

SONGS AS A DEVICE: TEACHING VOCABULARY FOR THE STUDENTS OF V STANDARD

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Abstract

Language has become one of the basic needs of man. English as an international language is playing a great role in the day-to-day life of man. It is very important to learn a language in man's early ages as his learning level in the brain is very high. Language acquisition and language learning are two different methods through which language can go into the minds of the learners. Language acquisition happens very effectively through listening to songs. Vocabulary in the songs that the listeners listen to is undoubtedly engraved in their minds. The study explores the dynamic intersection of music and language acquisition, specifically focusing on the pedagogical potential of songs for vocabulary acquisition. The study investigates how integrating songs into language teaching can enhance vocabulary acquisition and retention among learners. The traditional teaching method of vocabulary teaching that is followed in Tamil medium schools in Tamil Nadu plays a good role. It is called the grammar-translation method. The study analyses the difference between the commonly used grammar-translation method of teaching language and a more dynamic method of using songs for language acquisition in the minds of students around the ages of 9 and 10 who are studying in the 5th standard at a Tamil medium school.

Keywords:

Students, music, songs, English, acquisition, learning, understanding, vocabulary.

Introduction

Language learning is a very important role in life to survive in the world. Language has become one of the basic needs of man. In countries like India, the English language plays a great role as India has more than 500 languages. English has become a second and common language

for communication all around the world after their native language. It is very important to learn English to survive in the modern era.

Language learning and language acquisition represent two distinct approaches to gaining proficiency in a new language. Language learning involves a deliberate, conscious effort on the part of the learner to study vocabulary, grammar rules, and language skills through formal instruction and practice. On the other hand, language acquisition is a subconscious process that occurs naturally through exposure to the language in social contexts. It involves developing an intuitive understanding of grammar, pronunciation, and cultural nuances, primarily during childhood when the brain is highly receptive to language input.

There are many methods to teach the English language to its learners. One of the commonly used methods is the grammar-translation method which uses the mother tongue as a bridge to connect. There is an innovative method of using songs to make learners acquire the English language. Songs have a great impact on the minds of their listeners. By using the power of music, language teachers can create a dynamic learning experience in the minds of the learners. In traditional teaching methods, abstract definitions and isolated vocabulary lists are taught. When language is taught using songs, vocabulary is acquired in meaningful and memorable contexts. It uses lyrical narratives, rhythmic patterns, and melodic tunes to create a dynamic environment to make the learners actively participate in the learning process. In this process, students are not only exposed to new words but also provided with the opportunity to relax and enjoy the acquisition process. When students enjoy something, they tend to remember it forever.

Review of Literature:

Many studies prove the usage of songs has a great impact on English language acquisition. Saito and Miura say that using songs in language teaching helps in vocabulary retention and improves pronunciation. Wang, Huang, Zeb, Liu and Yue Wang say that the usage of music will improve physical and mental wellbeing in the minds of the learners and will boost the learning experience. A study by Johnson and Smith in 2020 says that listening to songs along with watching its lyrics will improve reading fluency and comprehension.

Theory used in the research:

“Comprehensible input” is an important factor in boosting language acquisition according to Stephen Krashen’s “Theory of Second Language Acquisition”. The idea is to use stories for language teaching. According to Stephen Krashen, repeated exposure is a very successful method in language acquisition. Repeated exposure will increase the liking of the particular subject in the minds of the learners and it will be engraved in their mind.

Aim of the Research:

The research aims to use songs as a medium of teaching English vocabulary to young learners.

Methodology:

For the study, the researcher has chosen a Tamil medium government school in a rural area. Two 5th standard Tamil medium classes comprising of 30 students each were chosen for the research. “Group A” is considered as Control Group and “Group B” is considered as Experimental Group. For the study, a pre-test comprising of 20 vocabulary was given to Group A. The vocabulary given in the pre-test were chosen according to their syllabus along with some new and simple vocabulary. The papers of the pre-test were collected and its results were analysed. After collecting the papers, all the 20 vocabulary given to the students in the pre-test were taught using the traditional grammar teaching method. Ample time was taken to explain all the 20 vocabulary clearly. After teaching, a post-test was conducted using the same set of vocabulary. The papers were collected and the results were analysed.

An energetic song “Five Little Birds” was chosen from the internet for the research.

Five little birds

Five little birds were sitting in the nest

On top of the tree and all at rest

Mama bird saw them starting to crack

And soon all the eggs were hatched

The first baby bird looked down at the ground

He got scared and couldn't make a sound

Mama bird said fly fly fly

But the baby bird was too shy shy shy

The first baby bird got out of the nest

The next baby bird looked at the nest

Mama bird said now fly fly fly

But the baby bird said ohh my my my

The second baby bird flew way up high
The next baby bird then gave a sigh
Mama bird said now fly fly fly
But the baby bird said too high high high

The third baby bird at last went out
The next baby bird then gave a pout
Mama bird said now fly fly fly
But the baby bird said oh why why why

The fourth baby bird went down to eat
The last baby bird gave a long loud tweet
Mama bird said now fly fly fly
But the baby bird wanted to cry cry cry

Mama bird said it'll be okay
You'll be alright and there's a way
The little baby bird then started to sing
And flew off flapping his wings

All the baby birds with mother in the lead
Flew through the sky quiet well indeed
Mama bird said now fly fly fly
And all the birds flew to the sky sky sky

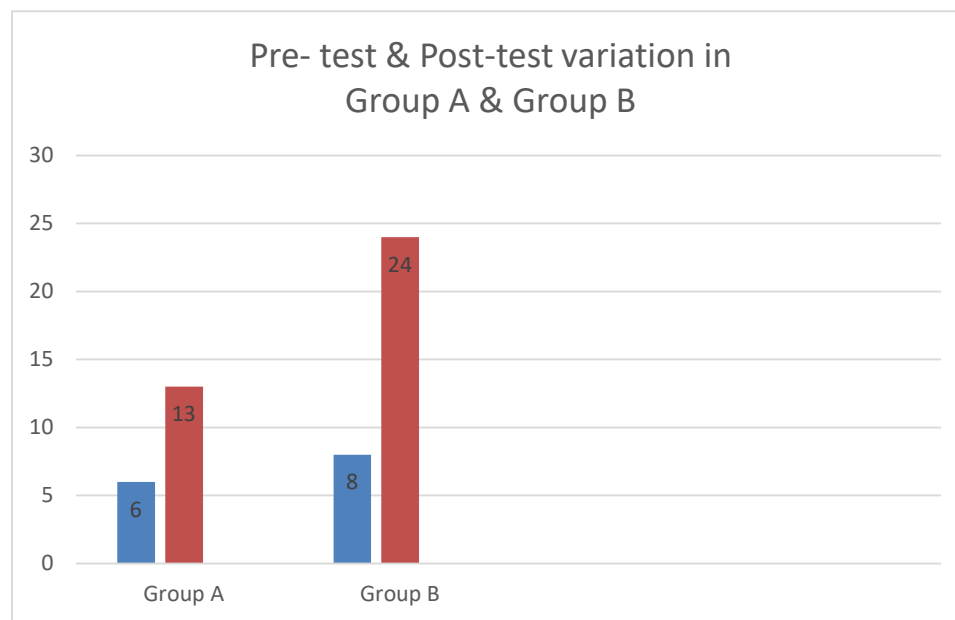
10 vocabulary were carefully picked from the song lyrics and a questionnaire was prepared with it. A pre-test consisting the selected 10 vocabulary was conducted. The papers of the test were

collected and its results were analysed. The original song “Five Little Birds” was screened and played with the help of audio-visual aids a couple of times. After listening to the video song, the students will be screened the same song but this time as a lyrical video. Students are then made to sing along with the video and audio. A hard copy of the lyrics will be given to the students. The researcher then explains the meaning of the vocabulary in the song. After explaining the meanings of the vocabulary, the students or again made to sing along with the lyrical video. A post-test was conducted with the same 10 vocabulary. The papers were collected, and their results were analysed.

Result:

Out of the 30 students in Group A, 6 scored more than 50% in the pre-test. After teaching the vocabulary in the traditional grammar teaching method 13 students scored more than 50% in the post-test.

In Group B out of 30 students, 8 scored more than 50 percentage in the pre-test. After listening and singing the song “Five Little Birds” the results of the post-test were considerably high. 24 students out of 30 scored more than 50%.



Conclusion:

The results of the study clearly says that Group B in which the song “Five little birds” was used scored much better than Group A. The traditional grammar teaching method used in Group A is a successful method for teaching vocabulary. It provides good results in the learners. But the results produced in Group B has much better numbers. This significant raise in the result is due to

the usage of songs and music as it creates an enjoyable atmosphere while learning. Students always enjoy a dynamic learning platform rather than a monotonous teaching style. Music and songs attract students and create a positive environment. The tune and rhythm of songs attract the students and help them acquire the vocabulary and their meaning easily. The enthusiasm of the students was found high in Group B rather than that of Group A. When Stephen Krashen's theory of repeated exposure is applied by making the students sure and sing the song again and again they got familiar with the vocabulary, and it would help them remember it for a very long time

Questionnaire

Answer the following questions:

1. Nest

- A) Bird home
- B) Fast bird movement
- C) Big bird party
- D) Tall tree

2. Hatched

- A) Break open
- B) Sang a song
- C) Flew away
- D) Ate quickly

3. Sigh

- A) Deep breath
- B) Cry loudly
- C) Happy dance
- D) Jump high

4. Tweet

- A) Bird sound
- B) Sleep soundly
- C) Eat quickly
- D) Run fast

5. Shy

- A) Little afraid
- B) Brave
- C) Happy
- D) Loud

6. Pout

- A) Biting lips in sadness
- B) Laugh
- C) Fly high
- D) Sing loudly

7. Flap

- A) Wings moving
- B) Rest quietly
- C) Sing a song
- D) Cry loudly

8. Cracked

- A) Broken

- B) Joyful
- C) Shy
- D) Frightened

9. Sky

- A) the place where the clouds are
- B) Ground
- C) Ocean
- D) Trees

10. Lead

- A) Going front
- B) Sing a song
- C) Sleep
- D) Laugh

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