

Using Songs for Teaching English Vocabulary to Children**Siham Sartorio¹, Souad Zazaa²**

¹University of Ghardaia, Laboratory of Cultural, Linguistic and Literary Heritage in Southern (Algeria).

²Ben Chaoui Omar Hassi Remel Middle School (Algeria).

The Author's E-mail: sartorio@univ-ghardaia.dz¹,
sosoenglish6@gmail.com²

Received: 15/08/2023**Published: 01/06/2024****Abstract:**

The present paper attempts to highlight the positive effect of using songs as a teaching tool to help young English learners learn vocabulary. It reports the findings of a study conducted with 30 Algerian third grade pupils at a primary school. The researchers adopted a quasi- experimental method based on forming two matching groups, assessing the learners by means of pre and post tests and comparing the results. The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant improvement in the performance of the experimental group in the post test as compared with the control group taught using the traditional method (PPP). The researchers also observed that songs had a positive impact on the experimental class. They contributed to create a dynamic and enjoyable learning environment, increased learners' participation in class and facilitated vocabulary learning.

Keywords: Vocabulary, learning, songs, young English learners.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the era we live today, a good command of English language has become a necessary tool to keep update with world developments and get a good job. Today, English is the first international language used in all walks of life. The Algerian government has displayed a keen interest to improve the teaching of English in recent years. Last year, the Algerian government issued a decision of teaching English starting from third grade at primary school. The objective of this project is to develop learners' mastery of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, with a focus on grammar, pronunciation, spelling

and vocabulary. Among these aspects, vocabulary holds particular importance as a foundational element in language learning.

2. Theoretical Background of the Study

A large body of research in literature suggests that using songs as a teaching tool is effective. Several studies have explored the effectiveness of incorporating songs in language classrooms. The majority of these studies proved that using songs has a positive impact on language acquisition. According to Yuliana (2003), singing a song is enjoyable for learners and because words are repeated several times, learners memorize them easily. Barker (1999) claimed that exposing children to songs help them to learn the sounds and the meaning of words. Sariçoban and Metin (2000) stated that repetition and rhythm make it easier for young learners to understand, follow and repeat. While listening to songs, learners hear the same words over and over which helps them to restore the meaning and pronunciation in their long-term memory. According to Paquette and Rieg (2008) songs provide a meaningful learning context as well. Instead of word level or sentence level learning, they provide learners with the context that a word is used which makes it easier for them to retrieve the meaning.

Other studies have investigated the effect of songs on learners' motivation. Aguirre, Bustinza and Garvich (2016) stated that songs increase learners' motivation to learn the language. For Schunk (1991), entertainment is a key factor for motivation which enhances learning as well. Engh (2013) studied the way that the teacher can motivate his learners through using activities such as singing, body movement, dancing, etc. She found that songs can be used with other activities as acting and dancing to increase learners' motivation and confidence to learn the language.

3. Purpose of the Study

The current study aimed to examine is the effect of songs as a teaching tool on vocabulary learning of young English learners. To provide objective results this method was compared with the traditional vocabulary instruction. Therefore, two groups of young children were taught using different methods of teaching. The first group was taught using songs; whereas, the second was taught the same vocabularies using traditional method (presentation, practice,

production). Learners in both groups tested, and their results were compared to answer the research question.

4. Statement of the Problem

One main reason why learners may struggle to communicate effectively in English is due to a limited Knowledge of vocabulary. With the introduction of English language as another foreign language besides French in primary schools, learners will probably face many problems in learning English; particularly, in remembering the words they have learned. Teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), especially to young learners, requires creative and motivating methods and techniques to address common difficulties with vocabulary and pronunciation. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate if the use of songs can facilitate vocabulary learning.

5. Research Question and Research Hypotheses

The study addressed the following research question:

Is using songs to teach vocabulary to young English language learners more effective than the traditional method (PPP)?

To answer this question, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

H0: There is no significant difference between using songs and using traditional method to teach vocabulary to young English language learners.

H1: Using song to teach vocabulary to young English language learners is more effective than the traditional method.

H2: Using the traditional method (PPP) to teach vocabulary to young English language learners is more effective than using songs.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Participants

The study was carried out with 30 Algerian third-grade pupils at primary school. They were divided into control and experimental groups. The control group included 15 pupils, and they received instruction using the traditional method (PPP). The experimental group composed of 15 pupils received instruction using songs.

6.2 Data Collection Tools

Before launching the experiment, the researcher administered a preliminary English interview as a proficiency test to make sure of the homogeneity of the subjects. The interview which functioned as a pre-test confirmed that the learners in both groups didn't have any background knowledge of the targeted vocabularies. After three weeks of instruction, the learners were re-tested to examine their vocabulary learning and compare the possible effects of songs and the traditional method (PPP) on learning English vocabulary. The researcher also used observation technique taking notes and recording the sessions.

6.3 Methods of Data Analysis

The researchers adopted a mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative analysis involved the researchers' observations, interpretations and conclusions; whereas, quantitative analysis concerned numerical data. The researchers calculated the means of scores obtained by the experimental and the control group and compared them using a statistical t-test.

7. Results and Discussion

7.1 Pre-test Results

The teacher showed the learners some pictures and asked them to name them. Learners in both the control and the experimental groups showed that they had no prior information about the targeted vocabularies and they used their mother language (Arabic) to answer the questions.

7.2 Classroom Observations Results

The researcher observed both the experimental and the control group classes and made the following observations:

The experimental class:

- The pupils enjoyed the songs.
- The pupils were cheerful and happy to learn English.
- They were interactive and did not get bored in the learning process.

The control class:

-Not all pupils participated in the class.

-Some pupils got bored. They were drawing or talking to each other while the teacher was explaining.

7.3 Post Test Results

Experimental group		Control group	
Students Scores		Students Scores	
S1	09	S1	06
S2	06	S2	09
S3	08	S3	05
S4	09	S4	08
S5	09	S5	04
S6	07	S6	05
S7	08	S7	08
S8	06	S8	09
S9	09	S9	04
S10	09	S10	06
S11	08	S11	05
S12	07	S12	05
S13	09	S13	04
S14	09	S14	06
S15	05	S15	07
Sum of scores	118	Sum of scores	91
		Mean	

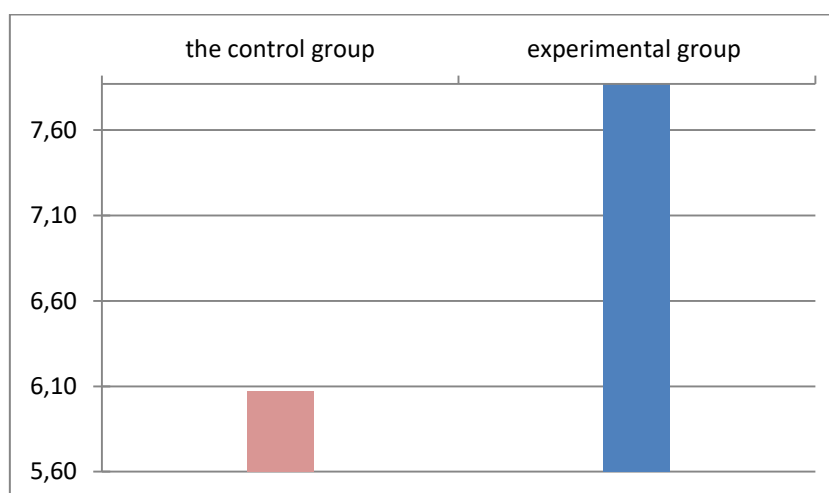
The

Mean	7.87	6.07
-------------	------	------

 results obtained in the post-test are summarized in the table below:

Table 1. Results of the Post Test

Figure1. The mean scores of the control and experimental groups in the post test



The results revealed that both teaching methods were effective in teaching vocabulary for young English learners. However, the mean score of the experimental group in the post-test was higher than the mean score of the control group. The researcher applied a statistical t-test to the results to determine if the difference between the two groups was significant.

7.4 T-test Results

The results of the t-test are presented in table 2 below:

Table 2. T-test Results

$\alpha = 0.05,$ $t\text{-crit} = 2.048$						
Groups	N	Mean	S	t obs	Df	P
C	15	6.07	1.751	3.051	28	S
E	15	7.87	1.356			

t obs > t crit

T obs was higher than t crit, so the difference was significant. H1 was confirmed. The researchers concluded that songs were more effective in vocabulary learning than the traditional method (PPP).

8. CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that songs are very effective for teaching vocabulary to young English learners. Children can easily remember the vocabulary being taught and the objectives of teaching vocabulary are well achieved. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends using songs as a supplementary teaching tool alongside other methods. Using songs is very easy, and they have a positive effect on children's language development. Songs provide an enjoyable and interactive learning environment that motivates learners and keep them engaged. However, the teacher must be very careful in selecting the songs for his class. The selected songs should match with learners' needs and level.

References

- (1) Aguirre,D., Bustinza,D. & Garvich,M. (2016). Influence of Songs in Primary School Students' Motivation for Learning English in Lima, Peru". *English Language Teaching*, 9/2: 178-191.
- (2) Barker, P.J. (1999). The philosophy and Practice of Psychiatric Nursing. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 9/4: 652.
- (3) Engh, D. (2013). Why Use Music in English Language Learning?: A survey of the Literature. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 6: 12-25.
- (4) Paquette, K.R .& Rieg, S.A. (2008). Using Music to Support Literacy Development of Young English Language Learners. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 36/3: 227-232.
- (5) Sariçoban,A .& Metin,E. (2000). Songs, verse and Games for Teaching Grammar. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 6/10:1-7.
- (6)Schunk, D.H. (1991). Self-efficacy and Academic Motivation. *Educational Psychologist*, 26: 207-231.
- (7)Yuliana, Y. (2003). Teaching English to Young Learners through Songs. *K@ta*, 5/1: 62-66.