

Fostering English Skills through Kpop: Evidence from Students in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of using K-pop as an English learning and teaching tool among Indonesian students. The focus of this study includes how English skills are improved through Kpop, how Kpop affects interest in learning, and how social media impacts interest and ability to learn English. This study used a quantitative method by giving questionnaires to six K-pop fan students. The results show that the use of KPop as a learning tool provides significant results in improving students' English skills. Moreover, K-Pop can be considered as an effective tool to assist students in improving skills based on their interest in learning the language. This study provides insight into the potential use of other media that match students' interests to improve the effectiveness of English language learning in Indonesia.

Keywords: *English skill; Kpop; language teaching and learning, University Students.*

INTRODUCTION

Social media can be accessed by anyone, most social media users are teenagers and adults. Idea Strict learning through social media as an educational tool has been proven not to have a significant impact on results(Holmberg, 2019). In this era, many people use social media just to have fun rather than to get useful benefits. Social media is simply described as web and mobile-based technologies used for communication(Candra Adi Pratama, 2020)

Motivation or interest in learning is one factor in the desire to expand knowledge of English(Holmberg, 2019). A person will not have an interest in learning if they do not have a goal that they want to carry out. Many teenagers and adults are more enthusiastic about learning, or increasing their knowledge of English through new things such as K-pop culture. Korean Popular Music (K-Pop) as one of the musical genres that has gained a lot of profit and received international attention has many terms including English terms(Aniuranti, 2020).

K-pop music is packaged nicely and with movements Being agile when singing(Gusti et al., 2022) makes K-pop music one of the things that attracts people's interest because it not only displays singing but also unique dances that make someone excited when they see or hear it. Song lyrics in K-Pop music show a certain structure, usually arranged in blocks, an intro to catch the listener's attention, verses

to build tension and fill in the details of the message, a chorus the most memorable part of the song (repeated throughout the song), an outro— the last part of the song—, just to mention the most common elements(Munchen, 2020). For teenagers, K-pop music can provide entertainment for those who are doing assignments or are bored with very busy daily activities. Music has an influence on someone who listens to it, emotions and feelings will be created when the listener experiences the music deeply(Fibrianto et al., 2020). K-pop is considered 'younger' and 'happier' music with a new 'look', compared to Western pop music. The increasing availability of K-pop videos via YouTube and other video streaming sites is considered a major factor contributing to the rise of a global K-pop fan participatory culture(Yoon, 2018).

K-pop videos available on YouTube mostly use Korean, and for fans from outside Korea there is usually a translation feature or subtitles in English. Videos with subtitles in particular can have a strong effect on vocabulary acquisition in the sense that they can help acquire new vocabulary(Bellalem et al., 2018). Subtitles influence a person's listening comprehension. It provides some new vocabulary that has never been seen before(Napikul et al., 2018). By watching YouTube, someone can improve their English language skills and increase their knowledge of foreign vocabulary.

Apart from YouTube, K-poppers (people who like K-pop) can also interact with each other via other social media such as Twitter (now X), Instagram, Weverse and other social media. Through this communication, people get to know each other, and ultimately create strong bonds online because of their love for their idols(Malik & Haidar, 2020). K-pop stimulates K-poppers to learn English by tweeting & following K-pop things on Twitter and other social media. The main factor that makes them enthusiastic about learning English is interest and curiosity to get as much information as possible about their K-pop idols(Faiza, 2020).

Apart from getting information about K-pop idols via social media, fans can usually interact with their idols through 'fansigns' (signatures by idols on released albums). Every time a K-pop idol releases a new album, fansign are often held in the Korean music industry. Fans (from outside Korea) who are selected to do the fansign are encouraged to use English(Shalhahdira, 2022). Because of this, many K-poppers are interested in learning English, not only to improve their English skills, but also as a means to interact with their idols. The great hope of being able to get closer to their idols is what makes K-poppers feel enthusiastic about broadening their knowledge or improving their English skills.

METHOD

Context and participant

This research was carried out by interviewing several sources who were kpopers or kpop fans. Information about the interviewees comes from their stories or habits on social media which indicate that they are kpop fans. The objects of this research are English students who are also kpop fans whose ages range from 18 to 21 years. They started to get to know Kpop from 2018 to 2020.

Data source and analysis

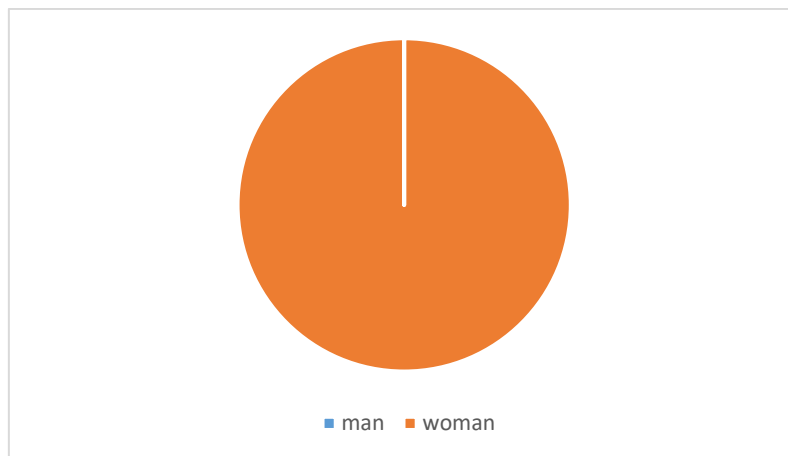
The research method used to collect and analyze in this research is a quantitative method. The participants or objects studied are people who like K-Pop. To get data,

I gave several questionnaires via Google form and participants will be asked questions related to how they improve their English skills through kpop. Participants were also asked follow-up questions to add and improve data efficiency. The form is shared via WhatsApp, where the data will then be collected and analyzed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

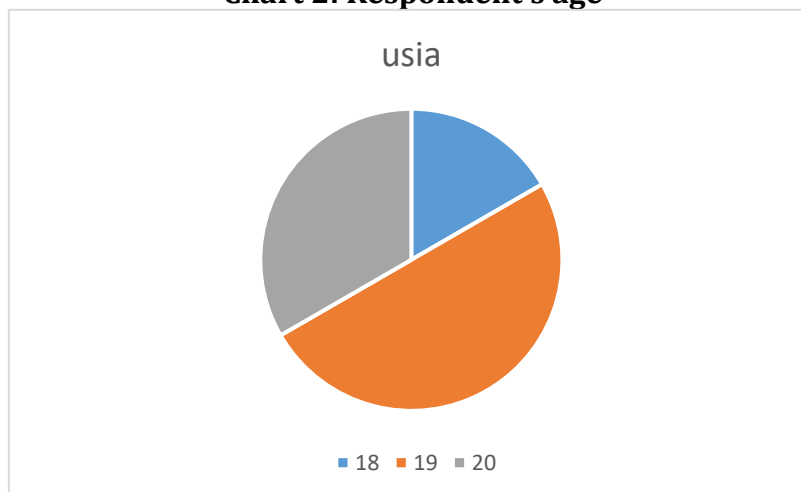
In collecting information about the research conducted, the researcher created a series of questions which were then put together in a Google form questionnaire. The results of the research and discussion are based on respondents' answers to a questionnaire via Google form regarding fostering English skills through Kpop. This data will be described in several forms. The following are the answers to the questionnaire that was given to 6 interview participants.

Charths 1: respondent gender



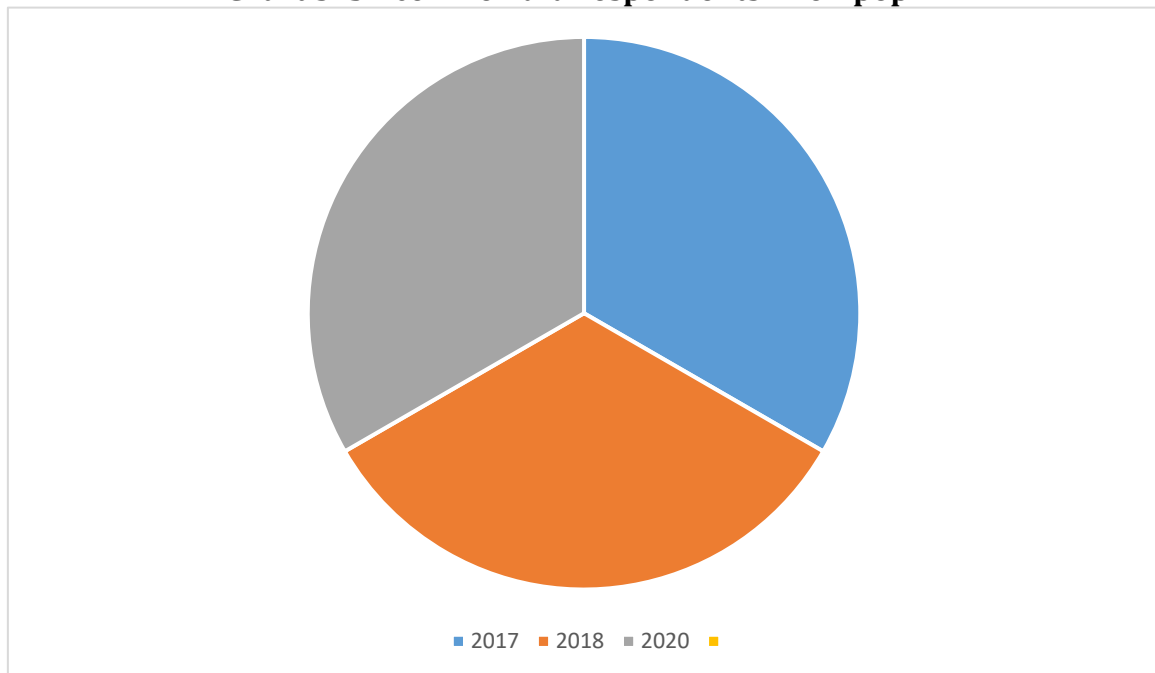
Based on the diagram above, it can be seen that most kpop fans are female, but there are also kpop fans who are male. But, Following the development of idol boy bands is an obligation for every female fan. It is felt that a female fan is always up to date about the development of her idol boy band.(Ayunita & Andriani, 2018). That's why there are more female fans than male fans.

Chart 2: Respondent's age



Based on the pie chart above, it can be seen that the average kpop fan is 19 years old, which means the target market for Korean pop is teenagers and adults.

Chart 3: Since when did respondents like Kpop?



Based on the diagram above, it can be seen that 2 respondents were familiar with Kpop in 2017, 2018 and 2020.

**Chart 4: respondents' answers to questions:
What K-pop means to everyday life?**

Respondent 1:

In terms of songs, basically I really like music, so not even Kpop songs, music is life support.

In terms of idols, it also means a lot to maintain sanity and survival

Respondent 2:

the meaning of kpop in my life is happiness, keeping mentally safe

Respondent 4:

Just for entertainment

Respondent 5:

Entertainment

Respondent 6:

Doesn't mean much

Based on respondents' answers to the questions given, there were several respondents who said that Kpop was very meaningful for life, mental health and happiness, there were also those who said it was just entertainment or didn't mean much.

**Chart 5: Respondents' answers to questions:
What are the benefits of being a kpopers in your opinion?**

Respondent 1:

Many

1. In terms of mental health, kpop is definitely a way of happiness
2. In terms of fashion, kpop makes me less tacky hahaha
3. In terms of knowledge, Kpop makes me know outside things that I didn't know before, ex: all about Korea, music genres, foreign artists, and many more
4. Kpop is also my first reason to save :)

Respondent 2:

For me, Kpop can divert things that I want to forget, for me, being a Kpopper can make me more friends

Respondent 3:

Many, such as learning various languages, including Korean, Mandarin, English, etc

Respondent 4:

It can motivate me to learn more about English of course, because that way we can communicate with kpop idols

Respondent 6:

Get to know kpop or Korean culture, learn a foreign language, broaden your knowledge about music and dance.

Based on respondents' answers to the question about the benefits of being a kpop fan, it can be seen that kpop has several benefits for its fans. Teenage fans show their fanaticism through active participation, creativity and dedication which results in their enthusiasm increasing in learning something, whether it is language or culture. (Rahma & Fauzi, 2023). Based on the answers from respondents 3, 4, and 6, among the benefits obtained are increasing insight into foreign languages and interest in foreign things from abroad. Based on the answers from respondents 1 and 2, it can be seen that kpop is not only a means of increasing knowledge of foreign languages, but also as a means of increasing social relations, a means of entertainment for fun, as well as a means of finding out new things related to Korean pop culture.

**Chart 6: respondents' answers to questions:
How has K-pop influenced or helped you in learning English?**

Respondent 1:

It's very influential, especially since I've been a kpopper since 2017, at which time my knowledge of English was still shallow... being a foreign fan means that to be able to understand what idols are saying, you have to use English as an international language, and that really makes things easier. My knowledge of English has increased

Respondent 2:

Some kpop idols come from America and they often speak English, this helps me to practice my listening skills, and usually when watching their content I always use English subtitles to get used to learning English quickly through kpop

Respondent 3:

Very helpful in increasing vocabulary

Respondent 4:

It really affects me, because my motivation to be able to speak English increases

Respondent 6:

Some K-Pop song lyrics are in English, so when we want to know the meaning of the lyrics, we inevitably have to study English, especially the vocabulary.

The use of songs in the learning process is fun for students because it functions more as recreation, songs make students feel satisfied and happy which makes students try harder in learning. Through songs, students can also improve their listening skills(Khoirin et al., 2022). Based on respondents' answers to the question of how kpop influences their English progress, it can be seen that kpop is little by little helping fans understand English. Based on the answers of respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6, it is known that the motivation or enthusiasm of kpop fans increases by following kpop developments.

Chart 7: respondents' answers to questions:

What motivates you to learn English through Kpop?

Respondent 1:

Actually, learning English through Kpop was something that wasn't planned, just because I like foreign artists, I thought I could learn and had to learn English as an international language.

Respondent 2:

Actually there is nothing that motivates me to learn English but, because I am a kpopers and can learn English through kpop, so I just learn English through kpop

Respondent 4:

Because English is an international language so we can communicate with many people

Respondent 5:

Idol or bias.

Respondent 6:

1. It is more interesting and fun to learn English through music or song lyrics
2. It's easier to memorize English vocabulary through song lyrics
3. To understand the meaning of the English lyrics.

Based on the respondents' answers, kpop itself is the most motivating thing to learn English, because kpop are international artists, who do not use Indonesian, thus making them voluntarily and enthusiastically learn English. And that feeling of enthusiasm emerged without any coercion from any party, this feeling came from himself.

Chart 8: respondents' answers to questions:

How do you use K-pop content to understand and improve your English skills?

Respondent 1:

Every idol content must have subtitles, and coincidentally my favorite group doesn't have Indonesian subtitles, so I can't help but read English subtitles.

Respondent 2:

usually when I watch kpop content with English subtitles and find words or sentences that I don't know the meaning of I often screenshot the part or write the sentence then interpret it after that I re-watch the video content

Respondent 3:

Every kpop video streaming

Respondent 4:

By finding out the meaning of songs and understanding English vocabulary

Respondent 5:

Watching eng subs on idol's variety show.

Respondent 6:

First, interpret the vocabulary you don't know, understand the meaning of a song lyric, then memorize some of the new vocabulary you find.

Based on the respondents' answers, it can be seen that several respondents have their own ways of improving their English skills through kpop content. Based on respondents' answers, on average they improve their English skills by watching content or music videos (songs accompanied by visual images).

Chart 9: respondents' answers to questions:

How do you balance between enjoying K-pop content in a fun way and using it as a tool for learning English? and what kind of KPop content is the most influential for you?

Respondent 1:

Actually, seeing content with English subtitles doesn't affect my enjoyment of seeing the content, but sometimes when I'm too lazy to think, I just look at the ones with Indonesian subtitles, fan posts hahaha

Respondent 2:

Usually I focus on watching the content first, then rewatch it again to focus on the subtitles.

Respondent 3:

Namely, like watching the live IG of one of the idols, for example Mark, who really likes speaking English, this makes me indirectly learn English.

Respondent 4:

If they speak English then it would be beneficial to learn English by finding out what they want

Respondent 6:

Make a song or video not just to enjoy or listen to but understand the meaning and learn some new unknown vocabulary.

Based on respondents' answers to the question of how respondents balance enjoying content and using the content as an English learning tool, it can be seen that there are various ways respondents balance enjoying content with learning English, some use the instant method by directly viewing Indonesian subtitles, There are also those who see the content first and then analyze the meaning, there are also those who use live K-Pop idol content to practice their listening skills. There was a positive relationship between the use of English songs and listening skills(Afriyuninda & Oktaviani, 2021).

Chart 10: respondents' answers to questions:

What advice or tips would you like to share with people who want to use K-pop to improve their English?

Respondent 1:

1. If possible, find a kpop group with many members who can speak English
2. Don't be tempted to use Indonesian subtitles if they are available
3. For those of you who are kpopers, rest assured that one day you will be able to fansign with your idols!!! SO YOU HAVE TO BE GOOD IN ENGLISH

Respondent 2:

My suggestion is that if you like Kpop but don't understand English, you can use English subtitles to practice your English skills, so you don't just like Kpop but don't get anything, but you can like Kpop and make it a way to learn English. more fun

Respondent 3:

My advice is to understand every word in the subtitles, especially English words

Respondent 4:

Look at full English content only, because it can help to increase your vocabulary

Respondent 6:

Use K-Pop not just for entertainment but also for learning, you can increase your English vocabulary, interpret lyrics, and get used to practicing your listening through K-Pop songs or videos.

English learning activities outside the classroom are very important in order to raise their enthusiasm for learning and interacting with other people (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020). Based on the answers from the respondents, some of them suggested using English subtitles and not using Indonesian subtitles to practice and improve English language skills. So, it can be seen that activities outside classroom like watch kpop content or MV is helping student to improve their English skill.

Chart 11: respondents' answers to questions:

Is there a difference between the method of learning English through K-pop and regular learning methods? If yes, what is the difference in your opinion?

Respondent 1:

Learning from kpop is more fun because while watching our favorites, it becomes more fun and so there is definitely no pressure.

Respondent 2:

Yes, if you study normally it's more serious and detailed, if you study through Kpop it might be a bit difficult to understand the grammar and you can only increase your vocabulary

Respondent 3:

Yes there is, because it's more interesting to learn by watching kpop videos

Respondent 4:

It's definitely different, if we study with kpop maybe we can relax, but it's also less efficient, while regular studying is more efficient but we don't get entertainment

Respondent 5:

Of course, for Kpopers learning with the media they like is more fun, they can discuss with fellow Kpopers.

Respondent 6:

Yes, but the difference is not very significant, if KPop is focused on learning through songs or videos, especially practicing listening.

Based on the respondents' answers to the question about whether there is a difference between learning English through kpop and regular learning, it can be seen that there is indeed a difference. Using kpop as a learning medium can make respondents feel happy and entertained, especially since it is something they like, apart from getting pleasure, the respondents also gain some new understanding. Apart from that, in the virtual world and in the real world you can also have discussions between fellow kpop fans to practice other English language skills.

Chart 12: respondents' answers to questions:

Do you feel that the K-pop fan community plays an important role in supporting English learning? How does interaction with the community influence your learning?

Respondent 1:

YES, because usually western fans, when news about idols is published in English, there are also sometimes some fans who voluntarily open questions about English lessons.

Respondent 2:

In my opinion, it doesn't play that important a role

Respondent 3:

Yes, in the kpop community we usually use English and other languages such as Mandarin, Japanese, etc.

Respondent 4:

It doesn't seem like much

Respondent 6:

Yes, but this only happens in communities between countries, or communities from all over the world, usually they will use English to communicate so we will try to understand or practice our English.

Fans usually look for information from their idols and then share it on social media with fellow fans through their uploads (Amri, 2020). Based on the answers of respondents 1, 3, and 6, according to them, the kpop fan community is important, but based on the answers from respondents 2 and 4, they stated that the kpop fan community does not play a very important role in supporting the improvement of English. From these two answers, it can be seen that each respondent has their own opinion about the role of fan communities in improving English language skills. But 50% of the answers agreed that the kpop fan community was very helpful in the process of improving English language skills.

Chart 13: respondents' answers to questions:

How would you evaluate progress or development in English skills gained from studying K-pop? Do you use any particular methods to measure this progress?

Respondent 1:

So far, not really, but sometimes I realize that I understand more English

Respondent 2:

No, I learned English through kpop just to increase my vocabulary and practice my English skills

Respondent 3:

The evaluation I did was by making a vocabulary list after I watched content that had subtitles

Respondent 4:

So far, because I don't really study English and Kpop, I don't think I can evaluate myself

Respondent 6:

I don't really focus on the development of English through K-Pop

Nearly 60% of respondents answered that they did not really evaluate the progress of their English skills.

Chart 14: respondents' answers to questions:

Do you think there is a difference between students who like Kpop and those who don't in terms of their English language skills?

Respondent 1:

There definitely is, and actually that can't be a comparison, because it's very rare for non-Kpop fans to deliberately learn English through Kpop. And most kpop fans can speak English through kpop, they don't accidentally learn English through kpop and then become fans.

Respondent 2:

There isn't any

Respondent 3:

Yes, in terms of how to pronounce it

Respondent 4:

Yes, it's different, when it comes to Kpop, the English language is usually a little mixed between Korean and English.

Respondent 5:

Yes, here.

Respondent 6:

There is no particular difference

Of the 6 respondents' answers, 4 of them said that there was a difference between students who like Kpop and those who don't in their English language skills. According to the first respondent, it was said that kpop fans studied English purely because they wanted to know what something meant about kpop and because they really liked it, whereas almost no students deliberately studied English through kpop. Based on the answers of respondents 4 and 5, it was said that the difference between students who like K-Pop and students who don't like K-Pop lies in their language.

Section 15: respondents' answers to questions:

What are the challenges or limitations in using k-pop as a learning media?

Respondent 1:

It's not intensive learning, because learning English through kpop is just to understand the content, so it's for fun and there's no pressure so it's as enjoyable as possible...

Respondent 2:

Quota limitations :)

Respondent 3:

Usually hampered by signal or packet outage

Respondent 4:

Maybe they use Korean more often than English

Respondent 5:

Addicted to singing.

Respondent 6:

Maybe because not all K-Pop songs are in English, learning is only focused on songs or videos.

Based on respondents' answers to the question whether there are obstacles or difficulties in using K-Pop media in learning, two out of 6 respondents were hindered by signals on cellphones or internet packages. Based on the answers from respondents 4 and 6, it can be seen that kpop uses too much Korean instead of English, which makes it quite difficult for them. Based on the opinions of respondents 1 and 5, it can be seen that when using kpop as a learning medium it does not make respondents focus on studying but makes respondents only enjoy what is presented in kpop itself.

Section 16: respondents' answers to questions:

What media do you usually use to learn through k-pop? or what application do you usually use and how do you use it?

Respondent 1:

Social media of course...

1. Twt (read up idols, news from western fans)
2. Vlive, YouTube (see content)
3. Instagram, Weverse (idol update)

Respondent 2:

I usually use the YouTube application to watch kpop idol videos and use English subtitles to practice my English skills

Respondent 3:

YouTube, IG, tiktok, bubble, twitter, etc

Respondent 4:

I only study via cellphone by listening to music or watching videos which are useful for learning English

Respondent 5:

Vlive

Respondent 6:

Whatever media, it's definitely a cell phone because you can't watch K-Pop directly

Based on the answers from respondents regarding the media commonly used for learning through K-Pop, it can be seen that the average media used is cellphones or smartphones. Smartphone or cellphone in educational sectors much less advanced international locations in the are less focused on the inexperienced persons' traits and styles. Maximum of the existing materials are not organized well as the non-academic(Mussa, 2020). So thats why, students must known to use their smartphone to support their finances while increasing their interest and satisfaction in learning in a fun way. Based on the answers from respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, on average fans use YouTube to practice their English skills by watching videos or kpop content with English subtitles. Apart from using YouTube as a medium for learning through K-Pop, some of them also use V Live (an application used by K-Pop idols to broadcast live and interact with their fans) and instagram, Based on (Pujiati et al., 2019) it is known that Instagram also has an important role in helping students increase their motivation to learn English and ultimately improve their English language competence and abilities. Which means, students can learn from any media that makes students feel satisfied and happy when learning. This is one method that can be used by students.

CONCLUSION

This research examines the habits, behavior and ways of Korean pop fans learning English. Some kpop fans feel that kpop is very meaningful in their lives, but on the other hand there are kpop fans who feel that kpop does not have much meaning in their lives other than just for entertainment. Some kpop fans stated that being a kpop fan can make them know new things from abroad that they did not know before, and enrich their knowledge of foreign languages, as well as increase many social connections in society and abroad to also practice their foreign language skills.

Kpop also helps fans learn English, they get a lot of enthusiasm and motivation to learn English by following the progress of Kpop, which is something they like. The things that kpop fans like are things that motivate them to learn English further, because the pleasure they have in improving their English through kpop is what makes fans feel more enthusiastic about improving their English skills.

Based on research results, kpop fans improve their listening skills and increase their vocabulary by watching or listening to things they like. This makes them more enthusiastic in improving their English skills. Apart from enjoying Kpop content, fans also like to use things they like as learning tools to expand their knowledge. Kpop fans have a way to improve their English skills, namely when watching or listening to Kpop content they usually use English subtitles, and limit themselves to using Indonesian subtitles. By using kpop as a learning medium, fans admit that it is more fun than normal learning methods, because kpop is something they like, so it makes them more enthusiastic about learning and also serves as entertainment.

Based on research, it is known that kpop fans have an important role in each other. Usually there will be a community that indirectly helps improve English language skills through communication between people. However, quite a few also feel that the fan community does not have a role in helping to improve their English skills.

Based on research, it is known that most kpop fans do not evaluate the progress or development of their English skills, because they are not too focused on developing English skills through kpop. Apart from that, fans also have limitations in using kpop as a learning medium, namely limited internet data packages and signals, also because they enjoy kpop content too much, which makes them not focus on learning through kpop. Fans use cellphones to access social media to improve their English skills. The platform that is usually used is YouTube because it contains a lot of content related to Kpop.

In conclusion, kpop plays an important role in building the enthusiasm and interest of its fans to be more active in learning English through any media. Kpop can make someone practice their listening skills through existing content, increase their vocabulary through the content provided, train their speaking skills to interact between fans and idols through social media platforms and the real world, and also train their writing skills to provide information between fans via social media platforms. .

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