

The Function of Stress in Educational Children's Songs

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Abstract

This research explores the role of phonological stress in children's songs and its impact on language development, using "Wheels on the Bus" as an example. Phonological stress is essential in language education, aiding comprehension and communication by emphasizing specific syllables and words. Song lyrics blend language and music to evoke emotions and convey messages. Music role in children's development is multifaceted, improving cognitive skills, emotions, and social interaction, acting as a universal language. Phonological stress in songs like "Wheels on the Bus" promotes phonological awareness, memorization, and enjoyment, supporting language acquisition. They expand vocabulary and improve pronunciation. "Wheels on the Bus" exemplifies how music aids language development, memorization, and motor skills, combining learning with physical activity. This study highlights the pedagogical value of integrating music into language education.

Keywords: Phonological stress, language development, children's songs, cognitive skills, phonological awareness, language education.

1- Introduction

Music and language are deeply interconnected in educational contexts through the use of phonological stress in children songs. stress which emphasizes certain syllables or words, is not just a linguistic tool but a powerful pedagogical strategy. It enriches the rhythmic quality of language, making it an engaging and memorable experience for young learners. In songs like "Wheels on the Bus," the use of stress patterns in language, helping children distinguish between different sounds and meanings, and fostering an intuitive understanding of the natural rhythm of speech.

The use of stress in educational songs also supports cognitive processing such as memory and recall. This is especially beneficial in early childhood education where repetition and melody play key roles in learning retention. Moreover, phonological stress contributes to the enjoyment of songs, as the predictable patterns and beats make participation more accessible and fun for children encouraging them to sing move, and dance.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The integration of phonological stress in children's songs presents an educational opportunity, yet it also poses a challenge in effectively utilizing way. this tool is used to enhance language development and literacy. While songs like "Wheels on the Bus" demonstrate the potential for engaging young learners in language acquisition and motor skills development, there is a need to systematically incorporate stress patterns in educational content to maximize learning outcomes. The problem lies in ensuring that the use of phonological stress in songs not only supports language proficiency and

cognitive growth but also resonates with children emotionally and socially which presents an environment that encourages active participation and holistic development.

1.3. Aims of the research

The aims of this research are to:

- Investigate the effectiveness of phonological stress in children's songs for language development.
- showing how stress patterns in songs can enhance cognitive skills and memory keeping.
- Exploring the impact of songs on children's emotional and social interaction.
- Determining the role of songs as pedagogical tools in raising active learning and participation.
- Analyzing the educational value of songs like "Wheels on the Bus" in early childhood education.

1.4. Question of the research

what are the effectiveness of incorporating phonological stress and songs in language education. Also how phonological stress training improve learners' natural speech patterns and contribute to language proficiency and accurate communication.

1.5. Limits of the research

This study is focused on the phonological stress patterns present in the children's song "Wheels on the Bus" and their impact on language development within educational settings.

1.6. Value of the Study

The study of phonological stress in children's music, exemplified by "Wheels on the Bus," is crucial for enhancing language learning. It supports children's linguistic skills, cognitive abilities, emotional expression, and cultural awareness, also guiding educators for more dynamic and effective teaching methods. This research highlights the integral role of music in children's comprehensive development and educational practices.

Section Two

2.1. Stress

Phonological stress in an educational language context involves the systematic emphasis placed on certain syllables or words within spoken language instruction or learning materials. It is a linguistic phenomenon where specific syllables or words are pronounced with greater prominence or force. This emphasis can be achieved through different ways, such as increased loudness, longer duration, and changes in pitch or intonation. By highlighting stress patterns, educators aim to assist forward language acquisition and comprehension among learners (Cutler, 2012: 46).

In educational settings, phonological stress tends to use as an essential function in conveying meaning and differentiating between words that have the same sounds but differ in stress patterns. The placement of stress on specific syllables or words can change the meaning of a word. (Dauer, 2005: 118).

phonological stress plays an important role in facilitating effective communication. Stress patterns contribute to the rhythmic and melodic aspects of speech, conveying emotions, emphasis, and the overall flow of spoken language. By highlighting stress patterns, educators help learners in understanding and producing the appropriate rhythms and intonation patterns of the target language. (Cutler, 2012: 48).

By engaging in rhythmical exercises, learners develop a sense of the natural stress patterns in the target language and improve their ability to produce speech that straighten with those patterns. Additionally, educators utilize stress patterns to teach vocabulary, sentence structure, and intonation patterns, enabling learners to develop a natural and fluent spoken language (Derwing & Munro, 2015:109).

Practicing phonological stress educators aim to enhance learners' overall language proficiency, pronunciation accuracy, and communication skills. Understanding and utilizing stress patterns allow learners to comprehend spoken language more effectively, as they can identify the emphasized elements that carry important information in communication. This facilitates effective communication and enables learners to convey meaning accurately in various social and educational contexts (Roach, 2009:75).

2.2. Lyrics and Language in Songs

Lyrics in songs serve as a powerful medium for artistic expression, enabling songwriters to convey a wide range of emotions, telling stories, and communicate complex ideas through language. Artists carefully select words and craft their lyrics to create a profound effect on listeners. The language used in song lyrics often exceed the boundaries of everyday conversation, incorporating poetic devices such as metaphors, similes, and imagery to create a rich content of words. These devices add depth to the lyrical content making it more memorable. (Gibson, 2013: 28).

Moreover, song lyrics often serve as a principle for personal expression, social commentary, and cultural reflection. Artists draw inspiration from their own lives, observations, and societal issues to write lyrics that capture universal truths or convey specific effect. The choice of language in these lyrics reflect the artist's unique voice and their desired impact on the audience. (Lamar et al., 2015: 70).

The relationship between music and language is also clear in how lyrics impact our emotions and psychology. (Squires, 2019: 167).

2.3. Music and Its Impact on Children

Music has a remarkable role in children's cognitive development. Research suggests that exposure to music and music training can enhance various cognitive skills in children. For example, engaging with music has been linked to improve spatial-temporal skills, which are crucial for scientific reasoning. These skills involve understanding and manipulating visual and auditory patterns, which are crucial in different ways such as problem-solving (Schellenberg, 2004:512).

Music training has positive effects on language processing and verbal memory in children. Studies have shown that children who engage in music lessons or musical activities enhanced language skills, such as vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. Music facilitates the development of auditory processing skills, including discrimination, segmentation, and sequencing of sounds, which are essential for language acquisition and interaction (Slater, Tierney, & Kraus, 2013:10).

Moving beyond cognitive development, music also has a profound impact on children's emotions. Listening to music or participating in music-making activities can evoke a range of emotions in children, allowing them to explore and express their feelings in a safe and creative manner. Music has the power to uplift spirits, provide solace during difficult times, and arouse a sense of joy and happiness. Rickard, 2012:24).

It can help children regulate their emotions, reduce stress and anxiety, and promote relaxation. (Lai & Good, 2005: 234).

Furthermore, music promotes social interactions and fosters a sense of community among children. Engaging in music activities such as singing, or participating in music classes encourages cooperation, teamwork, and mutual respect (Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2003: 157).

Through shared musical experiences, children learn to listen to others and collaborate, their actions, fostering social skills and empathy. Music also serves as a universal language that exceed cultural

barriers, enabling children from diverse backgrounds to connect, communicate, and appreciate different perspectives (Abril & Gault, 2018: 247).

2.4 Stress in Children Songs

Phonological stress, also known as word stress or accent, refers to the emphasis placed on certain syllables within words or phrases. In children's songs, the deliberate use of phonological stress can have several positive effects on language development, musical engagement, and enjoyment for young listeners. One important benefit of incorporating phonological stress into children's songs is the promotion of phonological awareness. By emphasizing words in songs, children are exposed to the rhythmic and melodic aspects of language, helping them to develop an ear for patterns and syllable structure. (Goswami, 2011:15).

The incorporation of phonological stress in children's songs also contributes to the enjoyment and fun aspects. The rhythmic and melodic patterns created by stressed syllables can make songs popular and appealing to young listeners. The repetition of stressed syllables within the song's structure creates a sense of familiarity making it easier for children to actively sing, and even dance or move. This active engagement not only enhances their musical experience but also promotes their overall enjoyment of the song (Gardiner, Fox, & Knowles, 1996: 284).

Furthermore, the use of phonological stress in children's songs can assist in language acquisition and vocabulary development. By highlighting stressed syllables, children become more attuned to the natural rhythms and accents of spoken language.

Children's songs that incorporate phonological stress provide a playful and engaging context for children to learn and reinforce their language skills (Welch, 2006: 182).

2.5. Songs as Pedagogical Tools

Songs have long been recognized as effective educational tools in various educational settings. Whether used in early childhood education, language learning, or songs offer a range of benefits for learners. They engage students through their melodic and rhythmic elements, making learning experience enjoyable and memorable. Moreover, songs give opportunities for language development, cognitive processing, and social interaction (Hallam, 2010: 269).

Children are more likely to remember and reproduce songs that have clear and consistent patterns of stressed syllables, supporting their overall musical engagement and participation (Welch, 2006: 161).

The repetitive nature of songs assist to reinforce learning and recall of content. Additionally, songs often include rhymes, which enhance phonological awareness and support language acquisition (Gardiner, Fox, & Knowles, 1996:284).

In the domain of language learning, songs serve as valuable tools for vocabulary expansion and pronunciation practice. Songs also provide context for syntactic structures and help develop listening skills. songs create a supportive environment that encourages learners to take risks and engage actively in the language learning process (Araújo and Fernandes,2019: 27).

Section Three

3.1. Data Analysis and Results

The context of the children's song "The Wheels on the Bus," can apply a similar analytical lens to explore how the song's lyrics employ rhythmic and stress patterns to convey meaning and facilitate language learning. Its repetitive and melodic structure serves as a foundational tool for children to develop linguistic competence. By dissecting the stress patterns and their educational implications, we can gain insights into how such simple songs play a pivotal role in early childhood development,

reaching children about social norms, environmental sounds, and the rhythm of language in a manner that is both engaging and respectful of their cognitive abilities.

This analysis aims to highlight the intricate ways in which stress patterns in language can influence learning and social interaction from a young age as below:

- "0:24The wheels on the bus go round and round." The primary stress on "wheels" immediately brings the listener's focus to the central theme of the song—the bus and its journey. The repeated stress on "round" not only emphasizes the circular motion but also introduces children to the concept of continuity and the idea that some actions, like the turning of wheels, are constant and reliable. This can be a comforting and grounding concept for young minds.

0:35" - All through the town." The stress on both "All" and "town" serves to highlight the scope of the bus's journey—it travels throughout the entire town, leaving no area untouched. This inclusivity can foster a sense of community and togetherness in children, teaching them that they are part of a larger whole.

- "0:39The doors on the bus go open and shut," The alternating stress pattern here mirrors the physical action of doors opening and closing. This not only teaches children about opposites but also about rhythm and regularity in everyday life. It can also introduce the concept of accessibility, as doors that open allow entry, and those that shut provide security.

- "0:54The wipers on the bus go Swish, swish, swish" The consistent stress on

"Swish" mimics the sound and movement of wipers, providing an auditory and visual representation of the action. This can help children develop their sensory perception by linking sounds to actions, which is a key aspect of language development.

- "1:09The signals on the bus go blink blink blink" The rhythmic stress on "blink" serves as an auditory representation of the bus's signal lights. This repetition is akin to the flashing of lights, which in real-life scenarios, signals the need for attention and caution. For children, this can be an early lesson in recognizing visual and auditory signs that require a response, such as stopping or looking both ways before crossing the street. It also teaches them about the rhythm of communication—how signals are a form of language without words.

- "1:25The horn on the bus goes Beep, beep, beep" The sharp, punctuated stress on

"Beep" mimics the sound of a horn, which is universally recognized as a call to alertness. This can help children understand the concept of using sounds to convey messages be it a warning, a greeting, or a signal to move. It also illustrates how stress in speech can indicate urgency; the same word said differently can have a range of meanings.

1:40« - The motor on the bus goes vroom vroom vroom" The deep, resonant stress on "vroom" echoes the powerful sound of an engine. This auditory experience can teach children about the source of motion and energy. It also introduces them to the idea of cause and effect—the motor's sound is directly linked to the bus's movement, just as their actions can lead to consequences.

- "1:55The people on the bus go up and down." The alternating stress on "up" and "down" reflects the physical motion experienced by passengers on a bus. This can help children with their understanding of movement and balance. Additionally, it can be a metaphor for the highs and lows in life, teaching them that life is full of different experiences and emotions.

" - 2:15The wheels on the bus go round and round." The repetition of this line with its consistent stress pattern reinforces the concept of cycles and routines. For children, understanding that certain things repeat regularly can provide a sense of security and predictability. It also helps them grasp the concept of time and the continuity of actions.

3.2 Wheels on The Bus Kids Songs

"Wheels on the Bus" is a popular children's song that has been enjoyed by generations of young learners. The song's catchy tune and repetitive lyrics make it engaging and easy for children to sing along and participate in the actions. It is often used as a fun and interactive way to teach young children about different parts of a bus and the sounds they make (Lynch, 2019: 47)

In terms of educational value, the song helps develop various skills in young children.

It promotes language development by introducing vocabulary related to transportation, such as wheels, doors, wipers, and horn. The repetitive structure of the song aids in memorization and reinforces language acquisition. It encourages fine and gross motor skills as children imitate the actions described in the song, such as rolling hands for wheels, opening and closing hands for doors, and swaying for the movement of the bus. This kinesthetic engagement enhances body awareness, coordination, and physical development (Hannon, 2012: 54).

3.3. Results

Based on the detailed analysis of the stress patterns in the song "The Wheels on the Bus," we can draw several findings that highlight the educational value of the song:

Language Development: The song's stress patterns facilitate language acquisition by emphasizing key words that are central to the song's theme. This helps children in word recognition and understanding the rhythm of language.

Cognitive Skills: The repetition and predictability of the song's structure aid in memory retention and cognitive development, as children learn to anticipate and remember the sequence of actions described in the song.

Conceptual Understanding: The song introduces children to various concepts such as continuity, community, opposites, communication, cause and effect, movement, and spatial awareness through its lyrics and the stress placed on specific words.

Rhythmic Communication: The song demonstrates how rhythm and stress in language can convey different levels of urgency and importance, which is a fundamental aspect of effective communication.

Section Four

1.4. Conclusion

Educational Tool: "The Wheels on the Bus" is more than a catchy tune; it's a strategic educational resource. The song's repetitive structure and melodic patterns are designed to engage young minds, making it easier for them to learn and retain information. Through its verses, children are introduced to various aspects of daily life and communal living, all while enjoying the process of learning.

Guiding Concepts: The song cleverly uses stress patterns to highlight key concepts.

For instance, the swishing of the wipers and the opening and closing of the bus doors are not just fun sounds; they represent rhythm and routine. These auditory cues help children understand their environment and the roles within a community, such as the driver and passengers.

-3**Language Building:** Each verse of the song is a lesson in language development.

The repetition of words and phrases aids in building vocabulary, while the emphasis on certain syllables helps with pronunciation. Moreover, the song introduces children to the concept of sequencing and storytelling, as they follow the bus on its journey.

Rhythm and Interaction: As children sing along, they're not just learning words; they're learning how to interact. The rhythm of the song mirrors the natural patterns of speech, teaching children about timing and the flow of conversation. This musical interaction lays the groundwork for social skills and effective communication.

Timeless Instruction: The enduring popularity of "The Wheels on the Bus" lies in its simplicity and depth. It's a song that has been passed down through generations, yet it remains relevant. It introduces children to the world in a way that is accessible and understandable, making it a timeless piece of educational music.

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