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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**A CASE STUDY ON THE BENEFITS OF USING SONGS IN TEACHING
VOCABULARY TO YOUNG LEARNERS OF ENGLISH**

THESIS BY

Filiz SARI

SUPERVISOR

Assist. Prof. Dr. Hülya YUMRU

MASTER OF ARTS

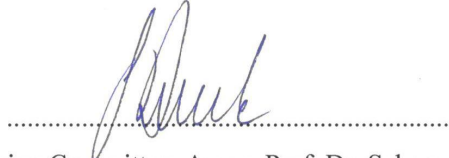
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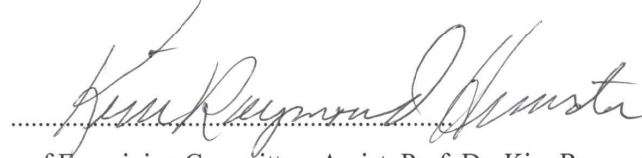
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Supervisor- Head of Examining Committee: Assist. Prof. Dr. Hülya YUMRU



Member of Examining Committee: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Şehnaz ŞAHİNKARAKAŞ



I. Reserved Member of Examining Committee: Assist. Prof. Dr. Kim Raymond

HUMISTON

I certify that this thesis conforms to formal standards of the Institute of Social Sciences.



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ÖZET

ÇOCUKLARA İNGİLİZCE KELİME ÖĞRETİMİNDE ŞARKI KULLANIMININ FAYDALARI ÜZERİNE BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

Filiz SARI

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Hülya YUMRU

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Bu çalışma çocuklara yabancı dil olarak İngilizce kelime öğretiminde şarkıların faydalarını ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla yapılmıştır. Bunun için 2. sınıf öğrencileri haftada 2 saat zorunlu İngilizce derslerinde altı hafta boyunca gözlenmiştir. Çalışmanın katılımcıları özel Tarsus Toros İlköğretim Okulunda öğretim gören 2. sınıf öğrencilerinden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmacı çalışma sürecinde gözlemlerini günlüğe kaydetmiş ve daha sonra bu gözlemler içerik analizi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın sonucunda çocuklara yabancı dil öğretiminde şarkı kullanımının ana alanda faydası olduğu belirlenmiştir. Bu çalışmada kullanılan şarkılar: Numbers and Jobs, Animals and Abilities, Animals and Senses, If You are Happy and You Know It, Head and Shoulders Knees and Toes, Countries and Capitals Song, Row Your Boat Song.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çocuklara İngilizce Öğretimi, Kelime Öğretimi, Şarkı.

ABSTRACT

A CASE STUDY ON THE BENEFITS OF USING SONGS IN TEACHING VOCABULARY TO YOUNG LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

Filiz SARI

Master of Arts, Department of English Language Teaching

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Hülya YUMRU

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The purpose of this study was to find out the benefits of songs in teaching vocabulary to young learners of English. The research was carried out with second grade students studying at private Tarsus Toros Primary School. The study was conducted for six weeks in 2013-2014 academic year. The researcher collected the data using a researcher diary. The results of this study showed that songs are beneficial in teaching vocabulary to young learners of English. The songs used in this study were: Numbers and jobs, Animals and Abilities, Animals and Senses, If You Are Happy and You Know It, Head and Shoulders Knees and Toes, Countries and Capitals Song and Row Your Boat Song.

Key Words: Teaching English to Young Learners, Vocabulary Teaching, Songs.

ABBREVIATIONS

EFL : English as a Foreign Language
ELT : English Language Teaching
TPR : Total Physical Response

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose and the significance of the study. Then the research questions and the operational definitions are explained respectively.

1.1. Background of the Study

Although children learn a language faster than adults, they do not learn through traditional language teaching methods. Through fun activities children can learn a language effectively as learning becomes natural for them. That is, these activities do not make them conscious that they are learning a language (Ara, 2009).

The teaching of English as a foreign language has been extended to second graders of primary schools in 2013-2014 academic year. This sudden change resulted in the need of primary school teachers whose competencies fit with the level of false beginners. Teachers cannot teach English to young learners with the same tools which are used for adults. Because, young learners have different needs. Roth (1998) explains that children quickly learn and forget. Moreover, their senses are stronger to support learning through seeing, hearing, touching and tasting. Their imagination and fantasy worlds are so wide that they can visualize and acquire more easily. Thus, the methods and the techniques used for adults do not work when they are used for children (Yuliana, 2003).

1.2. Purpose of the Study

This case study aims to discover the benefits of using songs in teaching vocabulary in EFL classes to young learners. Accordingly, the research question of the present study is as follows:

1. What are the benefits of using songs in teaching vocabulary in EFL classes to young learners?

1.3. Definition of the Terms

Young Learners: For Rixon (1999) children between the ages of 5 to 12 years old are regarded as young learners. However, Cameron (2001) states young learners are those under 14 years old. All in all, the definition of young learners is mainly based on the years spent in the primary or elementary stages of formal education before the transition to secondary school. They are subconscious learners whose main traits are self-centeredness, short attention span, learning through senses, natural curiosity, learning through play (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Total Physical Response: For Asher, “the fastest, least stressful way to achieve understanding of any target language is to follow directions uttered by the instructor” (cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 108).

Multiple Intelligence: Multiple Intelligences is a term coined by Gardner. It is known to be capacity to perceive, discriminate, transform and express through musical forms (2013, retrieved from <http://www.teachervision.fen.com/intelligence/teaching-methods/2204.html>).

CHAPTER II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical basis of the study. First, it presents the characteristics of young learners and then it discusses the implications of those characteristics for English language teaching. Finally, it reveals the importance of songs as pedagogical tools.

2.2. Characteristics of Young Learners

The more a child feels free, the better s/he learns the items which are new, meaningful, nice, important, pleasurable and constant. The child will personally take part in the learning event, making foreign language learning easier (Hisar, 2006). When a child hears, says, writes, reads, thinks, feels, imagines, draws, tastes, does something, s/he learns better (Hisar, 2006). Children are advantageous in language learning because they have the ability to put themselves into the center of the events, they enjoy what they experience and they are never afraid of making mistakes and criticizing themselves (Forero, 2011).

To start learning a language in an early age does not only remain limited with a success of pronunciation but also brings success in syntax and semantics. Seebauner (1991) suggests that ‘‘the children who learn language in an early age are brasher and more outgoing and they are not shy in view of language and they do not get bored while repeating the sentences which have been said to them’’ (p.75).

Swiss scientist Jean Piaget who is considered to be a pioneer of psychology and philosophy spent most of his life by listening and watching children. He also read and reviewed scientific publications, which are on the same topic prepared by the scientists from around the world (Hisar, 2006). In conclusion, Piaget asserted that children think differently from adults. Generally it is possible to talk about "three factors in language learning. When social and psychological factors are taken into account; learning language in an early age is easier than learning in an advanced age" (Senemoğlu, 2003, p.46). "The difficulties that adults experience in advanced age in learning a language mostly depend on personality problems and native language experiences. The reasons for language learning are the leading determinant factor. An adult's conscious approach to the language may act as an inhibitor but a child's not struggling with a new system helps a child succeed in learning language naturally. Additionally, a child communicates easier with community" (Senemoğlu, 2003, p.46). According to language learning research, an early age is a key to having more success in language learning especially as compared to later periods of life. A person who reaches his/her puberty age will bring on a theory about language. And this will prevent learning the language naturally. Therefore, there is not much opportunity for adults to learn the language naturally. According to Piaget, the students who are at the age of primary school are at concrete operational stage. For this reason, a child thinks and learns actively by structuring his/her own learning by studying with the objects around him/her (Hisar, 2006).

According to Vygotsky, the people around the child have a very important place in the language learning process. As the child knows the word in native language, s/he notices them easily in a new language. Regarding non-linguistic factors, it is a fact that

children can mostly pronounce foreign language with no accent, while only 68% of adults achieve pronunciation without accent, which supports the opinion that “critical period” factor plays a role in foreign language learning. As adults complete their cognitive development, they never get perfection in language learning pronunciation (Hisar, 2006).

"Children have the power of learning more than one language, reflecting and creating the language. The ability of children learning their own native language is limitless. Children are also capable of comprehending a new language. They can learn the form of speech and pronunciation. Adults can randomly achieve this considering non-linguistic factors" (Dursun, 1999, p. 22). At this point, we need to reflect on critical period hypothesis. According to critical period hypothesis, when the age increases neurological change affects language learning adversely. Children are not interested in what language is, but they are interested in what language serves for. Brown (2004) says that "children take faster steps in the process of alienating, culture shock while learning, orientating to different cultures and they approach the language more moderate as they haven't developed a habit like dependence on their own culture" (p.156).

Foreign language learning in adults is very different from children's. Children learn foreign languages with more natural ways in the manner that they learn their own language by listening and communicating in a trustworthy environment with fun activities.

"As children have more willingness to communicate than adults, this reflects on foreign language learning positively" (Hisar, 2006, p.12). Children participate willingly and easily in the activities they find interesting. Teachers should take care of their emotions and this willingness. It is a fact that when children feel themselves in a trust,

peaceful atmosphere, foreign language learning gets easier. Children do not worry about learning a foreign language or feeling humiliated. Each person learns a language in normal life conditions. However, each person trying to learn a second or a third language cannot always succeed. While grown-up students face with difficulties, it is seen that children learn foreign languages easily. Moreover, grown-ups can contribute to lessons via their opinions and approaches to the language learning. They give their opinions about the materials and methods they prefer by specifying them. They can say their preferences by evaluating how teacher teaches. From this perspective, it is an important information source about how a grown-up's teaching should be. However, if such a group consists of students learning foreign language in an early age then teachers have complicated responsibilities in terms of the teaching methods employed (Ferero, 2011).

2.3. Characteristics of Elementary School Students

The age range of the elementary school students is between seven to eleven years old. They have different characteristics and attitudes that contrast with the high school students. Therefore, we assume that teaching young learners is not the same as teaching teenagers, because the students of the elementary school may have a different motivation level towards learning. In this case, the teacher has to challenge and motivate the students to learn something new (Ferero, 2011).

According to Scoot and Ytreberg (1990), the general characteristics of students in elementary school are as follows:

- 1) They are competent users of the mother tongue.
- 2) They can tell the difference between facts and fiction.
- 3) They love to play and they learn better when they enjoy themselves.

- 4) They are enthusiastic and positive about learning.
- 5) They rely on the spoken word as well as on the physical world to convey and understand meaning.
- 6) They enjoy working with others and learning from others.
- 7) Their concentration works for a short period of time.
- 8) They use their body parts to play and learn through (p. 2-4).

2.4. Foreign Language Learning

Learning a foreign language such as English for speakers of other languages is very important due to the current trend of globalization. That is, people need a competence for having contact with people from other countries for diverse purposes, for instance; technology, education, tourism, business and politics. This situation motivates people to learn a foreign language that will be helpful for their integration to the rhythm of the globalized world. Besides, in order to get successful results, the learner is supposed to increase motivation, since learning language is necessarily intellectual and emotional.

Learning a foreign language is not as simple as learning a native language, because when children acquire their mother tongue naturally and there is usually no interference with another language system. Mohambest (2009) refers to Finocchiaro (1974) stating that learning foreign language is different from learning a native language because students' environments in achieving their first language and a foreign language are different.

2.5. Foreign Language Teaching

When we teach a foreign language, we should have a clear objective directed toward making the learners able to communicate in the target language in an integral way. According to Brown (2000), there are some factors that affect foreign language acquisition; those factors should be considered when teaching: the age, ability, need, motivation, context, environment, and L2 exposure of the learner (Forero, 2011). For Octaviany (2007), the material, which is going to be presented, should be chosen considering the learners' age, ability, need, native language, and previous language experience. In addition, the emphasis of learning and teaching English as the first foreign language is always on the mastery of listening, speaking, writing, and listening- no skill should be ignored. English lessons should involve activities to have the students practice these four skills.

2.6. Teaching English Vocabulary to Second Graders of Elementary School

Teaching vocabulary in elementary school is very important and it is the main issue to be developed in children when teaching English as a foreign language.

Consequently, the teacher needs to pay attention to the choice of vocabulary presentation and practice techniques that are appropriate to the learner characteristics. Brown (2001) on his work "Teaching by Principles" points out several methodologies for language teaching. For instance: The grammar translation method, a classical method, focuses on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary and of various declensions and conjugations, translations of texts, doing written exercises; one of the characteristics of this method is that the classes are taught in mother tongue, with a little active use of the target language. The direct method is a naturalistic method that includes lots of

interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation, a little analysis of grammatical rules. The audio-lingual method has the following characteristics: presents the new material in dialogue form, structural patterns are taught using repetitive drills, little grammar explanation since grammar is taught by inductively, vocabulary is learned in context, very little use of mother tongue, and there is a great effort to get students to produce utterances. Suggestopedia, which suggests that the human brain could process great quantities of material if given the right conditions for learning. The silent way is based on a cognitive argument. From this point of view, learners discover and create language patterns.

2.7. Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a set of techniques developed by Dr. James Asher. According to Asher (1977), the TPR is based on the understanding that the human brain is biologically programmed to learn languages through interaction with others. Children combine verbal and kinesthetic skills when they learn a language and to communicate in the language.

The total physical response (TPR) proposes basically a structuralist, grammar-based view of language in which the learners develop comprehension before production through carrying out commands through physical involvement. That is, language production is delayed until the learners produce the language naturally. Therefore, the teacher should select the most suitable methods according to the children's needs and the curriculum requirements. We consider that an appropriate method to teach vocabulary items to children is the Total Physical Response, because it catches the attention of the

children, it makes the children give attention to the form, meaning and use of the words, and it gives possibilities for repetition.

2.8. Significance of Teaching Young Learners Through Music

Students generally learn the subjects they find interesting. Hisar (2006) asserts that although primary school students can learn easily, they might forget what they have learned quickly, too. According to (Hisar, 2006), when the features of primary school students such as curiosity and motivation are taken into consideration, it is essential that teachers should enhance their foreign language teaching through games, songs, stories and computer technology. Roth (1998) emphasizes several points to be taken into account when teaching very young children. He states that a teacher must know how to speak, how to play simple games, how to provide craft activities, how to teach songs and rhymes and how to organize simple drama activities. In his point of view, music, that includes all the qualities of rhymes, help children develop a sense of rhythm in the target language. It can be understood that music helps subconscious learning in a safe atmosphere. As constructivists, Farrel and Jacobs (2010) underline the fact that learning for understanding is essential to be able to construct knowledge. They object to the passive process of taking in information. Likewise, Hisar (2006) informs that the lack of concrete thinking capacity in primary school children lead activities to be chosen from daily life to immediate interest of that age. She points out the active role of the students, the significance of experimenting and demonstrating. Farrel and Jocab (2010) believe we need to encourage learners to be active and guide them explore new information and experiences according to their aims, interests and knowledge. Developing the ability of

student's social interaction should be taken care of and at first stage if a child is silent the teacher should respect this and children shouldn't be forced to talk. It shouldn't be expected from children to analyze each structure as children cannot analyze the language in an early age. Teachers need to take on the role of a counselor finding out students' needs and interests, organizing and planning the learning tasks and preparing the necessary atmosphere.

2.8.1. Perspectives on Multiple Intelligence

Music has long been used in many diverse ways in language teaching. It is evident that successful use of music is highly valued both by the students of English and the teachers (Huy Le, 2007). Many countries such as the USA, Taiwan, Mexico, Japan or South Africa highlight the usefulness of music in language teaching and its activating role (Xlengming and Brand, 2009). They assert that music helps creating lively classrooms.

The use of music in English as a second Language has a theoretical and psychological foundation. According to Gardner, Multiple Intelligence (MI) is the capacity to perceive, discriminate, transform and express musical forms. In the class, it should be ensured that all intelligences are being used. There are some activities that address to each intelligence. Humming, rapping, playing background music, patterns, form, playing instruments, tapping out poetic rhythms, rhyming, singing can best allow the teachers cater students' interest and enhance their achievement due to musical intelligence. According to Armstrong (2001), there are seven intelligence types such as linguistic, logical, mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily, kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal. Recently the 'naturalistic intelligence' has been included in the list. Arkan

and Sarıcaoğlu (2010) stated in their study that Gardner's theory suggest that the scope of human potential should be broadened beyond the confines of IQ. Interestingly, Özdemir, Güneysu and Tekkaya (2006) found out that musical intelligence was the least common type of Intelligence for the students in Turkey. No matter how music and language seem to be two different forms of communication, Maess and Koelsh (2001) revealed that both musical and linguistic syntax are similarly processed.

2.9. Songs as Pedagogical Tools

There are several reasons why songs might be beneficial for second language learners. Xiangming and Brand (2009) inform that vocabularies of the songs are appropriate for students as songs contain common short words with numerous pronouns and repetitive structures. Moreover, songs contain beats, which develop learners' inner timing. Though, it is much advantageous, Ayotte (2004) notes that the studies are mostly related to young learners but a few of adult learners. Listening to songs play an important role in the development of young children learning a second language. Songs can be used for a number of purposes and there are many reasons why songs can be considered as valuable pedagogical tools. Songs can help young learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation; therefore they help them to improve their speaking skills (Murphey, 1992). However, songs can only be effective means of developing children's language skills when they are well integrated into a curriculum. Songs can also be useful tools in the learning of sentence structures and sentence patterns, not to mention their reflectivity of mother tongue culture (Murphey, 1992). Moreover, songs can provide an opportunity for vocabulary practice as they are usually based around a theme or topic that can provide the context for vocabulary learning. For example, the song *Head, Shoulders,*

Knees and Toes provide fun drills of vocabulary and it can be used to review body parts. In addition, the song *I Can Sing a Rainbow* might be useful for reviewing color names. Most children's songs are characterized by monosyllabic words, many of which are frequently repeated. This repetition offers greater exposure to these words and can help to improve vocabulary acquisition.

Perhaps the greatest benefit to using songs in the classroom is that they can be fun. Pleasure for its own sake is important part of learning a language, something that is often overlooked by language teachers. In addition, songs can add interest to the classroom routine and potentially improve student motivation.

Kirsch (2008) points out that many language teachers have described the benefits of using rhymes, songs, and games in foreign language classes as in the following:

- .Rhymes, poems, and songs are very popular with young learners who tend to be familiar with this type of literacy from school or home. Children do not shy away from poems and songs in foreign languages,
- .Teachers are equally familiar with them and thus may find them a good way into the teaching of foreign languages,
- .They promote positive feelings,
- .Their rhythmical patterns facilitate and accelerate learning,
- .They are good means of developing listening, pronunciation and speaking skills. Pupils do not tire of listening to and repeating them over and over again. They join in with the parts they know and acquire more sounds, words and sentences with each successive performance until they gradually master the text,

.These forms of literacy help pupils get into the rhythm of a language and learn to pronounce sounds and words confidently, accurately and with expression,

.Pupils are more likely to remember the new words and structures because they are repetitive, meaningful and presented in predictable patterns and larger chunks. The internalization of sounds, words and sentence patterns bring learners a step closer to using these in other contexts,

.Rhymes, poems and songs can initiate a range of activities: listening, reading, drawing, performing actions, playing and enacting, performing in front of an audience and practicing intonation, pronunciation and structures,

.Poems or songs about typical traditions or cultural artifacts are helpful in developing pupils' cultural awareness and understanding,

.Besides, many teachers take advantage of popularity and repetitive structure of songs to practice key vocabulary in an enjoyable way (p.85).

However as language teachers we should always bear in mind that our main responsibility is to teach target language. No matter how fun and enjoyable song activities may be for young learners, we should not be carried away by music and the rhythm of songs. Our main responsibility is not to teach singing skills but to teach target language. Therefore, if songs are used ineffectively and in meaningless ways they can easily become mere entertainment and pleasurable interruptions in the school day, which, in the long term, results in pupils being bored and losing interest. There should be a clear reason in the language teacher's mind as to why and how to use a song (Şevik, 2012).

Some of the vocabulary and language used in traditional and popular English songs, however, can cause difficulties for language learners due to their use of low frequency and archaic words. The song and the lyrics need to be selected carefully to complement the target vocabulary. A difficulty for teachers is finding and selecting songs that are suitable both in terms of vocabulary and topic or theme (Hisar, 2006).

One advantage of using songs in the young learner classroom is their flexibility. The stress and intonation patterns of the spoken language can be taught through music. Following this line of thought, Graham (1993) designed Jazz Chants to teach the natural rhythm, stress and intonation patterns of conversational American English. However, Graham is not the only language teacher to be aware of the fact that music can be a medium for natural language acquisition. For example, Cakir (1999) argues some language teachers in Turkey have been using songs in English language to help students pick up rhythm, stress and intonation patterns of English through enjoyable teaching activities.

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological design of the study. First, the research design, the context of the study and the participants are introduced. Then, the data collection tool and the data collection procedures are presented in detail. Finally, the method used for data analysis is explained.

3.2. Research Design

The aim of this study was to identify the benefits of using songs when teaching vocabulary to young learners. This study is a case study. According to Bryman (2008) “the basic case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case” (p. 66). Baxter and Jack (2008) also articulate “the qualitative case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources” (p. 544). It is a helpful type of research design to reach the findings if the interest of the study is on the “case.” It provides the researcher with a variety of data sources to get more satisfying and reliable findings. The researcher engaged in the cycles of an action research within this case study so as to identify the benefits of using songs with primary school students. Qualitative research is defined as "research studies that investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or most materials are frequently referred to as qualitative research" (Fraenkel, 2012, p. 426).

3.3. The Context and the Participants of the Study

This study was conducted at private Toros Primary School in Tarsus, Mersin, Turkey in 2013/2014 academic year. In this institution the schooling is from kindergarten to twelfth grade; inside school there is a sport field, a library, a computer classroom, a cafeteria and a little restaurant. Students are from different social status. I conducted this research in a second grade classroom. The classroom has a computer, a speaker, a projector, a bookshelf, a white board, a teacher's desk, and twenty students' desks, and the classroom area is approximately twenty square meters. The students in second grade take two hours of English classes per week consisting of one hour of grammar (main course) one hour of reading, speaking, listening and writing skills. The language proficiency level of students is A1. The students take three written examinations each term.

The participants of the present study were a total of 20 Turkish second grade students studying at private Toros Primary School in Tarsus, Mersin, Turkey. They were about 7-8 years old. Convenience sampling strategy was used when choosing the participants of the study. For Marshall (1996) "Convenience sample is the least rigorous technique involving the selection of the most accessible subjects. It is the least costly to the researcher, in terms of time, effort and money, but may result in poor quality and lacks intellectual credibility. There is an element of convenience sampling in many qualitative studies, but a thoughtful approach to selection of a sample is usually justified" (p. 523).

3.4. Data Collection Tool

The data collection tool used in this study was a researcher diary. In qualitative studies, researcher diaries are one way of collecting data. According to Bloor (2006), "a research diary is a written record of the researcher's activities, thoughts and feelings throughout the research process from design, through data collection and analysis to writing and presenting study" (p.150). Following the line of argument stated above, the researcher kept a diary for six weeks to record her teaching practice plans, her reflections on the effectiveness of the songs and related activities that she used in her teaching practice and her suggestions for further improvement. More specifically, she tried to find the answers to the following questions as a result of her reflection-on-practice:

1. Did I achieve my aim?
2. Did the vocabulary activities coupled with songs help to increase my students' level of participation in the lessons?
3. Would I use the same activities in my future practice? If not, what type of modifications can be done?

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

The first step in the data collection procedure was to inform the administration of the school that I would conduct a six-week case study with the second grade students. After getting the permission from the administration of the school, I informed the parents and the students that I would use songs to present and practice vocabulary items. I also explained to the parents the importance of using music and body language in language learning with young learners.

Additionally, in the process of how to select songs that was compatible with the vocabulary items offered in our course book, I was inspired from the guidance book named *English Through Songs (Teaching English in Primary School)* authored by Şevik (2006). I also used some of Ekinici's (2006) suggestions related to how to use songs and rhymes with language learners. The following sections present the data collection procedure in detail.

3.5.1. Week One

Aim: To help students recognize and pronounce the cardinal numbers from one to ten.

Material Used: Numbers and jobs, classroom rules from *English Through Songs* Şevik (2006).

Procedure: First, the students listened to the song *Numbers and Jobs*. Second, they were asked to fill in the blanks on their paper. While they were writing the numbers on the related blanks they listened to the song twice. Next, the students were asked to sing the song all together by reading the song on their papers. Then the students were divided into groups. Each group was asked to sing the song. Lastly, each student sang the song by herself. Finally, everybody counted the numbers all together. The *Numbers and Jobs* helped the students to practice the numbers from one to ten easily. They also had the opportunity to develop their concentration span, memory and coordination.

3.5.2. Week Two

Aim: To help students practice using the names of the animals that was presented to them in the previous lesson.

Materials Used: Animals and abilities, animals and senses, what animals like from *English Through Songs* by Kömürcü (2006). A copy of the sampling animal pictures to be described by the teacher and acted by the learners through the descriptions.

Procedure: At the beginning of the lesson, students were shown some animal pictures coupled with related animal sounds. And they were asked to name the animal. In the second step, students were divided into two groups and asked to act and produce the sound of the related animal while singing. Meanwhile, the teacher monitored the students. Finally, the teacher stopped the music and asked the students to name the animals in English as a whole class activity.

3.5.3. Week Three

Aim: To help the students to learn vocabulary items related to physical actions such as movement, mime, skipping, clapping.

Materials Used: The song named: *If you are happy and you know it*.

Procedure: I reflected the song *If you're happy and you know it* on the board. Then I played the song on the CD and sang it. When doing so I revealed the meanings of the vocabulary items related to physical actions through movement and actions. Then I asked the students to join me and we sang the song together practicing the vocabulary items.

3.5.4. Week Four

Aim: To help students learn and practice the vocabulary items related to parts of body.

Materials Used: The song named *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*.

Procedure: At the beginning of the lesson, the students watched the video of the song. The second time they were watching the video extract, the teacher sang the song and acted out the vocabulary items. The next time they watched the video and listened to the song, the students joined the physical movements and sang the song along with the teacher.

3.5.5. Week Five

Aim: To help students to learn the names of the countries of the world.

Materials Used: Countries and capitals song (Şevik, 2006).

Procedure: First I reflected the some pictures of Big Ben, Eiffel, Coliseum and White House. I asked them where they are. Students were asked to sit in circles of five or six. They were asked to imagine they are around these places. Lastly, they listened the countries and capitals song.

3.5.6. Week Six

Aim: The first aim of the week was to help the students to learn and use the new words in group activities.

Materials Used: The song named *Row Your Boat*.

Procedure

First, I played *Row Your Boat* and asked the students to sit in four parallel lines facing the board on the floor. While listening to the music, they were asked to imagine they are in a boat, on an island. They were rowing down a stream. Students sang the song. Students

repeated the song. After listening to the song many times, students would have not only the words but also the melody. In the second step, students were asked to write down the lyrics. I played the tape until most of the students could complete the lyrics of the song. I gave the students very little help, only the title of the song and some of the words. I wrote a blank outline of the song on the board. Then told them the number of words per line. I drew a line for every word. These activities made the children learn the language unconsciously, and in a fun way. Students could enhance their language skills such as listening, speaking and writing. These three skills were used as stated in the following order: first they listened to the song, and after that the students sang the song and finally they wrote the lyrics of the song. The activity was not only fun for the students but it also helped skills development.

3.6. Data Analysis

The qualitative data that were driven from the researcher diary was subjected to content analysis. Content analysis is defined by Elo and Kyngäs (2008) as a method that can be used inductively or deductively with either quantitative or qualitative data. The researchers also continue to define content analysis in detail by stating that both inductive and deductive processes have preparation, organization and reporting phases. The preparation phase is nearly the same in both phases but in inductive analysis the concepts are derived from the data while deductive content analysis uses the previous knowledge at the background. That is; inductive content analysis operates when there is no previous study related to the phenomenon. Conversely, deductive content analysis is useful to examine the previous study in a different case (Kanste, Pölkki and Elo, 2014).

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter highlights the findings of the study. The findings of the study are presented under four sections: use of songs help children's language learning process (4.2.), use of songs increase children's level of classroom participation (4.3.), use of songs help to establish a stress free classroom environment (4.4.) and use of songs help children's listening improvement (4.5.).

4.2. Use of Songs Help Children's Language Learning Process

Reflecting on my classroom observations, which were recorded in my diary, I realized that teaching English vocabulary to children through songs was very suitable for children for two main reasons. First of all, I realized that the use of songs helps to establish meaningful language learning presentation and practice in English language classes for two main reasons. Firstly, this approach helps the teacher to present the vocabulary items in context and this helps children to discover the meanings of the vocabulary items easily. Secondly, during the practice stage children could easily associate the words and their meanings on listening to the songs the second or the third time. For example, in fourth week children learned parts of the body with the song named *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*. I observed that the children internalized the words through movements, repetition and imitation easily. The second main reason why songs might be argued to be useful in children's language learning process is related to their learning of pronunciation effectively. I noticed my students' improvement in

pronunciation especially in week six. This benefit might be the result of exposing children to an increased amount of authentic language through songs. For this reason, it might not be incorrect to state that songs and rhymes were particularly useful for practicing pronunciation of certain vocabulary items.

4.3. Use of Songs Increase Children's Level of Classroom Participation

According to my observations, in the first week of the term, almost all of the students were disinterested and unwilling to learn English. They couldn't even focus on the activities in the first and the second week. From third week on, they started to enjoy the activities more. As a teacher, my role was to facilitate learning. I wasn't in the center of the teaching process. I tried to be a model to start the activities and then guided them to perform the activities by themselves.

Initially, songs generated active thinking, which facilitated the children's participation in the learning process; consequently, it promoted not only motivation but also good attitude from students towards foreign language learning. According to Brewster (2007), songs are psychological resources. They are motivating and fun and help to develop positive attitudes towards the target language. Having those factors strengthened helped the children to learn in a fast and effective way. The fact that children understood and used the new vocabulary in the class caused high stimulus for learning English vocabulary, and as they were highly motivated for being active part of the activities, their response towards the target language improved.

4.4. Use of Songs Help to Establish a Stress Free Classroom Environment

One of the main factors that facilitated the learning of foreign languages is the absence of stress. According to Ioannou (2010) songs lower any anxiety the children

might have and help to create a safe atmosphere in the classroom. Le Roux (2002) also supports that "students can relax and feel good about themselves while singing because that is a form of an expression that they are familiar with. It can also appeal to students who already have negative attitude towards learning a new language or the traditional methods that are commonly used" (cited in Forero, 2011, p. 45).

During the sessions, I observed that the participants could learn easily in a stress free environment within which they experienced physical movement with the inclusion of songs and games, for instance: "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" song. In addition, the participants expressed their emotions and enthusiasm to learn and participate in the activities. Brewster (2007) points out that songs are social resources and singing/chanting together is a shared social experience and helps to develop a class and group identity. Songs can be used as the basis for a performance or show.

Finally, the use of the songs was interesting because it caught children's attention and made them be attentive and focused in the lessons. They also freely involved in the learning process since they were involved in implicit learning situation. All these factors helped the children to achieve the learning aims proposed for each lesson by participating and practicing the vocabulary. To sum up, I can say that these activities created a positive classroom environment for language learning.

4.5. Use of Songs Help Children's Listening Improvement

I observed that the children listened to the songs attentively and followed the songs. They also immediately began to sing the songs and repeated the lyrics. For this reason, I believe songs might be used as a vehicle for listening improvement. In addition, use of songs in language teaching helps to integrate other skills such as speaking,

specifically pronunciation. This finding is in line with those of Ioannou's (2010) study. In that, Ioannou (2010) points out that songs can function as first steps in speaking and listening as they offer opportunities for practice of sounds, rhythm and intonation in safe atmosphere. According to Brewster (2007), songs help improve all aspects of pronunciation and they can be used to develop all skills in an integrated way.

During the lesson, I also emphasized the pronunciation of some words related to the topic. Finally, I observed that when the children listened and understood the vocabulary they were more able to give an appropriate physical response to the song.

CHAPTER V

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter firstly provides a brief summary of the study. Then, it presents the conclusions of the study. Finally, some suggestions for further studies are made to enlighten the coming studies.

5.2. Summary of the Study

This case study aimed to determine the benefits of using songs with young learners in English classrooms. The participants of the present study were a total of 20 Turkish second grade students studying at private Toros Primary School in Tarsus, Mersin, Turkey. They were about 7-8 year old. The research question that guided the study was:

What are the benefits of using songs in EFL classes to young learners?

The researcher used a diary and kept her observations and her reflections on her classroom observations for six weeks to find an answer to her question.

5.3. Conclusions of the Study

In the present study I tried to examine the benefits of using songs in teaching vocabulary to young learners of English. In this respect, this study suggests that teaching vocabulary through songs have four main benefits to second graders at Toros College. The benefits of using songs in teaching vocabulary to young learners of English were categorized as: use of songs help children's language learning process (4.2.), use of songs increase children's level of classroom participation (4.3.), use of songs help to establish a stress free classroom environment (4.4.) and use of songs help children's listening

improvement (4.5.). The conclusions for the above mentioned findings are explained in the following paragraphs.

First of all, this study suggests that use of songs help children's language learning process. This conclusion is based on the researcher's observation that the use of songs helps to establish the grounds for meaningful learning. That is, the teacher finds an opportunity to present and practice the vocabulary items in context. In the long run, this approach to teaching vocabulary helps the learners to associate the vocabulary items with their meanings easily. This conclusion is in line with the arguments put forward by Şevik (2012) and Ferero (2011). According to Şevik (2012) singing is one of the most effective language learning strategies as reported by the children.

As with Brewster (2007), we might also argue that the use of songs increase children's level of classroom participation. That is, the use of songs for vocabulary teaching purposes helps to involve children actively in the classroom activities as they feel fun and excitement during the learning process. As a result, children's active involvement leads employment of positive attitudes towards learning the target language.

Furthermore, we might claim that use of songs help to establish a stress free classroom environment. This conclusion is in line with those of Ioannou (2010) and Le Roux (2002). They also claim that songs lower children's anxiety and this helps to create a safe atmosphere in the classroom. Moreover, for Le Roux (2002) singing songs help children to be confident and safe as they are familiar with this type of self-expression.

Finally, we might conclude that the use of songs help children's listening improvement. Children find an opportunity to practice the sounds and the pronunciation of the target vocabulary items through listening and singing songs. This conclusion is in

line with the arguments stated by Ioannou (2010) and Brewster (2007). They claim that songs not only help improvement in listening skills but they also help the teachers to integrate all the skills in their lessons. Similarly, Yuliana (2002) points out that children can enhance their language skills such as listening, speaking and writing through songs.

5.4. Suggestions for Further Studies

Music should not be seen as a loss of time or a loss of seriousness in the classrooms. On the contrary, music is part of our lives. It reveals different perspective to life and students can exchange their ideas by music. Music is not just for children. Researchers can search benefits of songs to adults in teaching English as a foreign language.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1. Appendix 1: Examples from Lesson Plans

Lesson 1:

Numbers and Jobs.

Aims: At the end of the lesson the children will be able to:

- To learn basic jobs .
- To recognize the numbers 1 to 10 .
- To understand the use of some verbs.

Description:

Students are going to learn basic English vocabulary items; they will be exposed to English by

the teacher's pronunciation. Listening is very important because the students will recognize

English words.

Vocabulary:

Verb-want.

Numbers- 1 to 10.

Jobs- doctor, soldier, writer, teacher, worker, painter, lawyer, driver, farmer, singer.

Material: Song:Numbers and Jobs

What is being learned?

Children learn about jobs, numbers and they improve their balance by singing, dancing.

They count their fingers 1 to 10. Moreover, they are improving their memory skills—their ability to listen, to remember, and do it.

Lesson 4:**Body parts.**

Aims: At the end of the lesson the children will be able to:

- To identify the parts of the body.
- To recognize the parts of the body when somebody names it and to react verbally and physically.

Description:

With this activity the children will learn the parts of the body, through activities that requires social interaction and cooperative learning. Also the children will be exposed to audio-visual material in which they will interact with items of English vocabulary.

Vocabulary:

Verbs—Touch, hold, open, stick. Body parts—Head, shoulder, arms, legs, knees ...etc.

Material: Head and Shoulders Knees and Toes

What is being learned?

Children learn their body parts not just memorizing but internalizing the words through songs it gives children a stronger internal awareness of these words.

Lesson 5

Places and prepositions of place.

Aims: At the end of the lesson the children will be able to:

- Express location of places in a city.
- Express existence of things and places.

Description:

Students will learn about the places of the city and the prepositions of place. They will learn prepositions of place using song.

Vocabulary: Country, capital, guess, London, England, Paris, Eiffel, Big Ben, France, know, Coliseum, Rome, Italy, White House, Washington, America

Material: Song: Countries and Capitals

What is being learned? Students learn about the capital of the countries. They will learn about the location of places in the city.

7.2. Appendix 2: Songs

Head and Shoulders Knees and Toes

Head, shoulders, knees and toes,

Knees and toes.

Head, shoulders, knees and toes,

Knees and toes.

And eyes, and ears, and mouth,

And nose.

Head, shoulders, knees and toes,

Knees and toes.

Numbers and Jobs

One is a number; it wants to be a doctor,

Two is a number; it wants to be a soldier,

Three is a number; it wants to be a writer,

Four is a number ; it wants to be a teacher,

Five is a number; it wants to be worker,

Six is a number it wants to be a painter;

Seven is a number; it wants to be a lawyer;

Eight is a number; it wants to be a driver;

Nine is a number; it wants to be a farmer,

Ten is a number; it wants to be singer.

Countries and Capitals

Guess where the Big Ben is

I know, I know in London it is,

Guess where London is

I know, I know in England it is,

Guess where the Eiffel is

I know, I know in Paris it is,

Guess where the Paris is

I know, I know in France it is,

Guess where the Colosseum is

I know, I know in Rome it is,

Guess where the Rome is

I know, I know in Italy it is,

Guess where the White House is

I know, I know in Washington it is,

Guess where the Washington is

I know, I know in America it is,