JAZZ CHANTS FOR YOUNG LEARNERS  
(A Case Study in TK Bina Insani Semarang)  

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Abstract: Children are thinkers and active learners who construct knowledge and information through active interaction with the surroundings in various stages of development. Through simple songs and poems, children can learn and have experience a language, especially a foreign language (English). Jazz Chants is one of them. Jazz chants is a learning method of English language for a child that was introduced by a jazz artist who is also an English teacher in New York. In contrast to common nursery rhymes which usually used as media to teach English for young learners, jazz chants have a combination of simple musicality and vocabulary or expression so it is easier to understand and play. This study will focus on the effectiveness of teaching English through jazz chants for young learners.

Keywords: jazz chants, EYL

Introduction

Literary work becomes very essential subject to be discussed, because literary work is a product of human which has uniq value to life. Literary works do not only deal with writing works but spoken also. Spoken works were as old as the civilization itself. These are the oldest literary works. One form of spoken works are nursery rhymes. Nursery rhymes are the most preferred literary works loved by children, because it is fun and entertaining and also give some moral values that are needed by children. However, nursery rhymes have limitations among others, it can be seen from the text and the rhythm that are created. To make a nursery rhymes, we need some specific skills too, so it is difficult to make another nursery rhymes which are suitable with the theme when we are teaching children in the class. We have to prepare it first. So, we have another alternative method to overcome the problem. We can use jazz chant as an alternative way to teach English for young learners, because jazz chant is simpler than nursery rhyme.

Jazz chants are simple because it deals with natural spoken language, no special skill is needed in composing the chants. All we need are a few examples of jazz chants to be practiced and verbal skills to support the creation of jazz chants. The simplicity of jazz chants also rely on numbers of syllables on words, phrases, or sentences, so it will show rhythmically unit. In addition, Jazz chants must come from the real and useful language. Finally jazz chants become an innovative way which was introduced by Carolyn Graham to teach English for young learner, because the theme of jazz chants could coincide based on the age of the students. Students are expected to have active in learning.

Jazz chants

Children are active learners constructing knowledge through active interaction in their environment. Shin in her journal “Teaching English for Young Learners” Jshin2@embc.edu (2013) explains that the role of teacher is working effectively and actively with them. Teacher should pay attention the capacity of his/her young learners in accepting new knowledge, especially new language. Adults also have role in guiding them. Young learners are learners that gain knowledge through listening and experiencing language. They also learn through playing. With this activity, they are not realized that they are actually learning new words and phrases. These young learners like to imitate spoken words and producing funny sounds in learning language. As they have not had ability to read and write, Language learning shuld be focused in speaking and playing. Their language structure will grow continually as they employ the language in daily basis. So it is important to create language environment that are suitable to them which is real world with autentic langauge. That is why jazz chants is appropiate to young learners as langauge used is authentic.

Jazz chants were introduced at the first time by Carolyn Graham in 1970s’, but the book was first published in 1978. She was Master Teacher of ESL at New York University. Actually she is a musician, writer and a teacher. According to Carolyn, jazz chant is a rhythmic expression of spoken American English, because it was born in America. Jazz chanting is simply a way of learning to speak and understand with special attention to the sound system of the language. That is way that jazz chant is focusing on words’ syllables to make it easier in producing the words’ rhythms (source: her video interview in http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_nPuUpYrCyCs).

Moreover, Carolyn said that a jazz chants’ sound and rhythm was reflected exactly from the traditional American Jazz. So, she tried to put the American jazz rhythm into her lyric of the chants. Why jazz chants become very essential in this article? The writer tried to analyze the differences between jazz chant and nursery
rhyme, and we found that jazz chant is more effective than nursery rhymes. That is because jazz chants bring rhythm into the classroom where the teachers teach the students. And we know exactly how the brain responds to the rhythm. The brain loves the rhythm which can be proved by the memory. From Jazz chants, students can enjoy in learning the English language material. They can easily memorize every material which presents it in rhythm, and the brain loves it. Moreover, not only spelling the lyric, jazz chants also works with the simple body movement, like clapping and stamping. And of course it will bring happiness and joy into the classroom, especially in the English Young Learners’ classroom.

One of the advantages of jazz chant is we can make our own jazz chant based on the needs of our students. We can customize the theme according to the age and educational level of the students. So, jazz chant is a method that is very effective and flexible to be used as a method of teaching English for young learners.

**Jazz Chants for the Students in TK Bina Insani Semarang**

It has been described earlier that one way to introduce English for young learners is by jazz chant. The simplicity of jazz chants makes them easy to understand simple English in expression or building vocabulary. We chose TK Bina Insani as this institution has been in collaboration with Universitas of PGRI Semarang since 2012. TK Bina Insani is located at Jl. Alas Sari Sumurbroto Srondol Semarang. It has 100s students which are divided into two level class, A for junior Class and B for the senior one. We chose B Class as it only remained. We did research in the end of semester so it was the graduation season.

We conducted the research for two days for 1.5 hours. There are two chants that we introduced to the students. The topics are the expressions of like and asking for name. The followings are the chants:

One, Two, I like You
One, Two, I like You
One, Two, Three, You like Me.

A. Hey You, What’s your name
Hey You, What’s your name
B. I’m…..(Marry)

These topics are considered to be appropriate to the level of kindergarten students. We have consulted with the class teacher first. The class we chose has 15 students.

First day, we introduced jazz chant entitled *I like you*. As we expected, the students grapsed it well, so within a few minutes, the expression could be delivered. However, our target was not that they only memorized the chant, but they could understand the contents of the chant that we taught. So that, they can show how to express their feeling of like.

Second day, we introduced jazz chant entitled *What’s your name*. As happened previously, they could memorize the chants well too. We also gave them simple explanation what the content of the chants were and how to use it in everyday situation. So after they memorized all the jazz chants given, they practiced it within 40 minutes. In practice, we played two part A and B, our role was asking them what their name was in rhythmical tone. Whether they could answer or not, it could be recorded. The result, they could answer the question happily.

The result of our observation in this research are
1. The students in TK Bina Insani Semarang enthusiastically learned English well.
2. They could easily accept the jazz chant material.

![Picture 1: enthusiastic students in learning English through Jazz Chants](image)
3. They can understand and practice how to show the feeling of like in English.
4. They can understand and practice how to ask someone's name and answer it in English.

Conclusion
There are some methods and approaches used to introduce English to Young learners. Songs, games, and jazz chants are the examples because those are simple and fun activities. Based on the result of our observation in TK Bina Insani, it can be concluded that jazz chants can motivate the students to learn English easily and enthusiastically. Furthermore, they can understand and practice it in the class confidently.

References
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