

UTILIZING ENGLISH SONGS TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH

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Abstract. This study, entitled "Utilizing English Songs to Illustrate Students' Interest in Learning English." Consequently, the research was framed around the central question: "What was the most effective time to employ songs in teaching English to motivate students?" The aim was to determine the best time to employ songs in teaching English to motivate students: at the beginning, midway, or end of the lesson. It was hoped that once teachers know the best time to play a song, they would implement it to encourage and motivate students to learn English better. The method used was a quasi-experiment to measure students' scientific attitudes and learning motivation. In this design, one class was given the treatment, and each meeting was assessed using an observation sheet to measure scientific attitudes and a student learning motivation. The results of the study found that the best time to use songs to motivate students to learn English was midway through the lesson. Playing songs at this time was believed to attract students' attention throughout the lesson, thereby maintaining their motivation. Therefore, teachers were expected to pay attention to creating a pleasant learning atmosphere by using songs midway through the lesson.

Keywords: *Utilizing, English Songs, Illustrate, Students' Interest, Learning English*

INTRODUCTION

For more than fifty years, English has been taught as a foreign language (TEFL) in Indonesia, encompassing educational institutions from junior high schools to universities. The Indonesian populace considers English to be the primary foreign language, and students need to achieve proficiency in it, despite Indonesia not being an English-speaking country. Ganschow (2010: 2) notes that learners of English as a foreign language often encounter challenges during their initial stages of study. A contributing factor to this difficulty is the substantial linguistic difference between their native language and the target language.

English teachers have significant responsibility in the teaching and learning process; however, their students are foreign language learners, and typically these students receive input in the new language only in a classroom and by artificial means. So, teachers' function is seen mainly as a provider of materials and conditions for learning English. Ghazali (2010, p. 96) states that the effectiveness of a teaching and learning process can occur originally or by creating learning conditions. In creating a learning condition, students' ability and language production can be developed through some affective language activities. These activities are planned to provide holistic information input, alleviate students' worries, and create an opportunity to convey a message.

Girard (1996, p. 276) posits that schoolchildren in the process of acquiring a foreign language are more likely to succeed when their teachers implement strategies that effectively stimulate and sustain both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Students' motivation is not stable because of some factors such as family problems, classmates, personal problems, laziness, and teachers (Alizadeh, 2016; Matsumoto & Obama, 2001; Nicholson, 2013). Various pedagogical approaches can be employed to enhance student engagement in language learning. For instance, utilizing visual aids to teach vocabulary, integrating games to explicate grammatical concepts, and incorporating English songs to aid in pronunciation are all potent methods. These techniques are believed to significantly contribute to the development of students' competencies, particularly in areas such as vocabulary enhancement, pronunciation accuracy, and the cultivation of listening and speaking skills.

A proficient educator must recognize that motivation plays a vital role in successfully fostering second or foreign language acquisition. It plays a significant role in determining the level of active and personal engagement that students exhibit in the learning process. According to Hughes (1960, p. 15), the primary responsibility of a teacher is to stimulate and guide learning activities. This assertion provides an accurate and concise depiction of their role, highlighting that teachers are integral figures in a child's educational development. They exert control over various manageable aspects of the educational process, and the effectiveness of the outcomes is fundamentally influenced by the teachers' ability to exercise this control wisely. Thus, it is essential for educators to focus on enhancing their students' motivation.

In the role of a motivator, a teacher needs to comprehend the factors that influence students' motivation to learn, whether these factors stem from internal needs or external environmental influences. According to Guildford (1950: 2), motivation can be defined as the combination of effort and desire to achieve a specific goal, along with a favorable attitude toward language learning. He elucidates second language motivation as the degree to which an individual endeavors to learn a language driven by an intrinsic desire and the satisfaction derived from that learning experience. More specifically, motivation is categorized into three components: motivational intensity, the desire to acquire the language, and a positive attitude toward the process of learning the language.

Guildford (1950: 2) identifies three primary sources of motivation in the learning process: 1) The inherent interest of the learner, which encompasses intrinsic satisfaction and a passion for acquiring new knowledge; 2) Extrinsic rewards provided by teachers or educational institutions, such as positive reinforcement and commendation; and 3) The achievement of success in tasks, which integrates both satisfaction and reward. Individuals tend to engage more in activities in which they perform well, thereby increasing their likelihood of participation and effort in those areas. In an educational context, this often manifests as students who perceive themselves as "not proficient in English" tending to avoid situations that reinforce this negative self-perception. Educators frequently pose questions such as, "How can I effectively stimulate a student to engage with material that they ought to learn but show a lack of interest in?" or "How can I guide that student toward developing new and more constructive interests?" The challenge lies in discovering methods that yield positive outcomes. By leveraging their understanding of students, educators modify certain stimuli—primarily their instructional methods—with the intention of eliciting desired responses. When a student exhibits a positive response, such as

demonstrating learning, it is indicative of their motivation to engage in the learning process. One effective strategy for educators to manipulate stimuli is through the incorporation of music in the classroom. Another emphasis by Nurani (2021) in Wusqo (2024) is that songs serve a range of purposes and provide numerous benefits, including the development of creativity. In that circumstance, songs can be utilized to educate and inform. In other way, a song can keep the audience entertained. Song is one of the most effective techniques to affect students' emotional behaviors because students may believe that listening to music in class is a game or activity designed to calm their brains rather than a learning experience.

Rahmawati (2012: 2) posits that integrating music into learning environments constitutes an innovative strategy that enhances student motivation while fostering a joyful atmosphere. As music serves to engage both the heart and mind, its efficacy in facilitating learning is well-documented. Fatonah (2004: 90) asserts that using English songs in EFL classrooms can successfully bring about affective learning through providing a harmonious classroom atmosphere, reducing students' anxiety, fostering their interests, and motivating them to learn the target language. Students regard English songs as part of entertainment rather than work and thus find learning English through songs amusing and relaxing. Children demonstrate optimal learning outcomes when they engage actively with the arts, language, and culture represented in the songs they perform. Slattery (in El-Nahhal, 2011: 3) characterizes a song as a form of poetry that is accompanied by musical elements. Throughout history, songs have been a fundamental aspect of the human experience. Campbell (1997: 1) asserts that a majority of individuals possess an affinity for songs, which are often perceived as possessing a magical quality that can elicit a wide spectrum of emotions, including joy and sorrow. Slattery (in El-Nahhal, 2011: 3) further articulates that songs represent an integral component of linguistic experience; when incorporated into language instruction, they can significantly enhance the educational process. Additionally, the growing accessibility of the internet, particularly the World Wide Web, has facilitated easier access to music and lyrics, thereby enriching both classroom experiences and the personal lives of students. Campbell (1997: 227) states that reading and writing skills could only be introduced to students once listening and sound recognition were involved, allowing them to learn texts and vocabulary directly from the song. "In the learning process, the introduction of reading and writing skills becomes effective only when listening and sound recognition are first engaged. By exposing students to the sounds of words and their pronunciation, they are better prepared to connect spoken language with written forms. Through this approach, students can directly learn new vocabulary and understand the text of a song more meaningfully, as they experience the transition from hearing and recognizing sounds to reading and writing them accurately."

METHOD

This research investigated the significance of incorporating songs into the teaching and learning of English as a means to illustrate students' interest. The study emphasized English thematic songs and the optimal timing for their integration during lessons to effectively engage learners. This inquiry highlights the potential of integrating songs within lessons to stimulate student interest, as noted by Harmer

(2010). However, the precise timing for the implementation of songs, which constitutes an essential focus of this research, remains to be established.

This study focuses on how song was manipulated during the period of an English class meeting. There were three treatments in each time frame, bringing the total to nine class meetings. The manipulation of songs had included experimentation with thematic songs suitable for the English syllabus. The thematic song used in this study was only "Old McDonald Had a Farm" played with accompaniment of different genres of music, like pop and country. The writer, as the English teacher in a junior high school, found that this class was a moderate class in learning because the fifteen students were a group of five students who had learned English at elementary school and ten of whom had not learning English at all.

The procedures of this study started with the planning phase. In this phase, the writer prepared lessons for the experiment and collected learning materials and media. For nine meetings in three time frames, the subject was about descriptive text, with the skill competency being reading and writing. The treatment phase consisted of three teaching experiments in ninety minutes for each time frame according to the three time frames of songs; in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the classes. In the observation phase, a collaborator needed to observe the classroom interaction between the writer and the students and filled in the observation guide according to what actually had taken place. An evaluation was held to measure the correlation between students' activity when the song was played and the results of the formative test. For each time-frame song, the writer collected two sets of scores from the observation list and the formative test. A correlational measurement was then applied to see how much a time-frame song affects the learner's learning achievement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Playing a song at the beginning of the lesson. In the beginning, the researcher used the song titled Old McDonald Had a Farm that was chosen based on the topic's descriptive text. The teaching goals during the experiment were (1) to understand the meaning of functional written texts and very simple short essays in descriptive and procedural form related to the immediate environment, and (2) respond to the meaning and rhetorical steps accurately, fluently and acceptably in very simple essays related to the immediate environment in descriptive and procedural texts. The main purpose of the song was to stimulate students' activity in following the lesson. The procedures of treatment were done as stated in lesson plan 1. The researcher and the collaborator entered the classroom and greeted the students. After checked the students' attendance, the researcher started to play a song. Then, she asked the students if they were familiar with the song and whether they were able to identify the names of animals from the song. To this question, some students answered that they recognized the words "cat" and 'dog'. The purpose of a song to be played at the beginning of the lesson was to create a joyful learning atmosphere as well as to raise the students' activity. After the question and answer activity, students were given a reading text with the title "My Cat" to read for about ten minutes, and did some tasks based on the reading. It was a descriptive text. The same teaching procedures were used for the second and third meetings, only the topic of the lesson was different. At the end of the third meeting, however, a formative test was given. The test was scored to be correlated with the average score of the observation lists. The result showed that students seemed to follow all the teaching interactions but they were not

seriously active in carrying out the teaching tasks offered by the teacher. In terms of learning behavior, not any of the seven items observed (demonstrated the ability to follow classroom routines, actively involved in variety learning activities, demonstrated an understanding of the instructional activity, worked independently for an appropriate period of time, cooperated in a group for an appropriate period of time, used equipment/materials appropriately and interacted with peers in both structured and unstructured activity) showed significant activeness in learning. However, students' participation in working independently showed somewhat active involvement, and so had used the equipment to support learning. It was also found that the average students who were shown their activeness following the lesson after listening to a song showed 'low'. Eight students clearly demonstrated the ability to follow classroom routines. When a text titled "My Cat" was introduced, only two students were clearly evident worked independently and enthusiastically found the difficult words in the dictionary, while eleven students were somewhat evident worked it independently. These eleven students did perfunctory task and somewhat evident to use equipment/materials. These students were not motivated intrinsically or extrinsically. Also, when a song was played at the beginning, four students were clearly involved in a variety of learning activities and demonstrated an understanding of the instructional activity. When the students did the cooperation in a group and interact with peers, ten students clearly showed their activeness. Students were intrinsically motivated to work independently for an appropriate period of time and in using equipment/materials. Finally, we could conclude that for overall learning activities in the beginning song, the students showed less activity.

Playing a song in the middle of the lesson. The researcher used the same song, "Old McDonald Had a Farm," in the second treatment that was chosen based on the topic's descriptive text. The song had two functions: to refresh the learners' mood and to recall students' knowledge about domestic animals. The procedure of treatment was done as stated in lesson plan 2. The researcher and the collaborator entered the classroom and greeted the students. After checking the students' attendance, the researcher continued the lesson. The students were given a reading text with the titles "My Cat" and "Panzer" to answer the comprehension questions stated in the text. This activity aimed to build students' reading comprehension skills. Domestic animals found in the song "Old McDonald Had a Farm" were introduced, and the writer revised students' vocabularies. Then the song played again in the middle of the lesson. After being played, the tasks about adjective words dealing with describing things were delivered while the collaborator did the observation, saw the students' activity. The same teaching procedures were used for the second and the third meeting; however, a formative test was given. Following the treatment of the second time-frame song was the measurement of correlation between the activeness scores as a result of the second time-frame song and test scores. The results showed that students' participation during the second time-frame song was active. It seems that the students were following all the teaching interactions seriously. Significant numbers of student clearly showed their activity following the activities in the class. However, the students' participation in working independently, cooperating, and interacting with peers showed clear active involvement.

The average students who showed their activity following the lesson was high. These active students were evident showed their activeness following the activities when a song was played in the middle of the lesson. In the classification of students' activeness, the score belonged to "medium". Eight students clearly demonstrated the

ability to follow classroom routines and worked independently, cooperated in a group and interacted with peers. These eight students showed their extrinsic motivation to tell their opinions about the animals and got compliment for their efforts. Six students were clearly evident demonstrated an understanding of the instructional activities and used equipment /materials appropriately. They were intrinsically motivated did tasks given and joined the activities when a song played in the middle of the lesson. Finally, we could conclude that for overall learning activities in the middle song, the students were showed medium activeness.

Played a song at the end of the lesson. The researcher still used the same song "Old McDonald Had a Farm," in the third treatment, but with accompaniment by country music to make the song vary in practice. The song was chosen based on the topic's descriptive text. The song had a function to refresh the learners' mood after following the whole activities that day. The procedures of the treatment were done as stated in lesson plan 3. The researcher and the collaborator entered the classroom and greeted the students. After checking the students' attendance, the researcher stated to continue the lesson by giving writing skills activities. Students were asked to write a simple text describing animals. While the students were engaging in the learning activities, the collaborator carried out an observation on the students' participation. Finally, the song "Old McDonald Had a Farm" played at the end of the lesson. The same teaching procedures were used for the second and the third meeting, only the topic of the lesson was different. At the end of the third meeting, however, a formative test was given. Following the treatment of the third time-frame song was the measurement of the correlation between the activeness score as a result of the third time-frame song and test scores.

The results showed that students' participation during the third time-frame song was not very active. It seemed the students were following all the teaching interactions but they were not seriously active. There were small, significant numbers of students who clearly showed their activity following the activities in the class. However, the students' participation in working independently showed somewhat active involvement, and so used of equipment to support learning. The average students who showed their activity following the lesson was "low". Only five students were evident, demonstrating the ability to follow classroom routines and interact with peers. Four students were involved in a variety of learning activities and demonstrated an understanding of the instructional activity. Three students worked independently and used equipment/materials, while six students cooperated for an appropriate period. Finally, we could conclude that for overall learning activities at the end song, the students showed low activity.

The result of the correlation between the activeness scores and text scores was higher in the second time-frame song. This indicated that the students' motivation rose when a song was played in the middle of the lesson. If songs were played and sung in the middle, a joyful atmosphere was created, and students were happy to finish the rest of the activities that day. Students have already heard the song before and have already known what the song about; so, they like and have a strong desire to sing the song.

The result of treatment of the second time-frame song was the measurement of correlation between the activeness scores as resulted from the second time-frame song and test scores. The calculation of their correlation was presented in the following:

Table 1
Data Participation of Time-Frame Song 2

| No. | Students | Learning Behavior Observation | Learning Achievement Test | Y2 | X2 | XY |
|-----|------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. | Alpen | 60 | 60 | 3600 | 3600 | 3600 |
| 2. | Agripa | 60 | 60 | 3600 | 3600 | 3600 |
| 3. | Ardon | 57 | 50 | 2500 | 3249 | 2850 |
| 4. | Delia | 90 | 80 | 6400 | 8100 | 7200 |
| 5. | Elisabet | 90 | 80 | 6400 | 8100 | 7200 |
| 6. | Frengki | 71 | 70 | 4900 | 5041 | 4970 |
| 7. | Immanuel | 50 | 50 | 2500 | 2500 | 2500 |
| 8. | Indriyanti | 50 | 50 | 2500 | 2500 | 2500 |
| 9. | Marvin | 71 | 70 | 4900 | 5041 | 4970 |
| 10. | Marten | 66 | 50 | 2500 | 4356 | 3300 |
| 11. | Retna | 71 | 70 | 4900 | 5041 | 4970 |
| 12. | Remon | 90 | 80 | 6400 | 8100 | 7200 |
| 13. | Valeri | 90 | 80 | 6400 | 8100 | 7200 |
| 14. | Yabes | 90 | 80 | 6400 | 8100 | 7200 |
| 15. | Yusnan | 90 | 80 | 6400 | 8100 | 7200 |
| | | 1096 | 1010 | 70300 | 83528 | 76460 |

Based on the data presented above, the correlation between the activeness scores and test scores could be measured using the following formula:

$$r = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{(n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2)(n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)}}$$

Where:

$$r = \frac{(15|76460) - (1096|1010)}{\sqrt{(15|83528 - 1096)^2 (15|70300 - 1010)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{11470 - 11070}{\sqrt{(15|82432)^2 - (15|69290)^2}}$$

$$r = \frac{400}{(12372|1040)^2}$$

$$r = \frac{400}{(1531|1082)}$$

$$r = \frac{400}{449} = 0,89$$

As we could see, the value of $r = 0,89$ indicated the positive correlation between students' learning achievement and students' activeness in the second time-frame song. Index correlation was higher close to 1.000. So, we could conclude that there was high correlation.

CONCLUSION

After researching to identify the optimal timing for incorporating songs in English language instruction, the author found a significant increase in student motivation.

The correlation analysis conducted during the mid-lesson song revealed a positive relationship between students' motivation—evidenced by their learning behaviors when a song was played midway through the lesson—and their learning achievement. Thus, it can be concluded that the most effective time to integrate songs into English teaching to enhance student motivation is during the middle of the lesson.

Given the positive impact of using songs at this juncture, the author recommends that the implementation of joyful learning strategies, utilizing songs, should be expanded to further engage students and enhance their enjoyment of the English learning process.

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