

Journal of  
Creative Practices in Language Learning and Teaching (CPLT)  
Volume 4, Number 2, 2016

## The Effectiveness of Using Children's Songs in Developing Elementary Graders' English Vocabulary and Pronunciation in Jerusalem, Palestine

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Received: 19 Oct 2016. Accepted: 25 Nov 2016 / Published online: 30 Nov 2016  
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### ABSTRACT

*This study aimed at investigating the effect of using children's songs in developing the elementary graders' vocabulary and pronunciation. It aimed also to investigate teachers' attitudes towards the use of songs in their English classes. The participants were 123 EFL students of the fourth grade; 72 females and 51 males. Arabic is their native language. Both groups are from four private schools in Jerusalem; two groups for boys, and two groups for girls. One boys' school and one girls' school were chosen to be the experimental group consisting of 58 participants, while the other boys' and girls' schools were chosen to be the control group consisting of 65 participants. Study data were collected via students' pre and post tests and teachers' questionnaire. Exams results showed that students have improved their vocabulary and pronunciation due to the use of songs in learning. Questionnaire results showed that teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of songs in their classes as songs have positive effects in increasing students' achievement, interest and motivation. Finally, results revealed that students' achievements were not affected by gender.*

**Keywords:** Children's Songs. Fourth Graders. English Vocabulary. Pronunciation

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## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Teaching English especially in elementary schools aims to motivate and encourage students to be more confident in studying English. For elementary students, teaching English is presenting vocabulary in addition to pronunciation that they learn for the first time (Burhayani, 2013). For this, teachers have an important role. They should keep students interested, motivated, and engaged in learning a foreign language and attain the lesson objectives (Ratnasari, 2007). Teachers are to help students in overcoming the difficulties that they may face while learning and acquiring a foreign language (Burhayani, 2013).

For decades, teaching English in our schools has been characterized by the use of the traditional way. Teachers rarely use teaching aids. Recently, they start to apply them. Due to the limited resources available in schools, flashcards and posters are the most frequent used aids in classes to teach vocabulary. Listening and speaking activities are almost neglected. Students have problems in pronouncing certain words. Through the technology development and change in teaching demands, many conducted foreign studies confirm the effectiveness of using music and songs in teaching English especially for young learners. Using music and songs in language classroom as an effective teaching method has been recommended especially for young learners. Audio-lingual Method from the 1950s to 1970s used songs in language teaching classrooms in order to reduce the boredom that could occur from repetitive drills (Kanel, 2000).

Suggestopedia methodology used classical instrumental music to produce a relaxed state of mind that makes the brain receptive to inputs and activates the subconsciousness (Lozanov, 1978). However, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task Based Learning (TBL) approaches became more pervasive that there was a sudden demand for pedagogical material for the use of songs in the language-learning classroom (Griffee, 2010).

The use of songs in language teaching can be beneficial to increase lexical, grammatical, phonological, sociolinguistic and cultural competencies, regardless of individual teaching approach, style or musical training and without sacrificing core competencies (McLaren & Lankshear, 1994). Moreover, songs play a significant role in developing learners' skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening, pronunciation, rhythm, grammar and vocabulary (Lo and Li, 1998).

Songs help render the boredom of the class by creating an enjoyable and interesting atmosphere and activities in class (Ulate, 2008). Orlova (1997) identifies that songs can work as an encouragement for learners to use English. They may help learners in recognizing words and meaning especially if they were supported with pictures and actions. Moreover, they can work as a stimulus that motivates them positively towards language learning (Al-Mamary, 2007).

Through songs, learners can acquire a variety of useful vocabulary (Medina, 1993). Songs and music are highly memorable and help learners memorizing vocabulary and speech patterns (Yang, 2011).

Songs are valuable tools for improving learners' pronunciation (Ulate, 2008). Singing activities, with rhyme "help enhance the development of auditory discrimination skills, including integration of letter sounds, syllabification, and pronunciation of words" (Richards,

1993, p. 109). Nursery rhymes, rhythmic activities, and songs are key texts that build children's concepts of reality (Stansell, 2005). Action rhymes captivate learners' attention and help teachers convert their natural energy and enthusiasm into meaningful learning experiences. Songs also help even in associating words and phrases with meanings (Ara, 2009).

### ***Statement of the Problem***

Teaching EFL, especially for young learners, involves using creative and motivating methodologies and techniques. Students may have problems in learning vocabulary and pronunciation. This study investigates the effectiveness of using English songs to improve Palestinian English vocabulary and pronunciation. Despite the communicative nature of the Palestinian English Curriculum (*English for Palestine*), the students have poor pronunciation and lack of vocabulary competence. Without adequate vocabulary and proper pronunciation, learners cannot communicate successfully or express their thoughts. Some learners consider learning vocabulary a tedious job and that results in a limited vocabulary that prevents them from learning a language. The use of songs and music in teaching English is one methodology that is used to facilitate learning (Lappi, 2009). Music plays an important role in setting the tone of the classroom, developing skills and concepts, helping children make transitions, and building a sense of community (Schiller, 2007). Palestinian English Curriculum (English for Palestine) has a limited number of songs, games, and projects (Dajani & McLaughlin, 2009). So this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using songs in teaching elementary graders vocabulary and pronunciation.

### ***Objectives of the Study***

The study aims to investigate:

1. To examine if there are statistically significant differences in performance between the experimental and control groups based on students' performance in the pre and post vocabulary tests.
2. To examine if there are statistically significant differences in performance between the experimental and control groups based on students' performance in the pre and post pronunciation tests.
3. To examine if there are statistically significant differences in the performance between the experimental group and the control group due to gender.
4. To examine the general teachers' attitudes towards the use of songs in teaching English.

### ***Questions of the Study***

1. Are there any statistically significant differences in performance between the experimental and control groups based on students' performance in the pre and post vocabulary tests?
2. Are there any statistically significant differences in performance between the experimental and control groups based on students' performance in the pre and post pronunciation tests?

3. Are there statistically significant differences in performance between the experimental and control groups based on students' performance in the pre and post vocabulary and pronunciation tests due to gender?
4. What are teachers' attitudes towards the use of songs in learning English?

### ***Significance of the Study***

Some teachers are unaware of applying some teaching methodologies in their classes such as songs. This study highlights the effectiveness of using songs and their effects on teaching EFL vocabulary and pronunciation for the fourth graders. It is hoped that the results of this study may help English language teachers to create effective learning environment in the light of using songs. Moreover, it may stimulate specialists' and supervisors' interest in conducting training courses for their teachers to use children's songs in their classes.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Many studies proved that including songs in English Language teaching is a very useful tool (Mardliyaton, 2007; Asih, 2011; Millington, 2011; Apsari, 2012; Burhayani, 2013). Songs may help improving speaking and pronunciation skills. Moreover, the variety of available songs require attention in the selection of the song considering the characteristics and particularities of students, and the possibilities the song gives them to present the language they want the students to have contact with (Morales, 2008).

Songs use in classroom is a powerful technique in teaching and practicing vocabulary, grammar, listening, and speaking (Walker, 2006). Songs are alternative way to increase English and give students opportunities especially on vocabulary. Wrenshall (2002, p.43) said; "there is also plenty of evidence that song help memorization, and the rhythm and rhyme of the lyrics can certainly help vocabulary as well." Songs also give students the opportunity to enrich vocabulary by vocalizing the language (Burhayani, 2013).

The effectiveness of using songs in teaching English has been investigated in various research studies. One of these studies was conducted at Al-Azhar University in Gaza El-Nahhal (2011) which examined the effectiveness of using children songs in developing the fourth graders' English Vocabulary in Rafah government schools. With the sample of 120 students, test results revealed that using songs in learning and teaching English improved elementary students' vocabulary learning.

In her study, Qurt (2013) aimed to make vocabulary unconsciously memorable for all students. She found that students become highly motivated to sing especially if the song is related to real life situation. Furthermore, they become better learners for vocabulary and learn with eagerness and unconsciousness. Finally, students feel free without shyness and perform the song in morning activity.

There are a lot of international studies investigating the effectiveness of using songs in developing elementary graders vocabulary and pronunciation with various results. Language teachers recognize that music can enhance language acquisition and be a wonderful medium for language learning (Graham, 1979; Cakir, 1999).

Music has an indirect positive influence on students' learning and makes the classroom atmosphere more comfortable (Lappi, 2009).

Using songs may help in teaching young learners. For example, Ara (2009) stated that children learn faster than adults especially if they weren't taught in traditional ways. So, the use of songs and games is an effective tool in teaching English for young learners especially that they made them unconscious that they are learning a language, i.e. they provide an interesting and enjoyable environment for learning without the feeling of pressure. Ara's findings analysis showed that in Bangladesh teachers are insensible of the effectiveness of using songs, rhymes and games in children's classes as means of interest and motivation; they still use ineffective traditional ways of teaching with memorization. The influence of the effectiveness of songs will appear in later stages with minimum level of proficiency in English to cope with their courses. Even good students have to struggle to get higher secondary exams CGPA.

Millington (2011) discussed the cause of considering songs as valuable pedagogical tool that helps learners in improving their listening and pronunciation skills, and vocabulary and sentence structure. He discussed also the reflection of culture that increases students' enjoyment. By means of practical examples, he showed how songs can be used as language tasks. He also explored how to adapt classical songs to suit a particular theme or part of the curriculum.

According to Pasanen (2010), music is most often used to increase culture knowledge, reading and listening comprehension skills, oral skills and teaching grammar. Furthermore, music can also be used in tasks related to practice writing, pronunciation and vocabulary.

Many studies investigate the situation of using songs especially for elementary graders. Sevki, Gürsan & Hasan (2005) in their study found that both teachers and students agreed that in teaching English songs are hardly used. However, they emphasized that learning songs could play a significant role in vocabulary acquisition. These findings are consistent with Asih, 2011; Millington, 2011; Apsari, 2012 and Burhayani, 2013 studies. Moreover, Sevki et al (2005) mentioned that despite the lack of facilities and devices that help teachers in using songs in teaching, teachers stressed the importance of using songs as a motivating factor for students and help in vocabulary learning.

In another study, Sevik (2011) explored Turkish primary schools' EFL teachers' views about songs and the use of songs in teaching English to young learners. Despite the difficulty in using songs in classroom due to the lack of resources that facilitate the use of songs, how to teach songs and what songs to teach, findings emphasized the positive impact of using songs in teaching English for young learners and their pedagogical value since they give opportunity to develop and enhance listening skills mainly. They also mentioned that students' anxiety is lowered by the use of songs. Research studies confirmed that songs are good in teaching vocabulary for young learners (Asih, 2011; Millington, 2011; Apsari, 2012).

Asih (2011) study results showed that the class that was taught vocabulary by picture technique has higher average percentage than the class that taught by songs technique. Asih proved that students' remember easily when they link the word to its picture while they be interested when listening to songs rather than memorizing vocabulary.

Apsari (2012) believed that students' interest is essential to obtain successful teaching and learning. For that, effectiveness in teaching English vocabulary to young learners is a crucial concern issue for language educators and practitioners. Through an empirical research, she aimed to study the application of teaching vocabulary for kindergarten students via songs. Results showed that songs can be effectively used in several ways to improve students' English vocabulary; as warm up activities, if presented repeatedly can be given in follow up activities as oral vocabulary quizzes, and media such as picture is required in order to convey the meaning of songs. Moreover, results showed that students were interested in learning vocabulary through songs and this indicates that songs tend to give more reaction in teaching and learning process.

By singing the songs, students can understand the difficult words easily. Students can remember the new words by singing and doing the action of the song. Songs help students understand new words without asking another person or looking them up in the dictionary. Songs also make vocabulary learning enjoyable, fun and interesting. That is how the effectiveness can be achieved by using songs in teaching vocabulary (Burhayani, 2013).

Songs, in addition of having positive effects in practicing vocabulary and grammar, focus on pronunciation, stress and intonation. Songs cannot provide good opportunities for incidental learning (e.g. through repetition and context) of unknown language items (Dajani & Mclaughlin, 2009). Songs use can greatly help teachers in listening skills. They provide listeners with concrete example of weak forms, sound reduction and linkage, either between words or between sentences (Rajbhandaraks, 2001).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This section describes the research design and methodology. The first section gives a description of the participants. The second section describes the instruments used in carrying out the study and the used data collection techniques. It describes the validity and reliability of the instruments. And it also describes the material used in conducting the study.

### ***Participants***

In this study, the participants were 123 EFL students of the fourth grade; 72 females and 51 males. Arabic is their native language and both groups are from four private schools in Jerusalem; two groups for boys, and two groups for girls. One boys' school and one girls' school were chosen to be the experimental group consisting of 58 participants, while the other boys' and girls' schools were chosen to be the control group consisting of 65 participants.

### ***Instrumentation: Procedure and Data Collection***

In this research, the researchers used the following instruments: a vocabulary test, pronunciation test, and a questionnaire were used for data collection. The Teacher's Book was used as a guiding document.

### *Vocabulary test*

To measure students' vocabulary, the researcher prepared a vocabulary test. The aim of the test is to measure students' knowledge of certain words and study the effect of the children's songs in developing their English vocabulary and at testing the hypothesis of the study.

The final draft of the test went through experts' reviews. It was prepared after taking suggestions from two school teachers and one supervisor in Jerusalem and two university instructors from Hebron University. Based on their suggestions, the researchers made the necessary changes. The format of the test did not change. Some sentences in question one were changed. In question two, the new classification of words is on food, family members and works (jobs). Some words in question four were replaced with others. Question four does not have any changes. In question five some sentences were changed. Finally, in question six, words are changed and became fewer in number. Still the final points of the exam were forty and the estimated time is 40 minutes (see Appendix A and B).

### *Pronunciation test*

To measure students' pronunciation, a pre test and a post test were conducted. In the pre-test students were asked to read certain words that they may know and will hear in songs. The post test depended on learners' memorization of the correct pronunciation of certain words that the researcher focused on during the experiment. The test consisted of twenty-five points of five questions. In question one, students were asked to odd out the words that do not rhyme. In question two, students were asked to circle the correct word. In question three, students were asked to choose the correct answers that show the word the researcher had read. In question four, they were asked to circle the silent letter. Finally, the fifth question asked them to classify words according to certain pronunciation (see Appendix C).

### *Teacher's Book*

The researcher prepared the book to facilitate applying the experiment. The teacher's book included mainly the songs, lesson plans, specific objectives and flashcards. The teacher's book in details includes specific information about the application of the experiment. It includes the objectives and procedures of the lessons. Moreover, the researcher suggested a lesson plan for each song to be a model for using children songs in practicing vocabulary and pronunciation. The lesson plan mainly includes: the learning objective, vocabulary, sources, and procedures for presenting songs and work sheets (see Appendix D).

### *Songs*

To conduct the study, the researcher studied the curriculum textbook. After that, songs were selected according to the major themes that the researcher selected to work on and the availability of songs. Songs were selected from the book and from external sources (You Tube). The songs were related to Unit 5 lesson 3 (The Weather Song), Unit 6 (Healthy Food Will Make You Smile), Unit 7 (The School Rule Song+ The Rule Chant), Unit 8 (Every Body had a Picnic) and Five Little Monkeys as an external song (see Appendix E)

### *Attitudes Questionnaire Development and Content Validation*

The questionnaire was designed mainly to get the quantitative data for the study (see

Appendix F). It aimed to investigate elementary graders teachers' attitudes towards the use of songs in English classes and their views regarding songs effectiveness in teaching English.

The items in the questionnaire were developed for this current research from some significant ideas identified in the related literature and previous studies. The final copy of the questionnaire consisted of three parts: Part One (Demographic Data), Part Two (School Information) and Part Three (Pedagogical value of using songs; Pedagogical value of using songs and Frequency of using songs)

### *Questionnaire Reliability*

The reliability was calculated by Alpha Coefficient. The result revealed that the Cronbach's Alpha of the questionnaire is (0.834), indicating an acceptable degree of internal consistency. Accordingly, the questionnaire is considered as a reliable instrument.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Results of Overall Post Tests**

In order to find the influence of using songs on the achievement of the elementary students in vocabulary and pronunciation learning and to see if there is a significant difference, a t-test was carried out to analyze the results of the post-vocabulary and pronunciation tests, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: t-test for equality of means of post-tests due to group**

Group	Group Statistics			Independent Samples Test		
	N	M	SD	T	d.f	Sig.
Experimental	58	30.6379	5.40856	4.304	121	.000
Control	65	26.0523	6.30355			

As can be seen in Table 1, in general, there is no significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.000$ ) due to group (experimental and control) in their achievement after conducting the study. Analyzing the means of the two groups (C=26.05, E=30.63) reveals that the group under treatment achieved significantly higher than the control group. The mean for overall post test is out of 65. This indicates that using songs for the experimental group improved their level of vocabulary competence more than control group.

### **2. Results of the Post Vocabulary Test**

To find out whether there is a significant difference in the post-vocabulary test results, a t-test was carried out. Vocabulary test points are 40. Results are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: t-test for the post vocabulary test due to group**

Group	Group Statistics			Independent Samples Test		
	N	M	SD	T	d.f	Sig.
Experimental	58	14.6552	2.84883	2.483	121	.014
Control	65	13.0308	4.19088	2.536		



As seen in Table 2, there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups (experimental and control) in favour of the experimental group as a whole in vocabulary improvement. To be specific, comparing the means of the pre and post tests proved that there is a significant difference at ( $\alpha=0.014$ ) ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) between the two groups due to vocabulary. Their means are (C=13.03, E=14.65) out of 40.

These results are in line with studies like Megawati, 2014; Qurt; 2013; Burhayani, 2013; Aspari, 2012; Millington; 2011; El-Nahhal, 2011; and Šišková, 2008. Results of these studies revealed that the experimental group showed a significant improvement in vocabulary compared to the control group. Ashi (2011) proved that using pictures and songs technique help students link the word to its picture while listening.

### 3. Results of the Post Pronunciation Test

A t-test was carried out to analyze the post-pronunciation test. Pronunciation test points are 25. Results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: t-test for post pronunciation test due to group**

Group	Group Statistics			Independent Samples Test		
	N	M	SD	T	d.f	Sig.
Experimental	58	18.4466	3.81186	9.000	121	.000
Control	65	13.0215	2.84893			

As seen in Table 3 it is clear that there is also a significant difference between the two groups at ( $\alpha=0.000$ ) ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) due to pronunciation. The post pronunciation test consisted of 25 points. The means for the two groups are (C=18.44, E=13.02) which means that the group under treatment achieved significantly higher than the control group. This indicates that using songs for the experimental group improves their pronunciation rather than not using.

These findings are in line with the literature studies like Arias,2012; Lutfia, 2009; Varasarin,2007; Rosová,2007; Ratnasari;2007 and others which results show that the experimental group achievement in the posttest is higher than the pretest.

The researcher noticed that drilling and the use of pictures and flashcards in addition to songs, help students improve their pronunciation. These results are what Zaroh, Laksmi (2013) found in their study.

### 4. Results related to gender

**Table 4: t-test for post vocabulary and pronunciation tests due to gender**

Gender	Group Statistics			Independent Samples Test				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Sig.
Male	51	27.1627	7.66864	1.07382	-1.566	121	.120	.349
Female	72	28.9597	5.06039	.59637	-1.463	80.226	.147	

As seen in Table 4, there is no significant difference between post test results due to

gender. For females, the mean in the post is 28.95. For boys, it is 27.16.

Limited studies examined the impact of using songs on learners due to gender. This result is in line with the results from a study carried out by Ghanbari and Hashemian (2014) which revealed that there was no significant difference between the male and female learners' performance in obtaining better results in listening comprehension and pronunciation. However, this asserts that songs should be incorporated into language teaching curricula since it is an indispensable asset and help to improve all language skills, especially listening comprehension and pronunciation. However, this study contrasts the study by Alipour, Gorjian, Zafari (2012) which indicated that male learners have better performance than the females when learning vocabulary.

### 5. *Results of Teachers' Questionnaire*

In order to find out teachers' attitude towards the use of songs in elementary English classroom, 67 questionnaire were collected back and analyzed. Analyzing the first part of the questionnaire; personal information, results revealed that almost 94% of elementary English teachers in Jerusalem are female as seen in Table 5.

**Table 5: Frequencies and numbers of teachers due to gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	4	63	67
<b>Percentage</b>	6%	94%	100%

Regarding school, public or private, 78.8% of participants were from private schools. Due to the political status of Jerusalem, private schools are more than public. In this study, public schools are Palestinian Government Schools not the Israeli Government Schools. Moreover, the number of English teachers in private schools is more than in public schools. This result is due to that in public schools there are 3-4 English lessons per week, while in private schools there is 5-6 lessons.

**Table 6: Teachers due to schools type's frequencies and numbers**

<b>School</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Number</b>	14	53	67
<b>Frequency</b>	21.2	78.8	100%

#### *Part one: Teachers' attitudes and practices*

**Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of teachers' attitudes and practices questionnaire items**

<b>N</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. D.</b>
1	Songs are considered a valuable pedagogical tool in learning English.	67	1.00	5.00	3.9104	1.01102
2	Songs help develop language acquisition.	67	1.00	5.00	3.9403	1.05716
3	Songs can be used to	65	1.00	5.00	3.9077	.93078

	illustrate themes or topics.					
4	Songs help learners become familiar with word stress, intonation and rhythm.	66	1.00	5.00	4.1818	1.05114
5	Songs enable learners to remember chunks of language.	64	1.00	5.00	3.9531	.95002
6	Songs provide students with opportunity for great exposure to improve vocabulary acquisition.	62	1.00	5.00	3.8065	1.02171
7	Songs help improve students' speaking skills.	66	1.00	5.00	3.9091	.94017
8	Songs help students to better understanding of the culture of the target language.	66	1.00	5.00	3.5303	1.08443
9	Songs are useful in the teaching of sentence structure.	66	1.00	5.00	3.4091	1.03741
10	Songs help learners improve their listening and pronunciation skills.	67	1.00	5.00	4.1194	1.08044
11	Songs increase students' enjoyment of learning English.	67	1.00	5.00	4.3731	1.15254
12	Songs add interest to the classroom routine.	66	1.00	5.00	4.3030	1.16315
13	Songs improve student's motivation.	67	1.00	5.00	4.1642	1.00901
14	Songs help create a relaxed and non-threatening environment of learning.	66	1.00	5.00	4.0303	.91095
15	Songs can be used to practice the four skills.	67	1.00	5.00	3.4478	1.11849
16	Songs help create more students' participation.	67	1.00	5.00	3.8507	1.09065
17	Songs lower students' anxiety toward learning English.	67	1.00	5.00	3.5075	1.32999

As seen in Table 7, teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of songs in teaching English. Results confirmed the pedagogical value of the use of songs in language teaching and learning. Statements 11, 12 and 4 get the highest mean of all statements. Their means are:

statement 11 (m=4.37), statement 12 (m=4.3) and statement 4 (m=4.18). This means that teachers believe that songs are not only increase students' enjoyment of learning English (statement 11) but also add interest to the classroom routine (statement 12). Moreover, songs help learners become familiar with word stress, intonation and rhythm (statement 4).

On the other hand, statements 9, 15 and 17 get the lowest mean. Their means are: statement 9 (m=3.4), statement 15 (m=3.44), and statement 17 (m=3.5). This indicate that teachers believe that songs are not useful in the teaching of sentence structure, cannot be used to practice the four skills, and cannot lower students' anxiety toward learning English.

These results are in line Şevki, Gürsan, Hasan (2005) who added that still songs are good factor that could enjoy and motivate learners. But still teachers are to be creative and innovative in their teaching practices.

Sevic (2011); Mufleh, El-Hersh, Al-Dalalah and Ababneh (2009) in their studies showed that songs are valuable pedagogical tool in learning English and have positive impact in teaching English for young learners.

Burhayani, 2013; Apsari, 2012; Asih, 2011; Millington, 2011; El-Nahhal, 2011; Sevki et al, 2005; in their studies found that songs play a significant role in vocabulary acquisition and learning. Alipour, Gorjian and Zafari (2012) in their study confirm that learners be more focused on the lyrics to catch the new vocabulary, realize them, learn these new words and memorize them easily. Lutfia, 2009; Shen, 2009; Ulate, 2008 and others proved that songs are effective tool for teaching pronunciation.

**Table 8: Descriptive Statistics of teachers' practices towards the use of songs questionnaire items**

N	Statement	N	Min.	Max	Mean	Std. D.
18	I use songs in my English classes on many occasions.	67	1.00	5.00	3.2388	.85439
19	Songs stimulate my students to learn real English.	67	1.00	5.00	3.3582	.98013
20	I use songs to introduce the theme.	66	1.00	4.00	2.6364	.79685
21	I use authentic English songs.	63	1.00	5.00	2.9524	1.09881
22	I use different activities when using songs.	66	1.00	5.00	3.2576	1.04234
23	Using songs is very flexible.	64	1.00	5.00	3.7031	1.03402
24	I enjoy using songs in my English language classes as a warm up activity.	66	1.00	5.00	3.8030	1.09853
25	I use educational songs that suit my students' level, needs, and interest	67	1.00	5.00	3.8060	1.11788

As shown in Table 8, it is clear that those two items get the highest means: item 25 (m=3.81, Std=1.1) and item 24 (m=3.8, Std=1, 0). This indicates that teachers use educational songs that suit their students' level, needs, and interest and they enjoy using songs in English

language classes as a warm up activity. On the contrary, the two items that get the lowest means are: item 20 (m=2.6) and item 21 (m=2.9) which means that teachers' have lower tendency towards using authentic songs and use songs to introduce the theme.

## CONCLUSION

The primary aim of this study was to examine the effect of using children's songs in developing the elementary graders' vocabulary and pronunciation. It aimed also to investigate teachers' attitudes towards the use of songs in their English classes. Reviewing the relevant literature about songs revealed that songs are considered as effective teaching tools and have pedagogical values. Songs can help in teaching English skills: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation. Moreover, they help in enhancing learners' listening and speaking skills. Furthermore, by using songs in English classes, learners will be motivated for learning English and enjoy English class. As the findings of this study demonstrate songs have the potential of playing an important role in English teaching and learning for young learners. As the research illustrates, the teachers indicated that songs are interesting, and enjoyable.

In order to achieve the goal of using songs in English classes, teachers should use different techniques for applying songs depending on students' level, interest, class time and textbook. However, students hate prompting education and prefer learning by action and other modern techniques.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study that show the effectiveness of using songs in teaching English, the researcher proposes the following recommendations:

1. **The Ministry of Education, curriculum designers and decision makers** should enrich English for Palestine curriculum with different songs that suit different language skills and themes. They should also provide schools with modern and important materials that help in the use of songs in classes. Finally, they should motivate teachers to develop their competences especially in using songs.
2. **The supervisors** should emphasize the important role of using songs in class and encourage teachers to use them. They should conduct different training courses that help them to develop themselves and provide them with different techniques and activities that can help them in using songs in class.
3. **The English teachers** should be aware of different approaches of language teaching. They should be creative in their classes and create suitable environment for students by adopting up to date techniques i.e. songs that suit students' level, interest, enjoy and motivate them to participate and interact with different activities.

### *Recommendations for Further Research*

After conducting this study, the researcher noticed that Education in Palestine is still in need for serious evaluation. For that, the researcher recommends, for example, pursuing research that investigates the effect of using songs in developing learners speaking skills. Also, a research can be carried out to investigate the effect of using songs in developing writing. Another research can be pursued to investigate teachers' perceptions towards the use of songs in language teaching especially for teenager/elder graders. Moreover, it is also possible to

conduct a research that investigates learners' attitudes towards the use of songs in language learning. Finally, a comparative study between male and female teachers can be pursued to examine using specific teaching method to help improve learners' proficiency.

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**Appendices**

*Appendix A*  
*Pre Vocabulary Test*

Name:..... Vocabulary Exam 4<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Time: 40 minutes Total points=40

**1) Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the box. (10 points)**

<b>rainbow</b>	<b>green</b>	<b>apple</b>	<b>bed</b>
<b>chair</b>	<b>ice cream</b>	<b>hotdog</b>	<b>blue</b>
<b>hamburger</b>	<b>narrow</b>		

- 1- \_\_\_\_\_ is cold.
- 2- \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are unhealthy food.
- 3- The sky is \_\_\_\_\_. Grass is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4- Please, sit on your \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5- I eat an \_\_\_\_\_ everyday.
- 6- \_\_\_\_\_ has seven colors.
- 7- The road is \_\_\_\_\_ We can't walk in.
- 8- The baby is sleeping into \_\_\_\_\_.

**2) Classify these words. (10 points)**  
**chips, purple ,vegetables, cave, pink, black, cake, forest, chocolate, red**

<b>Colours</b>	<b>Food</b>	<b>Places</b>
1-	1-	1-
2-	2-	2-
3-	3-	
4-	4-	

**3) Write the missing letters . (5 points)**


<b>u</b>	<b>s</b>	<b>i</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>e</b>
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

1- \_\_hine 2- behav\_\_ 3- wh\_\_te 4- \_\_ake 5- m\_\_d


4) Look at the pictures and write the correct words from the box. There is one extra word. (6 points)

snowy, windy, sunny, rainy, cloudy, foggy, wet


1




2




3




4



5



6



- 2- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.

5) Unscramble (Re-order). (4 points)

- 1- We – on – bear- a- are- going- hunt  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2- Fruits – grow- help- and - vegetables -you  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3- You -the- rules- should – obey  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4- Ramallah- in –winter- is- warm  
\_\_\_\_\_

6) Write each word next to its opposite. (5 points)

cold

open

disobey

down

outside

- 1- hot ≠ \_\_\_\_\_
- 2- inside ≠ \_\_\_\_\_
- 3- close ≠ \_\_\_\_\_
- 4- obey ≠ \_\_\_\_\_
- 5- up ≠ \_\_\_\_\_

**The End of the Questions**

*Appendix B*  
*Post Vocabulary Test*

Name:..... Vocabulary Exam 4<sup>th</sup> Grade  
 Time: 40 minutes Total points=40

**1) Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the box. (10 points)**

<b>aunt</b>	<b>typing</b>	<b>apple</b>	<b>push</b>
<b>chair</b>	<b>ice cream</b>	<b>hotdog</b>	<b>bubbles</b>
<b>hamburger</b>			<b>floor</b>

- 1- It's hot. I want to have an \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2- \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are unhealthy food.
- 3- Children like to play with water \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4- Please, sit on your \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5- I eat an \_\_\_\_\_ everyday.
- 6- We visited our \_\_\_\_\_ last week.
- 7- There is a sweetie paper on the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8- You shouldn't \_\_\_\_\_ your friend.
- 9- The typist is \_\_\_\_\_.

**2) Classify these words. (11 points)**  
**chips, bread ,vegetables, tailor, typist,**  
**aunt, grandpa, chocolate, dad, cleaner, mum**

Food	Family members	Works
1-	1-	1-
2-	2-	2-
3-	3-	3-
4-	4-	

**3) Write the missing letters . (6 points)**

<b>o</b>	<b>s</b>	<b>a</b>	<b>c</b>	<b>e</b>	<b>i</b>
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

- 1- \_\_hine    2- behav\_\_    3- cle\_\_n    4- \_\_ake    5- n\_\_d    6- t\_\_dy

4) Look at the pictures and write the correct words from the box. There is one extra word. (6 points)

snowy, windy, sunny, rainy, cloudy, foggy, wet



- 1- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6- The weather is \_\_\_\_\_.

5) Unscramble (Re-order). (4 points)

- 1- Tailors- sewing- are.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2- Fruits – grow- help- and - vegetables -you  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3- You -the- rules- should – obey  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4- Jericho- in –winter- is- warm  
\_\_\_\_\_

6) Write each word next to its opposite. (3 points)

**cold**                      **disobey**                      **outside**

- 1- hot ≠ \_\_\_\_\_
- 2- inside ≠ \_\_\_\_\_
- 3- obey ≠ \_\_\_\_\_

**The End of the Questions**

*Appendix C*  
*Post Pronunciation Test*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pronunciation Exam** **Time: 10 minutes**

**Q) Read the words then odd (circle) the word that doesn't rhyme out:**

- 1- bell fell weather (2 pts)  
 2- windy tidy five

**Q) Circle the correct word: (4pts)**

- 1- call- coll      2- suny- sunny      3- scream- skreem  
 4- four- fowr      5- melk- milk

**Q) Choose the correct answer: (6pts)**

- 1- gr\_\_nd (ou -w)      2- surpr\_\_e (s-z)      3- pi\_\_ (ck-k)  
 4- jum\_\_ing (p-b)      5- h\_\_d (e-ea)      6- r\_\_ny (a-ai)

**Q) Circle the silent letter: (4 pts)**

- 1- should      2- five      3- little      4- one

**Q) Classify these words into the table: (8 pts)**

**cheese, chair, push, cloudy, cold, please, sugar, surprize**

/z/ zoo	/k/ car	/sh/ shop	/ch/ cheata

**The End of the Questions**

*Appendix D*  
**Lesson Plans**

**Unit: 5 Lesson: 3 Page: 30 The Weather Song Subject: Listening**  
**Time: 40 minutes**

**Objectives:** After finishing the lesson, students are expected to:

- 1- identify the weather vocabulary.
- 2- read the words correctly.
- 3- use words in sentences.
- 4- write the words correctly.

**Instructional aids and resources:** computer – song- flashcards- board- worksheet.

**Vocabulary:** weather, hot, cold, sunny, cloudy, rainy, foggy, windy, wet, snow, shine, nice

**Procedures:**

1. T. introduces the weather vocabulary using flash cards, and sticks them on the board.
2. T. asks students to look outside and tell how the weather is.
3. T. plays the song while children listen.
4. T. plays it again while children listen and repeat.

5. T. shows the class the script of the song.
6. T. asks the children to sing three or four lines at a time.
7. T. lets them to sing the whole song.
8. T. invites some students to come up and put the weather pictures on the board. Students will be asked to say the word as they put the card on the board.
9. T. lets them do the worksheet.
10. T. asks the children to sing the song to their parents.

**Evaluation:** T. asks Ss questions to answer.

e.g.: Why do you wear a jacket?

It's ..... outside. Take off your jacket.

It's ..... take your coat.

It's ..... let's stay inside

### *Appendix E* **The Weather Song**

How's the weather?

How's the weather?

Look outside.

How's the weather?

How's the weather?

Look outside.

It's sunny, it's rainy, it's windy, it's cloudy. It's snowy, it's foggy, it's hot, it's cold.

How's the weather?

How's the weather?

Look outside.

How's the weather?

How's the weather?

Look outside.

It's sunny, it's rainy, it's windy, it's cloudy. It's snowy, it's foggy, it's hot, it's cold.

### **Appendix F**

#### *Teachers' Attitude Questionnaire – final draft*

#### **The Questionnaire of "Teachers' Beliefs and Attitudes towards the Effectiveness of Using Songs in Developing Vocabulary and Pronunciation" for the Elementary graders**

Dear Teachers,

*The purpose of this questionnaire is to examine teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards the effectiveness of using songs in their English language classrooms*

*Please note that data provided in this questionnaire will remain confidential and will be used only for the purpose of scientific research. I appreciate your time in filling out this questionnaire.*

**The questionnaire consists of three parts. The first part is about personal information, the second one is about school information and the third one consists of twenty five statements about teachers attitudes towards the effectiveness of using songs in English classrooms.**

**Part One: Personal Information:**

**Kindly put x next to the choice that fits with you.**

1. Gender:  Male  Female
2. Education:  Diploma  Bachelor  Master
3. Teaching diploma:  Yes  No
4. Years of experience:  Less than a year  1-5 years  5-10 years  More than 10 years

**Part Two: School Information:**

1. School:  private  public
2. Grades you teach (this year):  1  2  3  4  5  6
3. Your average class size:  Less than 12  12-20  21-28  28-35  35+
4. Curriculum you teach:  English for Palestine  Other .....

**Part Three:**

**Please read each statement below and note whether you agree or disagree with it**

**1- Strongly Disagree 2- Disagree 3- Neutral 4- Agree 5- Strongly Agree**

#	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Pedagogical value of using songs</b>						
<b>I believe that.....</b>						
1	Songs are considered a valuable pedagogical tool in learning English.					
2	Songs help develop language acquisition.					
3	Songs can be used to illustrate themes or topics.					
4	Songs help learners become familiar with word stress, intonation and rhythm.					
5	Songs enable learners to remember chunks of language.					
6	Songs provide students with opportunity for great exposure to improve vocabulary acquisition.					
7	Songs help improve students' speaking skills.					
8	Songs help students to better understanding of the culture of the target language.					
9	Songs are useful in the teaching of sentence structure.					
10	Songs help learners improve their listening and pronunciation skills.					
11	Songs increase students' enjoyment of learning English.					
12	Songs add interest to the classroom routine.					
13	Songs improve student's motivation.					
14	Songs help create a relaxed and non-threatening environment of learning.					
15	Songs can be used to practice the four skills.					
16	Songs help create more students' participation.					
17	Songs lower students' anxiety toward learning English.					
<b>Frequency of using songs</b>						
<i>Always often</i>						

<i>some- rarely never</i>					
<i>1005 80% times 40% 0%</i>					
<b>18</b>	I use songs in my English classes on many occasions.				
<b>19</b>	Songs stimulate my students to learn real English.				
<b>20</b>	I use songs to introduce the theme.				
<b>21</b>	I use authentic English songs.				
<b>22</b>	I use different activities when using songs.				
<b>23</b>	Using songs is very flexible.				
<b>24</b>	I enjoy using songs in my English language classes as a warm up activity.				
<b>25</b>	I use educational songs that suit my students' level, needs, and interest				

**26- Please write any additional comments you would like regarding the effectiveness of using songs in English language teaching.**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

**Thank you**