



ISSN (E): 2181-4570

THE USE OF SONGS IN INDEPENDENT LEARNING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract: Music has been found to have positive effects on language learning, as it engages learners in listening, comprehension, and pronunciation. This article will examine the benefits of using songs as a tool for learning a foreign language and review some of the research studies that support this method.

Keywords: foreign language, independent learning, language acquisition, target language, usage of songs, culture, listening, motivation

INTRODUCTION

Using music to learn a foreign language has become increasingly popular in recent years. It's not only an enjoyable and fun way of learning but also a very effective tool for improving language skills as well as cultural understanding. Research has shown that using songs in language study helps learners to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, and to build vocabulary in a more interesting and memorable way. (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 2005). This is because songs present learners with a rich source of language input, which is delivered in an engaging and memorable manner. Moreover, songs often use repetitions, which helps learners acquire new vocabulary and grammatical structures in context.

Additionally, songs can be used to improve learners' listening comprehension skills. Research has shown that songs' repetitive nature and melodic structure can help learners improve their understanding of spoken words and phrases (Ferreira, 2014). Songs can also provide learners with exposure to a range of accents and dialects, which is important in improving their ability to understand different speakers of the language they are learning.

Furthermore, the lyrics of songs can also provide learners with insights into the culture and values of the language they are learning (Dolinsky & Kiguel, 2008). Songs





can express emotions that are unique to a particular culture, and they can also provide learners with a glimpse into the everyday lives of the people who speak the language they are learning.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Several research studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of using songs for language learning. For example, a study conducted by Levorato and Cacciari (1995) found that children who learned English through singing had a higher rate of improvement in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation compared to those who learned through traditional methods.

Similarly, a study by Nikitina and Furuoka (2009) found that using songs in language learning improved listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition in Japanese learners of English. Another study by Rowena and Dina (2016) showed that songs helped learners of English as a second language to improve their pronunciation, vocabulary, and listening comprehension.

How to Use Songs for Learning a Foreign Language

Here are some tips on how to effectively use songs for language acquisition:

1. Choose Appropriate Songs

Choose songs that are at the appropriate level for your language abilities. Start with listening, singing, and working on your comprehension skills. Avoid difficult songs with fast-paced lyrics until you have developed adequate listening comprehension and have practiced enough.

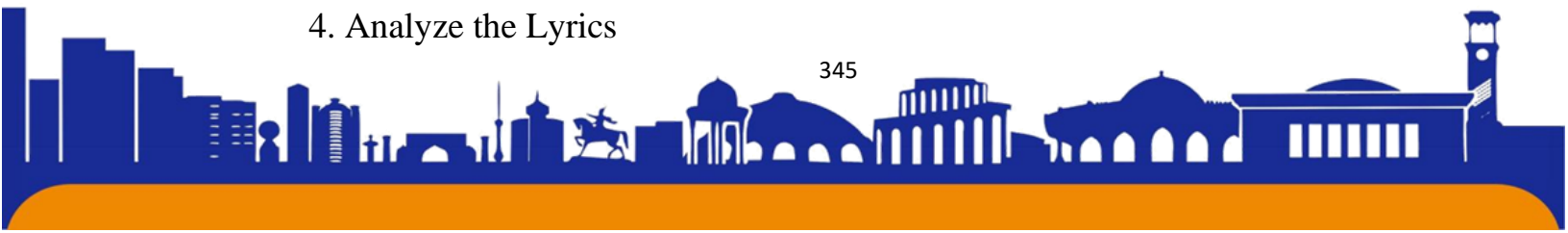
2. Find the Lyrics

Find the lyrics of the songs you are using. You can search for the lyrics online, or use language learning apps or websites that provide song lyrics with translations. Having the lyrics in front of you can help you to follow the song, identify new vocabulary and sentence structures while advancing your grammar practice.

3. Listen and Sing Along

Begin by simply listening and enjoying the music. Once you have become familiar with the song, sing along and practice pronouncing the words and phrases. Focus on pronunciation, intonation, rhythm, stress, and intonation. Practicing singing a song is similar to practicing speaking. As you sing, your mouth moves and you breathe, training your muscles to enunciate properly.

4. Analyze the Lyrics





Analyze the lyrics for grammar structures, vocabulary, idioms, and expressions. Highlight the words or phrases that you don't know or need to work on. You can also rewrite the lyrics with your own words, or make a vocabulary list that includes new words and their meanings.

5. Repeat and Memorize

Repeat the song and practice memorizing the lyrics. Use the song as an opportunity to practice your fluency, intonation, and rhythm. Try to sing the entire song from memory without the lyrics. Singing a song from memory not only helps you to remember the words, but also trains your brain to think and speak in the target language.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Here are some of the benefits of using songs for language learning:

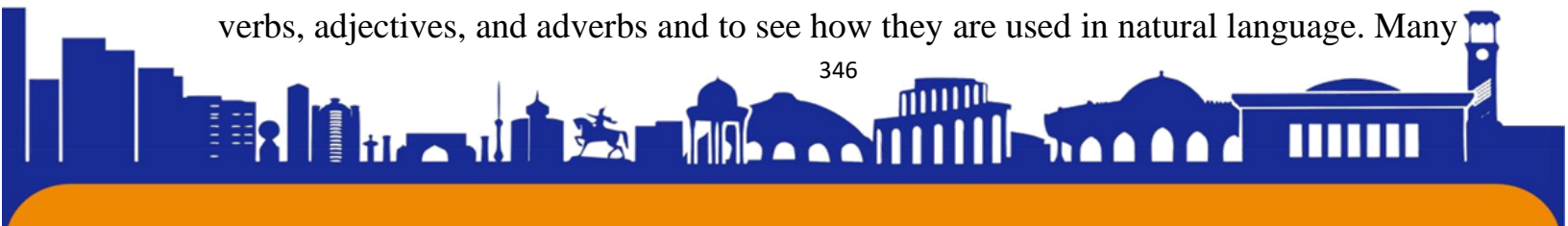
1. **Motivation:** Songs have been found to be a motivating factor for language learners, as they are entertaining and enjoyable. According to Juslin and Västfjäll (2008), music triggers emotional responses, which increases motivation and retention of information.

2. **Pronunciation:** Songs can help learners improve their pronunciation by exposing them to the rhythm and intonation patterns of the language. According to Zhang (2009), singing can help learners improve their speaking accuracy and fluency, as they can imitate the pronunciation and intonation of the language.

3. **Enhanced Listening Comprehension:** Songs are an excellent source of authentic language input with a natural rhythm and intonation. They give learners an opportunity to listen to real-life use of language and to see how words are used in a social context. By listening to and singing along with songs, learners can improve their grasp of pronunciation and intonation, and develop their listening comprehension skills.

4. **Vocabulary Acquisition:** Songs help learners to acquire and remember new vocabulary in a more enjoyable and memorable way. The rhythm, rhyme, and melody of songs create a natural way to learn and memorize new words and phrases. Songs can help learners to build their vocabulary and retain it longer. They can also provide a deeper understanding of idiomatic expressions, slang, and colloquialisms of the target language.

5. **Grammar Practice:** Songs provide a practical way to learn grammar in context. The structure of the song can help learners to identify different parts of speech such as verbs, adjectives, and adverbs and to see how they are used in natural language. Many





songs also contain verb tenses and sentence structures that are commonly used in everyday conversation.

6. Cultural Awareness: Music is a reflection of cultural identity, values, and traditions. Listening to songs in a foreign language can provide learners with an insight into the culture of the target language. Songs can also help learners to understand the norms, customs, and traditions of the people who speak the language they are learning.

The positive effect of using songs as a tool for learning the target language could be attributed to several factors. Firstly, songs contain natural language patterns and colloquialisms that may not be found in traditional language learning materials. Secondly, songs provide a more engaging and enjoyable learning experience, which can lead to better motivation and retention. Thirdly, songs can improve listening and pronunciation skills, as learners have to pay attention to the lyrics and try to imitate the singer's accent.

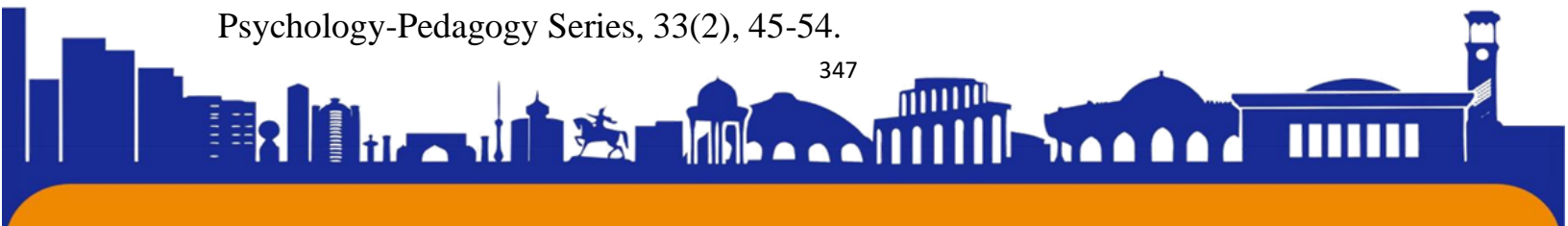
The results of this study are consistent with previous research on the effectiveness of using songs for language learning. For example, a study by Wang and Zhang (2020) found that using songs can significantly improve learners' vocabulary, grammar, and listening comprehension skills. Similarly, a study by Murphey and Arao (2001) found that using songs can enhance learners' motivation and contribute to their cultural understanding.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the use of songs as a tool for language learning has been shown to have numerous benefits, including motivation, improved listening comprehension, pronunciation, and vocabulary and grammar acquisition. Therefore, it is recommended for language teachers and learners to use songs as part of their language learning curriculum. As this research has shown, the use of songs has been proven to positively impact language acquisition and can be an effective way to make language learning more enjoyable and engaging.

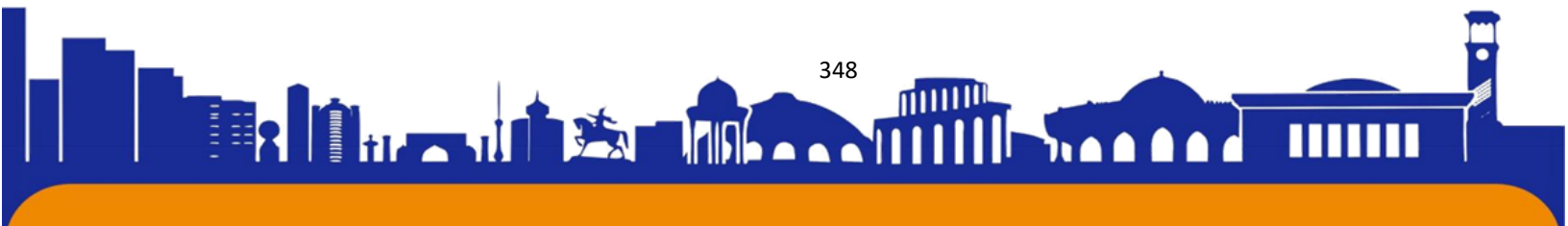
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ISSN (E): 2181-4570

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