

## Why Do We Use Music in A Second Language Acquisition?

In recent studies I found music as a teaching tool in second language acquisition (SLA) classes all over the world. Music is universal and is one of the largest media outlets in the world. A lot of cultures listen to music, some of which use music to attract foreigners to their countries and motivate them to learn their languages and rich histories. On countries lures a lot of foreigners by music is South Korea. Recently K-pop (Korean hip-hop music) just got big in the United States and all over the world because of Korean rapper/ comedian PSY's song (Gangnam Style). Because foreigners love listening to K-pop, they are motivated to learn the Korean language. The South Korean government purposely use K-pop to spread Korean culture in an effort to get other populations to engaged with it and boost their economy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Dooboo, S, n.d.). There are a lot of recent studies showing that music and language have a strong relationship with each other. Gradually this method of teaching English with music has been increasingly used by second language schools. Is there a positive and negative effect of using music in a second language classroom? What are the results?

There are deep relationship between music and language support's outcomes of language acquisition. There are evidences by earlier culture records that infants studied from cognitive scientists. One researcher quotes (Carmen, F. M. n.d.) "Discourse

intonation, the ordering of pitched sounds made by the human voice is the first we learn when acquiring a language". While there other evidence shows that through a mother's womb, a fetus cannot hear constants and only here vowel sounds (Carmen, F.M. n.d.). These musical aspects (tones, pauses, rhymes, etc...) are the units of phonemes (consonants and vowels) are later placed into. Also Melodic recognition, contour processing, timbre discrimination, rhythm, tonality, prediction, and perception of the sight, sound, and form of symbols in context are required in both music and language. Like supportive sisters, they comprise "separate, though complimentary systems of structured communication... language primarily responsible for content and music evoking emotion" Jourdain (n.d., p.293). Music is use as a meaningful communication for language acquisition. One researcher (Patxi, D. C. n.d.) breaks down how human's uses music to acquire a language by oral interaction into three parts (verbal language 15%, body language 70%, and intonation 15 %). One example is a child can imitate the rhythm and music contours of a language before they can say words. Later on, it is through interaction that a child picks up not only the musicality of each language, but also the necessary communication skills (Mora, n.d. , p.149).

"A significant amount of work is still being done regarding areas of the brain, but most teachers use the terms right brain and left-brain informally to describe a continuum between tasks perceived as a feeling and artistic and those that seem thinking and scientific. For example, Regina Richards claims, "music, rhythm, and movement... create a link between the right brain's processing of music and rhythm and the left brain's processing of verbal information." (Richards, n.d., p.109)

Music and language also shared several features; both stem from processing sounds and have intrinsic features. We learn language and music by exposure and both cannot be acquired if there is no oral or written input. Both sound odd from hearing other music and language from other cultures because of their different pattern of sound.

“For example, traditional Chinese pentatonic music perfectly blends tone and song contours, but Chinese pop music sacrifices the tonal system of that language to preserve an imported, modern rhythm and melody. Folk music in particular should be considered worthwhile for emulation because, unlike imported or modern music, it always matches the prosody of the language. In order to experience a culture's unique heritage and identity in depth, one must not merely read about them or look at pictures. It is best to follow members to ritualized, symbolic places in music, costume, dance, and song. This type of immersive environment is very healthy for language learning.” (Stansfield, J. W., 2005)

The findings of these more recent studies show that music and speech functions have many aspects in common and that several neural modules are similarly involved in speech and music (Tallal & Gaab, 2006). There is also emerging evidence that speech functions can benefit from music functions and vice versa.

Why teachers do used music in a second language class? It provides a motivational environment of learning for the students and it also provide a relaxing atmosphere. The students would be able to learn better when it in a less stress environment. This reflects on Kranshen two of the five Hypothesis theories. The affective filter hypothesis shows

that in a setting low anxiety, self-confidence, and high motivation. From theories of second language acquisition (SLA) research, the hypothesis states “acquirers with a low affective filter seek and receive more input, interact with confidence, and are more receptive to the input they receive” (Richards & Rogers, 2008, p.183). Connecting to what I said earlier in the term paper using pop songs create a low affective filter and by characteristics them as a teddy-bear-in-the-ear because of the riskless nature (Murphy, 1992). Teachers found out music have good linguistic features that help ESL students because they have many pronouns, English language is conversational (imperative questions made up 25 % of the sentences. They also contain short common words. There is a lot of repetition of vocabulary structures. In music studies shows, music-linguistic system has three levels.

“The beginning level involves reciting phrases from written directions along with a metronome (p.215). Afterwards, students chant the text in canon format, which weaves rich, syncopated counter-rhythms through the score and increases enjoyment. The intermediate level takes learners into a question-answer session with the teacher or other students, encouraging imitation, improving memory, and negotiating meaning (p.218-219). The advanced level requires students to write out a text with a musical representation of its rhythm, and perform it.” (Macarthur & Trojer, n.d.)

By using music there are two main outcomes from recent research. One is there are strong support from the faculty for the use of music in the second language classroom. Teachers thought it is beneficial to use music to teach the English language. Not all

educators can defend the decision of using music in the classroom from the administrators.

The one thing teachers must do when using music to the classroom is to provide a social culture and history context to the language being acquired. It is all about culture when you are teaching a target second language. One author states: to be sure, songs have a place in the classroom for helping create a friendly environment and co –operative atmosphere so important for language learning, but the teachers can offer it more is bring more culture insights and stories and myths of different societies, providing a window into the frames of reference and values of people whose language we are teaching (Candling, 1992).

Recent studies shows that children learning a second language. They been the one targeted to use music for an activity. Children learn the language faster than adults and they don't need any traditional teaching methods. Children can learn the language through activities because they will get motivated. Usually if the class is boring, children do not learn properly and is much unmotivated. Usually with songs and games are useful tools for teaching children a second language. According to one article, it talks about children in Bangladesh and how they use a Basic English lesson plan and what kind of activities they use with the lesson and what was the outcome compare by using textbooks and workbooks. One result was they didn't learn English that much because the class was boring and the children were unmotivated. By using the activity curriculum they were able have a good relationship with their teacher and were motivated to learn English and come to class every day.

For many researchers and language teachers assume the four traditional language skills are necessary for to learn in a second language learning class. Four traditional skills are reading comprehension, writing, listening, and speaking. In recent findings in an article that a teacher been using music as a tool to increase the amount of listening and speaking in the L2 classroom, it helps the students to learn the sequence of grammatical structure by listening to the song by using rhythm. By using music or a song shows in recent findings in both second language acquisition in social contexts, and a number of surveys of college and university students have shown that development of cultural understanding constitutes not only an embedded component of language learning and language use, but also a beneficial factor with regard to the student's motivation and attitudes toward the target language (Omaggio, 1993).

“Nunan(1999) refers to listening as a “Cinderella skill” in L2 teaching and learning, because of its secondary role compared with speaking and, to a lesser extent , writing and reading. L2 teaching methodology seems not to have realized until recently that listening is used in everyday life far more than any other single skill: twice as much as speaking, four times more than reading, and five times more than writing.”(Rivers, 1981)

In a lot of the institutes today has combine the four language skills to two groups. Listening and reading are passive skills. Speaking and writing are active skills. Researcher shows that listening skill a new language will teach the students to speak the language (interactive communication) and same goes for reading and writing.

As I seen how music are used as a media tool in SLA in the classroom. Some studies actually did some live testing on students to see if music really helps students in acquiring a second language. In her theory (Medina, S, 2008) suggest Vocabulary is incidentally acquired through stories because familiar vocabulary and syntax contained in the stories provide meaning to less familiar vocabulary, and picture illustrations clarify the meaning of unfamiliar words. Krashen has demonstrated that language acquisition results when the target language item is heavily laden with meaning. This is made possible by providing extra-linguistic support such as actions, pictures, and context that make linguistic input comprehensible. In her test group she divided the children into four groups of twenty. The main variables in her test were music/no music, and the presence or lack of illustrations. One group heard a sung story version; another had it told to them. A third group had illustrations accompanying the story song, the fourth, story with pictures.

“She (Medina) then compared the results of the four groups as they performed on a vocabulary test on two occasions. In this study, the children learned a similar amount of vocabulary whether the instruction was by song or by story. There was no statistically significant difference between the four groups from pre- and post-test scores at the .05 level. When the results were examined, vocabulary gain scores were appreciably, but not significantly higher for those groups using music or pictures, and the highest gains were in the group with both music and pictures. She warns educator’s not to abandon teaching strategies when using music in the classroom, to be sure that grammar and vocabulary patterns meanings are clear.”(2008)

The positive effects of using music in a SLA class are based on multiple studies and research it can be concluded that music and language should, in fact, be studied together. Music appeals to primal abilities related to language acquisition and code words with greater emotional meaning. Music can also create a more comfortable learning environment and lower affective barriers, leading to more positive attitudes and self-perception. Also music can make information meaningful and make a classroom into an uplifting experience. It also helps students to learn all four of the language skills by using music as a language tool. The negative effects of using music in a SLA classroom were the limitations of the research. There still have gaps in teacher pedagogical resources in using music in language learning. One question been asked a lot in all the studies (Why are the needs adult and teen learners are not reflected in web articles and other second language resources?) and given the limitations from of all the resources, there appears a need for additional research on adolescence and adults and more in-depth effects of a music intensive in SLA studies.

By what in read learn it is a good learning tool for all ages because it brings a relaxing environment in a classroom. By using music to teach second language to students it will be able the more motivate and by including vocabulary, grammar, oral fluency, and reading comprehension in songs they will have fun learning the language. As a future teacher I would use music in my future lesson plans and it all depends on what you are teaching also. I don't think you can use music all the time when you are teaching a SLA or ESL class, but it is a good media tool to use to change the pace for your class.



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