

HOW AND WHAT EFFECT OF ENGLISH SONGS ON PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract:

This study analyzes how english songs give impact to preschoolers in learning English. Investigates the effectiveness of using English songs to teach English as a foreign language (EFL) to preschool students based on the theory. The research shows that music enhances grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary while creating a fun and engaging environment. These dynamic experiences attract and retain attention, increasing motivation and fostering positive associations with language learning. Early childhood (2-6 years old) is a very important period in language acquisition. English songs, with their catchy melodies and rhythmic structures, can be a fun and engaging way for preschoolers to learn English. This research uses qualitative methods, specifically descriptive analysis. The data in the form of English songs will describe what influence they have on preschoolers' English language skills.

Keywords:

English Song;
Preschool Students;
Learning English;
Education



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INTRODUCTION

Language is a verbal communication tool used by humans to interact with each other. This is in line with Brown (2014), who states that language is a sign that has meaning as a way to communicate conventionally through sound or distributed movements. Meanwhile, according to Kurniati (2017), language is a symbol of the message's sender that will be accepted by the recipient of the message as a form of idea or thought in a verbal or nonverbal way. In short term, language is a way or tool of human communication that can be spread through verbal and non-verbal communication. On the other hand, English is an international language that is used massively in many countries. In addition, English plays an important and useful role in the current era of modernization.

Mastery of English is one of the important requirements so that the young generation of Indonesia is not only able to survive but also able to compete with other nations in this era. (Nurhayati 2009). English is a foreign language taught from primary education to university in Indonesia, even some pre-schools in Indonesia have introduced and taught English in their education system.

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, Early Childhood Education (ECED) or in Indonesia Pendidikan Usia Dini (PAUD) is one of the guidance efforts aimed at children from birth to the age of six, which is referred to as preschool. Early childhood education often segregates students based on age. Klimova (2013) argued the youngest group, typically aged 3-4, primarily engages in activities focused on physical movement and interaction, and in groups of 5-6 years old, their curriculum evolves to incorporate elements of drama alongside the continued emphasis on activity. Clarify in Roth (1998), defined that at the age of 3-4 years old children can express themselves with the first language or mother tongue, correctly use tenses at the age of 6, and understand the meaning on their own at 8-9 years old. An early age of learning a language can make the process of learning easier, but there are still pros and cons about this.

Children who enter preschool are sometimes still unable to speak their first language. Roth (1998) argued that children learning a second or third language is easier. In the age of preschool students, children are learning about mental processes that are related to expressing and describing their own emotional feelings. According to Curtis (2002), in the preschool years, there is no room for anxiety and pressure, the environment should be as free and positive as possible. The positive environment is a concept in pre-school to build a positive self-concept. Teaching a child is enabling them to develop their mentality, morally, physically, and as well as socially. In essence, early childhood education prioritizes a positive environment for preschoolers' social-emotional and cognitive development, including early language learning with its challenges and age-specific milestones.

Shin (2017) argued that children naturally sing a song, hum melodies, move, and dance to music in response to the beat. Songs have a benefit for children in learning foreign languages. English songs are a pleasant way to learn for preschoolers since the melody, rhythm, and intonation can facilitate the children's exposure to the English language. In the same vein, Albaladejo et al. (2018) defined songs as one of the medias that can easily catch children's attention. Crucially, songs offer a valuable approach to foreign language learning in preschoolers. Their inherent playfulness and accessibility make them a more enjoyable and effective method compared to traditional classroom instruction for this age group.

This research is not the first, several studies on English songs for children have been carried out before. Mokhtar et al. (2017) focus on the application of English songs to kindergarten students to introduce English vocabulary. The results obtained are that English songs can effectively expose students to English vocabulary. In contrast, Albaladejo et al. (2018) focus on preschool learners by involving songs, stories, and vocabulary acquisition to preschool learners in learning English. The results showed that the learning media positively impacted and increased students' learning motivation. Specifically, Shin (2017) focuses on English songs and movement as a learning medium for young learners. The result showed that songs and movements are effective for engaging and bringing joy to the classroom. Students as foreign learners can grow both cognitively and emotionally through songs and movements. Based on that, songs effectively expose children to vocabulary, enhance motivation, and create a joyful learning environment that fosters cognitive and emotional growth.

From the previous studies above, there has not been much research on English songs to introduce English to preschool students. Research on young learners related to English is essential to increasing the quality of this nation's generation. Thus, this research is urgent to conduct further and more in-depth research related to the same topic. The researchers formulated the research title, *The Influence of English Songs on Preschool Learners of English as a Foreign Language*. This research uses several English children's songs that can be used in the English learning process to see how and what effect they have on the development of preschool students' English knowledge.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods, specifically descriptive analysis. Creswell (2013) defines qualitative research as research that offers a nuanced understanding of human experiences around social issues, which relies on diverse data such as text and images, following an iterative process in which questions and methods evolve dynamically. Data is collected in natural situations, analyzed inductively from individual points to broader themes, and interpreted by the researcher to uncover deeper meanings. This research will describe a selection of songs that can be used as English learning media in early childhood education. This research uses a combination of source triangulation and theory triangulation. The data is in the form of English children's songs taken from digital platforms, YouTube and Spotify. Later the preschool students were given treatment in the form of English songs in the learning process. The data presented in the results and discussion are the lyrics of English children's songs and the purpose of the song stimulus for preschool children in the learning process so that the results show what and how they influence the development of preschool students' English knowledge. English language skills such as vocabulary mastery, fine and gross motor skills, and expression skills in listening and speaking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

According to Aguirre, et al. (2015), Many studies have demonstrated that incorporating music and songs while learning a new language can help pupils improve their grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. When songs are utilized in class, students can acquire new vocabulary and enhance their pronunciation. Overall, songs can assist students in learning a new language because the learning process becomes unconscious.

Listening to songs is enjoyable for many children. As a result, their interest in learning a new language may be increased because songs provide a more fun and dynamic learning environment: "The addition of songs to the foreign language classroom as a teaching method may be a way to retain student attention, and produce a happier learner" (Failoni, 1993). The use of songs in language learning can also help teachers explore and modify learning with a wide range of topics so that learning activities not only help children develop pedagogical tools such as listening skills, pronunciation, or even speaking skills but can become routine classroom activities that have the potential to develop children's motivation (Millington, 2001). In addition, learning English by songs not only helps children with their pedagogy but also can improve their motivation in the classroom.

According to Brewster, et al. (2002), songs can be used in a variety of learning activities, including attracting attention, transmitting students' excess energy, warming up the environment, filling transitions between one activity and a practicing language, improving language, changing the atmosphere/mood, and introducing new language. However, not every English song may be utilized as a teaching tool for younger learners while teaching the language. Songs with overly dominating musical elements, such as the overuse of slang terms and metaphors, are not appropriate for young listeners. Select easy songs, including those with animal songs, activities songs, food songs, and so forth. Select music with pronounceable lyrics and clear; lyrics. Select a suitable model for your kids to follow, as they will use the songs they hear as an example of the lessons they learn from the teacher (Nurhayati, 2009). In contrast, when choosing a song, the teacher must exercise caution because several songs have strange phrase structures that are not commonly found for children.

In using English songs in learning, teachers also must pay attention to several things in using songs according to:

1. Establish context, in which case the teacher needs to explain the purpose and background of the information.
2. Teach the most important vocabulary in advance using visual aids, actions/movements, realia, or imitations. Using visual aids, actions/movements, realia or mock objects, puppets, etc.
3. Listen to tapes or sing songs so that students can listen, show their understanding, and become familiar with the rhythm and tone.
4. Do advanced listening activities.
5. Pay attention to pronunciation such as identifying intonation patterns, stressed words, or syllables. stressed words or syllables.
6. Encourage students to listen, repeat, and practice singing and learning the song. Encourage them to use gestures, facial expressions, and so on. Encourage them to use body movements, facial expressions, and so on.
7. Give written notes of the song text. Related to this, the teacher does not necessarily have to give full notes of the song. In this regard, the teacher does not necessarily have to provide complete notes of the song he/she is teaching. The teacher can package it into interesting and learning-oriented activities.
8. Encourage students to compare it with similar types in their mother tongue, or national language.
9. Perform them together, individually, in groups, in pairs.

Discussion

The following are examples of English songs for preschool with various purposes such as enriching English vocabulary and creating new habits in a disciplined manner. Songs can be accessed through the internet page (www.youtube.com) or music applications (Spotify, JOOX, Apple Music, YouTube Music, etc.) for free to find out more about the songs below:

No	Title of song	Lyrics	Purposes
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URL: <http://jim.unindra.ac.id/index.php/jedu/index>
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30998/jedu.v4i1.10820>

1.	Good song	morning	Good morning 3x good morning 3x good morning 3x good morning 3x	Developing children's vocabulary can be honed in this "Good Morning Song".
			Clap your hands clap 3x stump your feet stump 3x spin around spin 3x hooray!!!	Usually, children talk about topics in a context that they often hear. They understand that their hands can be clapped, their feet can be stumped and they can spin their bodies. The repetition of this song can be a great exposure in learning and increasing their English vocabulary. In addition, not only do they develop their vocabulary skills, but their fine and gross motor skills are also well-trained and they can channel their excess energy by creating a joyful atmosphere.
2.	Walking jungle	in the	Let's take a walk in the jungle Walking in the jungle 2x we're not afraid 2x walking in the jungle 2x we're not afraid 2x One step, two steps, three steps forward One step, two steps, three steps back Stop, Listen... what's that? (kurr...kurr) That's a toucan (fly) we're not afraid	Most children like to learn how sounds are produced and this is a good approach to practicing English songs in this type of activity that engages children. The song "Walking in the Jungle" contains lyrics that are useful for practicing rhythm and stress as well as motoric training. Speaking in this song is also practiced, children will usually follow the voice example in the audio and practice it in class.

3.	Good morning and how are you?	Good morning 2x and how are you? I'm fine Good morning 2x and how are you? I'm fine Good morning to me, good morning to you Good morning 2x and how are you? I'm fine Good morning (<i>children's name</i>) I'm fine...	Children will become bored if they hear the lyrics of a song repeatedly, even the continuous repetition of a song will seem monotonous to children because of its rhythm and melody as stated by Purcell (1992) in Millington (2011). However, the song " <i>Good Morning and how are you?</i> " contains common expressions, rhythmic shapes and different intonations that are good for listening and speaking activities. At the end of the song, the teacher asks each child how they are and they have to respond. And it will create a strong long-term memory in their brain.
4.	Let's count 1 to 10	Here we go... 12345, jump! 678910, jump! Here we go... 123 step forward 123 step back 123 spin around Here we go 12345678910 yeah, i did i	One of the easy and cheerful songs for children is " <i>Count 1 to 10.</i> " It helps reinforce the idea of counting numbers while also improving children's language, memory, focus, and motoric coordination.
5.	Head, shoulders, knees, and toes	Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees, and toes 2x Eyes, ears, mouth, nose Head, shoulders, knees, and toes knees and toes	The song " <i>Head, shoulders, knees, and toes</i> ", can be used to show and learn body parts. Because it has the characteristics of monosyllabic words that are said repeatedly. The repetition in the lyrics is also accompanied by body movements that can help children develop their vocabulary acquisition.

Between the ages of two and six, a person is most susceptible to language. Before this delicate period of development ends, the infant must be introduced to all facets of language. It is crucial to teach proper speech during this delicate time, as it is an essential ability for interacting with others and the surroundings (Montessori, 1991 in Matondang, 2005). Based on the statement above, it can be concluded that the introduction of English to children should be done as early as possible with a gradual learning process that adapts the selection of effective materials to the cognitive development of preschoolers.

The techniques employed must be chosen to correspond to the skills and requirements that the teacher wishes to see in children. For young children learning English, expressive techniques like singing, performing music, making crafts, reading aloud, and emphasizing physical movement are ideal and productive. Since music is essentially the skill of creating tones that have unity and continuity with rhythmic composition, music has a highly positive impact on early English language learning. Because of the impetus of emotions that come with listening to music, the rhythmic construction of that experience causes movement or activity (Matondang, 2005).

CONCLUSION

Between the ages of two and six, a critical window for language acquisition swings open, revealing a boundless potential for learning. As Montessori (1991) in Matondang (2005) aptly states, during this delicate period, all facets of language must be meticulously introduced, laying the foundation for proper speech – the essential brushstroke for navigating our world. This research aligns with this sentiment, demonstrating that English songs act as vibrant tools, playfully adorning the preschool canvas of language acquisition.

Music, as Matondang (2005) eloquently describes, possesses a magical touch, weaving unity and continuity through rhythms and tones. This very essence becomes a potent ally in early English language learning. Songs, with their infectious melodies and rhythmic structures, tap into the emotional wellspring of young learners, transforming learning into a joyous dance. This innate connection between music and movement, as Purcell (1992) in Millington (2011) suggests, becomes a bridge, allowing children to internalize sounds and structures with remarkable ease. However, the careful selection of these melodic stepping stones is paramount. Brewster et al. (2002) advise choosing songs with pronounceable lyrics, and relatable themes, and avoiding the pitfalls of overly complex structures or slang. When paired with pre-teaching key vocabulary and utilizing varied activities like listening, singing, and movement, the learning experience transcends rote memorization, blossoming into a tapestry of understanding and expression.

Integrating English songs into preschool classrooms can significantly boost early language learning. Research shows that music enhances grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary while creating a fun and engaging environment. These dynamic experiences attract and retain attention, increasing motivation and fostering positive associations with language learning. By carefully selecting age-appropriate songs with clear lyrics and relatable themes, teachers can utilize diverse activities like listening, singing, movement, and repetition to reinforce learning. This playful approach aligns with the critical preschool years for language acquisition, making early exposure to English through music and songs a valuable strategy for nurturing young learners' language skills.

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