

TEACHING LISTENING SKILLS TO YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH THE SONGS AND STORYTELLING IN EFL CLASSES

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Abstract: Teaching English to young learners (TEYL) is widely expanded and became one of the crucial thing in teaching system of all countries. TEYL is crucial and challenging for teachers because this is the new way of teaching young learners are totally different from adults. Listening is one of the parts of English and for young learners it is more logical method to teach listening firstly, as they will be just learning to write or read. So, teaching listening to children seems more complex than writing or reading as children's short span of concentration and anxiety. In this article we try to conduct with some methods namely, songs and storytelling to teach listening skills to young learners in EFL classes as the songs and storytelling are the lovely activities children enjoy listening.

Keywords; TEYL, songs, storytelling, YL, methods, anxiety, enjoyment.

I. Introduction

Listening is one of the parts of English and interrelated with other skills such as speaking. When students listen to songs they adore it and in very young stage they learn by listening and imitating to their parents and adults. From listening they start learning and understanding their native language and they try to speak with those heard words. As listening is an effective tool in teaching why not to use it? According to Sevik (2012) musical expression has pivotal role in human experience and children answer enthusiastically to songs and stories. The rhythmic and repeated nature of songs, as well as the enjoyment that the connection between melody and content offers to the learning activity, are the songs' most salient characteristics that support language acquisition. (Sevik 2012). Millington (2011) adds that songs improve listening skills, and speaking with its pronunciation, additionally students' vocabulary, sentence structure and sentence patterns will be acquired easier and songs influence to children's culture and outlook, he points out that the pleasure is a key element in songs.

Songs are often enjoyable for kids, and they can provide a welcome diversion from the monotony of language study. Using songs in the classroom can also give the teacher a wonderful break from sticking to a rigid curriculum. Any number of kids can be taught songs, and even teachers with the fewest resources can make good use of them. Songs can be quite helpful for young children acquiring a second language in terms of their language development (Millington, 2011).

Another methodology to teach listening to young learners efficiently is stories and fairy tales. Tales and stories are memorable and meaningful activities to teach listening skills to YLs (Verdugo vs Belmonte, 2007). As children love to listen to different stories teachers can use them to improve students’ English language skills and expand their outlook to the world and improve their creativity. As we have two world one is real one where we live and second is the bigger one which is our imagination by thinking and imagining we can improve our fantasy and outlook.

To sum up this section, we can note that songs and stories are useful, meaningful and developing tools when we use them as pedagogical tools. As young learners prefer playing and listening to different songs and stories, teachers can utilize them to teach English more efficiently and help them better learn the language without boring and tedious lessons.

II. Literature review

TEYLs is one of the areas which was widely expanded, according to the need to of English language. Now, parents want their children acquire the language much earlier and faster. Teaching young learners is totally different from teaching adults, as the psychology and outlook differs teaching approaches and methodologies also must be various. This theory was conducted by many scientists as Oduolowu vs Akintemi, 2014; Rokhayani, 2010 ; Mustafa Sevik, 2012; Millington, 2011; Rubina, 2018; and etc.. In the literature review firstly young learners will be discussed, furthermore songs and stories will be looked through as a pedagogical tool in TEYLs.

Young learners

Learners are divided into categories according to their age and maturity level, and young learners (YL) are children under 14 years says Atik Rohayani, according to Lynne Cameron, young learners are those who are under the age of 14 years old. Young learners are defined as children between the ages of approximately 5 and 12 (Rixon, 1999, cited in Yuliana, 2003). Additionally, the years spent in primary or elementary school prior to entering secondary school are the major basis for the concept of young learners. Because of this, the ages of the young students may differ from one country to the next. According to some psycholinguists, being young is one of the keys to language learning success. There are a few reasons why young children learn more effectively. First, learning a language is possible even before puberty since the brain is more adaptive than because young children have more opportunities than adults, as well as early self-consciousness. Without the concerns and obligations of grownups, youngsters are always learning (Brumfit, 1994, cited in Yuliana, 2003).

Songs as pedagogical tools.

As above mentioned songs are one way to improve listening skills of young learners without any unpleasant feelings. The greatest point is made by Demirel (2004, quoted in Sevik, 2012), who contends that teaching songs to young learners is the most

efficient approach to teach them listening comprehension, pronunciation, and dictation.

There are several psychological problems that YL instructors face;

- Limited attention span of YLs
- Being shy and close to others
- Strong emotional attachment to teacher

These problems are mostly faced and teachers must cope with them and find many interactive methods in TEYL. Rohayani (2010) points out that TEYL is important, teaching is complex, but instructors may work as a children and use games, lovely songs, favourite stories and dances to solve the problem.

Yuliana (2003) provided with the idea “children learn through play” and this is the real and tested method in teaching YLs. While Milington (2011) came up with the idea using songs as tasks. In his article he introduced three stages of using songs; 1. Preparation, 2. Core activity, 3. Follow-up activity. And he demonstrated how he utilized the songs “the wheels on the bus” to improve listening skills and prove his opinion. Furthermore, Advantages of teaching listening through songs are ;

- Real language use (students can listen and use the natives words which are used daily)

- Funny and enjoyable atmosphere
- Best practice for repetition without boredom

3 reason why to choose songs by Sevik (2012)

1. Affective reason. A positive attitude and environment enhancement in language learning.

2. Cognitive reason. Fluency and automatic use of grammar structures and patterns.

3. Linguistic reason. Variety of words and nonacademic settings.

While choosing and presenting a songs teachers must follow several rules. According to Ersöz (2007, cited in Sevik, 2012), educators should take care to select songs that:

- have basic, understandable lyrics;
- relate to a subject or language that students are learning in class;
- have repetitive lines.
- Make activities simple for kids to perform (this helps to emphasis meaning).

Tales and stories.

Storytelling one way to teach listening, as children listen listening skills will be improved and while listening a story students comprehend the meaning of it and become aware of rhythm, intonation and pronunciation. (Rubina, 2018)

People have always shared stories in all eras and locations. The teller and the audience are both involved in the oral storytelling tradition. While the audience perceives the message and conjures up individual mental images from the words heard and the actions seen, the storyteller produces the experience. The majority of kids enjoy

reading books, and it was thought of as a learning tradition. It has a significant impact on how well kids learn languages. The linguistic skills of youngsters, such as listening, imagination, and prediction, can be developed through the use of stories with relevant settings, natural repetition, appealing characters, and intriguing narratives (Rokhayani, 2010). Furthermore, stories reduce anxiety of students and they try to listen attentively and guess the meaning of the story and predict the ongoing actions as an active listener. Students enjoy it. (Rubina, 2018).

Stories provide firstly meaningful context, secondly, natural repetition and lastly, develop listening skill in English and children love to listen an attractive story. The students who had higher listening skills according to Oduolowi and Akintemi, (2014) were exposed to high level of illustration and were permanently listened to stories. And females were better listeners than males, also cultural background was tested and stories which are mostly preferred were the stories which reflect national culture of each country.

In order to pique the interest of the students, teachers should consider topics that relate to the experiences or interests of the students when selecting stories. Children are more concerned with their past experiences or current interests. Age of the children must also be taken into account. A successful teaching and learning process depends on the characters of stories. Young learners enjoy stories, cartoons, and animals. In order for youngsters to remember and appreciate the stories as well as for the language to be more memorable, it will be good to select stories that have a straightforward and engaging storyline or a surprising finish.

Furthermore, the use of storytelling in language instruction has several benefits. According to Wright (2004), youngsters get a significant amount of consonant-rich language experience from stories that rely so heavily on words.

According to Rubina's research Children in primary school did not listen to the stories in English lessons and she used stories to teach English the results were that children enjoyed listening to stories, but while listening strategies as predicting, inferring opinions or attitudes are not used.

III. Conclusion

All in all, TEYL is widely expanded and teachers are facing problems in teaching as teaching adults, teenagers, and young learners totally differs.

While teaching listening first is more logical as children are not able to freely write or read. Because of students limited attention span, anxiety and shame, and other psychological disorders teaching them requires much innovation.

Teaching listening through songs and stories are the approaches that can be helpful and interesting for children. As songs and tales are part of everyday life and children appreciate listening to songs and chants and listening to various tales and stories enable teachers to use in TEYL to show better results.

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