**Teaching English by Using Song**

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**Abstrak**

***Pelajaran bahasa Inggris adalah salah satu mata pelajaran yang wajib dipelajarai di sekolah di Indonesia. Salah satu ujuan pengajaran Mata Pelajaran bahasa Inggris dalam Kurikulum yang berlaku saat ini adalah mengembangkan kemamupuan berkomunikasi dalam bahasa tersebut baik lisan maupun tulis. Kemampuan tersebut meliputi mendengarkan (listening), berbicara (speaking), membaca (reading), dan menulis (writing). Banyak media yang dapat digunakan untuk mengembangkan kemampuan tersebut, salah satu diantaranya adalah lagu (song). Lagu dianggap sangat cocok digunakan dalam mengajar bahasa Inggris, sebab lagu tidak saja dapat digunakan sebagai media utama pembelajaran, tetapi lagu dpat juga digunakan guru sebagai media alternative dalam mengajar bahasa Inggris bila masih ada waktu tersisa di akhir pembelajaran. Disamping itu, Lagu juga dapat digunakan meningkatkan motivasi belajar siswa, sebab lagu dapat meredakan ketegangan belajar, meingkatkan kegembiraan, kerjasama, serta menyenagkan hati dalam belajar. Tujuan tulisan ini adalah menggambarkan tentang bagaimana mengajar bahasa Inggris melalui media lagu, kriteria dan dan prinsip-prinsip memilih lagu, kelebihan dan kelemahan lagu, langkah-langkah mengajar deng lagu, dan latihan-latihanbelajar dengan lagu.***

***Key words: Teaching English, Song***

1. **Introduction**

English becomes a compulsory subject in Indonesia. It has an important role to the development country, such as our county. In this country English is studied from elementary school up to university level. Even in some kindergarten in big cities have introduced is as a local curriculum.

Teaching English is not easy job. There are many factors that influence the succeed of teaching program. The students sometimes do not have motivation to learn, they are bored to study during the class processing. Consequently, the teacher should be active and play a certain role to overcome the problems.

The roles played by the teacher in creating a lively classroom is essential. One of the roles is creating enjoyable classroom atmosphere by choosing media for teaching. There are a lot of media that can be used by the teacher in English teaching. The most important thing is how the teacher selects the interested media for teaching without ignoring the students’ needs. The interested media should create a lively, enjoyably and meaningful teaching. One medium which is expected has a high effect on students motivation in learning English is using song. Classes by using song can create an atmosphere more conducive to learning. (Lems; 2018)

Songs have been more and more popular in language learning for decades because song can also give learners the opportunity to listen to someone other than (you), their teacher. Song is a fantastic media for teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). It is not only used for fun and entertainment but it also can provide a great effect for language teaching and learning. All skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing can be taught by using song.

Considering the fact above, there are many teachers still focus their teaching on the hand book used. Meanwhile there still many materials that can be used in teaching English which provide teachers with many materials or media to improve the teaching process, such as song.

Based on the explanation above, this article tries to discuss about the use of song in teaching English which entitled “Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) by Using Song”.

1. **Overview of Song**

Basically, song can be defined as a short piece of music, usually with words. According to Hornby (1990) “Song is a piece of music with words that is sung”.

In studying songs and songwriting, there seem to always be common threads to the basic components of successful songs. They are melody, beat and rhythm, chord, genre and style, concept and story, hook, song section, arrangement, length, and lyrics (Steve, 2014). The most common discussion by people on song is the words. The words of a song are called lyrics. The lyrics describe the concept, theme and/or title of the song. They can include a series of verses, the longer sections of the song that tell the story, and a refrain, a short phrase repeated at the end of every verse.

Song have been parts of the human experience for as long as we can remember. Song cannot be separated from human life, because according to Gugliemino (1986) adult sing at religious service, bars, in the shower and listening to the car audio. Kuśnierek (2016) Songs play a meaningful role in life. it can be heard almost in every place around the world. Such kind of entertainment as song may be applicable for students’ to learn, efficiently and enjoyably.

The purpose of song is to express and modulate emotions. It is used to soothe, psych up, woo, enrage, sadden and cheer each other, or ourselves (Hein, 2012).

Song is a wonderful tool to learn a language. As mention above that song is filled with lyrics, rhymes, sound patterns, alliterations and so on. Through song students will be aware of how sounds can be manipulated. Students can repeat a sound. Song gives children the sound awareness skills that are critical to learning to read successfully.

Listening to the song means letting the students hear the song over and over again. Practicing listening to the song can develop a love of language and excellent foundation for learning to read.

1. **Song as English learning Media and Material**

Good teachers should be creative. They must have initiative in creating the most effective way to help the students to understand the lesson. There are also expected to be able to prepare and choose the media in such way so that they can create a good class atmosphere. Using song in teaching English is one way of doing creative teaching.

Song is an important role in learning second language, because song is also a great language package that bundles culture, vocabulary, listening, grammar and a host of other language skills in just a few rhymes (Futonge, 2015). Song can also be useful tool in learning of vocabulary, sentence structure, and sentence pattern, not to mention their reflectivity of mother tongue culture (Murphey,1992). The believe that song provides enjoyment and develop language skills is also noted by several other authors (Adamowski, 1997; Domoney & Harris, 1993, Griffee, 1992). Cullen (1999) affirm that song is a significant teaching tool in teaching ESL/EFL because as most teachers find out, students love listening to the song in the language classroom and the often hold strong views about music or song.

Song is an authentic media. Ross (2006) says that an example of authentic learning English media is song. Learners can directly listening to the song, and they also many of them interest to learn the value of English language from it. Songs are good media for learning English, because wherever we are, songs always follow us, at home, at school, at car and anywhere we like, can enjoy it while learning the language aspects and contents of the song.

Related to the essential of using song as media of teaching English, some experts has suggestions. One of them is Eken (1996), he gives us nine reasons why song should be included in the English teaching process;

1. Add variety to a lesson
2. Increase motivation and create a relaxed atmosphere in an ELT classroom involve the whole class participation
3. Encourage creativity and use of imagination
4. Help in practicing pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation
5. Help in practicing grammar items
6. Help in practicing new vocabulary
7. Help learners remember language in chunks
8. Provide reinforcement of language learning
9. Encourage practicing listening skill.

It is clear that song can not only be used to improve students language skills, motivation, activities but song can also be used for fun. If the song is used for improving language skill, song means as main material of teaching. On the other hand, if the teacher do not uses song for improving language skill, but just for fun and relax, such as the teacher teaches song when the class still have more time about five to ten minute left. It means that song is as an alternative material. In short song can be used as a main material or as an alternative material for teaching English.

1. **Criteria and Principles of Choosing Song**

Song is a great source of ‘real-life’ language. Very often song is the main source of English outside the classroom. Thus, using it in the lesson seems to be a good idea. Most of all, song is a fun way to learn English. Song helps students develop cognitive skills, as well as enhance language skills. with song students can learn language appreciation, vocabulary and rhyme (Shipely, 1998). Song is a fantastic media for the English teachers to use with any level of students. So the if teacher wants to teach English by using song, he/she should to choose certain songs that suitable for the students. This is very important because there many types of song, and it is obvious not all types fix for students’ level and needs.

Related to the choosing song, there are some criteria of best song for learning English, namely;

1. Everyday English, it means not too many difficult or new words,
2. Clear, it means the pronunciation and the recording are clear, so that it can easily hear the words,
3. The song is not long, it means just about 2-3 verses.
4. The song is not fast, because if the song is too fast you find difficulties to sing along.
5. Interesting to learners, find the song that the learners like,
6. Suitable subject matter; adjust the vocabulary, grammar, story or content to the lesson in the curriculum.
7. Suitable to level of difficulties; adjust the song to the learners level such elementary, intermediate or advance .

These criteria should be remembered by the teacher whenever he/she want to select the song for teaching English by using song. These criteria are expected can cover the students’ needs for song in teaching English. The quality of the singer’s voce and the quality of recording should also be taken into consideration of the teacher. Because, sometimes even though the singer is a native speaker the lyrics are still difficult to catch by the students.

Another aspect that is expected can determine the succeed of using song in teaching English is the principles of song selection criteria. To be effective of teaching and learning English with song the teacher should consider some principals. These principles are considered very useful for teachers before starting teaching English by using song. The principles are;

1. The Songs should have an appropriate theme. There’s enough bad news, negativity and violence in the world already. Songs with any type of negative theme should be avoided. There are plenty of positive, upbeat, even humorous songs available.
2. The songs should be popular songs with the students whenever possible. Unfortunately, students frequently select songs for classroom use which are objectionable in some way making the song unusable.
3. The songs should be clear and understandable lyrics. Nothing is worse than a song almost nobody can understand. If you have trouble understanding the lyrics by listening, then another song needs to be selected.

Whoever wants to teach English by using song should take these principles as a consideration. Because the theme of song sometimes is very popular for students, but the recording is not clear, or the lyrics are not ethics for student. It also becomes the problem in teaching.

1. **Advantages and disadvantages of Song**

Based on reasons of using song in teaching English above, song can be split into five advantages. These are practicing pronunciation, enriching vocabulary, creating enjoyable class atmosphere, motivating to learn English, and developing the sense of togetherness among students. Each will be discussed in turn.

1. Enriching vocabulary

Vocabulary is a list or set of words for particular language or a list or set of word that individual speakers of language might use Hatch and Brown (1995). Song provide various vocabularies. Learners who listen the English song, they will improve mastery vocabulary because they get more vocabularies from the song that hear. Songs can be useful tools in the learning of vocabulary (Murphey, 1992). It means song can be used as a tool to enrich vocabulary.

1. Practicing pronunciation

Song provide excellent opportunities for practice and repetition that might otherwise be tedious. When listening to the song, there are a lot of unusual sounds your mouth isn’t used to making. Song help your mouth to practice the right shapes and make the sounds loudly and clearly. Song also help you practice how weaker and stronger sound are pronounced differently in English.

1. Creating enjoyable class atmosphere

Probably the most obvious advantage to using songs in the classroom is that they are enjoyable. Most learner enjoy singing and usually respond well to using songs in the classroom. Song can help to create a relaxed and informal atmosphere that makes the classroom a nonthreatening environment. Learners often think of songs as entertainment rather than study and therefore find learning English through songs fun and enjoyable (Millington; 2011).

1. Motivating to learn English

Song can bring variety to the everyday classroom routine. This variety stimulates interest and attention, which can help maintain classroom motivation, thereby helping learners to reach higher of achievement (Millington; 2011).

1. Developing the sense of togetherness among students.

Singing together makes you feel good and provides excellent stress relief. It also gives the joy of success when you are always learning new things.

Research led by psychologist Nick Steward of Bath University indicates that people who participate in choir enjoy a greater feeling of togetherness and being part of collective endeavor than others involved in different social activities. It means through song as a subject matter can be used as tool to tie the sense of togetherness among them and degrease individualize in learning.

Based on the explanation above it can be concluded that song has big advantages for students learning, for instants; language skills mastery, motivation, interest and readiness for work together in learning.

Although, songs have many good aspects, there are some less positive concerns about song that the teachers should regard in the language classroom. Murphey (1992) writes that

1. Loudly playing songs may disturb neighbouring classes.
2. Some learners get too excited and may forget about the discipline.
3. Some students may disagree about musical pieces and they have dissimilar musical tastes.
4. Teachers often complain that the learners just want to listen, not work.
5. Many songs may be intelligible for students since they contain many colloquial expressions and the pace is too fast.

Siek-Piskozub and Wach (2006) add that there are songs which touch taboo topics like violence and sexism and thus such songs may confuse the learners or embarrass them.

1. **Steps of Teaching Eng by Using of Song**

There is no permanent steps for teaching English with song, different experts has different opinions about the steps. Here are some ideas that collected from various sources about the steps which can be applied in teaching English by using song.

The general steps of teaching English by using song can be describe as below;

1. Listen the song

Listen to the song is the first step in the teaching song activities. Here the students are asked to listen carefully for several times, use background knowledge to get the theme and general understanding from the song. But before that the teacher should choose a certain song that suitable for students. He or she may selects song not only entertains students but also helps them with learning English. There are a lot of songs that can be taken into consideration, but only a limited number of songs is acceptable. The theme, grammar, and vocabulary items should conform with the curriculum and the students’ level.

1. Write down the lyrics of the song

Once the students have listened the song a few times. They are asked write down the lyrics as they listen. Pause the song to give themselves time to catch up, and rewind when needed. This will teach them the written portion and reiterate the words they are hearing. The teacher should also highlight unknown words or phrases and look up them to have a deeper understanding of the song’s meaning. This step is also an important step that helps to improve vocabulary. Hence, the teacher does not need to rush, just take it slowly (Lizzy,2017)

1. Read aloud the lyrics of the song

As soon as the students get the lyrics, the teacher asks the students to read loudly to practice correct pronunciation. Of course students probably familiar with for most vocabulary but for some vocabularies students should read loudly to check the pronunciation

1. Memorize the lyrics of the song

The teacher asks the students to memorize the lyrics of the song as frequently as possible : in the classroom or out side the classroom,

1. Recite aloud the lyrics of the song

The teacher asks the students to recite aloud the lyrics of the song individually or together by heart.

1. Sing along with the lyrics of the song

Singing is the most important part of using song to improve your English! Singing the lyrics out loud to the songs you listen to is the best way to improve pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and other language elements. And you can have fun at the same time. The more you can sing from memory, the more fluent you will become (Lizzy,2017).

1. Do the exercises

Remove some words from the song. Ask the students to listen to the song then ask them to fill in the words that have been left out. The teacher may also give a variety of tests, such as; True-False statement, dictation, multiple choice, circle the synonym of the given words, matching, essay or questions.

These steps may apply in teaching English by using song in classroom. There are many steps , so the teacher should be smart to spend the time in each step as efficient as possible, because some of these steps need more time in applying than others.

These steps should be integrated into the while teaching activities. Teaching activities can be divided into three categories namely pre-teaching activities, while teaching activities and after teaching activities. In the while teaching activities the teacher should also has techniques to apply these steps effectively. Because different object of teaching has different techniques teaching to be applied.

1. **Learning English by Song exercises**

Listening exercises are pretty straightforward. it’s important to remember that **the students need exercises or task, but the most important thing to remember by the teacher is he or she should give an interested and various kinds of exercises. They know the purpose, advantages, and how to do well the exercises. In general, the English teaching exercises can be for practicing such as; finding the main idea, finding the detail information, understanding the sequence, vocabulary, cultural interest, attitude and opinion, and functional language (**Pesce: 2018). In teaching English by using song also can be about finding the main idea, vocabulary, functional language as mentioned above. **Here some examples of listening to the song exercises.**

1. Listen to the song and complete the lyrics with the following words; depths – heard - reminds – make – story.

Baby I have no ……….

But I’ve ……. One of you

And I’m gonna…… your head burn

1. Listen to the song and put the following lines in order

I’m not one of those ……

I don’t have much money ……

Who can easily hide ……

It’s a little bit funny ……

1. Listen to the song and complete the lines with full sentences

And you………….

It may be ………..

I……….

I hope you……….

1. Listen to the song and complete the lyrics

May be I …. Really …. To know

How your garden …….

I just ….. to fly

Lately did you ever feel the pain

In the morning rain

As it soak to the bone

1. Listen to the song and correct the underlined words !

I’m standing here in a boring room

It’s just another sunny Monday afternoon

I’m wasting my time I got so much to do

I’m hanging around I’m waiting for Sue

1. Listen to the song then answer these questions!

What does the title of the song suggested?

How many person are there in the song?

There are still many types of exercises that can be use in teaching English by using song. The teachers can chose the best type of exercises on condition the exercises should be meaningful to improve the students’ competencies about English. The teacher can create certain exercises freely to enrich the students knowledge about English subject.

1. **Conclusions**

Nowadays, there are many ways to improve the English teaching and learning process, one of them is by using song. Song may become a great help in teaching English. It cannot be separated from English teaching. It can be used as a core as well as alternative tool for teaching English. Through song, students can improve their language skills and language knowledge , such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking, reading and writing. So it is recommended to the English teachers to use song as media in the English teaching and learning process.

The most important thing, before the teacher want to teach English by using song, there are some considerations that the teachers should thinks, namely; remembering the criteria and principles of good song for teaching, use various techniques and strategies in applying the steps of teaching, focus on not one skill or aspect of language but also on others skills and aspects such as reading, speaking, pronunciation, or vocabulary. Song can create a relaxing atmosphere in the classroom that sometimes really important for the students to make conversation in certain ways.

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