The Impact of Using Songs on Iraqi Intermediate EFL Students' vocabulary Performance.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to discover the impact of using songs on Iraqi EFL intermediate students' vocabulary performance. The sample of the present study consists of sixty students chosen from 3rd grade students at Fatima Al-Zehraa Secondary school for girls in Al-Diwanyia. The students are divided into two groups,30 students for control group and 30 students for the experimental group. To achieve the aim of this study, the researcher designed a pre-posttest of vocabulary. Before the experiment, a pretest in vocabulary is given to both groups. The researcher selected 8 songs to teach students vocabulary through them. The experimental group has been taught vocabulary within the selected songs, whereas the control group has been taught according to traditional instruction. At the end of the experiment which has lasted for six weeks, the same pre-posttest in vocabulary is given to both groups. From the result which has been statistically analyzed, the researcher concludes that the experimental group outperformed the control group. This results reflected the positive effect of the impact of using songs as a good way to teach vocabulary to the intermediate school student. The findings suggested that songs are not merely an entertaining tool, but they can also be utilized as a pedagogic material particularly when it comes to teaching vocabulary.

الملخص

الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو اكتشاف تأثير استخدام الأغاني على أداء مفردات طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية المتوسطة دارسي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. أحتوت عينة الدراسة الحالية على ستين طالباً تم اختيارهم من طلاب الصف الثالث في مدرسة فاطمة الزهراء الثانوية للبنات في

الديوانية. ينقسم الطلاب إلى مجموعتين ، ٣٠ طالبَة للمجموعة الضابطة و ٣٠ طالبَة للمجموعة التجريبية. لتحقيق الهدف من هذه الدراسة ، صمم الباحث الاختبار القبلي للمفردات. وقبل بدىء التجربة تم إعطاء الاختبار في المفردات لكلتا المجموعتين. واختارت الباحثة 8 أغنية لتعليم الطلاب المفردات من خلالها. فقد تم تدريس المجموعة التجريبية المفردات ضمن الأغاني المختارة. بينما تم تدريس المجموعة الضابطة وفقًا للتعليمات التقليدية. في نهاية التجربة التي استمرت ستة أسابيع ، تم تقديم نفس الاختبار القبلي كاختبار بعدي في المفردات لكلتا المجموعتين. وقد تم تحليل النتائج إحصائيا ، و دلت النتائج على أن المجموعة التجريبية تفوقت على المجموعة الضابطة. وقدعكست هذه النتائج التأثير الإيجابي لتأثير استخدام الأغاني كوسيلة جيدة لتدريس المفردات لطالبات المدرسة المتوسطة. تشير النتائج إلى أن الأغاني ليست مجرد أداة مسلية ولكن يمكن استخدامها كذلك كمواد تربوية خاصة عندما يتعلق الأمر بتدريس المفردات.

Key words: Vocabulary, Song, Traditional instruction

Introduction

1. The Problem of the Study and its Significance

Vocabulary is a noteworthy perspective in learning language, particularly in learning English as a second (ESL) or as a foreign language (EFL), in the light of the fact that without adequate vocabulary students can't get others or express their very own thoughts. Vocabulary is a set of words for a specific language or set of words that individual speaker of language may utilize. At the point when students are learning another language, they ought to have enough vocabulary (Hatch and Brown, 1995:37). Wilkins (1993:45) states that grammar is important, but vocabulary is more important than grammar, because without grammar one can convey some information, whereas without vocabulary one can convey nothing.

According to Lado (1979:50), vocabulary can assist students to develop their language skills, that is why vocabulary is considered as an

important factor in any language. Students through vocabulary can convey their own thoughts both in written and oral ways effectively.

When students have insufficient vocabulary, this results in physical aggressiveness and they will find difficulty in conveying and expressing their thoughts (Shoari, 2013:56). In other words, the insufficient vocabulary is a sort of deficiency. Students need enough vocabulary not only to understand what somebody hears and reads, but furthermore to discuss things successfully with others. That's why to get sufficient vocabulary is so fundamental and essential for students to learn EFL (Shoebottom, 2013:31).

According to Schmitt (2010:76),an enormous vocabulary is fundamental for students to utilize language in a foreseen way. In English, when students have enough vocabulary, they can reflect them in the type of writings somebody can peruse; as such, there is a close connection between number of vocabulary student knows and how well s/he accomplishes as far as various language abilities (Nation and Meara, 2002 :46).

It is found that there are challenges for teaching vocabulary in the class. The students have problems in recollecting and getting words. They successfully unable to remember some new words that the educator instructed and all over they couldn't review how to articulate it. This shows their tendency to rebuff the subject of English was achieved by their nonattendance of vocabulary. Language instructor should

consider on the most capable technique to manage an intriguing classroom action so that the students can get an extraordinary accomplishment in their vocabulary learning. Similarly, the students can improve their eagerness for vocabulary learning (Thornburry, 2002:57).

According to August and Carlo (2005:56), "EFL students who are not have enough amount of vocabulary could not understand different types of texts. They consider that those students are of poor performance and are at the risk of being diagnosed as learning disabled students".

What's more, the exhausting method for recollecting the vocabulary turns into the essential problem of numerous students. Students generally acquire English words from their educator and never attempt to build up their vocabulary dominance. Also, the instructor needs innovativeness to improve students' vocabulary dominance. In this manner, the instructor must be inventive in choosing persuading exercises and should offer an extraordinary assortment of the compelling method to gather in learning by giving something enthusiasm to pursue their physical and mental improvement especially in learning vocabulary (Nation,1990:23).

Therefore, in teaching vocabulary to the students the kind of the guidance is vital. For a long time, such a large number of studies have been accomplished for finding the best vocabulary learning procedure (Yongi Gu, 2003:24). That is to say, students ought to have inspiration and motivation to learn and remember vocabulary things so as to peruse,

spell and compose vocabulary. Intriguing way will expand students' inspiration (Nation,1990:25).

It is worth noting that vocabulary plays a significant role in conversation. It follows that the elementary purpose of language learning at the present time is communication. Consequently, vocabulary is necessary to EFL students. What's more is that vocabulary is very essential to do talking, reading, listening comprehension, and writing progresses are also potential. So with sufficient vocabulary students can express their own thoughts and also grasp others. (Nation,1990:27). Ur (2012: 3) points out that words convey meaning. Students need words and tiniest information of grammar to communicate. That is to say, lexis and the base learning of sentence structure is helpful, not alternately. Because of the information of vocabulary, the conceivable user of a language is equipped for conveying. Inside perusing exercises, students would not figure out how to appreciate a content, if they didn't obtain enough vocabulary items.

Thus to assist students to get overcome with regards to learning language particularly EFL, they have to learn vocabulary that is utilized in day by day life. One of the good tools that can rouse students in learning vocabulary is the utilization of song, which acclimates students to new vocabulary and expressions in an enthusiastic manner. Numerous schools have utilized songs to support students in learning and

improving their conduct. Music enables students to obtain vocabulary all the more quickly (Salcedo, 2010:76).

According to Medina (2004:9) a well-known song can animate a wide assortment of helpful words. Murphey (1992:41) states that utilizing the students' main songs can assist them to learn words over the long term; this is known as the tune stuck-in-my – head phenomena. Depending on the background above and to full the gab of, the present study is an attempt to discover: Is there any significant impact of using songs on developing vocabulary performance by Iraqi intermediate EFL students?

1.1 The Aim

The present study aims to investigate the impact of using songs on Iraqi intermediate EFL students' vocabulary performance.

1.2 The Hypothesis

To achieve the aim of the study, it is hypothesized that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students, who are taught vocabulary according to the songs activities and those of the control group students, who are taught vocabulary according to the traditional instruction, in the performance of the post- test.

1.3 The Purpose of the Research

In order to attempt to fill the gap of how to increase students' vocabulary, the researcher believes that teaching vocabulary through

songs may be an additional fruitful technique that can empower both teachers and students with a new way of approaching EFL teaching and learning.

2. Literature Review

A song can be defined as a relatively small melodic arrangement for the human speech, which have vocabulary (lyrics). A "song is a procedure of training words to increase students' eagerness and attention in learning a language where motivation and interest is very significant for learning accomplishment" (Murphey ,1992:31).

Songs are considered as a vital authentic material for instruction in an EFLclassroom. The song not only provide vocabulary, but also provide grammar, and patterns for students to train. Through songs students can get native pronunciation and also improve their listening capability. In addition, students who have some difficulties in expressing their thoughts can acquire the language better by means of the song which offers them a comfortable situation. Songs and rhymes aid students to practise good pronunciation similar to a native speaker (Stansell,2005).

Furthermore, as an effective material to teach vocabulary, teachers can use songs. They can utilize the words of a song, uttering a song, correction, employing a song for gap-fill, assimilating songs into assignment work, involve pronunciation, intonation, and stress. Students are trained lessons by singing songs with a fun situation which can create very confident effect in language learning (Murphey, 1992:37).

According to Yuliana (2003:36), in the process of singing a song, students can get pleasure and not only get many vocabulary, but they can recall them very easily. As words are repeated several times within the songs, they are educated them by heart and as a consequence lead to learners' progress in learning EFL. "The repetitive nature of songs and rhythm is considered as a very important process because it could support students to acquire vocabulary and rhythm of a language". The process of hearing a song, subconsciously will increase students' words (ibid.).

Martin (2013:61) points out that teaching vocabulary through songs has many advantages for students to acquire words in dissimilar way, one is that it provides a comfortable atmosphere and the recurrence required to absorb new vocabulary. It also gives students an opportunity to work with their melodic intelligence, because the aim of the lesson is to deliver students a foundation and a means to study and utilize new vocabulary words. Some researchers have conduct the research on the use of songs in teaching vocabulary. Songs as an instruction device are very operative mainly when instructors have to present new material. By utilizing songs, teachers could stimulate students and make them feel comfortable during instruction and learning progression especially in EFL learning.

Šišková (2008:63) states that "music provides the song's story which supports the students comprehend the words in a situation. Students can

discover vocabulary meaning through hearing the songs over and over again". Consequently, students pick up new vocabulary. Murphey (1992:34) states that "students are able to acquire the language naturally while hearing and singing the songs more than once". Music and songs create motivation for students. The interest and motivation which are provide by the listening to songs play a vital role in learning vocabulary. Furthermore, the videos of the songs are one of the instruments for making students conscious of their learning.

According to Lozanov (1978:73), Music and songs are a great motivator. The using of music and songs through the learning progression will generate the comfortable attention and it is an ideal state of erudition. Songs maintain students to vigorously contribute in the learning involvement, because music aids to increase student participation, they consequently progress improved outlooks concerning class itself. This also increases their general opinion of the language and their outlooks about learning English, as they are more equipped and capable to earnings in different material.

2.1 Importance of Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary "can be defined as the words of a language containing single items and phrases or chucks of several words which offer a particular meaning" (Alemi and Tayebi, 2011:43). According to Taylor (1990: iv), "Vocabulary is central to language teaching and learning" A good vocabulary is really needed in both teaching and learning. If the

learners do not know the meaning of the words, they will have difficulty in understanding what they see, read, and learn.

English words comprise "three primary angles which are structure, meaning and use. They include lexical expressions". Learning vocabulary is challenging because of the size of the assignment; it includes comprehending the varied sorts of vocabulary which grasp: single word, express, figure of speech, fixed vocabulary, collocation, vital vocabulary, and syntax design" (Alemi and Tayebi, 2011:44). Some educators of English and academics have tried to realize the tactics and methods for teaching and education English words since they are aware of the significance of knowledge vocabulary which is the substance for learners' performance in other language skills containing talking, listening, writing, and reading (ibid.)

According to Thornburry (2002:13), "The ability of English will improve significantly if we learn more words". When the students know more vocabulary, their English ability will increase. Then, they can express anything if they master many words.

Harmer (1998:23) argues that "The teachers should ensure that their students are aware of the vocabulary they need for their level and that they can use the words which they want to use". According to Cross (1991:5) "A major aim of most teaching programs is to help students gaining a large vocabulary of useful words". The central purpose of teaching activities is to give more vocabularies to the students. Hence

the teacher should be aware how significant of teaching vocabulary is. Cross (1991:15) also states that "there are two main ways to teach (introduce vocabulary); showing the meaning directly and using the language that the students already know". When the students already recognize the meaning of words, the teacher can use the sentences to illustrate the meaning obviously which are used to motivate the students to increase their vocabularies.

2.2 Songs for English Vocabulary Teaching

According to Richard (2002:402), the song is an extraordinary language bundle that packs culture, vocabulary, tuning in, syntax and a large group of other language abilities in only a couple of rhymes. Some of the time it has rhymes and uses a language style that isn't exactly equivalent to the language style which is used in a sensible or formal substance. The words inside a song are sung explicitly tones, rhythms, speed and style. Music can in like manner give an easygoing activity on a hot debilitating day. A tune for the most part is joined by music instruments, which embellish its exhibition. The students basically appreciate hearing the songs and the requirement for the egocentric language is satisfied incompletely through songs.

According to (Murphey: 1992:3) "In relation to language learning, the use of music and songs offers two major advantages:

3. Music is highly memorable.

4. It is highly motivating especially for children, adolescents and young adult learners". (ibid.) He also states that "anything you can do with a text you can do with a song". It means that everyone can learn or teach the English text using songs.

According to Krashen's (1992) students can learn vocabulary easily when its meaning is made clear to them. Hanshumaker (1980:25) Points out that the melody can rearrange language fulfillment, perusing availability and general proficient improvement to offer inspirational mentality and to bring down uneasiness in third middle of the road level; to create making; and empower social advancement character guideline and self -worth.

Wittaker (1981) states that songs can assist syntax, pronunciation cultural gratitude, words are considered as one of the most significant quantity of language that songs can advantage it.

Lozanov (1978:75) contends that the utilization of music brought about a loosen up state for psyche, and as a result improve learning. A large portion of the students tune in to music when they study might be on the grounds that they believe that music assists them to concentrate on errands. Martin (2013:62) likewise took a shot at the impact of the music and found that through tuning in to the mood melodies students' scores improved fundamentally.

Griffee (1992:5) says that "songs are especially good at introducing vocabulary because songs provide a meaningful context for the

vocabulary". It is clear that songs can be used as an aid to teach vocabulary. Songs contain so many words that aid the students master many meanings too. Griffee (1992:6) also points out that "songs can be used for pattern practice and memory retention". It suggests that if the educators give fitting tasks, songs will give pleasurable repetition with no fatigue and give dynamic interest in the language.

3. Methodology

Depending on a pretest-posttest control group design, the purpose of the present research is to explore whether songs help students develop EFL vocabulary performance or not.

3.1 Population and Sample

A population can be defined as "the whole subjects of the research. Population is all individuals which are being target in research while research sample is individual who give the data" (Creswell ,2005:161).

The population of this study is limited to the third intermediate level students who learn EFL at all the intermediate schools in Iraq. The sample of this study is the students of third intermediate grade at Fatima Al-Zahra Secondary schools for girls in Al-Diwanyia in Iraq. Students were randomly divided into two equivalent groups and they also decided randomly to experimental and control group. The random division "applies based on the consideration that every student in the population has the same chance to be chosen and in order to avoid the subjectivity

in the research" (Creswell ,2005:161). The design of this research was pretest posttest control group design.

3.2 Materials and Instruments

3.2.1 Materials

The present study materials and instrument were song activities and prepost test containing the pretest, and posttest after the management which were similar. The materials employed in this research contained 8 songs with the verbal forms. They were selected from "Song of Action" (Doyle,2008) (see Appendix 1). At most essential dimension, these writings had the accompanying attributes: they are suitable for the students; they additionally contain many words which were new to the third intermediate of the students; and the sound appeared on the tapes is clear, and understandable. The songs were evaluated by the classroom educators to be a little over the students' present level.

3.2.2 Teacher Made Test

The researcher prepared test was intended to quantify the students' recognition of the words and conceivable vocabulary gains from the test. The central rational behind the test was to check whether the students knew the significance of the words. The test included 20 questions concerning vocabulary. A teacher- made test was planned to calculate the student recognition with the words and the conceivable vocabulary gains from the test. A good test should contain validity and reliability.

3.2.3 Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to "the accuracy of clarifications made from test performance, with performance typically taking the form of scores" (Ramsay and Reynolds, 2004:27).

As Hatch and Farhady (1982:251) defines the "content validity as the extended to which a test measure representative sample of the subject matter contents, the emphasis of the content validity is suitability of the sample and simply on the appearance of the test". To obtain the content validity, the researcher modified the test from the students' book. Then the researcher prepared the test according to material (songs) which is taught to the students.

"Construct validity concentrate on the sort of the test that is used to measure the capability, it is used to the research that has many indicators", according to (Creswell (2005:169), for example, to gain construct validity is to measure vocabulary items as one aspect. The instrument has satisfied construct validity as all items have measured vocabulary items. The researcher utilized prepost vocabulary test as the instrument, furthermore all the items in the test measure vocabulary, so it has satisfied construct validity.

According to Shohamy (1985:70), "reliability refers to the extent to which the test is consistent in its score, and it gives one an indication of how precise the test score is. A students' score on the test consists of a true score and mistake". The reliability of the tests was calculated by means of spearman –brown prophecy formula. (Spearman, 1910). The

reliability of the test was equivalent to 0.86, these coefficients revealed that the reliability of the tests was adequate.

3.2.4 Procedures

To examine the questions of the study, two experimental and control groups were chosen. In the present study, the independent variable is song activities, and the dependent variable is students' vocabulary performance.

The participants attended English classes for 45 minutes lesson periods, 5 days a week and 20 sessions each month. The entire period experiment was six weeks.

First of all, the pretest was given to the students. The vocabulary was from different songs and incorporated into the course book of which were suitable for the level of the students. After listening to the words in songs, in experimental group, students in every session were enquired to exercise the new words.

On the other hand, in control group the same words were taught through traditional instruction. That is to say, students were asked to memorize the new words and their equivalents in students' first language. The students also used dictionaries to help them to understand vocabulary. At the end of the experiment the same pre- posttest was directed for estimating the adequacy of the experiment. The gathered information was analyzed by means of SPSS. The researcher utilized t-

test because there were two groups in this study for contrasting the outcomes, and effectiveness of the adequacy of the treatment.

4.Results and Discussion

4.1 Data Analysis

In order to determine the impact of songs on the students' vocabulary performance, vocabulary was tested before the treatment. After the experiment which lasted for six weeks, the same pre-posttest was given. Test analysis was conducted to know whether the dissimilarity between these two groups is important or not.

In the pretest results, both the experimental and control groups were approximately at the same level in vocabulary; this can be demonstrated through comparing the mean scores of them of the pre-test. The mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-test was 13.7000, and the mean scores of the control group was 14.0333 (see table 1).

Table 1. The results of the t-test of the experimental and control groups (pre-test).

| Variable | Group | No. | M. | SD | DF | T-value | | Significance at 0.05 |
						Calculated	Critical	
Subject's Performanc e on the Pre-test	Control group	30	14.0333	3.76447	58	0.272	2.00	Not Significance
	Experimental group	30	13.7000	5.55940				

Table 2. The results of the t-test of the experimental and control groups (post-test)

Variable	Group	No.	M	SD	DF	t-value		Level of significance
						Calculated	Critical	
vocabulary	Control group	30	13.9000	3.65164	58	-14.81	2.000	0.05
	Experimental group	30	30.6000	4.97996				

There are apparent differences in the scores of the experimental and control groups in the posttest. It can also be proved from the results of the posttest when comparing the means of both groups in the post- test. The means of the post-test for control group was 13.9000, while for experimental group was 30.6000 (see table 2 and figure 1).

The null hypothesis was: there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students, who are taught vocabulary according to the songs activities and those of the control group students, who are taught vocabulary according to the traditional instruction, in the performance of the post- test. From the results the null hypothesis is rejected, and to show that there is a difference due to the impact of using songs in teaching vocabulary.

As it is evident form table1 and 2, the students in the control group did not make progress in acquiring vocabulary. As a consequence, there is no important change in the results, so the traditional instruction was not effective in teaching vocabulary. Table 2 shows the results of the experimental group and the control group in the post-test, it demonstrates that there is noteworthy change due to the impact of using of songs in teaching vocabulary.
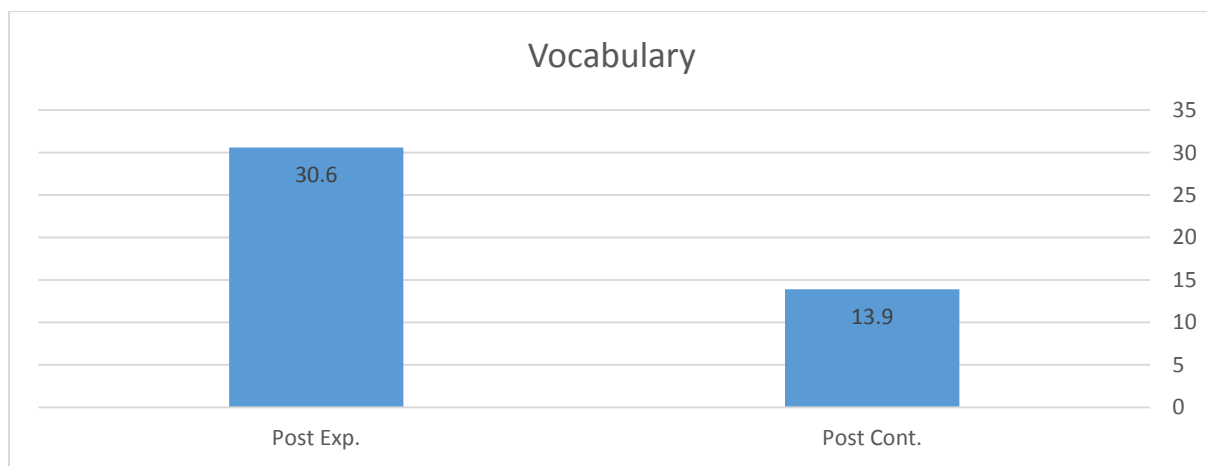

Figure 1: **A comparison between the Experimental & Control group in the Post- test result.**

The results of the posttest suggest that the participants in the experiential group have knowledge about vocabulary more than those in the control group. As it was revealed, the experimental group outperformed the control group. Therefore, songs have positive consequences on EFL students' vocabulary performance. The results designate that students in the experimental group mostly had better vocabulary capability than students in the control group.

4.2 Discussions

According to the statistical analysis above, there was an apparent difference between the scores of the students in the experimental and control groups after learning vocabulary through songs activities. The result was relevant to the results of Kasuwan and Chatuphot (2013:34). "The results showed that after learning through song activities, the students' score was pointedly higher than before learning vocabulary through songs".

"Evidence shows that song aids rote memorization when various types of verbal information (e.g., multiplication tables, spelling lists) have been presented with song, memorization has been improved" (Gfeller, 1986:29). According to Asher (1990:1163) "a rhythmic presentation aids memorization, particularly when the verbal information is meaningful". Stansell (2005:23) claims that "song absolutely effects on mind, language, remedial as well as mood, motivation and enjoyment".

So, it is important to notice that in EFL classrooms music and songs income in positive effectiveness. Music and songs play a vital role as a learning instrument and underline the comfortable state of mind and improved preservation. The atmosphere formed by music improved the ability of the students to recall vocabulary words and abbreviated the study period of the EFL (ibid).

According to Krashen (1992:34), "unfamiliar vocabulary can be acquired best when students have a low affective filter, which can aid

students to be free from pressure". When students comfortable, they acquired the new words more simply. In addition, the outcomes illustrate the students got better in a comfortable situation. Murphey (1992:34) points out that when students feel comfortable they can gain new material simply. Students were also encouraged to obtain the new words through song actions. When students are enthused they have a longer retaining length to engage new words.

In addition, the result of this study is also consistent with Šišková opinion's (2008:65) using music and songs is an important motivator in appealing and absorbent students' care. Motivation is a vital element for students' accomplishment. Furthermore, according to Martin (2013:59), "listening to song is a very enjoyable activity and motivate them to try to comprehend the meaning". What's more, students can more easily study by using songs since the brain can be inspired by means of songs.

By listening to and practising songs, students can receive the pronunciation of the native speakers and consequently their pronunciation will be improved. Students also develop their capability to hear the language, natural rhythm in the words and phrases. The benefit of using songs in language teaching and learning aids student to relax, to make good relationship among students and teachers, create the friendly atmosphere, and to develop students' pronunciation and vocabulary (Šišková, 2008:66).

5. Conclusion

It could be concluded from the data analysis and discussions that the experimental group outperforms the control group. The outcome of the pretest and posttest reveal a good progress from students' average marks. It means that using songs has a positive effect on EFL vocabulary learning. Songs result in extremely comfortable environment for students. Stress stop learning, when it is reduced learning happens in powerful way. So songs bring down the cognitive load on students' brains and thus, encourage vocabulary learning.

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Appendix 1

These songs were used to teach vocabulary to the experimental group:

THE SONG OF THE BOW

THE FRONTIER LINE

A ROVER CHANTY

A LAY OF THE LINKS

WITH THE CHIDDINGFOLDS

A HUNTING MORNING

THE OLD GRAY FOX

THE PASSING

(Doyle,2008)