THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGLISH SONGS IN TEACHING VOCABULARY TO THE SIXTH GRADE PUPILS

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Abstract: This research was conducted at an elementary school in Jakarta. The purpose of the study was to find the empirical evidence of whether or not English songs are effective in teaching vocabulary for elementary school students. The samples of this study were 28 students of sixth grade class. The writer used quantitative design by employing pre-experiment method in taking this research. She used vocabulary test to find the students vocabulary pre-test and post-test scores and use t-test to analyse the effectiveness of English songs in the teaching of vocabulary. The test consisted of two parts; multiple choice, and matching with the total 50 items. After describing and analysing the data, it can be concluded that English songs are effective as an alternate vocabulary-teaching technique to the sixth-graders. It is proven that there is a significant score improvement after several treatments in the classroom. Moreover, the research revealed some benefits of using English songs to teach English vocabulary. The teacher and the students feel more relaxed, less-stressful, and happy. The teacher and the students also gain new word from the lyrics.

Keywords: English songs, Sixth Grade Pupils, Teaching Vocabulary

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian elementary school pupils have officially learned English for two years since they were in the fourth year of elementary school. However, in reality, they haven't been able to use English in their daily learning tasks. They cannot frequently understand the simple texts they are reading in their daily school learning. They seldom correctly answer the questions following reading passages in their English textbook. This reality looks even worse if they are involved in daily communication activities. Neither can they understand the expressions addressed to them nor can they respond to the expressions.

These phenomena seem to be the effects of many possible causes. The causes which always emerge are the tedious teaching strategies or method which the teacher has employed, and the pupils' lack of desire to learn the daily-assigned English subject. Other common causes are the pupils' lack of curiosity and motivation to explore and improve their English receptive and productive skills. Besides, the pupils know very limited learning strategies which do not enable them to vary their English learning activities. Every time they have any difficulties, the only thing they do is to open their dictionary which does not give a solution to their difficulties.

Looking at all these phenomena, teachers can use a variety of teaching strategies and methods. One of the fun strategies, which the teacher might choose to run his English class, is using songs in English teaching. This is because songs contain music and rhythm which create an enjoyable situation for the learners, and songs will provoke the learner to feel more interested and more engaged in the English classroom. There are some reasons why songs could be a solution to the learners in learning English. Diakou (2013) has found that songs can; 1) create positive emotion for the learners, 2) reduce the anxiety because songs create a funny and enjoyable situation, 3) boost motivation, and 4) reflect cultural features. To emphasize, Eken (1996) in Kusnierek (2016) stated that songs can be used: 1) to present a topic, a linguistic point, lexis, or other information, 2) to rehearse a linguistic point, lexis, or other aspect of the language, 3) to pay closer attention to typical learner faults, 4) to foster active listening and discussion of attitudes and feelings, 5) to encourage people to talk about their feelings and

opinions, 6) to develop curiosity and creativity, 7) to create a pleasant learning environment in the classroom, 8) to make learning more interesting and enjoyable.

During the implementation of classroom observation on September 2019 at the VI D class of an elementary school in Jakarta, the writer got information from the sixth-grade pupils that their English teacher never taught them the subject employing a variety of methods. This made their English class monotonous and left nothing in their memory. They felt that English was a difficult subject to learn. So, they didn't sufficiently have grammar and vocabulary knowledge yet. That's why the pupils had no idea what to do if they were asked questions. In fact, one of the components that play a significant role in the process of learning English is vocabulary. Richards (2002) in Rohmatillah (2014) stated that vocabulary is the most important aspect of language proficiency; besides, it determines how effectively students talk, listen, read, and write. Vocabulary is a set of a lexeme, including a single word, compound words, and idioms. It indicates that one of the aspects that English learners must master is vocabulary. There are three types of words in vocabulary: single words, compound words, and idioms. Hornby (2000) in Nurvityasari (2017) explained that vocabulary is a catalogue of terms in a language. The total amount of words in a language is also known as vocabulary. This means that vocabulary might occur as a single word or as a combination of words, and it can have multiple meanings. In addition, Diamond and Gulthon (2006) defined vocabulary as "the knowledge of words and their meanings." According to the definitions above, vocabulary is the essential component of language ability and consists of a set of lexemes that includes single words, compound words, and idioms. In the teaching of a foreign language, vocabulary is a list of terms that has knowledge of words and word meanings for the learners to listen, speak, read, and write. Harmer (1992) summarized that knowing a word (vocabulary) means understanding its meaning, use, formation, and grammar.

However, students cannot understand others or convey their own thoughts without a proper vocabulary, which is why vocabulary is so important in English language instruction. "While without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed," Wilkins (1972) wrote in Heidari and Araghi (2015). Vocabulary aids pupils in comprehending and communicating in English. Therefore, vocabulary helps students to study English for their purposes. From the explanations above, we can conclude that vocabulary is necessary in every English skill when you are learning foreign language. Hence, the alternative that can be used as media for teaching vocabulary is through song. Song is a short musical composition which has features like, words or lyric and human voice, and it has rhymes, rhythm, tone, speed and style (Richard, 2002 in Kayyis, 2015). Song is an excellent source of authentic language, and there is a plethora of methods to use it in the classroom. Song is usually composed by musical instruments and it means song has a sense of touching feeling inside the music instrument which sometimes can create more emotion value.

According to Lynch (2005), song has some exclusivities so that it can be a teaching method in the classroom; 1) Song almost always contains authentic natural language, 2) song has a variety of new vocabulary, 3) song is usually very easy to obtain, 4) song can be selected to suit the students' need and interest, 5) grammar and cultural aspects, 6) time length is easily controlled, 7) students can experience a wide range of accents, 8) song's lyric can be used in relating to situations around us, and 9) students think song is fun and natural. Moreover, songs are one way to get a low affective filter while learning a language. Similar suggestions are made by Lo and Li (1998) in Abidin, et al (2011), who wrote that songs provide a break from the routine of the classroom and that learning English through songs creates a non-threatening classroom environment in which the four language skills can be improved.

Songs are an excellent example of language formation since they contain cultural bundles, vocabulary, listening, grammar, and other language components within a few rhymes. Millington (2011) claimed song provides the opportunity to practice vocabulary. It means that

songs are composed of many words which can be remembered easily by the learners for their practice. In addition, songs are considered as a useful strategy to teach and to learn English vocabulary; first, songs can encourage learner's motivation in learning vocabulary, and songs will give advantage for both teacher and students in learning English (Borisai & Dennis, 2016). Second, according to Zarei & Salimi (2012), if songs can be listened frequently, there will be a process of repetition. The process of a successful learning can be gained from a purposeful repetition and there are four steps process in acquiring vocabulary through songs or music, as follow; 1) word comprehension, 2) word pronunciation practice, 3) drilling how to spell the word, and 4) how to put vocabulary in sentences. Therefore, songs can facilitate the learners to go through the four steps and the learners can improve their ability in vocabulary learning.

Teaching English to young learners is quite different from teaching English to others because young learners have different capabilities, thoughts, feelings, traits, intellectual capacity, skill, attitudes, needs, and desires than adults. It means that they have to teach with different way, different technique, and different strategy so, they are willing to learn foreign language. The young learners have to be taught with variety of funny strategies because they can't learn effectively if they feel in boredom. Suyanto (2007) in Kuattiningih (2008) stated that there are three linguistic components in teaching English to young learners, one of which is vocabulary. A vocabulary is a collection of words found in a language. As a result, young learners should be taught vocabulary sooner in order to understand the meaning of words. The young learners will better be taught vocabulary with simple words, and the words are related to their world. There are four paces to teach vocabulary to the young learners according Suyanto (2007) in Kuattiningsing (2008); 1) introducing the vocabulary by using pictures or others media, 2) modelling the vocabulary by giving and showing the example and action, 3) practicing the words which the teacher said for many times so, they will remember easily, and 4) applying the words into real situation. Those four paces must be done sequent because it will create meaningful vocabulary teaching.

The effectiveness of English songs in acquiring vocabulary was investigated in two studies by Heidari and Araghi (2015) and Dzanic and Pejic (2016). The outcomes of these two studies are quite different. They did a study comparing the effects of songs and visuals on Iranian EFL students. The participants were 68 guys between the ages of 7 and 14, who were picked from seven classes. The study used a vocabulary test (pre- and post-test) as well as a quasi-experiment. The hearing and reading portion of the test consisted of 65 items. The result of this research used statistic descriptive to show the results of the effects between songs and pictures. In the end, the finding showed that songs were not effective because the participants were males; meanwhile, using pictures was effective in the teaching of vocabulary.

Dzanic and Pejic (2016) did a study on the impact of employing songs on young learners' motivation to learn English. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 28 second-grade students aged 7-8 were used in this study. This study used a quantitative design with quasi-experiment groups, three types of tests (pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire survey), and a questionnaire survey. The findings of this study demonstrated that English songs were excellent and had a beneficial impact on students' vocabulary learning. In contrast to the other two studies, this one focused on the usefulness of English songs in teaching vocabulary to sixth-grade students. The population of this study was four sixth-grade classes, and the sample included 28 sixth-grade students from grade 6 D. By using a pre-experiment group, this study used a quantitative design. Pre-test and post-test data were acquired by taking a vocabulary test that consisted of 50 items (multiple choice and matching). To determine the t-value, the author employed a t-test, and the results of this study showed that English songs are helpful in the teaching of vocabulary to sixth-grade students. However, Heidari and Araghi (2015) focused their research on comparing the effects of using songs and pictures to teach vocabulary, while Dzanic and Pejic (2016) looked at the effect of utilizing songs and motivation in learning English. Having

reviewed previous relevant studies with various findings, the writer intends to investigate whether English songs are effective in teaching vocabulary to the sixth-graders. The purpose of this study is to find empirical evidence of whether or not English songs are effective when it comes to teaching vocabulary to the sixth-graders.

METHOD

The method which the writer employed is pre-experiment, and the writer applied quantitative design by employing a t-test. This method can be used to analyze the score's test done by students in doing vocabulary test which was administrated by the writer. Thus, it can show the cause and effect between the variables, and it can draw the exact conclusion.

The participants in this study were students in grades six of an elementary school in Jakarta during the first semester of the 2019/2020 school year. The sample for this study consisted of twenty-eight sixth-grade students who were randomly selected from four classes of the elementary school in the first semester of the 2019/2020 school year. The data for this study was gathered through a vocabulary test. The test was created in such a way that it was based on the instructional materials that students in the sixth grade had acquired. There were two elements to the tests: multiple choices and matching. The same test was utilized for both the pre-test and post-test to make it easier to determine whether or not the students' vocabulary learning scores had improved. The writer calculated the data manually; she calculated the mean score and standard deviation. After she found the standard deviation, she calculated the t-test. She used the formula as follows:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x} - \mu_0}{s / \sqrt{n}}$$

Notes:

T   = Result score
$\bar{x}$ = Mean score from the sample
μ_0 = Mean score before the treatments
s = Standard deviation from the sample
$\sqrt{n}$ = Total of the sample

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data was analysed to find mean's score and standard deviation. The mean score and standard deviation are shown in the following tables after the outcome of the students' score has been calculated.

Table 1: The average pre-test score for the experimental class

Class	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Experimental	59.75	17.00

Table 2: The average post-test score for the experimental class

Class	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Experimental	67.05	16.00

Table 3: The difference in score between the pre-test and post-test

Class	Session	Mean score	Increased score
Experimental	Pre-test	59.75	7.32
Experimental	Post-test	67.05	

From the data analysis result, it can be seen that there is an increasing score in the mount of 7.32. It signifies that the post-test mean score is higher than the pre-test mean score. The conclusion is that English songs are excellent in teaching vocabulary to sixth grade students. Next, the writer used the formula below to calculate the t-test value from the pre- and post-test data:

T-test data from Pre-test

$$t = \frac{\bar{x} - \mu_0}{s / \sqrt{n}}$$

$$t = \frac{67.05 - 59.75}{5.25 / \sqrt{28}} = \frac{7.30}{1.00} = \mathbf{7.30}$$

T-test from pre-test score is 7.30. In the level of significance 0.05 (= probability 0.95), t-table value (0.05;27) is gained t-table = 1.70. From the calculation above it gained that t_{value} is higher than t_{table} (7.30 > 1.70) which means English songs are effective in teaching vocabulary at grade sixth.

T-test data from Post-test

$$t = \frac{67.05 - 59.75}{5.00 / \sqrt{28}} = \frac{7.30}{0.95} = \mathbf{7.68}$$

Next, t-test from post-test score is 7.68. In the level of significance 0.05 (= probability 0.95), t-table value (0.05; 27) is gained t-table = 1.70. From the calculation above it gained that t_{value} is higher than t_{table} (7.68 > 1.70) which means English songs are beneficial in the sixth grade when it comes to teaching vocabulary. The t-test can be used to determine the significance score between the pre-test and post-test.

Table 4: The pre-test and post-test distribution of t-test and t-table values

Variable	t-test value	t-table value
Pre-test	7.30	1.70
Post-test	7.68	1.70

Hypothesis Testing I

According to the alternative hypothesis (Ha) proposed in this study, there is a significant difference in the way English songs are taught vocabulary to sixth grade students. As a result, the hypothesis was revised to zero (Ho), stating: "There is no significant difference in the teaching of vocabulary to sixth grade students using English songs."

Table 5: The pre-test and post-test scores and percentages comparison

Class	Session	Mean score	Increased score	Percentage	Category
Experimental	Pre-test	59.75	7.32	28.58%	Success
Experimental	Post-test	67.05		53.57%	Success

The score from the pre-test to the post-test was 7.32, as stated in the table above. It signifies that the mean post-test score is higher than the pre-test score (67.05 > 59.75). Meanwhile, just 28.58 percent of those who completed the pre-test session were successful, while 53.57 percent completed the post-test session. It may be stated that English songs make a significant difference in teaching vocabulary to sixth grade students. Therefore, the hypothesis is altered to zero Ho, which means that the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the teaching of vocabulary to sixth grade students is rejected. Meanwhile, Ha claims that English songs play an important role in teaching vocabulary to sixth-grade students.

Hypothesis Testing II

The alternative hypothesis (H_a) proposed in this study says that English songs are effective in teaching vocabulary to the sixth-grade pupils. Therefore, the hypothesis is changed to zero (H_o) so it said: English songs are not effective in teaching vocabulary to the sixth grade pupils. If the t_{value} is higher than t_{table} degree significance 5% and degree of freedom 0.95 then (H_a) is accepted, and the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected.

Table 6: Post-test T-test score

Variable	t-test value	t-table value
Post-test	7.68	1.70

The result of hypothesis shows that that $t_0 = 1.70$ and the $t_t = 7.68$. In fact, t_t is higher than t_0 (7.68 > 1.70) so that H_o said that English songs are ineffective in teaching vocabulary to sixth-graders is debunked. As a result, Ha claims that English songs are helpful in teaching vocabulary to sixth-grade students has been accepted. The findings of this study demonstrated that English songs are useful in the classroom when it comes to teaching vocabulary. The improvement in the students' grades demonstrates this. The students' average pre-test score was 59.75, and they were subsequently given certain therapies involving the use of English songs as vocabulary material. The post-test resulted in an average score of 67.05. It can be stated that English songs are useful in the classroom when it comes to vocabulary development. It was proved that students scored higher on the post-test and were more engaged and happier during the teaching-learning process. Eventually, the students and the teacher received the advantages from English songs, for example: 1) the students and the teacher felt way more relaxed, less-stressful, and joyful, 2) the students and the teacher tried to pronounce or say the words from the song spontaneously, and 3) the students and the teacher sang together and received new words.

In addition, the writer presented each hypothesis and the data. The result of hypothesis shows that that $t_0 = 1.70$ and the t_t degree significance 5% 7.68. In t-test, if the t-test value is higher than t-test table, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted, and the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. There is a significant difference between teaching English vocabulary by using English songs and teaching English vocabulary without using English songs. The findingof this

study is in line with a previous study conducted by Dzanic and Pejic (2016), which showed the effectiveness of songs to teach students' English vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

Based on the preceding explanation, it is apparent that English songs are beneficial in the classroom when it comes to teaching vocabulary. Before using English songs to learn vocabulary, the kids' vocabulary test score was low. Following multiple treatments and the administration of the post-test, the data was described and analysed, and the t-test value of post-test 7.68 was found to be greater than the t-test table in post-test 1.70. As a result, English songs are useful in teaching vocabulary to sixth-graders.

The writer makes the following recommendations to teachers: 1) when it comes to arranging English materials, teachers should be active, innovative, and successful. 2) Teachers should be able to engage pupils in more active learning and teaching of English, particularly vocabulary. 3) Teachers should be able to select an effective and entertaining strategy for increasing students' motivation to learn English so that they can increase their English proficiency.

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