

# FAN, TA'LIM, TEXNOLOGIYA VA ISHLAB CHIQRARISH INTEGRATSIYASI ASOSIDA RIVOJLANISH ISTIQBOLLARI NOMLI III ILMYI ONLAYN KONFERENSIYA

## Using songs in teaching English.

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**Abstract:** Songs play an important role in the development of young children learning a second language. This paper begins by looking at why songs can be considered valuable pedagogical tools. In particular, it will discuss how songs can help learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation, and how they can be useful in the teaching of vocabulary and sentence structures. It will be also discussed how songs can reflect culture and increase students' overall enjoyment of learning a second language.

**Key words:** young learners, songs, music, pre-teaching activities, while-teaching activities, post-teaching activities, natural human need, skill, perfect learning tool.

Most children enjoy singing songs, and they can often be a welcome change from the routine of learning a foreign language. For the teacher, using songs in the classroom can also be a nice break from following a set curriculum. Songs can be taught to any number of students and even those teachers with the most limited resources can use them effectively. Songs can play an important role in the development of language in young children learning a second language. Yet songs may be used relatively ineffectively and the potential for language learning is not maximized. One advantage of using songs in the young learner classroom is their flexibility. Songs can be used for a number of purposes and there are many reasons why songs can be considered a valuable pedagogical tool. Songs can help young learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation, therefore potentially helping them to improve their speaking skills.<sup>1</sup> Songs can also be useful tools in the learning of vocabulary, sentence structures, and sentence patterns, not to mention their reflectivity of mother tongue culture (Murphey, 1992). Perhaps the greatest benefit to using songs in the classroom is that they can be fun. Pleasure for its own sake is an important part of learning a language, something which is often overlooked by teachers, and songs can add

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<sup>1</sup> Murphey, T. (1992). Music and Song. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

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interest to the classroom routine and potentially improve student motivation. Songs can also help to improve listening skills because they provide students with practice listening to different forms of intonation and rhythm. English has a stress-timed rhythm, for which songs can help to establish a feeling. Children are often keen to learn how to make new sounds and this can take a great deal of practice. Some teachers use minimal-pair drills, yet these types of activities are rarely interesting for young learners. Songs, on the other hand, can allow young learners to practice a new sound without producing the same level of boredom. Songs also have a natural rhythm with a recurring beat that is similar to the stress patterns of spoken English. These patterns make some songs useful for practicing rhythm and stress. The song *Girls and Boys Come Out and Play* could be used effectively to teach English rhythm and stress, for example:

Girls and boys come out to play,  
The sun above is bright today.  
Leave your work and leave your sleep,  
Come and join us in the street.  
Come with a shout and come with a call,  
Come with a smile and bring your ball.  
Down the steps and up the path,  
All the fun will make you laugh.<sup>2</sup>

Ohata (2004) shows the differences in vowels, consonants and syllable types that cause difficulties for Japanese learners of English. Practicing the different sounds by singing songs can be more interesting and enjoyable than other activities such as minimal-pair drills. Songs can provide the opportunity for vocabulary practice. They are usually based around a theme or topic that can provide the context for vocabulary learning. The song *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*, for example, could be used to review body parts, or 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. Songs can be used as a valuable teaching and learning tool. Using songs can help learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation; they can also be useful for teaching vocabulary and sentence structures. Probably the greatest benefit to using songs in the classroom is that they are enjoyable. Unfortunately, despite these advantages, simply singing

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<sup>2</sup> Richards, J. (1969). Songs in language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 3(2), 161-174.

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songs will not teach learners how to communicate in another language. Using songs as tasks might be one way of helping transfer words from songs into use, and maximize the potential of songs as teaching and learning tools. Adapting existing children's songs is one method that teachers can use to increase their repertoire of songs, thus giving them more opportunity to use songs in their teaching contexts.

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