USING SONGS AS AUDIO MATERIALS IN TEACHING TURKISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT
The use of songs as audio materials in teaching Turkish as foreign language is an important part of language culture and has an important place in culture. Thus, the transfer of cultural aspects accelerates language learning process. In the light of this view, it becomes necessary to transfer cultural aspects into classroom environment in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Songs are one of the instruments which provide students with the information related to target culture. In foreign language teaching, activities which are created by using songs contribute to the development of a lot of language skills from grammar to pronunciation. Therefore, these activities can be carried out in all classes ranging from very basic levels to advanced ones. Additionally, as widely known, music and melody have a positive impact in terms of reducing stress and anxiety. Considering the current literature, the use of activities involving songs in foreign language teaching has positive effects on students within their language learning process and further help them to be encouraged toward foreign language and culture. in this study, the place and the importance of songs as one of the tools to transfer culture and used in Turkish as a foreign language courses will be questioned, and sample activities will also be presented.
Keywords: Teaching Turkish as a foreign language, audio materials, , songs, culture transfer

1. INTRODUCTION
With the progress of technology, the development of educational tools for foreign language teaching has started to contribute significantly to student progress while learning a foreign language. Therefore, the efforts to adapt these tools, which are developed by the technology of our day, to class environment has become of greater importance. At the same time, the increase in the number of approaches to develop students' skill of communication and cross-cultural interaction is an indicator of the fact that songs are audial and written tools essential for foreign language teaching.

Utilization of visual and audial tools is effective in concretizing the learning process. Using these tools in class environment not only enables students acquire the desired information more quickly, but also makes the information acquired more permanent. According to (Çakır, 2006), it is a well-known fact that audio-visual materials are a great help in stimulating and facilitating the learning of a foreign language That is to say, all audio-visual materials have positive contributions to language learning as long as they are used at the right time, in the right place. As multimedia consisting of tools appealing to human senses such as visual and audial tools used in foreign language teaching increase the amount of emotional input, the level and the quality of lingual skills of a person also increases Tarcan (2004),. Accordingly, the quality and the quantity of the output such as writing and speaking skills, which are of utmost importance for language learning, becomes higher. From this point of view, songs, which are audial tools, are important resources for students while developing lingual skills.

2. THE INFLUENCE OF SONGS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES
Using songs as tools for teaching a foreign language has many benefits. According to Lo and Li (1998), songs are able to change the monotonous mood in the class and with the smoothing effect of music; they provide a comfortable class environment so that students can develop their lingual skills more easily. Besides, utilizing songs in class environment amuses students, helps them feel relaxed and get rid of their negative attitudes towards a foreign language while learning a lingual structure through a song (Sarıçoban, 2000). In this direction, the amusing and relaxing mood brought by songs to the class eases the effects of certain emotional cases such as excitement, anxiety, lack of self-confidence and the feeling of being threatened, in addition to influencing learning process positively or facilitating it by stimulating the student emotionally (Kramsch,1993). Also songs help motivating the learners as they provide a pleasant atmosphere. The students are encouraged to actively involve in the learning process by making use of their musical knowledge. In this way songs help students to develop confidence for language learning.(Şahin, 2008)

In a survey conducted by Joly (1995), the question whether the in-class utilization of songs which were chosen in accordance with the goals of the lesson was helpful or not was directed to students attending a Japanese speaking course. The results of the survey show that the majority of the students favored using songs in the class.

In the light of this view of students, it can be said that songs amuse students; they reduce the level of boredom existing in ordinary language teaching and increase student enthusiasm towards studying.

According to Cheung (2001), as students more easily learn the things about which they have background knowledge, student motivation is increased when the elements belonging to the popular culture of the target language are involved in the class. Bringing a song listened by the student to the class environment increases students' desire to learn and enables them contribute to the process of learning by making use of their own musical knowledge.

Songs offer many codes that strengthen student memory such as choruses, rhymes and melodies (Maley,1987). Therefore, these codes in songs increase the functionality of songs in language teaching. When a student listens to and memorizes a song involved in the class, the lyrics are embedded in his/her long-term memory. Moreover, neurological researches have shown that musical and lingual processes occur in the same section of brain and that there are significant similarities between musical and lingual syntax (Maess & Koelsch: 2001).

Additionally, being authentic texts themselves, songs provide students with the opportunity of meeting authentic texts belonging to the target language. According to Schoepp (2001), as they feature examples of daily language, songs help students get prepared for the language they will encounter in daily life. Besides, as a part of daily life, they are the tools of informing the students about the culture of the target language. A song is a literary text and literary texts harbor cultural elements belonging to the language in which they are written.

When the relationship between literary texts and life itself is examined, it is seen that the reality of life and human conditions in literary texts are narrated by being processed in the inner world of the author. In this regard, literary texts have a significant role in comprehending human beings and society with their different aspects. In literary texts written in a foreign language, it is possible to find the reflection of the world of that language, a life which is stranger to us (Polat, 1993).

In parallel with these views, songs, as a type of literary texts, reflect culture and transmit cultural values between people, societies and generations. Therefore, while learning a foreign language, a person can learn about a society and its culture through songs.

3. THE CRITERIA FOR SELECTING SONGS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

As also mentioned above, songs are essential sources to be utilized during language teaching. Besides positive effects, there are of course difficulties encountered while using songs in language teaching. Terhune (1997: 8) lines these difficulties as follows:

   1. Pop songs are not scientific. Therefore, some teachers and students do not think that they are effective tools in education.
   2. As each student has a different way of learning, some students may have difficulty in studying through music.
   3. Inefficient sound systems in schools may cause problems while listening to songs.
   4. The types of music favored by students may not be matching with each other.
   5. Songs which are not grammatical or those involving complicated sentence structures may confuse students.
   6. In some songs, there may be embarrassing parts which cannot be explained to students.
   7. Repetition of a limited number of words may cause the song to seem boring or ineffective.

According to Jensen (2000), many teachers do not have sufficient knowledge about music and teacher training programs do not involve anything regarding how to utilize music in language teaching.

Another disadvantage of using songs is the lack of the ability to slow down the tempo of the song when a grammatically difficult part is playing, or to fasten it when there is the repetition of certain parts (Miller, 1999). Moreover, some teachers may think that they cannot sing, but using songs in the classroom for this aim does not necessitate any expertise in this field. Teachers can accompany the song while it is playing or in cases where students do not prefer to sing a song alone.

Despite these disadvantages that songs have, the number of such problems can be reduced if teachers have sufficient knowledge about using songs in the class. According to Terhune (1997), if they are used in classroom wisely and in a balanced way, songs can be perfect sources for teachers. For instance, students may think that

songs do not have any educational significance as utilizing them leads students off the syllabus and the course book. For this reason, the teacher should involve certain activities which show that using songs in the lesson has a significant motive. Therefore, in order to avoid the misuse of songs, there are certain criteria to be considered for choosing the song to be utilized in the class.

While utilizing a song in classroom environment, the language of that song, age and language level of the students, areas in which students and the teacher are interested in should be taken into account. In order to utilize songs in the best way, a certain amount of attention is required. Sarıçoban (2000) recommends using songs which harbor frequent repetitions or a story or interpretations on life or cultural elements. Griffe (1992) lists four elements to be considered while choosing a song to be used in the class as follows:

1. Classroom environment (number, age and interests of students; lesson hours)
2. Teacher (teacher's age, interest in music and aim to use the song in the class)
3. Classroom facilities (flexibility in lesson plan, classroom equipment)
4. Music (lesson plan and equipment such as the volume, sources of music, copying machine, board, etc.)

The content of the song chosen to be used in the classroom is also important. Some songs may contain embarrassing elements for students. Sarıçoban (2000) divides songs into two categories as those suitable for adults on advanced level of language and those appropriate for children. Meaningful and popular songs which also harbor cultural elements as well as grammatical patterns should be chosen for adult students on intermediate or advanced level, whereas more familiar or internationally-known songs should be selected for children. Griffe (1992) recommends using short and slow songs for students on beginner level. Crosswords, drawing or picture showing exercises can be conducted with such songs. For the students with a higher language level, long and fast songs which tell a story should be used. The song to be chosen should have a clear sound and it should be comprehensible; there should not be too many instruments played with a high volume in the song.

A song chosen should always contain a grammatical structure or a lingual subject. The diction of the singer should be clear so that the student will understand the lyrics more easily. The song should be chosen form a music genre favored by a major group of listeners. For example, if the teacher makes the students listen to only classical Turkish songs, then the students may feel bored with the lesson.

Applying these four criteria above during a lesson ensures that songs are optimally utilized in the class.

4. ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE APPLIED THROUGH THE UTILIZATION OF SONGS
Activities that can be carried out with songs in foreign language classes can be classified in three groups as pre-listening, listening and post-listening activities. Here, a teacher should carefully think about what a student will do before, while and after listening. Below are some recommendations regarding these activity stages and what kind of activities a teacher can use in these stages.

4.1. Pre-listening activities
In this stage, the teacher ensures that students are ready for the listening activity to be carried out. According to Davenellos (1999), the aim of this stage is to prepare students to a topic grammatically, educationally and psychologically. Before playing a song to students, it is necessary to introduce the topic, the keywords and the grammatical structure. In this stage, in order to activate students' background information, it may be suitable to ask the students to guess the theme of a song, to brainstorm about it, to present or to discuss the cultural information that the song includes or to state the keywords and the ideas in the song.

Pre-listening activities enable students to be aware of the purpose of listening to the song and to focus on the meaning of the song while listening. Besides, it is also possible to use songs by deliberately removing a part of their lyrics and to conduct activities in which students predict or derive the meaning of a word out of the context (Vandergrift, 1999).

As pre-listening activities, Sarıçoban (2000) recommends discussing the theme, the title or the story of the song if there is one, informing students about the lingual points to be studied and using a picture to introduce the theme of the song.

Moreover, many activities such as predicting the theme of a song out of its title, putting the lyrics of a song in syntactical order, involving posters about the song and the singer and with the aim of raising awareness, asking

students whether they have background knowledge about them and if the song has a video clip, playing it silently and asking students to make predictions about the theme of the song can be utilized in this stage.

An example from an application regarding how to make use of a song of which theme is wedding ceremony, which is a cultural element, in Turkish as a foreign language classes is given below. In this application, the first step consists of pre-listening activities composed with the purpose of familiarizing students with the text.

Activity 1: What do the pictures remind you?
Activity 2: Write down the other words you have in your mind about marriage.

Activity 3: Read the disordered lyrics of a song below. Which of the options below can be the title of the song?
Activity 4: Read the lyrics below and order them for yourself by writing the numbers in the first gap.

The aims of these activities are to motivate students for the text and the lesson and to have them brainstorm about the text, by providing them with some ideas about the theme of the text before encountering it, since students may fail to focus on or be motivated for the text if they directly face the text without having any preliminary activities.

4.2. Listening Activities

Listening activities are directly related to the text and students are expected to carry out these activities in the course of listening. In this process of listening and by the guidance of the teacher, students control their comprehension skills and focus on listening to the text.

According to Peachey (2003), in order for students to get accustomed to the voice of the singer or the tempo of the song, they need to listen to that song at least for three or four times. Prior to listening, it is also necessary to grant students with a short period of time for reading the questions they are going to answer while listening.

In this stage, activities such as removing certain parts of the text which are related with the grammatical form, word or pronunciation type in question, checking the accuracy of the predictions made about the song before listening, ordering the lyrics of the song, answering multiple-choice or open-ended questions about the song, picking the words that students hear in the song from a long wordlist given before listening, pausing the song and asking students to repeat the last word they have heard or correcting lexical, grammatical or syntactical mistakes deliberately involved in the lyrics.

Activity 5: Listen to the song and put the lyrics in order using the second gap.
Activity 6: How many differences are there between your order of lyrics and the order you have had after listening to the song.
Activity 7: Don't look at the lyrics. The song will be paused at certain parts. Write down the last word you have heard.
Activity 8: Write the passive verbs you have heard in the song in the gaps below.

5.Şarkıyı dinleyin ve şarkının sözlerini ikinci boşluğa sıralayın.

6. Kendinize göre sıraladığınız ile şarkıya göre sıraladığınız sözler arasında kaç farklılık var?

7. Şarkı sözlerini kapalı olarak tutun. Şarkı bazı bölümlerde durdurulacaktır. En son duyduğunuz sözcüğü aşağıdaki bölüme yazın.

8. Şarkıda geçen edilgen fiilleri aşağıdaki boşluklara yazınız.

In the activities presented above, the aims are to have students check the predictions they have previously made about the song, develop their listening and comprehension skills and internalize the grammatical structure they have learned. In this process, students are more into production. In this stage, the emphasis is on how and with which elements students should approach texts in order to develop their comprehension skills. It is expected from students to carry out verbal and written tasks by sticking to the text and to progress the way they use the language from dependent to independent by dealing with the text in question with its various aspects.

4.3. Post-listening activities
Various activities for assessing the whole process of listening can be conducted in this stage. According to Davenellos (1999), this stage consists of follow-up activities for developing speaking and writing skills.

In this stage, Sarıçoban (2000) recommends using activities such as reading a text about the singer or the theme of the song, commenting and interpreting the song and dramatizing the plot of the song. These activities may vary in accordance with the language level and the areas of interest of students. The teacher can check the answers of the questions from listening stage. For improving writing skills, students can compose a dialogue out of the words of the people in a song; they can summarize, continue the song, or rewrite the lyrics from the point of view of another person in the song. In order to improve pronunciation, students can sing the song individually, with another student or in groups. For improving speaking skills, students can talk about how they feel after listening to the song. Also, some questions can be directed to students with the aim of initiating discussions.

Activity 9: According to the song, what kinds of activities are there in a wedding ceremony? Summarize them.
Activity 10: What kinds of activities are there in a wedding ceremony in your country? Compare them with the activities mentioned in the song.

9.Şarkıya göre bir düğünde neler yapılır? Özetleyiniz.

10. Sizin ülkenizde bir düğünde neler yapılır? Karşılaştırarak yazınız.

With these activities, students are expected to summarize the song, to practice writing by involving his/her culture in the class and using the lingual structure he/she has just learned. Students are more into production in this stage. What is expected from students is to carry out verbal and written tasks by sticking to the text and to progress the way they use the language from dependent to independent by dealing with the text in question with its various aspects. In the activity on the final step, lesson topics are quite flexible. The lesson is drawn away from fictional contexts to daily life. Students are expected to state their thoughts without depending on the text.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order for the student to learn the target language, the using of technology need to be exploited in classroom as much as possible. For this reason, utilizing technology for language teaching is of great importance, and the tendency to integrate technology with lesson content grows each day. Accordingly, utilizing songs through technology in lesson environment attract attention. There are positive and negative views on the utilization of songs in foreign language teaching. It is seen that songs are used for many reasons by methods adopted in foreign language teaching. The facts that music soothes students and that melodies, rhythms and rhymes in a song facilitate language learning improve students' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Besides, music and songs are all authentic texts. These authentic texts act as significant sources for students to discover the culture of the target language and to improve their cultural awareness. In this study, which was carried out by taking these effects of songs as basis, activities that can be used with songs in Turkish as a foreign language classes are given and certain sample activities are recommended.

For foreign language teaching, if songs are carefully chosen by taking the audience, objectives, language level of students and song content into consideration and if deliberate activities are carried out, it is possible to make use of songs effectively. Utilizing songs this way provides an enjoyable experience not only for students but also for the teacher. Using songs along with such activities will have many advantages such as saving the lesson from being boring and monotonous and improving student motivation.

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