

THE ROLE OF SONGS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPEAKING SKILLS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT: Most of us would surely agree that songs, once learned are very hard to forget. Besides, experienced teachers of English understand the importance of using rhymes and songs in the teaching-learning process for their many benefits. Although children have an innate ability to learn any foreign language, they do not learn it properly if they find their lessons boring. In fact, children learn better through interesting activities. The main objective of this article is to emphasize the importance of using rhymes and songs in the teaching of English as a foreign language. Actually, they are the tools that help children learn in an enjoyable and relaxed environment without the necessity of making them feel the pressure of learning a foreign language.

Key words: music, listening, educational songs, rhymes, students' achievement

INTRODUCTION

For different purpose, most individuals use English as a medium and a communication tool. This goes to prove that it has become one of the languages spoken and written all over the world. A wide variety of vocabulary can contribute to an efficient process of communication. In learning English, songs are seen as popular and developed and studies have found that both students and teachers believe that songs have helped them learn English vocabulary and good practice. Techniques are important to build up the morale of young foreign language learners gradually, ensuring that the goal systems are implemented in an easily achievable order.

Music and songs are important parts of learning. Children enjoy music and teachers use songs inherently in a fun way to teach them concepts and language. The most significant trait of songs, though, is repetition. They have language patterns, but they also improve listening ability, rhythm and pronunciation and provide a fun atmosphere. In fact, songs and rhymes are very beneficial. There are so many facets of a language with the use of songs that can be delivered and recycled. Particularly at pre-school and lower primary levels, teaching English using songs has been a common practice in schools. Recent studies have shown that songs are one of the sources of most successful acquisitions of child language, showing that lexical objects must be repeated several times before children internalize them. By songs the people will feel happy even it is supposed to be the compensation to eliminate bored or stress. Music and song also are able to identify someone's character or behavior. Based on this, song can be made use of as a media of teaching in the process of teaching and learning English at school to increase more the students' interest in learning especially in learning foreign language. Teachers in learning used songs must give more attention to their students and teachers can able to guide their students was sung. By using songs a teacher teaches about music, intonation, pronunciation, and a teacher can give a brief and translate even if their initial understanding of the vocabulary is poor.

LITERATURE REVIEW Many researcher mention that it would be very useful to learn English by using songs in their English class (Burhayani, 2013). The concept of songs has been found to have positive effects on the classroom climate. The most successful lessons are the ones which give us the feeling of enjoyment and good time. Enjoyable learning has to be more effective than the traditional teacher- centre procedures. Music is a proven teaching tool which fosters language retention and production in young children. According to Medina, "using music in the classroom will help our students succeed as FL students" (1993).

Murphey (1992) found that the majority of English teachers use or have used songs for different teaching purpose. According to him, it seems that songs stick in

both our short and long memory so they are relatively easy way to remember quite long portions of language. He also found out that songs may be exploited as effectively as any other text. They can be a source of language for presenting and practicing grammar and syntax, vocabulary, pronunciation, and the different skills of listening, reading, speaking, writing and translation. According to Philips, rhymes and songs are tough “to practice the sounds, rhymes and stress patterns of English” (1993, 108). That pupil’s motivation to learn largely depends on the teaching methods does not constitute any update or novelty. But if the teacher skillfully uses rhymes and songs, the children are usually highly motivated. Following Murphey’s definition: “rhymes and songs are relaxing; they vary the lesson’s progress, they provide fun and action, and above all, they encourage harmony within a group” (1992, 8).

According to Heinichet et. al. (2002:9) by songs the people will feel happy even it is supposed to be the compensation to eliminate bored or stress. Music and songs also are able to indentify someone’s character or behavior. Based on this, songs can be made use of as schools to increase more the students’ interest in learning especially in learning foreign language. Sophya (2013, 8) says that song is a tool to help student in learning English language especially able to increase students’ motivations. In addition to, studies exploring the effects of song on language learning mostly focus on memorizing text passages or new words, phonological awareness, and pronunciation, while grammar skills seem less frequently addressed (Alinte, 2013). Despite the wealth of literature recommending music and songs to develop literacy and grammar skills (e.g., Brown, 2006; Paquette and Rieg, 2008; Hancock, 2013), empirical evidence is scare. In general, using singing for grammar teaching may be particularly suitable for primary school children. Firstly, younger learners usually show positive responses to group singing (Good and Russo, 2016) and may not be inhibited by voice breaks or other maturation effects. Secondly, although there is evidence to suggest that even younger learners can benefit from a combination of implicit and explicit teaching (Stanat et al., 2012), in general explicit grammar teaching (e.g., explanation of

grammar rules) may be more difficult for younger learners (Cameron, 2001, S.106; Cummins, 1981).

METHODS There are different ways and procedures for presenting a rhyme or song to our class. It all depend on level of class, the simplicity of the rhyme or song and the time available. Rhymes and songs present a lot of linguistic material in a natural linguistic context. Words in rhymes and songs are meaningful to the learner, which influence the acquisition in a quite positive way. As Murphey assumes: "In general, they use simple conversational language with a lot of repetition "(1992, 7). Therefore, rhymes and songs stick in the learner's mind and the words and expressions used are memorized more easily. Practicing intonation through reciting rhymes and songs is mostly funny and very effective. Curtain and Dahlberg (2004) suggest the following steps for presenting a song in class:

- **Step 1:** prepare the students. Tell them what the song is about, preferable in English, making heavy use of visuals and gestures so they can get to know the song; play a recording or sing the entire song so that the students know what they are working toward.
- **Step 2:** go through the words. Make sure the children understand the words or, at least, they understand the key words necessary for singing the song meaningfully and with enjoyment; place new vocabulary in context and illustrate the meaning with gestures and visuals; there should be very little new vocabulary in any new song, and the new words should be presented several days before you introduce the song.
- **Step 3:** speak the song line by line. Say the song one line at a time and have the children repeat the words; if the song is on the board, track the words with a pointer or a ruler.
- **Step 4:** sing line at a time. Sing the song to the children one line at a time and have them sing it back; practice each line several times until the children can sing independently and then practice it two lines at a time ; finally put the entire song together.

- **Step 5:** add rhythmic accompaniments. Begin to rhythmic accompaniment such as clapping, finger snapping, foot stamping or hand shuffling. (Curtain and Dahlberg 2004, 265)

RESULTS The first necessary step in order to teach rhymes and songs is their actual presentation in class by means of any electronic device (CD, mp3 player or PC) in the case of song or outspoken by the own teacher in the case of rhyme. The teacher should previously have tested the devices prior to its use in class. Then, a double check is needed so as to assure that the students comprehend the nature of the activity and the content of the rhyme or song. It is not necessary to translate word by word but the students should know that the rhyme song means and it is about. This step can also be supported by visual aids.

DISCUSSION The first logical step is the preparation stage. At this stage, we should be clear about the focus of the activity itself, which is singing the song in a later step. Henceforth, prior to this, we should introduce the song with its basic vocabulary and patterns so as student become familiar with them.

CONCLUSION Music has a tangible effect on the soul and human sensations, as it moves a person from one state to another, makes it clearer and more capable of listening and understanding. It is a social and educational means of high level and it has a tangible role in the learning–teaching process for the teachers and the students. Furthermore, the music and educational songs will make the whole process of teaching-learning enjoyable and far away from the traditional and boring ways.

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