

THE EFFECTS OF ENGLISH SONGS ON THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION ACHIEVEMENT IN SMP SRIJAYA NEGARA PALEMBANG

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in order to know the effectiveness of pronunciation achievement based on English songs strategy. This study applied a quasi-experimental research design, specifically non-equivalent control group design. The objectives of the study were to find out whether or not (a) there was significant improvement of students' pronunciation achievement after being taught by using English songs (b) there was significant difference of pronunciation achievement between the students who were taught by using English songs and those who were not. The population was all the seventh grade students in SMP Srijaya Negara Palembang. This research, the researcher used purposive sampling. The sample was divided into two samples, there were 30 samples for experimental group and 30 samples for control group. The data were collected by using t-test (Paired Samples t-test and Independent Samples t-test). The findings showed that English songs strategy significantly improve the students' pronunciation achievement ($T=36.947$). In addition, there was significant difference in pronunciation achievement between the students who were taught through English songs strategy and those who were not ($T=12.663$). Based on this study, it is found that the use of English songs in teaching English is effective to improve the students' pronunciation and very beneficial for the students in order to facilitate them in learning English. Based on this finding, it is suggested that English songs in teaching English can be recommended for the English teachers.

Key word: effect, English songs, pronunciation

1. Introduction

English has become an international language. English is a key to success in communicating, people of different countries speak English to communicate. Basically, there are four language skills that every students need to master in order to be able for communicate with others. They are reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Speaking is an important skill that must be mastered by every person who wants to study English. Before learning speaking skill, English language learners are recommended to learn pronunciation because it is the fundamental basic for both teachers and students who want to master speaking in English language. People can speak English better if they master pronunciation.

Pronunciation is one of the most aspects in speaking skill, and one of the most important parts of English to communicate with others. In learning a foreign language, pronunciation plays an important role. According to Farmand and Pourgharib (2013), "pronunciation is the way we pronounce a word, especially in a way that is accepted or generally understood" (p. 841). It is important when we pronounce a word, if speakers have very bad pronunciation, our speech will not be understandable to the listeners.

Furthermore, Gilakjani (2016) mentions that pronunciation should be viewed as more than correct production of individual sounds or words. It should be viewed as an important part of communication that is

incorporated into classroom activities (p. 5). It means that, the teachers have to train more of the students pronunciations in the class to make their pronunciation well. For example, giving practice speech such as conversations between his or her friend in the class using English language. For the teacher should pay attention if the students pronunciation is not correct, the teacher must tell the correct pronunciation to students.

According to EPI (English Proficiency Index) (2016), the rank of Indonesian's English Proficiency was the 32nd out of 72 countries with average 52,94 scores in Asia. It means that Indonesian's English proficiency was categorized low and therefore Indonesians English proficiency still need to be improved. Furthermore, all over the world, people have to learn English for the development of science technology, culture, economic, business activities, etc.

There are many problems when students pronounce the sound of consonant that are related by points of articulation, manners of articulation, and aspirated or non-aspirated voicing (Pimwan, 2012, p. 2). Teaching English pronunciation is an important aspect both ofteaching and learning the language. Therefore, it is very crucial for students to start learning English pronunciation as early as possible. The teacher should give more attention to teaching pronunciation for students and clearly to teaching pronunciation.

Ratnasari (2007) points out that The students often find problem with pronunciation when they speak, read, or listen to English words. It might be caused by some factors. It is difficult for Indonesian students to pronounce English words correctly, for example when they are asked to pronounce the word "umbrella" /ʌm'brelə/ they will pronounce /um'brelə/ (p. 2).

The students often find problems with their pronunciation because of the differences between their mother tongue and English. In Indonesian language, there are many problems that learners have when they deal with the pronunciation. Most of the learners have problems when they learn oral skill. Riswanto & Haryanto (2012) state that when people communicate with other, they made a mistake in pronouncing the word, sometimes language learners pronounce differently from the writing and their speech will not be understandable to the listeners (p. 82). This happens because the teacher did not pay attention when the students speaking English. For examples the word "love", people pronounce /lɔ:p/, but the correct pronounce /lʌv/, "sheep" /ʃi:p/, but the people pronounce /si:p/, and etc.

Based on the problem, the researcher should consider a good strategy to be applied in the ESL/EFL classroom so that students will be motivated and interested to learn the pronunciation. Moreover, the researcher has to create a good learning situation to make students happy, interested, and highly motivated in learning English. There are many ways to improve students' pronunciation, one of them using listening to English songs. English songs have become an integral part of our language experience, songs as very useful tool in the foreign language classroom.

Therefore, Ratnasari (2007) explains that the teachers should have several special tricks to make their students motivated to learn English, for example singing English songs can get the students integrated to English (p. 3). Using English songs in EFL classroom can successfully bring about effective learning through interests and motivating students to learn the target language. A song is an important thing in learning besides utilizing songs in class environment amuses students, it is help the learners feel relaxed while learning through a songs.

According to Pimwan (2012), "songs are authentic materials that can motivate students to learn English. Songs can inspire great motivation during a lesson because songs stimulate positive emotional attitude towards language learning" (p. 5). Through songs, the students get the material easily, and it can be an alternative way to improve their pronunciation. In this research, the researcher used the popular English songs in 1990's, for examples (1) Air Supply "Making Love Out of Nothing At All", (2) Tomy Page "A Shoulder To Cry On", (3) Roxette "It Must Have Been Love", (4) Michael Learns To Rock "Sleeping Child" (see. Chapter 2).

The researcher choose those songs because nowadays many students do not know the popular

English songs in the 1990's and the students do not know the lyrics of the song. So, if the researcher gave the exercise to the students using the song, the researcher believed the student will actually listen to the song to answer the exercises has given from the researcher.

For that reason, it is important for the researcher to select appropriate English songs which can help the students learn the pronunciation. To overcome these problem, the researcher found song which was not too fast. As we know wherever we are, many people listening to the songs at home, at school, at office, at car, and others. So, we can directly listen to the songs and also get interested in learning pronunciation in lyric of the songs. The students can learn pronunciation easily by using songs. Based on the reasons above, the researcher was really interested in conducting the research entitled "The Effects of English Songs on the Seventh Grade Students' Pronunciation Achievement in SMP Sri Jaya Negara Palembang".

The problems of the study were formulated as follows: (1) Was there any significant improvement of students' pronunciation achievement after being taught by using English songs? (2) Was there any significant mean difference of pronunciation achievement between the students who were taught by using English songs and those who were not?

A. Literature Review

1) The concept of pronunciation

There are five components of speaking, such as: pronunciation, vocabulary, structure, comprehension and fluency. From those components, pronunciation is one of aspects that is important not only in speaking but also in other aspects in learning English. Pronunciation consists of vowels, consonants, and diphthongs. Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams, (2011) point out that English vowels are divided into two kinds of vowels, long vowels and short vowels. Long vowels consist of /ɑ:/, /i:/, /u:/, /ɔ:/, /æ/, while short vowels consist of /ə/, /e/, /i/, /ʌ/, /ʊ/, /ɒ/, /ɜ:/. There are eight English diphthongs, consist of /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /əʊ/, /aʊ/, /ɔɪ/, /ɪə/, /eə/, /ʊə/. In addition, English consonants consist of twenty-four. Those are /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /l/, /r/, /w/, /y/. It is essential for the students to understand phonetic symbols and sounds correctly. Pronunciation is the act of giving the true sounds of letters in words, and the true accents and quantity of syllables

2) Difficulties in learning pronunciation

Arimili, Kanuri, and Kokkirigadda (2016) explain that the difficulties in learning pronunciation includes age (critical period hypothesis), perception, mother tongue influence, no one to one correspondence, and time stress pattern (p. 109). The researcher agreed with their argument, because every person is different in pronouncing the word. For example, the influence of age on language acquisition and specifically pronunciation may make adults find pronunciation more difficult than

children do and that adults probably will not achieve native-like pronunciation.

Gilakjani (2011) states that among the reasons ESL students have difficulties learning pronunciation are that they are not interested, not exposed to target language often, and that teachers do not highlight the importance of pronunciation nor have the right tools to help their students learn proper pronunciation (p. 12). In order to attract the students attention to the importance of pronunciation, the researcher used the right methods and utilized the right tools to teach pronunciation in the teaching learning and environment.

3) *Techniques in teaching pronunciation*

There are some techniques suggested by Arimili, Kanuri, and Kokkirigadda (2016) in teaching English sounds. Those are: (1) minimal pair drills method, (2) sentence drills or contextualized minimal pairs, (3) vowel shifts and stress shifts drills, (4) naturalistic method, (5) recordings, (6) tongue twisters, and (7) reading aloud (p. 110-111). Related to this study, the researcher utilized the technique of *minimal pair drills method*. In this technique the researcher made the students understand about the basic patterns of each and every sound in the target language, these drills improve the listening perception and production. Next, the researcher utilized the technique of *sentence drills or contextualized minimal pairs*. In this technique, the researcher made the students are made to listen to the sentences, with words that sound similar but different in the meaning they convey or often called *homophone*. After that, the researcher utilized the technique of *vowel shifts and stress shifts drills*, in this technique the researcher made the students speak more appropriately. Finally, the researcher made the students know how to pronounce words correctly.

There have been a variety of techniques suggested to help the students master the correct pronunciation of the target language (Hayati, 2010) claims that Firstly, imitation (some may call it modeling) is believed to play a significant role in learning the English sound system. The second technique mostly used by English teacher explanation. One helpful device is the simple face diagram in which the various "organs of speech" are shown. Using pictures, drawings, objects, etc, the teacher attempts to teach the place and manner of articulation of difficult sounds (p. 122). So, it can be synthesized that the learners learn the production of sounds uses in the contexts relevant to the real situations.

4) *The concept of using songs*

Songs as one of listening materials can be applied in English language learners. While the students are listening to the music or song, they will learn many things, such as learning grammar and pronunciation. While listening to the songs, the students may follow to sing the songs (Ratnasari, 2007, p. 21). Besides the students may follow to sing the songs, they can train their pronunciation after listening the songs. Song is a like friend in life. Most people like songs, song can make

the people cry, laugh, sad or angry only by listening songs. By using songs, the students can also learn a lot of things such as new words and the meaning of the words. So, the researcher believed that songs can be used as an alternative way in language learning to improve the students' pronunciation.

5) *The utilization of English songs in EFL classroom*

Teaching English through songs requires language teachers to be active in order to maintain students interest. The teachers should be able to use the songs in teaching by breaking it down into several creative teaching learning activities. As an example, students are given some pieces of cards to choose and guess missing parts in song lyrics or cross-words are given to students who do not listen to the song carefully, or give a punishment to students when they are not know the answers, for example the students sing a song in the classroom.

There are many utilizing of English songs in EFL classroom. Shen (2009, pp. 91-93) recommends using songs to improve students in (1) listening, (2) speaking, (3) writing, and (4) memorizing vocabulary. The researcher believed it is very crucial to utilize English songs in EFL classroom. Based on the statement above, songs can also help to improved listening skills because they provide students with listening practice to different forms of intonation and rhythm. English has a stress-timed rhythm, for which songs can help to establish students feeling to learn pronunciation. Whereas, speaking can improved the students practice speaking English with the pronunciation correctly for example the students can repetition the lyric of the song after listen to the song. After that, using songs can made the students English writing practice, for example after the students listen to the songs, they can try to write the lyric of the song. And then, if the students listen to words that have not been heard before, the students find out what the word means and that adds a new vocabularies for students by using songs.

6) *The hypotheses of the study*

The hypotheses of this study were proposed in terms of null hypotheses (Ho) and alternative hypotheses (Ha). They were as follows:

Ho₁: There was no significant improvement of students' pronunciation achievement after being taught by using English songs.

Ha₁: There was significant improvement of students' pronunciation achievement after being taught by using English songs.

Ho₂: There was no significant mean difference of pronunciation achievement between the students who were taught by using English songs and those who were not.

Ha₂: There was significant mean difference of pronunciation achievement between the students who were taught by using English songs and those who were not.

B. Methods and procedures

1) Methods of the study

In conducting the study, the researcher used a quasi-experimental one using pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design. Wallen and Fraenkel (1991) state that a quasi experimental design study is conducted when random assignment is not possible (p. 289). The researcher assigned existing groups as the experimental and control groups, administered a pretest to both group, conducted experimental treatment activities with the experimental group only, and then administered a posttest to assess the differences between the two groups.

2) Variables of the study

This current research has two kinds of variables, namely: independent and dependent variables. In this study, variables: (1) English song as independent variable, and (2) pronunciation achievement as dependent variable. The use of song was the independent variable. On the other hand, the dependent variable which was affected by the independent variable in this study was the students' pronunciation achievement.

3) Operational definitions

This study was entitled "The Effects of English Songs on the Seventh Grade Students' Pronunciation Achievement in SMP Srijaya Negara Palembang". For the purpose of the study, some terms used in the title were defined operationally to avoid misinterpretations.

In this study, there were two variables that need to be defined: pronunciation and song. The researcher used song for test pronunciation. In this research, the researcher chose one English song to teach pronunciation for students, there was *Making Love Out of Nothing at All by Air Supply*. This song was selected because when the researcher listened this song, the researcher thought the songs contain many good words. And then lyrics of this song was not repeated in every line. So, the researcher believed this lyric is good for teaching pronunciation to students.

In this test, the researcher used gapped text for song test. Gapped text or always called missing lyrics was used when the researcher gave the students a test about the lyrics of song with certain words blanked out. The students had to listen carefully and fill in the missing words. There were 46 missing lyrics in this test. The students had 3 minutes to answer the test about missing lyrics, and the song was played 1 time.

Beside that, the researcher gave the students pronunciation test in the form of oral test which is recorded. The test covered pronunciation of vowels, consonants, and diphthongs. In this test, the students pronounced 46 words of lyrics English song the title was *Making Love Out of Nothing at All by Air Supply*. The learners had 3 minutes to pronounce them.

4) Population of the study

The population of this study was the students of the seventh grade of SMP Srijaya Negara Palembang in

academic year 2017/2018. The total number of population this research is shown in the table 1 below:

Table 1. *The population of the study*

No	Class	The total number of students
1.	VII. A	30
2.	VII. B	30
3.	VII. C	29
Total		89

5) Samples of the study

The researcher chose the sample by means of purposive sampling. Wallen and Fraenkel (1991, p. 139) state that purposive sampling is chosen when the researcher uses his or her personal judgment for a specific purpose of the study. It permits the researcher to select the sample on the basis of his or her judgment and knowledge of the population.

In purposive sampling, the researcher selects particular elements from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic (McMillan, 1992, p. 76). The researcher firmly believed that the sample students would provide the best information to address the purpose of this research. First, the researcher needed two classes to be the sample for her research, one was experimental group and the other was the control group. Therefore, the researcher chose two classes with the same number of the students. Second, selected classes were those who were in similar level of English competence. The researcher decided to have VII. A and VII. B as the researcher checked the students' report that their English scores were closely similar. Third, the two classes happened to be taught by the same teacher.

In addition, to decide which class belongs to the either experimental group or control group the researcher determined the group by writing each name of class in a piece of paper, rolling the papers, putting them in a glass and then shakes the glass to take groups'. The experimental group and the control group are shown in this following table:

Table 2. *The samples of the study*

No	Class	Number of students
1.	ExpGroup	30
2.	Cont Group	30
Total		60

6) Technique of data collection

In order to get the information from the fields, the researcher used a test to get the results. The test was given before and after the researcher treatment in order to know the effectiveness of this approach in improving pronunciation achievement of the students. In this study, the test was divided into two. The first was pre-test and the second was post-test. A pre-test was given before conducting experiment to the students and a post-test

was given after the treatment. The test was given in both groups – experimental and control groups.

The purpose of the test was to find out whether there were significant improvement of students' pronunciation achievement after being taught by using English songs and to find out whether there was significant mean difference of pronunciation achievement between the students who were taught by using English songs and those who were not. The test was about gapped text or often called *missing lyrics* and also included an objective test consisted of 46 words (phonetic symbols) in the oral test covers pronunciation.

The results of the test serves as a comparison to the results of pronunciation test and to find out whether there was a correlation between students' fill in the blanks test and their oral test cover pronunciation. In fact, pronunciation was closely related to production and recognition.

7) *Techniques of data analysis*

Before the researcher used SPSS, the researcher used the manual formula to calculate of the results pronunciation test for pre-test and post-test. The formula proposed by *Direktorat Pendidikan Umum, Ditjen, Dikdasmen, Depdiknas2004* was used to score the students' pronunciation tests.

$$\text{Score} = B / N \times 100$$

Where :

B = right answer

N = total of the test item

Table 3. *Conversion of score range*

Categories	Score Interval
Excellent	76 – 100
Very Good	51 – 75
Good	26 – 50
Poor	0 -25

To analyze the data, the researcher used t-test. T-test was used to know how significant difference between two groups. In answering the research question number one, the researcher used paired samples t-test. Paired samples t-test was used to see the significant improvement of students' pronunciation achievement after being taught by using English song. Meanwhile, in answering research question number two, the researcher used independent samples t-test. Independent sample t-test was used to see the significant difference of pronunciation achievement between the students who were taught by using English songs and those who were not. In this case, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 12 for windows was employed.

2. *Finding and interpretations*

A. *The findings of the study*

The results of students' Pronunciation Achievement (PA) in the experimental group. In experimental group of pre-test, it was found that there were 11 students (63%) in *very good category* with the mean score 54.45 and 19 students (37%) were in *good category* with the mean score 42.36. Based on the category presented in table 4, it could be concluded that the students' pronunciation achievement of the experimental group in pre-test was *good category*. Meanwhile, in experimental group of post-test, it was found that there were 14 students (53%) in *excellent category* with the mean score 84.57 and 16 students (47%) were in *very good category* with the mean score 68.12. Based on the category presented in table 4, it could be concluded that the students' pronunciation achievement of the experimental group in post-test was *excellent category*.

The results of students' Pronunciation Achievement (PA) in the control group. For the control group of pre-test, it was found that there were 8 students (27%) in *very good category* with the mean score 54.37 and 22 students (73%) were in *good category* with the mean score 39.40. From the results, it could be stated that the students' pronunciation achievement of the control group in pre-test was *good category*. And then for the control group of post-test it was found that there were 11 students (37%) in *very good category* with the mean score 54.54 and 19 students (63%) were in *good category* with the mean score 41.15. From the results, it could be stated that the students' pronunciation achievement of the control group in post-test was *good category*.

The mean score of experimental group in pre-test was 46.80, meanwhile the mean score of experimental group in post-test was 75.80. The mean difference of pronunciation achievement between the pretest and posttest within the experimental group was 2.900 and the significance level of students' pronunciation achievement in experimental group was .000 which was lower than .005.

The mean score of control group in pre-test was 43.40, meanwhile the mean score of control group in post-test was 46.06. The mean difference of pronunciation achievement between the pretest and posttest within the control group was 2.700 and the significance level of students' pronunciation achievement in control group was .001 which was lower than .005. In addition, there was significant mean difference of pronunciation achievement between the students who were taught by using English songs and those who were not with the t-value 29.73 and the significance level of students' pronunciation achievement between experimental and control groups was .000 which was lower than .005. Thus, the students' pronunciation achievement improved significantly after being taught by using English songs.

B. *The interpretations of the study*

In accordance with the findings above, some interpretation could be drawn. It was found that, the experimental group got better pronunciation achievement

if it was compared to the students in control group. It could be seen from the results in experimental group of pre-test was 46.80 and it increased to be 75.80. It might be caused by some factors, first the students were exposed to the activities in 12 meetings. For 12 meetings, the researcher gave the students some activity to improve students pronunciation, such as *gapped text (missing lyrics), homophone, phonetic symbols, games, and others.*

The result showed that missing lyrics activity contributed to the higher improvement of students pronunciation because the researcher gave the activity in four times in week. Beside that, homophone activity gave significant influences to students pronunciation because the researcher gave the activity in three times in a week.

In the previous meeting the researcher found that the students' made mistakes in pronouncing the words because they were not familiar with the English sounds or pronunciation, for example *stumble, fake, whistle, riches, and aim.* In order to solve these problems, the researcher agreed to use English songs to improve the students' pronunciation achievement. This statement is supported by Ratnasari (2007) who stated that using English songs in EFL classroom can successfully bring about effective learning through interests and motivating students' to learn the target language (p. 3). A song is an important thing in learning besides utilizing songs in class environment amuses students. Using songs helps the learners to feel relaxed while learning through songs.

The researcher gave the students activity about gapped text (missing lyrics). Beside that, the researcher gave the students practice about homophone. According to Ferrand and Grainger (2003), "a homophone is a word that is pronounced the same as another word but differs in meaning" (p. 404). The researcher gave the students homophone practice using English songs. Homophone practice made the students' pronunciation improve, because gave the students homophone practice made the students focus on listening to the right words, in addition to hearing, the pronunciation also increases. This statement is supported by Riswanto (2012) who stated that homophone is very important aspects in pronunciation teaching. Homophone technique refers to behaviorist approach where the students are suggested to use it with foreign language students who learn the pairs of words that differ in only a single sound (p. 83).

After that, giving the phonetic symbols could improve the students' pronunciation. It might be caused by the phonetic symbols the students which focused on the sounds of the letters that are inside the phonetics symbols. This statement is supported by Arimili, Kanuri, and Kokkirigadda (2016) who stated that using phonetic transcription method is one of the advantages in which if the learner once becomes aware of the phonetic alphabet, the students can learn the pronunciation of the new words also by referring to a standard dictionary (p. 110).

In addition, the researcher gave the students activity using a game. In this activity the researcher gave the students games about "guessing the word". The

researcher believed this activity can improve the students pronunciation because if the students mispronounce the word, the researcher can tell the students how to pronounce correct. In this activity, if the students groups pronunciation is not correctly, so the students groups sing a song in front of the class. Using English songs that made the students feel interested to do the activities, the students also became more competitive than before while playing the game. It is also supported by Thomas & Clarke (2013) who stated that teachers use games as learners make use of all their senses, sight, sound, touch, even taste and smell and learners learn in many different ways; by listening to what people tell them, by watching what they do, by copying them, by experimenting, finding things out for them and above all practicing various skills and make the students more competitive than before while playing the game (p. 217).

Next, using English songs made the students pronunciation better. Beside that the students got some vocabularies too. There is the correlation among English songs, vocabulary and pronunciation, it could be seen if the students listened to song, the students repeated the lyric of song, after that the students pronounced correctly and fluently. Beside that, by listening to the songs, the researcher believed that the students new the word that have been heard before. In addition, the researcher also gave practice to the students by reading of English words that have been made by the researcher to read in front of the class.

3. Conclusions

Based on the results of the analyses and interpretations in the previous chapter, several conclusions can be drawn. This research was successful in the effort to improve the students' pronunciation achievement through English songs. The use of English songs could make the pronunciation activity more enjoyable and interesting. By using English songs, the students could improve their pronunciation like short vowels /ə/, /ʌ/, /ɒ/, /ɜ:/, long vowels /ɔ:/, /æ/, consonants /ʃ/, /θ/, /h/, /tʃ/, and diphthongs /əʊ/, /aʊ/, /ɔɪ/, /ʊə/ while using English songs and improved their motivation to learn English as well as got more opportunities to speak.

During the teaching and learning process, the researcher often used the different English songs to motivate them in learning pronunciation. While listening to the songs, the students may follow to sing the songs. So, they can train their pronunciation ability unconsciously.

In addition, the researcher also used the songs with varied activities such as the students guess the title of the songs, giving the students games like a *puzzle, hot seat and whisper* using English songs, so the students did not get bored. Utilizing songs this way provides an enjoyable experience not only for students but also for the researcher.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions of the study, some suggestions to English teacher could be drawn. The English teachers should be good examples for students because the English teachers should be fluent in pronouncing words. It could be seen if the English teacher is not fluent in pronouncing the words, so the students can not pronounce them correctly. Meanwhile pronunciation relates to speaking proficiency, because if someone is fluent in speaking English, it will make communication with people smoothing, but if the someone's pronunciation is incorrect then it will not be easily understood by the listener when communicating.

The researcher should prepare the English songs to use in research. It is important for the researcher to select appropriate songs which can help the students learn the language and gain learning objectives. To overcome this problem, the researcher should find the song which is not too fast and not too long. In addition, the lyrics of the song should be understandable.

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