

# TEACHING VOCABULARY BY USING THE LYRIC OF SONG

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## Abstract

The goal of this paper is to give explanation about teaching vocabulary by using the lyric of songs as an alternative teaching technique which can be used in teaching vocabulary, especially in senior high school. Moreover, this paper also aims to be a guideline for English teacher to teach vocabulary more interesting. In this paper the writer discusses how to teach vocabulary by using the lyric of song. The writer hopes this technique will improve student's understanding about vocabulary. There are some phases in teaching technique. The first is that the teacher gives lyric of song to the students and then the teacher explains about material. After that the students play the song so the students become familiar with the lyric. The next the teacher asks the students to write vocabulary. Then, the teacher and the students discuss the answer together. Finally, the teacher asks the students to write their own sentences.

**Keywords:** Vocabulary, Suggestopedia, the lyric of song

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## Background

English is an international language. It does not only function as a tool of communication, but also to transfer science and technology. There are many books written in English that give information about science and technology. If the students cannot master English, surely they cannot read those books.

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According to the writer's experience when teaching practice at senior high school in Adabiah. The students already have some dictionaries, electronic dictionary and Google translate to support them to find out the meaning of the new vocabulary on the text that teacher asked. Therefore, the students just find out the vocabulary without remember them. The writer assumes that the techniques used in teaching vocabulary by the teacher so far are less effective. By using the technique, the student cannot memorize the words for a long time. As a

result, they cannot use the language fluently. Therefore, the writer will suggest one alternative teaching technique to improve student's vocabulary, that is by using the lyric of song.

The reason of the writer to choose this technique is that it is a technique that was seldom used by teachers. According to the writer, it will be more effective if it is used in teaching vocabulary for senior high school students, because the lyric of English song is interesting, and easy to understand by the students. The writer hopes that the teacher uses this technique, the students can improve their vocabulary even their English in daily communication.

The general purpose of the writing this paper is to give a further explanation about teaching vocabulary by using the lyric of song, as an alternative teaching technique which can be used in teaching vocabulary. The specific purpose to improve the student new vocabulary by using lyric of song.

## **Literature Review**

### **Definition of Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is very important in effort to learn a language, because it is related to basic language English skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In case of reading, student should learn vocabulary first. When language develops from language-rich class room,

vocabulary-rich conversation, and experiences to building prior knowledge, children begin to acquire the vocabulary that is necessary for reading comprehension.

Zahro (2010:6) says vocabulary is one of the language components which should be mastered by English learners. Vocabulary plays role, which parallel with phonology and grammar to help the learner mastering four language skills.

According to Cameron (2001:71) states vocabulary is central to the learning of a foreign language at primary level. Someone who has a lot of vocabulary of foreign language, she/he could learn language easily, vocabulary is also one of the most important parts of languages, because when speaking a language, the speakers need several words to convey ideas. Therefore, people can understand what the speakers mean. When a learner intends to learn foreign language, he/she has to learn the vocabulary of the foreign language first.

Manurung (2011:9) adds the vocabulary looks like blood in human body. If someone has many blood it means she or he is strong in his/her life. It is same with language, if we have many vocabularies it means we have ability in language, vice versa, if you poor vocabulary it means we have a bad ability

in language such as listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Furthermore, Munoz (2011:33) says vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings, especially one given in a reading book of a foreign language. Vocabulary is the total number of words in a particular language; it is an important part to master English correctly. According to Mukoroli (2011:7) vocabulary is not only confined to the meaning of words but also includes how vocabulary in a language is structured: how people use and store words and how they learn words and the relationship between words, categories of words and phrases. He also adds there are different types of vocabulary are (1) Reading vocabulary - This refers to all the words an individual can recognize when reading a text, (2) Listening vocabulary - It refers to all the words an individual can recognize when listening to speech, (3) Writing vocabulary - This includes all the words an individual can employ in writing, (4) Speaking vocabulary - This refers to all the words an individual can use in speech.

Based on the expert ideas above the writer concludes that vocabulary is the knowledge of words and words meaning that people use in communication process. By having sufficient of vocabularies we can communicate clearly. In short, the writer can say that “no vocabulary, no

communication”.Whoever and where ever the people do communication process they need vocabulary.

### **The Concept of Teaching Vocabulary**

The National Research Council (1998:2) concluded that vocabulary development is a fundamental goal for students in the early grades. Mora (2001:2), states that the teaching of vocabulary above elementary level was mostly incidental, limited to presenting new items as they appeared in reading or sometimes listening text. Nowadays, teaching vocabulary should be part of the syllabus, and be taught in a well-planned and regular basis.

Teaching vocabulary could be said as a process of directed learning. Richeck (2005:414) says that in order the student must know the meaning of the word that they read. There are two strategies, semantic impression and word expert card help teacher to introduce word. They provide motivation to the student to be comfortable in using vocabulary in speaking and writing.

Mehta (2009:1) states that vocabulary is the first and foremost important step in language acquisition. In a classroom where students are not finding themselves comfortable with L2, language learning can be made interactive and

interesting with the introduction of appropriate vocabulary exercises.

Based on the experts statement above, the writer concludes that teaching vocabulary is very important in language learning. How can the students speak and write? How can the students understand what they listening? How can the students comprehend what they read without any vocabulary? Vocabulary helps the students to speak, write, comprehend what they read and they listen.

### **Some Methods in Teaching Vocabulary**

Nathan (2013:2) reveals that there is no single research based method for teaching vocabulary. From its analysis, the panel recommends to use a variety of direct and indirect methods of instruction according to the suitability of time and context.

Swerling (2010:1) states “vocabulary instructions have examined direct and indirect method to teaching vocabulary. Direct instruction involves explicit teaching of new word meanings, whereas indirect methods encourage inferring word meanings from context”. The example of direct method: word card and concept sorting, collection of word cards, they can engage in various activities to practice. Word cards can be sorted by parts of speech (i.e., nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs) or by semantic categories. The students could

also sort words without specified categories and then explain the basis for their categories. Pairs of words can be used to make up sentences. In the other side, the concept of sorting is to select certain words. Together with the students, the teacher reviews the list of words and come to a consensus by dividing the list into categories. Through this process, students will be comparing, contrasting, and analyzing already known concepts while expanding their knowledge of unknown concepts. This exercise allows the teacher to assess and build background knowledge.

Swerling (2010:2) explains about the example of indirect method: word wizard and dictionaries. The goal of Word Wizard is to get the students to notice words they encounter and be sensitive to the words learned during vocabulary instruction. The Word Wizard is a large graphic of a wizard (or chart) that is hung in classroom and the students are then on the pursuit of hearing or reading the word in context. The student or the teacher writes the word and its context down and posts it on the chart or wizard. A variation is to add words to the wizard or chart as discuss them in class. As the students encounter the words again, they note the context and put it on the wizard or chart. After a period of two weeks or so, teacher and students determine the student who

found the most words. That student is then declared the "Word Wizard" for the class. Although, Dictionaries directed the students to use the dictionary like adult do, the teachers have to teach the students how to read the dictionary and make a dictionary with their own words along the concept of words and sentences.

Furthermore, Lazanov (2009:4) suggest a suggestopedia method, "memorization in learning by the suggestopedia method seems to be accelerated 25 times over that in learning by conventional method". Suggestopedia usually uses a song in the classroom for learning activity which will be expanded and whereby unexpected results will be produced.

There are many methods for the teachers in teaching vocabulary. The writer thinks every method in teaching vocabulary is good, that depends on the teachers how to explain the lesson, to make good situation and condition in the classroom.

### Teaching Vocabulary by Using Song

Related by using song, music can make the student calm down and help them to memorize what they are listening. Lazanov (2009:2) states that Suggestopedia is the method that three to five time faster and easier in learning vocabulary because suggesstodia works with relaxation. It seems that music is the

key element of suggesstopedia making it so special. He also addssuggestopedia is a superlearning because the supporters of suggestopedia claims that memorisation in learning through this method would be accelerated by up to 25 times over that in conventional learning methods and the students achieved a memorization rate of 1000 words an hour. It means that suggestopedia is the most suitable method which creates a good environment and strategy to develop the student vocabulary. The advantages using this method can be seen in the table below:

Table 1. The advantages of using Suggestopedia method

No	The Advantages of using Suggestopedia Method
1.	It works with relaxation
2.	Accelerated 25 time over that in conventional method
3.	Memorize 1000 word per hour
4.	Good environment

In addition, using song in vocabulary classroom can be implemented by using Lexical Approach. Siskova (2008:25) who believed that "an important part of language acquisition is the ability to comprehend and produce lexical phrases as unanalyzed wholes, or chunks, and that these chunks become the raw data by which learners perceive patterns of

language traditionally thought of as grammar”. Based on Lewis approach, Siskova (2008:28) says that “Some exercises created for the songs in the practical part are "guessing the meaning of vocabulary items from context", which is also one of the features of the Lexical Approach”.

From the explanation above, the writer thinks that the suggestopedia method is the most suitable method in teaching vocabulary by using the lyric of song. This method is using the direct instruction which is focused on the communicative learning and teaching process. Because this method will create the good environment and fun situation in the teaching and learning activity in the classroom.

### **Using Song in Learning Classroom**

Murphey (1992:22) stresses that teachers should “be careful not to kill the material by doing too much of serious work”. He also states in Millington (2011:1) “Songs can help young learners improve their listening skills and pronunciation, therefore potentially helping them to improve their speaking skills. 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”.

We can classify music based on genre and theme. It can be seen in the table below:

Table 2. Classification of Songs

No	Genre	Theme
1.	Hip-hop songs	Education
2.	Classical Songs	Family
3.	Pop songs	Love
4.	Country songs	Politic
5.	Rock songs	Friendship

Besides, Schoepp (2001:2) offer similar suggestions, writing that songs provide a break from classroom routine, and that learning English through songs develops a non-threatening classroom atmosphere in which the four language skills can be enhanced.

Agus (2013:8) explains that song is not consisting of rhythm only but the people can get a new word that we do not know before. Singing songs and listening to music are enjoyable experience

We can also find some advantages and disadvantages in using song in the classroom. See Table 3.

Table 3. The advantages and disadvantages using song in the classroom.

No	Advantages	Disadvantages
1.	Attractive the students and make them relax	Focus on music not material
2.	Easy to memorize new vocabulary	Need more time
3.	Active and enjoy learning	Crowded class

Based on the explanation above, the writer believes song in an English classroom would stimulate a positive environment to the study of a language, which could help the students to enjoy the class.

### **The Role of Song in Improving Vocabulary**

Murphey (1992:26) states that in teaching and learning a foreign language, songs play an important role in the development of the student learning a second language. Songs are very good way to relax the student.

Furthermore, Krouse (1992:5) states that learners discover vocabulary, structure and other language components through active singing and the learners

can transfer this to conversation situation. He supports the idea of music in the ESL classroom to increase creativity in the learning process.

Anglin (1993:10) describes that when student are interested in one song they will try to find out the lyric and try to sing that song. Next, they must be curious about the song that they are singing and want to know what the song talks about, whether it is a sad or happy story. Then they try to have translation of that song into their native language. When the students have got translation, they must also curious about which word in that song refers to a word in their native language. And then the students try to find out meaning of the words one by one. Accumulatively, the students will get some new vocabularies that have never been known before.

In conclusion, learning vocabulary is study about the unit of the words, with a good media, the writer believes that teaching vocabulary would be more effective by using lyric of song, in order to get as much as new vocabularies in other sideto know the pronunciation from the song.

### **Implementation of Teaching Vocabulary by Using Lyric of Song**

Zahro (2010:20) explains how to apply song in teaching vocabulary of verbs as follow: first, teacher explains

about verb, and then teacher gives script of song lyric, and then the student plays the song and he asks the students to identify the vocabulary of verb of song lyric and asks one of students to write on the whiteboard. If the answer is wrong, the teacher will explain correctly.

Longfellow (2014:2) also says that “there are a variety of different ways to use music in the classroom. Some teachers prefer to use background music and others use music lyrics as the basis of a lesson. Music can be used to: introduce a new theme or topic (Christmas/colours/feelings), to break the ice in a class where students do not know each other or are having difficulty communicating, to change the mood (liven things up or calm things down), to teach and build vocabulary and idioms, to review material (background music improves memory), to teach pronunciation and intonation, to teach songs and rhymes about difficult grammar and spelling rules that need to be memorized ("i before e", irregular verbs, phrasal verbs), to teach reading comprehension, to inspire a class discussion, and to teach listening for details and gist”.

Based on the explanation above, the writer concludes that the aim of the using of song in teaching vocabulary is to deliver the material in pleasant

environment so that the students could receive the material easily and faster.

### **Procedure of Teaching Vocabulary by Using Lyric of Song**

In the preparation section, the writer suggests to the teachers that they should find out the appropriate material, and then it is better to choose the interesting topic, so the students are more interested to study, then, the teachers should prepare the lesson plan. In the lesson plan, the teacher should pay attention to the time allocation, the activity while teaching the material.

### **Pre-Teaching**

Pre-teaching is important in the learning process, because the pre-teaching is a process that can stimulate students' knowledge before starting the lesson. Pre-teaching activities also help teachers to motivate students before starting the lesson especially to the material to teach. Pre-teaching activity can also increase the confidence of students before learning so that they are ready to receive the materials from the teacher.

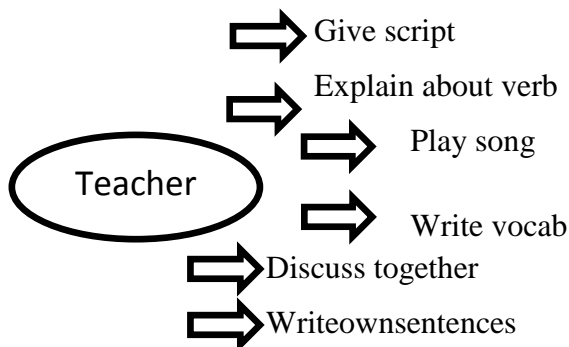
In this part, there are some steps in Pre-teaching process as follows;

1. Physically preparing students to learn.
2. Praying together.
3. Checking students attendance.
4. Asking some questions about topic.



## Whilst-Teaching

In learning the teacher focuses on song about love because the lyric will be interesting for the students. The title of the song is "I cannot break it to my heart". The song tells us about someone who will survive her love. The differences this paper between the other is in this paper the writer asks the students to write their own sentences by using new vocabulary. The purpose of this step is the students can apply the new vocabulary in their daily life. The writer will apply some steps as follows:



1. The teacher gives script of song lyric.

Example:

### "I Can't Break It to My Heart"

If it's okay  
I'll leave the bed light on  
And place your water glass  
where it belongs  
And if alright  
I'll lie awake at night

Pretending I am curled up at your side  
See I am circling these patterns  
Living out of memories  
I am still a long way from accepting it  
That there's just no you and me

But if I still believe you love me  
Maybe I will survive  
So I tell myself you're coming home  
Like you've done a million times  
And if it's alright  
I'll still be loving you  
'cause I can't break it to my heart

2. The teacher explains about verb.

Example:

Teacher: Ok students, have you ever heard about *verb*?

Students: (Probably answers): yes.

Teacher: What does *verb* mean?

Students: *Verb* is kata kerja.

Teacher: Do you know the function of *verb*? *Verb* is used to describe action and we can find verb in the sentence after the subject. For example: in line 2. There is *leave* after subject *I*.

Students: (Students find the word in the line 2).

Teacher: Do you know the characteristics of *verb*?

Students: No.

Teacher: There are the characteristics of *verb*: a. verb is doing word, b. Verb is perhaps the most important part of sentences, c. asserts something about the subject. Any question?

Students: No.

Teacher: Ok next, our activity is singing a song. It does not just sing but you may pay attention to the lyrics and looking for verbs. Do you understand?

Students: Understand.

3. Then the student plays the song. The teacher asks the students to listen to the song, so the students become familiar with the lyrics. After that, the teacher asks the students to circle the vocabulary of verb of song lyrics.

Example:

Teacher: Well students, listen to the music please. I will play the music three times.

Students: Ok.

Teacher: Do not forget to circle the vocabulary verb that you found in the lyrics.

4. The teacher asks the students to write vocabulary on the white board.

Example:

Teacher: Ok students, who can identify verb in the lyric?

Students: (Hands up).

Teacher: Can you write on the white board.

Students: (Probably answer: *break, long, survive, place, lie, circling, believe, reading, work, keep*).

5. The teacher and the students discuss the answer together. If the answer is wrong, the teacher will explain correctly.

Example:

Teacher: Ok. Let's discuss together your friend answer in the white board. First, *break*.

What do you think everybody, is it true?

Students: Yes.

Teacher: How about *long*? Is it true or false?

Students: (Part the students say yes and the other say no).

Teacher: Alright. *Long* is not verb but *long* is adjective. How about the others words (*survive, place, lie, circling, believe, reading, work, keep*)?

Students: Those are verb.

Teacher: Good. How do you know?

Students: Because the place of the words after subject.

Teacher: Excellent. How about the others opinion about definition of verb?

Student: verb is doing word.

Student: verb is perhaps the most important part of sentences.

Student: verb expresses action.

Teacher: That's right.

6. The teacher asks the students to write their own sentences.

Teacher: Good. Now your task is make your own sentences by using that word.

Student: Yes mom.

Teacher: (After 10 minutes). Alright my students write your own sentences in the white board. Who can?

Student 1: I survive my life.

Student 2: I believe you.

Student 3: I am reading book, etc.

Teacher: Ok. Let's check your sentences one by one. Do you find any mistake?

Students: No mom.

### **Post-Teaching**

Sadida in Educational technology (2011:4) declares that the post teaching activity in learning is not only defined as activities to cover lessons, but also as an assessment of student learning outcomes and follow-up activities. Follow-up activities should be taken based on the process and outcomes of student learning. Here are some steps in post-teaching, namely:

1. The teacher asks the students about song. What is the song telling you about?
2. Checking the students' answers.
3. The teacher asks the students if there is any question about the whole topic.
4. If there is no question, the teacher gives homework to the students. These are some words that you have to make your own sentences at home. They are: *bring, buy, walk, stop, swim, wash, drink, sing, discuss, help.*
5. The last, the teachers closes the meeting.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the review the problem background, the writer can conclude as follows:

1. Vocabulary is necessary in four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).
2. There are many techniques in teaching vocabulary. One of them is by using lyric of song.
3. Song can increase students' motivation in learning vocabulary.

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