each IPS A and IPS B). The students of each class chosen were based on their high and low scores in English subject.

This study used two vocabulary tests to collect data. The first was pre and post-test, consisting of multiple choices, fill-in-the-blanks, and matching words. The pre-test and post-test results were compared to determine the success of the treatments. The second was the Vocabulary Level Test (VLT). The objective of the vocabulary level test was to evaluate the impact of students taught using English Islamic Pop song lyrics (Songs by Harris J) on their vocabulary size in every meeting. The test format was 15 numbers of matching words with their meanings related to English Islamic Pop song lyrics taught. The students should find the word corresponding to each definition and match it to the correct one. This test assessed learners' understanding of words at four different levels: 2000, 3000, 5000, and 10000 words.

Data gained were analyzed using quantitative data analysis techniques. These techniques rely on measurements, as is typical in quantitative research. The

measurement involves SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) V22.0 to calculate the number of samples, mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum scores, the normality using the Kolmogorov normality test, hypothesis, the effectiveness of tests, and the classification of student scores adopted from Mariana (2020) as follows.

Table 1. *Classification of Students' Scores*

Scale	Classification
90–100	Excellent
75–89	Very good
65–74	Fair
50–64	Poor
0–49	Very poor

FINDINGS

The Results of Students' Vocabulary Pre and Post Tests

The pre-test and post-test were utilized to assess the knowledge acquired by students who engaged in treatments using English Islamic Pop songs. The pre-test consisted of questions given to participants before the treatment to assess their initial vocabulary size. After completing the three treatment meetings, students were given a post-test in which they were asked to answer the same set of questions as the pre-test. The effects of the treatments were identified by comparing their pre-test and post-test scores. The following table provides the gained scores of the students' pre-test and post-test:

Table 2. *The Students' Scores*

No.	participant Number	Pre-Test	Post-Test
1.	001	63	89
2.	002	60	91
3.	003	55	89
4.	004	62	92
5.	005	45	86
6.	006	63	95
7.	007	43	82
8.	008	20	91
9.	009	20	80
10.	010	15	85
11.	011	33	75
12.	012	28	76
13.	013	26	85
14.	014	33	80
15.	015	44	70
16.	016	44	68
17.	017	43	75
18.	018	32	80
19.	019	34	90
20.	020	53	86

Average	40.8	83.25
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Table 2 shows a significant improvement in the students' scores before and after the treatment. The result indicated that students experienced an increase in their vocabulary size after being taught using English Islamic Pop songs. The improvement can be measured by comparing the minimum scores in the pre-test and the post-test. In the pre-test, the minimum score was 15, while in the post-test, the minimum score was 68. The pre-test had a maximum score of 63, and the post-test had 95. Furthermore, students' learning progress can be assessed by comparing their gain score on the pre-test (40.8) with their post-test score (83.25). After comparing the two students' gain scores before and after treatment, this study indicated that students' vocabulary size has significantly improved. In addition, the classification of the results in the pre-test and post-test can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. *The Classification of the Students' Scores*

Scale	Classifications	Frequency	
		Pre-Test	Post-Test
90–100	Excellent	0	5
75–89	Very good	0	13
65–74	Fair	0	2
50–64	Poor	6	0
0–49	Very poor	14	0
Total		20	20

Table 3 shows the improvement in the students' classification scores. On the pre-test, none of the students were in fair, very good, and excellent classifications. Most of them had low knowledge of English Vocabulary in the Islamic context. However, there were increases after students were taught using English Islamic Pop songs. None of the students stay in the lowest classification anymore. These results indicated the students' improvement in their vocabulary.

To evaluate the research hypothesis, it was necessary to assess the distribution of the samples to determine whether it was normal or non-normal. A normality test was conducted to compare the null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis. The results of the normality tests are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4. *One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov*

Statistics		Pre-Test	Post-Test
N		20	20
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	40.80	83.25
	Std. Deviation	15.150	7.601
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.123	.141
	Positive	.123	.080
	Negative	-.108	-.141
Test Statistic		.123	.141
Astmp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}	.200 ^{c,d}

- a. Test distribution is Normal.
- b. Calculated from data.
- c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
- d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Table 4 shows the significant value of the pre-test = $0.200 > 0.05$. It meant there was insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis, and it assumed the sample was normally distributed. The significant value of the post-test = $0.200 > 0.05$, which meant that the sample was also normality distributed. In addition, the mean score of the post-test (83.25) was higher than the pre-test (40.80). Thus, a gain score of 42.25 indicated the students' vocabulary improvement.

After confirming that the pre-test and post-test samples had a normal distribution, the effect of using English Islamic Pop songs on students' vocabulary size was analyzed using the null (H_0) and alternative (H_1) hypotheses. The H_0 hypothesis was accepted, and H_1 was rejected if there was no effect on improving students' vocabulary size after treatment, and vice versa. The independent t-test evaluated these hypotheses and determined whether to accept or reject the H_0 or H_1 hypotheses. The detail of the t-test was described as follows:

Table 5. Paired Samples T-Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre-Test – Post-Test	-42.450	14.479	3.238	-49.226	-35.674	-13.112	19	.000

Table 5 describes the result of the Paired Sample T-Test. The results indicated that one sample t-test = -13.112 and the significance level (2-tailed) was $0.000 < 0.05$, which meant there was an improvement in using English Islamic Pop songs on the students' English vocabulary size. Therefore, H_0 was rejected, and H_1 was accepted.

The Results of Students' Vocabulary Level Test (VLT)

The Vocabulary Level Test (VLT) measured students' vocabulary size and improvement in each meeting. This test aimed to measure learners' knowledge of words at 2000, 3000, 5000, and 10000 levels. Because the student was still at the beginner stage, the vocabulary in this test was only covered at the 2000 level. The result of the analysis is described in Table 6.

Table 6. The Results of the Vocabulary Level Test

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
<i>Salam Alaikum</i>	20	80	90	83.50	4.894

You are My Life	20	70	90	83.00	7.327
Rasool Allah	20	80	100	87.00	6.767
Valid N (listwise)	20				

Based on the vocabulary level test results shown in Table 6, it has been determined that the lowest score achieved was 70, while the highest score gained was 100. These scores were obtained from three VLTs with different words and English Islamic Pop songs. The mean scores of ‘Salam Alaikum’ (83.50) to ‘You Are My Life’ (83.00) did not show improvement; however, ‘Rasool Allah’ (87.00) indicated a significant increase. Thus, the results showed that students' vocabulary size had increased only in particular songs.

DISCUSSION

This study used English Islamic Pop songs to teach students English vocabulary. Teaching involves an interactive relationship between students and teachers. According to Rajagopalan (2019), teaching involves a close relationship between an adult with more knowledge and a less advanced individual to facilitate education. In addition, Smith in Kaharuddin et al. (2017) stated that teaching is observing individuals' needs, experiences, and emotions and responding to help them acquire specific skills. In this case, the students were introduced to new words through Islamic Pop songs to encourage them to learn English. Islamic Pop song lyrics were integrated into their daily school lives to familiarise them with the words taught.

Some steps should be carried out in teaching students through English Islamic Pop songs. Three main stages are commonly followed when observing how teachers teach: pre-teaching, while-teaching, and post-teaching (Kaharuddin, 2017). Students were introduced to the topic during pre-teaching by presenting song lyrics related to the Islamic context and common words. In the while-teaching phase, English Islamic pop songs were used to help with word analysis in the song. This activity was followed by classifying vocabulary based on word class. Afterwards, the post-teaching phase was done by evaluating to assess the students' understanding of the vocabulary learned, especially new words related to the Islamic context.

Several studies have been conducted related to vocabulary size. Pratiwi et al. (2022) found an improvement in the students' vocabulary size after being taught using Flashcard media, and it was expected to help students expand their vocabulary size. In addition, Asmawati et al. (2022) revealed that the ‘Learn English with TV series’ channel on YouTube for learning English has significantly increased the students' vocabulary size by helping to expand their vocabulary, particularly in Disney movies. Those studies used different strategies to teach students' vocabulary and presented similar results to this study. It could be inferred that many alternative strategies could affect students' vocabulary increases, including English Islamic Pop songs.

Islamic Pop songs have become increasingly prominent in Islamic education in Indonesia. The use of Islamic songs had a positive impact on

students' comprehension, motivation, and the overall atmosphere in the classroom. Incorporating Islamic songs into English teaching can enhance students' understanding of Islamic vocabulary (Naralita & Azis, 2020). The combination of music and lyrics reflecting Islamic values is very suitable for learning English vocabulary. Widhiastuti (2012) found a notable distinction in the vocabulary scores of students taught using English Pop songs compared to those taught using conventional techniques. Thus, the lyrics of English Islamic Pop songs provided new words and phrases regarding Islamic values.

The level of students' vocabulary size remained at 2000 words. The number of their vocabulary size was improved but was not followed by its level. This result aligns with the survey conducted by Afriando et al. (2015) that most students' vocabulary size in senior high schools was still low. He found that the average was 2794 words for social science students and 3250 for natural science. In addition, Wero et al. (2021) also found that university students had a receptive vocabulary size of 3110 words and a productive vocabulary size of 1841 words. Most students in Indonesia do not use English regularly as it is a foreign language; that is one factor that can influence their vocabulary size.

Furthermore, this study was carried out in limited treatments to the students. The songs presented to the students' were only three by Harris J. Various songs and different singers need to be done for further research. Nation (2013) suggested that learners should know various aspects of vocabulary because the words are complex and rich. Likewise, students must develop extensive vocabulary to enhance their language learning proficiency. In other words, if learners are provided with opportunities to look into deeper levels of vocabulary knowledge, their vocabulary size will grow.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the effect of English Islamic Pop songs on students' vocabulary size. Students experienced treatments listening and reading the lyrics of Harris J's songs (*Salam Alaikum*, *You are My Life*, and *Rasool Allah*). During treatments, students enjoyed the learning process and were motivated to know the meanings of the words or phrases. Two tests were used to identify students' vocabulary after treatments. The results revealed that using English Islamic Pop songs improved students' vocabulary size; however, this was not followed by the level improvement. Students' vocabulary size level has remained at 2000 words. Therefore, using Islamic Pop songs in teaching vocabulary is suggested to introduce Islamic English words and phrases to students from various English Islamic Pop songs.

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