

THE ROLE OF SONGS AND MOVIES IN ENHANCING VOCABULARY ACQUISITION IN EFL LEARNERS

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Abstract: In today's digitally advanced world, technology plays an important role in everyday life and offers engaging ways to learn languages. This article explores English songs and movies as effective tools for vocabulary development. While traditional methods like textbooks may reduce motivation, songs and movies provide real language input that improves pronunciation, sentence structure, and understanding of natural expressions. Music supports memory through rhythm, and movies offer visual context, cultural understanding, and exposure to different accents. Combining entertainment-based learning with traditional methods can significantly improve vocabulary learning and overall language skills.

Keywords: Vocabulary learning, English language learning, songs and movies, authentic language, songs and movies, motivation, language development.

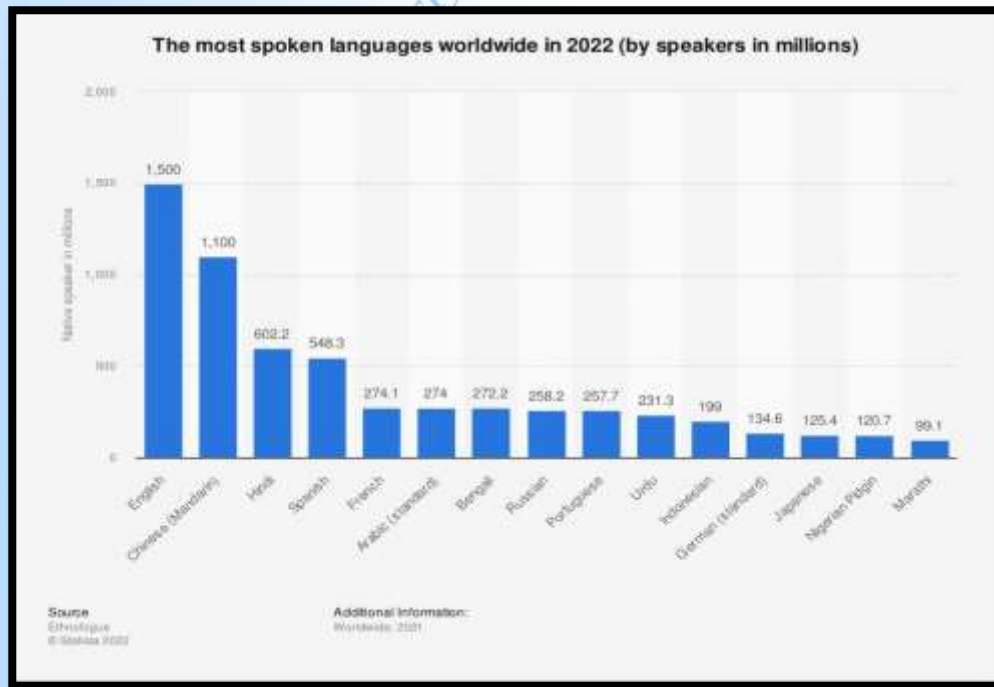
INTRODUCTION

While songs and movies are widely consumed on a daily basis, their potential as effective tools for improving English proficiency is often overlooked.

Now we are living in the 21st century, and it is completely normal for people of this era unable to live without technology, such as not only communication tools like phones, laptops, internet, social media, television, radio, as well as household appliances like washing machines, microwaves, vacuum cleaners, fridges, and so on. Besides making our life easier, these technologies also help people learn and improve their English skill through different types of online platforms included YouTube, Spotify, and Netflix which can help learners to gain knowledge by improving their vocabulary base.

DISCUSSION

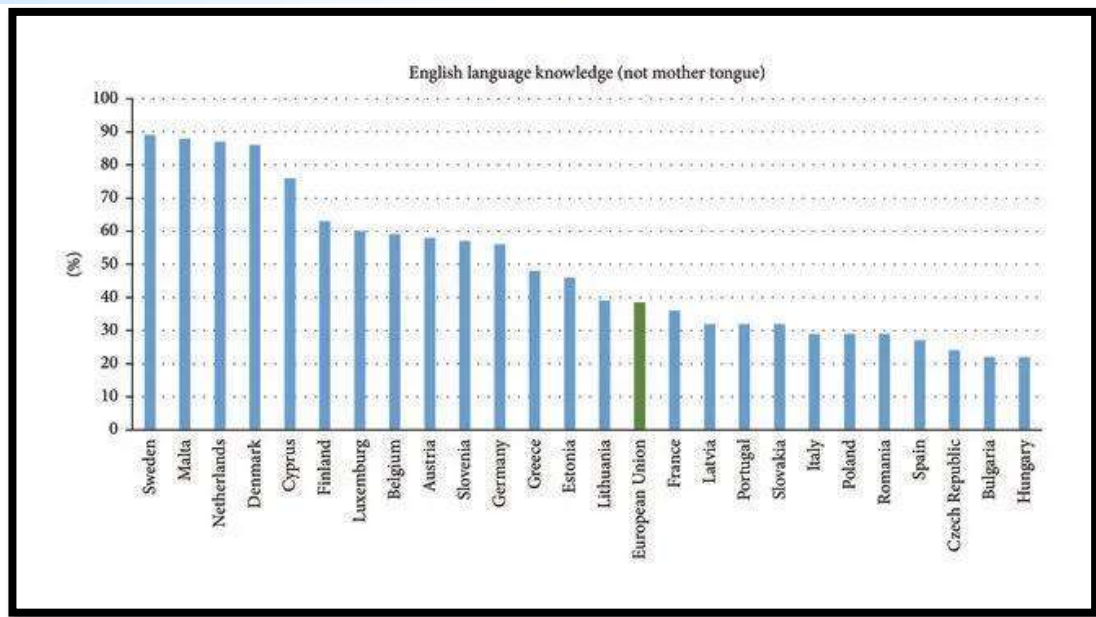
There are many languages in the world, but the languages that we know that they are actually alive and still spoken by major of subjects are less. According to statistic of “**The most spoken languages worldwide in 2022**”, English which is considered as a connecting language for all over the world has taken first place.



Why is English Used in So Many Places?

English is called the international language of business and **lingua franca**¹ of the modern world, English is spoken by 1.500 million worldwide while more than 430 million speak as a second. This study examines that in most countries there are a lot of English speakers and this is the main reason, nowadays, English is like the ‘bridge’ language that connects people from all over the globe.

¹ is a language systematically used to make communication possible between groups of people who do not share a native language or dialect, particularly when it is a third language that is distinct from both of the speakers' native languages.



As the above statistic shows, the number of people learning English as a second language constitutes almost one-third of all speakers around the world. This indicates that the demand for this language is increasing day by day and that it is attracting many new learners who want to learn it well like their mother tongue.

In order to achieve this goal, learners usually go through several important learning processes and it includes **three main steps**:

1. Vocabulary learning
2. Grammar learning
3. Skills (speaking, reading, writing and listening).

In particular, vocabulary learning is one of the most important aspects for non-native English learners. It forms the foundation of communication, as learners need words to express their thoughts, ideas, and emotions clearly. Without sufficient vocabulary, even if a learner understands grammar, it becomes difficult to speak or write effectively. For non-native speakers, vocabulary learning should not only focus on memorizing individual words, but also on understanding their meanings in context. Learning collocations, synonyms, and different word forms can help learners use language more naturally.

Of course, this is considered one way to perfectly learn new and unfamiliar language, but unfortunately, many students try to learn new words through textbooks or dictionaries however, these methods can feel ineffective, dull and sometimes decrease the learner's motivation to adopt and absorb this language overly.



As Dr Popkins mentioned "Language textbooks are boring and they focus too much on dry grammar, impenetrable explanations, interminable exercises and dull texts. It's no wonder that so many people fall victim to "chapter three syndrome". They start a new language full of enthusiasm and yet by the time they get to chapter three of the book, they've lost motivation and give up. It's far more stimulating to start "living the language" from day one." In his article named "Language textbooks: good or bad?"

An engaging approach to vocabulary development involves the use of English songs and films, both of which are widely recognized as popular forms of entertainment and can considerably enhance language fluency when applied effectively. A key advantage of these media is their provision of authentic linguistic input. Through them, learners are exposed to how native speakers naturally use language in everyday contexts, enabling them to develop a better understanding of pronunciation, grammatical patterns, and frequently used expressions in real-life communication. Furthermore, English-language songs are highly accessible across numerous digital platforms, contributing to their global popularity. This widespread appeal can be attributed to the tendency of learners, particularly those at developing stages, to favour enjoyable and stimulating learning methods, with music serving as an especially appealing medium. As noted in "The Power of Music: How to Learn English with Songs" by the British Council, music has the capacity to evoke emotions, alleviate anxiety, inspire creativity, and ultimately make language learning more engaging and effective.

Within this framework, Millen Rahmanisha Utami, in "Learning English Through Songs: A Fun Way to Build Vocabulary", highlights practical methods for incorporating

songs into English language instruction, while also addressing both the benefits and limitations of this approach. The book illustrates how song-based learning can enhance vocabulary acquisition by integrating theoretical insights with practical classroom techniques.

Drawing on authentic teaching experiences, it demonstrates how songs such as **Dreamers** by BTS, **In My Blood** by Shawn Mendes, and **Breathing** by Ariana Grande can be effectively utilized to introduce learners to diverse vocabulary while also increasing their motivation and engagement. In addition, the emotional resonance of music supports better retention of lexical items and fosters deeper involvement in the learning process. Consequently, the integration of songs into language teaching not only facilitates vocabulary development but also contributes to a more dynamic and supportive learning environment, reinforcing the idea that language acquisition can be both effective and enjoyable when combined with music, this is further supported by the assumption that learners exposed to song-based instruction tend to demonstrate stronger vocabulary retention compared to those in non-song-based learning groups.²

When students listen to their favourite songs they are more likely to stay focused and engaged with the language. Music and rhythm can help learners remember words and phrases better. There are **six steps** how to improve English vocabulary with songs and they are included:



Through with this simple guiding every level of the students can both learn and enjoy it at the same time. What about learning through movies? In movies, visual elements such as actions, facial expressions, and situations help viewers figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words. Watching movies with subtitles, writing down new vocabulary, and practicing those words in speaking or writing can make learning more effective. Here's given main benefits of learning English through movies in **“Learning English Through Music and Movies:**

² Saadet Kevser Toğan, Using Songs to Improve Vocabulary, Contemporary Research in Language and Linguistics, Vol. 3, No. 1.

Recommendations for Songs and Films That Can Help Improve Listening Skills and Cultural Understanding”:

- ✓ Exposure to Real-life Conversations: Movies present dialogues in various contexts, helping us understand how English is used in different situations.
- ✓ Diverse Accents and Dialects: Movies expose you to different accents, enhancing your ability to understand English speakers from various regions.
- ✓ Visual Context: Seeing characters interact helps understand the context and non-verbal cues, which are important for comprehension.
- ✓ Cultural Immersion: Films offer a deep dive into the culture, customs, and societal norms of English-speaking countries.
- ✓ Improves Listening and Comprehension Skills: Watching movies can help catch nuances and improve overall listening skills.

Taken together, these advantages demonstrate that movies serve as a multifaceted tool for vocabulary acquisition. The integration of visual and auditory input facilitates deeper processing of lexical items, while exposure to authentic language use enhances learners' ability to interpret meaning in context. In addition, the inclusion of cultural and pragmatic elements contributes to the development of communicative competence. Consequently, the use of films can be considered an effective complement to traditional vocabulary learning methods.

These ideas are further reinforced by the practical approaches outlined in **”Learning English with Movies”** by Elena Kalish. In this book, the author presents a variety of examples demonstrating how English-language films can be incorporated into the classroom through interactive and engaging activities. These activities include role-plays, issue-based discussions, descriptive exercises, and vocabulary-oriented tasks, all of which aim to strengthen vocabulary acquisition. Such methods not only foster active participation among learners but also enhance their ability to understand vocabulary within context. Thus, Kalish's work illustrates the effective integration of audiovisual resources into language teaching practices.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, English songs and movies are valuable tools for developing vocabulary. They offer real language input, boost learner motivation, and help students understand vocabulary through context. When combined with traditional learning methods, they can significantly improve vocabulary learning and overall language skills.

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