



THE ROLE OF SONGS IN DEVELOPING ENGLISH LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

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Annotation: *This article gives information about teaching with the use of songs as her target in the study because listening to music in English is highly motivating for students and songs are easily accessible for all learners. The prime objective of this is to investigate whether teaching English vocabulary with the use of songs contributes to developing students' better memorisation of vocabulary.*

Key words: *teaching of vocabulary; song on lessons of English language as strange language*

Very often music is the main source of English outside the classroom. Thus, using it in the lesson seems to be a good idea. There can be distinguished affective and cognitive rationale for playing a song during a lesson. As a matter of fact, affective reasons are connected with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis. In short, it gives an explanation why some learners learn and others do not. The crucial thing is that students need to develop a positive attitude towards learning. Krashen (1982: 45) has it that: "for effective learning the affective filter is must be weak. A weak affective filter means that a positive attitude to learning is present." Hence teachers' task is to provide a positive atmosphere favourable for learning. In this aspect music and songs may be one of the methods for obtaining weak affective filter. Eken (1996: 46) enumerates eight reasons for the use of song in a language classroom. Firstly, a song may be used to present a topic, new vocabulary or a language point. Then, it may also be used as a practice of lexis. Beyond question, songs can be used as a material for extensive and intensive listening. Some teachers may use them to focus on frequent learner errors in a more indirect way. Not to mention that songs are a perfect source for stimulating discussions about feelings and attitudes. Learners may talk over with another in pairs or in small groups what happened in the song and then share their opinions with the rest of students. Additionally, songs may arrange a relaxed classroom atmosphere and contribute to fun and variety in language teaching. Finally, songs may be said to encourage the use of imagination and creativity during foreign language lessons. Songs also give a chance to develop automaticity which is the main cognitive reason for using songs in the classroom. Automaticity is defined



as “ a component of language fluency which involves both knowing what to say and producing language rapidly without pauses” . To put it in other words, songs may help automatize the language improvement process. Essentially, the students should be placed in an environment in which it is possible to use the target language in a communicative way. As a matter of fact, the nature of songs is said to be quite repetitive, logical and persistent.

Some teachers might not be aware of possibilities of using songs in the classroom. They may feel that such activities are not appropriate for classes which often cause discipline problems. To add more, lecturers may think that using music may create chaos or students may be reluctant to sing. Stanislawczyk and Yavener are of the opinion that a song is an advantageous tool and a teacher should take advantage of it during linguistic practice. She also emphasizes the importance of the engagement learners get when listening to songs or creating own lyrics: “In the era when guitar players are ubiquitous, music must be an integral part of language study. It is a part of classroom activities from the start of the work in language, supplying additional language learning and cultural insights. At the advanced level, students become even more actively involved in music by creating songs” . The passage below attempts to present rationale for using song activities in English foreign language classrooms.


Fundamentally, popular songs touch the lives of learners, and are connected with their various interests and everyday experiences. Almost all popular songs are related to the same topic of friendship, love, dream, sorrow, and the rest which are the common feelings of people. Since most young people nowadays are interested in a wide range of cultural forms outside classes, songs may be a really motivating and unique teaching tool. Experiencing with films, television, computer games and popular music seems to be highly motivating. Accordingly, more time and concentration to popular music in English foreign language classroom would surely increase learners’ motivation as classroom tasks would reflect on their knowledge, their music and the vocabulary they already know from the songs (Baoan 2008). Although motivation is absolutely important in learning all school subjects, this is studying a foreign language that makes motivation play a huge role. Dorneyi points out that learning a language is a long-term process and learners are in charge of their learning at length. The students need to support their efforts for a long time, very often against numerous failures and difficulties. Songs play a meaningful role in life. Music can be heard almost in every place around the world. Such kind of entertainment as music may be applicable for students’ to learn, efficiently and enjoyably.





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