

THE USAGE OF ENGLISH SONGS AND MUSIC AS PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CONTEXTS

Rakhmonova Shakhnoza

Abstract:

It is common to use music as one of the strategies in teaching English language for different ages. Teachers all over the world consider that music is really important tool in development of various aspects of the language such as vocabulary, pronunciation, listening skills and even it can act as a source of motivation for students to learn the target language in the EFL classrooms. However, there is still a lack of theoretical and practical researches in this sphere. This research paper is aimed to discuss opinions about the impact of songs on learning and teaching English language, besides that suggests ways of using this method. The author shares her observation, researches experiments, results and discoveries in this article.

INTRODUCTION

The learning English language is indispensable part of people's life, because this language is a useful tool for communication between different nations and cultures, development of technology, medicine and, generally speaking, it affects every part of human life.

All students know old and traditional methods of learning this important language by using books, dictionaries and audio for listening exercises, but what new ways can EWFL teachers and learners create in order to make learning and teaching process more interesting, motivating and productive? One of this magic method is learning language through the usage of songs. According to majority of English teachers, using music during English learning lessons is not just for entertainment, it can significantly improve the learning process of second language. Implementation of songs, as a method of teaching English language, can affect different learning English language aspects such as listening, vocabulary, pronunciation. This research paper aims to verify these claims and confirm the effectiveness of using songs as a means of improvement knowledge of the language.

Nowadays, the problem of modernizing the methods of teaching is becoming really practical, because traditional methods seem old-fashioned, and do not work well for contemporary learners in the current society. Due to the trendy of this method, it attracts bigger amount of students to learn foreign language.

In Uzbekistan English learners face with the problem of lack of native interlocutors. There are not so many places for communicating with foreigners and practicing speaking or listening. The usage of songs for English learning and teaching purpose provides a chance to improve skills of learning language even independently. It is the best way with the help of what learners can get used to native speech, learn new vocabulary (it can include formal

and informal words) and imitate speech of native speakers. Also applying music is a great chance of creating special atmosphere during the classes.

Literature Review

Song - according to Cambridge vocabulary, is a usually short piece of music with words that are sung. Commonly, it is a type of entertainment, however nowadays more and more teachers try to involve this teaching technique into their practice as an educational tool. There are some following aspects of learning language which can be improved by using songs during the lesson.

3.1 .Listening .

It is the most obvious aspect which comes first to mind when person hears expression «learning language by songs». According to Purcell (1992), students may grow weary of hearing the same narrative or conversation over and over again as they try to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words or phrases in context. On the other hand, the rhythm and melody of a song might make listening to it again feel less monotonous. Songs give language learners practice listening to various intonations and rhythms, which can aid in the development of listening abilities. Songs can help create a mood for the stress-timed rhythm of English.

3.2.Phonetics , pronunciation. It is the second factor, which can be improved by using songs during the lesson. Songs are probably the best and fastest approach to teach phonetics, according to Leith (1979). (p. 540).This educator used the text of the song for instruction in difficult aspects of pronunciation by omitting words and word endings. The educator has observed this to be effective, resulting in less frequent errors. In addition to this, the rhymes in songs provide listeners with repetition of similar sounds, and when the students choose to listen to songs time, songs can be helpful for learning. It means that songs provide with an opportunity to sound like a native speaker. Larry Lynch has claimed that there is another great advantage of using this method is a chance to explore different accents and imitate them :The ability to introduce the pupils to a variety of English through songs is a plus. Songs are a common way to hear British English, American English, and Caribbean English. Songs from diverse regions, and in a variety of kinds and formats, are excellent at capturing accents. Styles including gospel, soul, R&B, pop, rock, reggae, and jazz alter not only accents but also vocabulary and usage.

3.3.Vocabulary - it is all the words that exist in a particular language or subject. Every English learner faced with the problem of learning new words and song method is one of the best way to learn new vocabulary.

Songs almost always contain authentic, natural language. This frequently stands in contrast to the stilted, forced language present in many student texts. Of course, songs can also go too far by utilizing excessively vulgar, offensive, or other unpleasant vocabulary. It is

possible to assemble a sizable collection of songs that are helpful for language learning with careful choice.

Recent researches have shown that a variety of new vocabulary can be introduced to students through English songs. Songs are almost always directed to the native-speaking population so they usually contain contemporary vocabulary, idioms and expressions. (Larry Lynch, 1 May, 2023)

According to Rainey & Larsen, respondents retained and relearned a list of proper names (in the native language) more quickly after a one-week break if they had first learned the list by singing it.

3.4. Mood and atmosphere in the class.

As all people feel that music can help them to relax, keep calm, reduce stress and improve their mood, give them countenance, teachers and researches decided to take the benefits of songs during EFL classes. This phenomenon has several explanations:

Children and teenagers' anxiety symptoms are reduced by 30% when they listen to music, one of the neuroleptic elements, according to one study. In psychiatry, music is used therapeutically to treat neuroses and functional deficiencies, such as stammering, dyslexia, and dysgraphia. The fact that Murphey states that "music has the potential to change the atmosphere" is less significant than the fact that he specifically refers to the atmosphere in a classroom when he says that music seems to give energy where there was none and to spark off images when students complain about having nothing to write about. Music is the soil on which dreams grow.

Methodology

The relationship between music and language acquisition has not been the focus of much scientific research. A pretest, an experiment, and post-tests are all included in the experiment the author is suggesting. The methods which the researcher used were qualitative and quantitative.

The participants are 20 students of intermediate level. A written, multiple-choice pretest were used to assess these students' past subject knowledge. This was done in order to exclude any individuals from the study. Each member of the group completed a pre-test with 25 multiple-choice questions that include superstition related vocabulary. Then the students were instructed using a song: "Bad Luck" by Social Distortion. The main theme of the song is superstitions.

The researcher used this song because it's an interesting cultural topic, and there's a lot of useful vocabulary related to superstitions. The control group was given the song and the its lyrics. As proposed by Lake (2003) and others, the song was played around three times. Following the conclusion of the treatment, an explanation of the vocabulary was offered. The researcher explained the vocabulary and its usage taking the song as an example. Following the class, the group took two post-tests: a recap of the pre-test, a questionnaire. The post

test was in written form, while the questionnaire was conducted in oral form. The questionnaire provides a chance to indicate the feedback of students.

Result and Discussion

The findings of the data that the researchers discovered after employing the study method is presented in this section. The experiment was aimed to verify the efficiency of the given teaching method to improve vocabulary and cultural awareness of EFL students. Two parts comprise the presentation of the findings. Data from the pre- and post-tests is presented in the first section, followed by survey data in the second section.

5.1. Pre-test. Checking of students` past knowledge.

Graph 1. Students` pre-test.

Score	Amount of students, who achieved the score
0-10	7
10-20	10
20-30	3
30-40	
40-50	

The table depicts the results of pre-test .The pre-test was consisted of 25 multiple - choice questions(2 scores for each question).

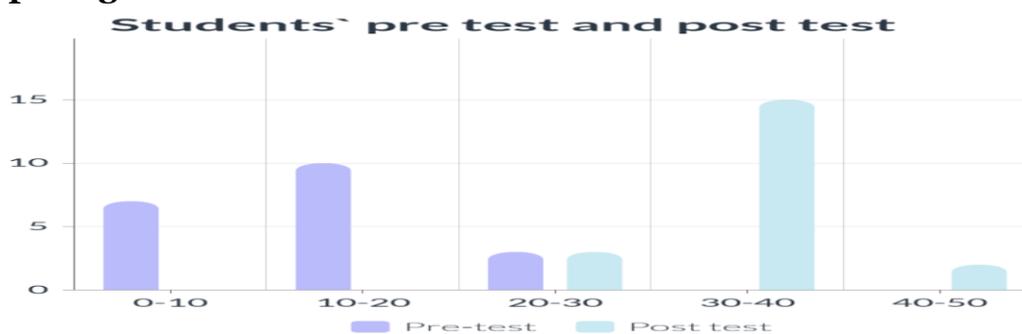
5.2. Post test

Graph 2. Students` post test

Score	Amount of students , who achieved the score
0-10	
10-20	
20-30	3
30-40	15
40-50	2

The given graph above represents the results of post test It was the recap of the pre-test included 25 multiple - choice questions(2 scores for each question).The analyses of outcomes from pre-test and post test can be seen in the following bar chart.

5.3 Comparing of two tests.



Graph 3. Students` pre-test and post test

The diagram above shows the key modifications that were discovered. The majority of students scored less satisfactorily on the pre-test component. During the pre test the half of students (10) got 10-20 scores, while the lowest scores were presented by 7 pupils. Thus, only 3 students got the average results 20-30 scores). It means that only 15% of students gain the half of the overall scores from the pre-test. While , during the post test the same amount of students got the same middle result (20-30). However, the generality of students (15) succeeded and received 30-40 scores , solving the given recap of the pre-test. Accordingly , the highest scores from post test (40-50) were got by 2 people. Thus , founded on the diagram, the researcher analyses the effectiveness of the using songs as a teaching method. As it can be seen from the bar chart that songs positively influenced the process of studying, especially teaching and learning vocabulary. At the beginning of the experiment, while doing pre-test students had some difficulties with understanding of new vocabulary. However , subsequently , after the using of the experimented method , the knowledge of students was improved . For example , in pre test amount of students who achieved 30-40 scores was zero, while in post test it became 75% from the whole group. Eventually with the help of the research , the author proved the productivity of using songs during English learning classes, taking as an example song “Bad Luck” by Social Distortion and superstition related vocabulary.

5.4 Questionnaire

After conducting and finishing the pre-test and post-test, the researcher provide the students with a questionnaire. There are three scales in the survey: 1) agree, 2) neutral, 3) disagree.

There are 5 statements in the survey. Each student should answer the questionnaire individually.

Nº	Statement
1	Studying by songs seems productive for me.
2	Songs create special atmosphere on the lesson.
3	I enjoy songs listening activities
4	Listening English songs motivates me to learn English language.
5	Listening songs help me to learn new vocabulary and develop listening skills.

The outcomes of the survey are presented in the following table.

Nº	Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
1	Studying by songs seems productive for me.	10	4	6
2	Songs create special atmosphere on the lesson.	19		1
3	I enjoy songs listening activities	20		
4	Listening English songs motivates me to learn English language.	10	5	5
5	Listening songs help me to learn new vocabulary and develop listening skills.	11	2	7

The study discovered a variety of information regarding usage of English songs as a learning technique and feedback of students about this method based on the answers to the aforementioned questionnaire.

As it clearly seen from the table , he first statement is controversial one . A half of the students agreed with the idea of the effectiveness of this technique, while 20% and 30% of respondents did not fully agree with it. It means that for a part of the group songs seems more entertainment then study.

In the second statement almost whole group of students (95%) agreed with the thought that songs provide especial atmosphere. Only one student remained neutral. It signifies that with the help of song method teachers can imitate atmosphere of British or American classes.

The third section is the only one with 100% of agreement, this fact implies that everyone like listening English songs at the lesson and it can be a great idea for warming up activity.

In the fourth statement 50% of the group agreed that songs provide with portion of motivation to learn English language, what means , that it is one of the best way how to take an interest of learners. However 5 % of students disagree with the idea that English can influence on their motivation, while left 5% chose neutral position.

In the last fifth statement, 55 % of students thought that songs can improve listening skills and widen vocabulary , whereas 35% followed the neutrality and the minority - 1% of students did not feel any influence of the songs on their skills and knowledge.

To conclude the analyses of the survey , the researcher received positive feedback about song teaching technique from students. It implies that learning English language can be supported and accompanied by listening songs and doing related activities.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Songs contain authentic language, are easily obtainable, provide vocabulary, grammar and cultural aspects oof one certain language. Language teachers can and should use songs as part of their classroom teaching repertoire. Because these educational tools can provide valuable speaking, listening and language practice in and out of the classroom. The English songs represent the current picture of the world through the eye of native speakers. They can reflect the aspirations, motivations, cultural trends as well as the fears, anxieties, joys, and opinions through the lyrics that help EFL learners to comprehend the culture of the targeted language. Furthermore, many teachers, based on their experiences, evaluate songs as a helpful tool to solve many pedagogical problems in the EFL context as a suggestopedia. They also connect the foreign teacher with EFL learners and help them learn new linguistic patterns including multiple expressions quickly and smoothly. Songs also mitigate the stressful learning aspects by offering an easy, fun-filled environment for learning that can ease the cognitive burden of the EFL learners and can increase their motivation levels.

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