
INTRODUCING ENGLISH THROUGH SONGS**M. Sabiqul Huda**

Dosen Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan Institut Agama Islam
Sultan Muhammad Syafiuddin Sambas. Jl. Raya Sejangkung Kawasan Pendidikan Tinggi
Sebayan-Sambas Kalimantan Barat
Email: @yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Reading skill is English as a foreign language should be taught from an early age because the children can learn anything quickly. In Indonesia, English language has been taught in kindergarten in the form of local contents / extracurricular. Children are at an early age to be introduced about the English in a simple form. Song is the simple form to interest the children in Introducing English. In practicing this method; the teacher must be able to choose the right songs for his or her students. The song selected should match the theme that will be taught, who is also familiar songs, and lyrics should be clear. Thus, the children can enjoy the songs.

Learning English through Songs can be enjoyable and fun. It cause, they give children feel good about the circumstance, consist with a lot of repetition, which is just learners look for sample text, and encourage harmony within oneself and within one group. So, the children are easy to remember the vocabulary by sing a song.

KEYWORDS: *Introducing English, English as a Foreign Language, Songs*

INTRODUCTION

Reading skill is English as a foreign language should be taught from an early age because the children can learn anything quickly. In Indonesia, English language has been taught in kindergarten in the form of local contents/ extracurricular. Children are at an early age to be introduced about the English in a simple form.

At school, they learn English about knowing themselves, family, animals, plants, and objects around them. Teaching children to kindergarten is not the same as teaching adult. The children are uninhibited, positively enjoy most of the repetitive kinds of language activities and are ready for situational (as opposed to intellectual) learning while adults learning English brings to the task a mature personality many years of educational training a developed intelligence a determination to get what they want, fairly clear aims, and above all strong motivation

to make as rapid as possible (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill and Pincas, 2003).¹

In teaching children an early age, learning process is important. Learning process can help young learners understand the lesson. To handle these problems a teacher of English subject should be able to create a joyful learning especially in kindergarten so that teaching and learning processes can be conducted well. This can be done if teachers understand about teaching methods or techniques appropriate for students. It's good for English teachers to use additional media to assist in understanding the process of teaching English. The media to be used is songs. Using song in the classroom is not only an educational tool, because it's a way to make learning more interesting and memorable for students of all levels.

¹ Broughton G., Brumfit, Flavell, Hill and Pincas. (2003) *Teaching English as a Foreign Language 2nd edition*. New York : Routledge.

This is related to the theory of Multiple Intelligents proposed by Howard Gardner. Gardner (1993) stated that every individual has more than one flexibility includes: verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/images, kinesthetic, musical, naturalist, interpersonal and intrapersonal. Based on the teacher's belief, that introducing English as Foreign language is interesting, especially when using songs.²

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ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Second language learning is diverse from first language learning. Unlike first language learners, young children who start learning a second language have already acquired some mastery of their mother tongue. Some children first find themselves surrounded by speakers of a language they don't understand, they make an attempt to go on using the language they already know. They have been speaking their first language to care givers and their playmates hoping that this strategy will enable them to communicate. According Gordon (2007) stated that some children will start speaking after just a few weeks of second language immersion; others take up to several months or even a year before they are comfortable enough attempting first words in a second language.³

Children learning English as a foreign language also make errors. The errors give evidence that both first and

second language children are not just imitating what they hear like parrots, but are working out how the language system operates. The situational learning approach proposed that context is an important consideration in the language learning process and can enhance learner learning interest and efficiency. Cameron (2001) stated "Conceptual knowledge grows as children experience more and more daily lives".⁴ Cameron (2001) cited in Locke (1993) said from early childhood, the desire to connect emotionally and communicate with other people seems to drive speaking. As children move through infancy, they begin to communicate with others about things in their shared world, and developing abilities to categories. It means meaningful vocabulary learning occurs only when the learning process is integrated with social, cultural and life contexts.

Introducing English as Foreign Language through songs for children can build their understanding about words of the object. They can develop the English language through imitate and express once again the words slowly, according to the direction of his teacher. The appropriate media can be used by song. Songs are one of the most enchanting and culturally rich resources that can easily be used in language classrooms. Songs offer a change from routine classroom activities.

While second language teachers do not expect children to speak in the beginning level ESL classroom until they are comfortable with language use, there are activities that help elicit output even from beginning level language students. These activities work best if they are not threatening and if they leave students with an option to remain silent. An instructional strategy used to encourage speech emergence in the beginning level ESL

² Gardner, H. (1993) *Frames of mind: The theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Basic books.

³ Gordon, T. (2007) *Teaching Young children a Second Language*. USA: Praeger Publisher.

⁴ Cameron, L. (2001) *Teaching Language to Young Learners*. UK: Cambridge University Press.

classroom is the use of songs and music. Beginning level language learners derive great pleasure from signing. Singing along lowers students' affective filter, because when children sing together, they are not afraid of mispronouncing a sound or getting a word wrong. Singing is also effective, because it provides children with an opportunity to form an emotional bond with their peers.

SONGS

Song is a familiar thing and popular in our society not only in general society but also in education society. Most of the people like song because it can make the feeling happy and could tell their aspiration. Beside song can be used as a motivation to student to learn something, motivation is needed to support someone and influence them to do something to get their own goal or purpose. According to Levitin (2008) said "A song is a musical composition intended or adapted for singing. It is defined as a short piece of music with words that you sing".⁵ Davies (2000) suggested that young children seem to be naturally "wired" for sound and rhythm.⁶ In other hand, Schoepp (2001) stated that songs can be used:⁷

1. To present a topic.
2. To practice a language.
3. To encourage creativity and use of imagination.
4. To provide a relaxed classroom atmosphere.
5. To bring variety and fun to learning.

According to Garza (1994) said songs increase English vocabulary

students.⁸ Songs are very valuable in developing powerful access to the new language by being enjoyable, fostering confidence, and increasing attention span and motivation to learn. Schoepp (2001) stated that songs provide a break from classroom routine and that learning English through song develops a non-threatening classroom atmosphere in which the language skill can be enhanced. Songs provide enjoyment and develop language skill.⁹ It means the teacher can use songs for teaching because songs in general also use simple conversational language, with a lot of repetition, which is just learners look for sample text, so the children are easy to remember the English language through songs.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SONG IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

One of the most important aspects of structuring through song learning in the classroom is to develop a successful of activities. In developing plans for teach through song, teacher needs to organize for presenting material.

The teachers like to provide the students with a lot of knowledge-words and grammar. They are focusing these things, especially on the grammar. The students do need these, but many teachers forget to teach them how to study English, and how to use it. In the teaching learning process, there are skills; speaking, reading, listening, writing, vocabulary, and grammar.

1. Speaking

Speaking cannot be taught separately. It is often connected with listening. So we often speak of listening and speaking. There are many different ways that children play with words and language beginning with the

⁵ Levitin, D J. (2008) *The World in Six Songs: How the musical brain created human nature, First Edition edition*. New York: Penguin Group (USA) Inc.

⁶ Davies, NL. (2000) *Learning: The Best Goes On*. Childhood Education, 148-153.

⁷ Schoepp, K. (2001) The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. VII, No. 2, February 2001. Retrieved May 2011 from: <http://iteslj.org/>

⁸ Garza. (1994) Music for their minds. Young Children, 61(2), 62-67.

⁹ Schoepp, K. (2001) The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. VII, No. 2, February 2001.

tickling rhymes that they hear as babies and continuing with other sort of play which involve both the form and meaning of language. When children begin speaking, they experiment and play with the utterances that are made to form words like hello and bye-bye. The children working with the teacher recognize how important it is for them to develop speaking skill. Many of the songs that children learn to say contain language that is repetitive. Children can easily mime the actions until they feel comfortable saying the words. Linse (2005) stated that children gradually learn the repetitive lyrics of songs and eventually the entire songs

Younger children learning English as a foreign language do not develop English-language skill more ready than older learners. They have a clear advantage when it comes to pronunciation if they begin learning English as a foreign language at an early age.

2. Reading

Reading is a set of skills that involves making sense and deriving meaning from the printed word. Reading is an important way of gaining information in foreign language learning. Teaching children how to derive meaning as well as analyze what they have read is an essential part of the reading process. For some children, learning to read seems effortless and rapid. There are two main reasons that people read: the first is for pleasure and the second is for information. The simple way when the children repeating the lyrics of the song that reading by teacher.

3. Listening

Vihman (1996) said that the babies have capacity to discriminate speech sounds. Before they can comprehend words, they listen to the rhythm and melody of the language

and have some awareness of interaction and relationship with a speaker.¹⁰ Eventually, children start tuning in to words and the meanings attached to them. Young children listen to a variety of voices and sounds that are around them. Young learners also enjoy listening to songs and stories. For example: combine picture or number with songs and use fingers in second acting to prove the students what they are listening.

4. Writing

Sokolik (2003) said that writing is a combination of process and product. The process refers to the act of gathering ideas and working with them until they are presented in a manner that is polished and comprehensible to readers.¹¹ Olson (2003) stated that the concept that writing is a process is very useful to young writers. Writing is one way of providing variety in classroom procedures.¹² It provides a student with physical evidence of his achievements and becomes a course whereby he can measure his improvement. So, they should begin their writing with words. For example: the students trace the words.

5. Vocabulary

Words are the building blocks of language and having a good supply of them is very important for student's right from the beginning of their English learning. With young students vocabulary learning is relatively easy as the words they need (the words they

¹⁰ Vihman, M, M., (1996) Phonological development: the origins of language in the child. *Journal of Child Language*, 24 (03), 781-788.

¹¹ Sokolik, M. (2003) *Writing*. In D. Nunan (ed), *Practical English Language Teaching*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

¹² Olson, C.B. (2003) *The Reading/Writing Strategies for Teaching and Learning in the Secondary Classroom*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

would use in their mother tongue too) are concrete – things they can see, touch, taste, play with etc.; so it easy for the meaning of the words to be made apparent without resorting to translation or complicated explanations.

The sooner students are able to communicate ideas in English; the more motivated they will be, so giving them a bank of vocabulary to draw on is necessary – starting with nouns and adjectives. Although children seem to learn new words very quickly, they will also forget quickly, so it is very important to give them lots of practice of vocabulary to help them remember.

6. Grammar

Teaching grammar to young learners requires an extensive knowledge of a great number of issues. In the beginning stages, learners seem to use words or chunks strung together to get their meaning across with little attention paid to grammar that would fit the words or chunks together in conversational patterns. Young learners unconsciously formulate the rules when exposed to rich meaningful language. Their language evolves when their formulated rules govern the production of language. The children's competence in grammars is acquired gradually. So it is not the matter of when the teacher decides to teach

CONCLUSION

Songs can make someone be happy, but sometimes songs can make sad. Songs can be good media for language teaching. In kindergarten school song can make the children interesting and fun in classroom. Orlova (1997) said "Songs are considered to be an effective tool or language teaching and it can be used to teach English children in content course for beginner".

From the elaboration above, it can be concluded that learning through songs,

learning English can be enjoyable and fun. It cause, they give children feel good about the circumstance, consist with a lot of repetition, which is just learners look for sample text, and encourage harmony within oneself and within one group. So, the children are easy to remember the vocabulary by sing a song.

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