

Use of English Songs to Improve the Vocabulary of Junior Secondary Level Students

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To be competent in writing and speaking in any language, one should master his or her vocabulary. Improving the vocabulary of students who are learning English is an important aspect that teachers of English should pay attention to. In the present context in Sri Lanka, a major problem among school students who are learning English is the lack of competence in vocabulary making them reluctant to write and speak in English. According to McDonald (1984), the use of the songs in English classroom allows the students to hide behind the music and then avoids the heat of an early spotlight landing on a timid students. Therefore this study intended to identify an effective, entertaining and student friendly method to improve the vocabulary of students by using music. As songs are appreciated for their pedagogical, linguistic, cultural and entertaining features and are considered as precious language learning materials to develop any aspect of language. The study investigates whether the learners who are exposed to English songs in their day today learning process in the classroom would display a change in their vocabulary competence in English compared with those who are not exposed to English songs. The Shapiro-Wilk test results confirmed that the test score data are normally distributed and paired-sample t-test was confirmed that the tests score of the methods are different. The findings reveal that appropriately applying music as a learning tool would enhance level of competence of students' knowledge in vocabulary. Therefore based on the results, it can be concluded that teaching vocabulary through listening to English songs is more effective to improve the vocabulary of students than without using songs. Furthermore it can be recommended that music can be utilize as entertaining and student friendly method to improve the vocabulary of students.

Keywords: English; vocabulary; songs; methods; retention