BUILDING VOCABULARY THROUGH ENGLISH SONGS

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Abstract
It is crucial to investigate the improvement of vocabulary which is the base of spoken and written communication. This research was aimed at investigating which strategies are used to improve vocabulary fluency, and importance of reciting unfamiliar words through English songs. A combination of both quantitative and qualitative research designs was developed for two treatments and two control groups consisting of 134 first-year undergraduates from Mandakh University in Ulaanbaatar Mongolia. After collecting the data from the questionnaire with a total of 15 questions and the notes with 5 questions, we worked on analysis and discussion parts based on previous studies on vocabulary learning. Findings of the quantitative outcomes represented that memorization achievements of two treatment groups increased by 17.7%, while the final result of the two control groups raised by 21.3% compared to measurements of inbound tests. The qualitative research outcomes revealed that the most commonly used strategies are reciting unfamiliar words with translation (42.5%), and listening to songs with lyrics (37.6%) dominated by the majority of students.

Keywords: inbound and outbound vocabulary tests, reciting strategies of words

Introduction

A long-term memory enables learners to succeed in remembering vocabulary due to the complex process of brain including working memory rather than short term memory which is limited in capacity of a few seconds (Thornbury, 2002, p. 23) In other words, mastery of vocabulary is dependent on not only ability to recite the unfamiliar words but also the strategies of learners in the classroom teaching. Learning process works well with enjoyable atmosphere and interesting activities in the classroom as achievement of learning is dependent on teaching technique of teachers (Maulaya, 2008) Moreover, a meaningful learning leads to the success of students based on long-term retention instead of rote learning (Brown, 2001). Thus, songs could be considered as entertaining way of teaching beyond the regular English class since it plays a main role in developing skills such as listening, writing, speaking and vocabulary in the target language (Arif Saricoban & Esen Metin, 2000). On the other hand, enjoying the music enables learners to consciously build the vocabulary with repetition rhyme of songs as students tend to focus on looking up meaning of challenging words in the dictionary.

Language skills including listening depends on teaching strategies based on using songs in English course (Lestari, 2017). An interesting way of learning works well with the motivation which releases an effective strategy to remember the words (Muflihah). On the other hand, vocabulary is an important component of language beside grammar (Wulan Wangi, Pratiwi Widyaning Premesti, Atik Nurul Khotimah, Rohim Pradana, 2017) because learners of the target language need to acquire those components. Mastering for language skill relies on combination of phonology and grammar in vocabulary (Marianne Celce-Murcia, Elite Olshtain, 2001) explained that there are two kinds of vocabulary.

In the range of the research, we worked on using media with song lyrics which allow students to dive in different situation instead of the normal English class as song is an authentic media with words and a short music (from Merriam Webster. com/dictionary/song). It is worth to note that song is important for the individuals' life since mothers sing lullabies to their infants and toddlers because it emphasizes the emotions in reality and it also works as a testimony of mankind including land or time and it speaks for us where words fail (Medina, 2002).

Listening song releases a good vibe including start of day and beginning of class since song plays a main role in bringing learner friendly atmosphere due to the fun and melodic rhythm for building vocabulary memory rather than ordinary sentence. In other words, songs maintain attention and concentration of students in language learning process (Mojtaba Moradi, Mostafa Zamanian, 2014). Mastery of the vocabulary based on listening songs allows students to use efficient strategies to gain success in building vocabulary in a long term memory. A study reports the most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies are simple use of context, repeated pronunciation of the word, and its meaning for Indonesian postgraduate students in learning unfamiliar words (Heng, 2011).

The study aims to investigate students' strategies to recite unfamiliar words based on the pre-answers before the teaching songs and post-answers after a 4-week treatment in the classroom. For the reliability of the research result, we compared the final scores for inbound and outbound tests of students to measure vocabulary development when learning unfamiliar words from English love songs including control and treatment groups. Building vocabulary strategies of students will be identified to deliver better understanding of learning English words from English love songs.

In general, there is certain percentage of benefits besides the minor drawbacks in improving vocabulary based on English songs. This study is focused on answering the following questions:

1. What are benefits of teaching songs to build vocabulary of students in English course?
2. What strategies are used by students to develop their vocabulary in college English?

The objectives of this research were to study the use of song lyrics in vocabulary development of students based on the inbound and outbound tests of vocabulary and pre-answers and post answers of strategies use for vocabulary memorization. The curriculum, classroom atmosphere and music play an important role in choosing the songs for the students (Griffee was cited in Kuśnierek, 2016). Chosen songs are significant in meaning such as repetition, reinforcement, and enlargement of vocabulary which met to the age and character of first year students.

In accordance with it, songs of "Rewrite stars" in "The greatest showman", "Memories", "Blinding lights" by the Weekend, by Maroon, "Let me down slowly" by Alec Benjamin were chosen as a research tool for the treatment. Students may develop vocabulary strategies themselves to memory unfamiliar words in a relatively efficient way out of classroom.

In the range of the research we focused on receptive skills such as listening and reading due to the inbound and outbound tests and pre and post responses of five questions for the students. The result of the research revealed further research needs to concern the evaluating development of students in productive skills including speaking and writing. Finally, it is worth to note that song is limited in wide range of vocabulary due to the rhymes rather than other entertainment including media and movie.

Method

The research work consisted of three main steps including preparation, treatment and analyzing process which were pioneered in the 2nd semester (in April) of Academic year from 2021 to 2022. We administrated inbound and outbound tests with various types of questions such as multiple choice, translating collocations, phrasal verbs and idioms, filling gaps, matching synonyms or antonyms and choosing negative or positive meaning to measure the students' vocabulary achievement before and after the song training of four weeks. Each correct number is scored 1 and the total correct score is 15.

The secondary data analysis in this research consisted of qualitative data. There were 5 questions for the pre and post responses of students which were compared to identify strategies use toward vocabulary memorization in primary data collection on this research. In conducting this study, student's response sheet is pre and post questions which were used to ask the students about what the students felt and their experience when they were listening English songs before the class and in the class.

The design used a group of students, as the experimental groups received the treatment of using English song as media in teaching. The only difference of treatment is guidance of researchers for the treatment and control groups as we focused on providing meaningful translation of the unfamiliar words and phrases for the treatment groups instead of control groups. In this research, competence of learners was measured by the result comparison of pre and post responses for the control and treatment groups before and after treatment for them.

Then, treatment was given by playing four different songs for three times audio-visually (each time 15-20 minutes) and reciting phrases with the translation. This treatment was done to see the students' vocabulary achievement difference for both groups. Outbound test was given after teaching English songs in order to measure how far the students' improvement after they got the treatment including control and treatment groups. The result comparison of inbound and outbound tests played a main role in measurement of vocabulary development after a four-week experiment for the treatment and control groups.

Literature review

English has emerged as the most vital language for communication in the modern world. In order to communicate effectively, students need be able to expand

their linguistic expertise (Ilinawati, 2018). English is a compulsory course that must be taught in higher Education institutes in Mongolia. There are many ways to enrich lexical knowledge of the target language learners. Expanding vocabulary through English songs is an interesting and efficient way of learning vocabulary. One of the learning theories "Behaviorisms" is the mean which how a learner behaves is related to their interaction with the environment. The theory illustrates that behaviors are influenced and learned from systematic repetition, verbal reinforcement and incentives. When learners study songs, they repeat some words in chorus. Thus, the theory of Behaviorisms supports learning English song can expand one's lexical knowledge in the term of repetition.

Many linguists have studied about this method below such as: A researcher stated that teachers should pay more attention to the techniques to teach vocabulary, the technique or strategy would be applied in course objective and students' age, needs and interest (Gerlach, 1980). According to Pintrich, students learn best when they are engaged in activities that are interesting to them and relevant to the type of course (Pintrich, 2003).

In 2022, Indonesian researcher conducted research named "Using English songs to improve the vocabulary mastery of the second-grade students" with the purposes of improving the students' English vocabulary mastery by English songs at the second grade and solving a problem that often occurs during English teaching and learning process namely the lack of the students' vocabulary mastery. The findings indicated that there were upward increases in terms of students' lexical knowledge and teaching method of using English songs is effective method to expand learners' vocabulary, therefore it makes them more engaged during teaching and learning steps (Ray Suryadi, 2022).

Ningsih, Sofian, Zainal Arifin worked on vocabulary acquisition process of learners under the title of "The use of song lyrics to improve students' vocabulary mastery" and aimed to improve students' vocabulary mastery of 1st year students by using song lyrics. The findings of this study demonstrated that students' vocabulary knowledge is increasing significantly and has a notable impact on their speaking skills. Students learn and retain vocabulary and sentence structure more quickly and easily when song lyrics are used as a teaching tool (Ningsih, 2018).

A paper was explored with the title of "Improving students' vocabulary through songs" to increase students' vocabulary through songs and the output of this study demonstrated that using songs to teach pupils vocabulary was successful. The test's results showed that the average score was 80.25, which was in the "good" category. The survey covered 22 students of STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa Sintang University. (Ilinawati Y. , November 2018)

Ika Devi defended his doctorate diploma in the title of "The use of songs to increase English vocabulary to the first-grade students of SDN TUGU JEBRES" the paper mentioned that songs are a fun and inspiring tool for language learning. The students' vocabulary could grow by singing a lot of English songs. Because students enjoy music, using songs to teach English to the learners can be a wonderful alternative. The use of the songs makes it simpler for the learners to comprehend word meanings and recite vocabulary. It occurred firstly as a result of songs' unique rhythms, which encourage listeners to pay attention to the lyrics. Second, songs frequently repeat words, which is a great aid for students learning new vocabulary. Third, singing creates a positive and stress-free environment in the

classroom that makes the children feel more motivated to acquire English language (Devi, 2009)

After reading several papers and reports from earlier studies, we found out that one of the finest methods for teaching vocabulary works well with the use of English songs and students adore it since they essentially have fun while studying in the classroom, and making it a particularly enjoyable way.

Findings and Discussion

We kept in mind the following steps of the research to analyze the final result of inbound and outbound tests, and pre- and post-answers of treatment and control groups in the vocabulary building process of students.

Firstly, both treatment and control group students were taken an inbound test. Researchers collected pre-responses of strategies before the treatment of English love songs with English lyrics. Secondly, researchers played the songs with lyrics 15-20 minutes before break (after class) for both treatment and control groups. Next, researchers asked students to try their best to translate the songs with their effort and support of classmates. Then, researchers shared the meaning of songs with highlighted words and their meaning as we believed that the shared version could be better than translation of students.

Moreover, comprehending well allowed students to recite the highlighted phrases, collocations, phrasal verbs and idioms due to the repetition of songs for 3 times a week. The repetition process focused on reviewing the understanding, translation and highlighted new words with meaning. Finally, four weeks' treatment course of teaching English songs enabled students of treatment and control group to submit the outbound test with various types of 15 questions in vocabulary and post-responses of strategies also were collected by researchers.

Table-1. The qualitative data result from treatment groups

Treatment groups	Inbound test	Outbound test	Achievement
Treatment group-1	56.6%	68.7%	*12.1%*
Treatment group-2	59.3%	65%	5.7%

The quantitative data analysis comparison of inbound and outbound tests reveals the increase of vocabulary development for treatment (17.8%) group. As for the treatment group-1 is students who are having English intensive class rather than treatment group-2 which is non-intensive class students. The treatment group had an advantage toward the comprehension of songs due to the meaningful translation provided from researchers rather than students' individual translations without any guidance.

Table-2. The qualitative data result from control groups

Control groups	Inbound test	Outbound test	Achievement
Control group-1	59.3%	68%	8.7%
Control group-2	52%	64.6%	*12.6*%

The increase of the control groups (20.3%) after the experiment of listening songs for treatment and control groups. The reciting process of vocabulary development is different for control groups as they worked well on translating the songs themselves including the peer-groups excluding translation version of

researchers. It is worthy to note that other steps of vocabulary development process such as inbound and outbound tests, measurement of vocabulary improvement, highlighted words, phrases, idioms and collocations, repetition, and pre-responses and post-responses were maintained same for them.

As mentioned earlier, both the treatment and control groups listened the same songs for the experiment of four weeks in order to measure the improvement of the vocabulary.

The development of vocabulary (control groups) could be explained by the following reasons:

- Vocabulary level increase of control group reveals song treatment enables students to recite unfamiliar words with their effort including translation of meaning out of guidance of researchers due to their curiosity rather than their ignorance after English class.
- Student number of control group is higher than treatment groups.
- Almost 20% of control group students are English intensive class.

In the second part of the survey, we asked 5 questions for all respondents about expanding lexical knowledge through reciting English songs at the beginning and ending of the treatment.
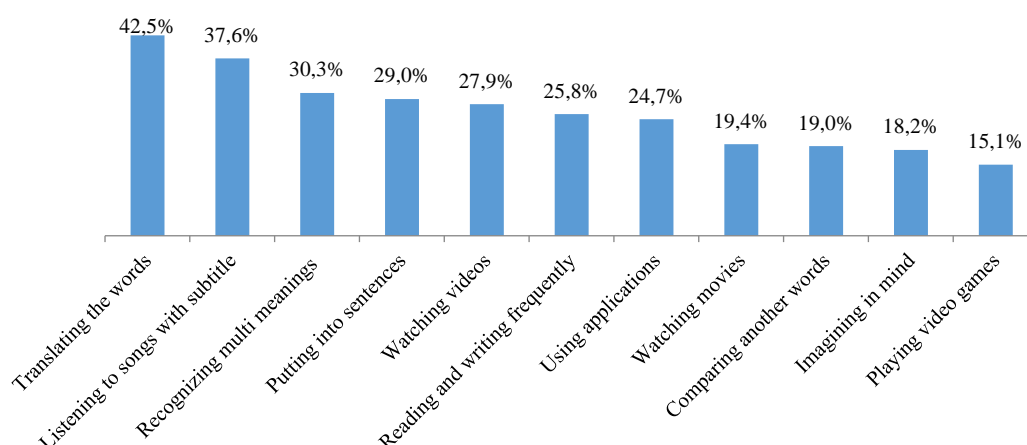

Figure 1. Methods used by students to recite unfamiliar words

According to pre-responses of students, they tend to give a weight to the following strategies to recite the words. These are classified into the following two categories:

Productive skills are dependent on following strategies which were ranked from the highest to the lowest: meaning of words (42.5%), recognizing multi meanings (37.6%), putting words into sentences (29%), reading & writing frequently (25.8%),

Receptive skills are required for the below strategies which were measured due to the highest to the lowest percentages as students tend to listen songs with subtitle (37.6), use applications (24.7%), watch videos (27.9%), compare another word (19%), and imagine in mind (18.2%) and play video games (15.1%) .
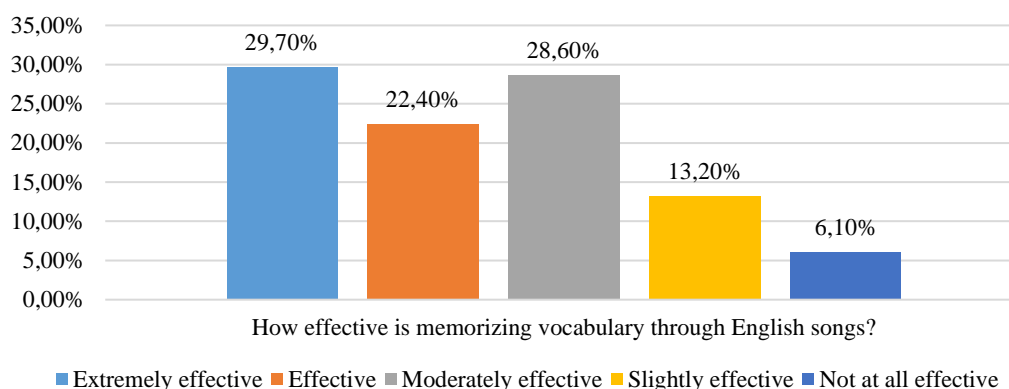
Figure 2. Effectiveness of reciting English songs

The column graph reveals, 29.7 percent of 134 first-year students illustrated reciting vocabulary through English song is extremely effective and 22.4 percent emphasized it is effective and 28.6 percent of all respondents said that it is moderately effective, while just 19.3 percent of them gave negative answers. Therefore, it is safely concluded that majority (80.7%) of all students preferred to recite vocabulary by listening English songs and this method is considered as efficient way of learning new words.
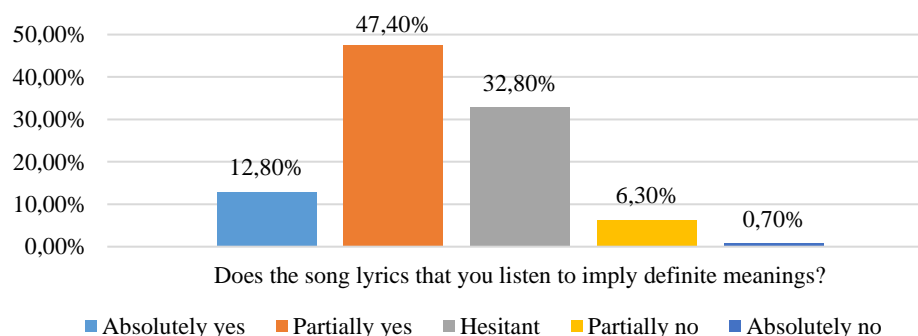

Figure 3. Definite meanings of English songs

According to the answers given by 63 students which means 47.4 percent, they agreed that the English song had a specific meaning but 44 students hesitated about it. From this result, although English songs don't imply perfect meanings, they contained many phrases that are used in everyday life, so students listen and enrich their lexical knowledge.
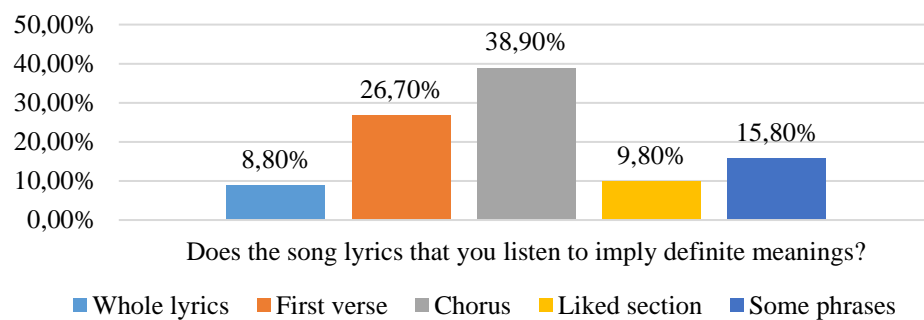
Figure 4. Memorization of English songs

From the graph above, 52 students (38.9%) tend to recite the part of chorus and 36 students (26.7%) prefer to focus on just the first verse. It turned out that most students recite the first verse and chorus of a song rather than the entire song or the most repeated part. Moreover, 15.8 percent of all respondents keen on reciting some phrases in the song lyrics.
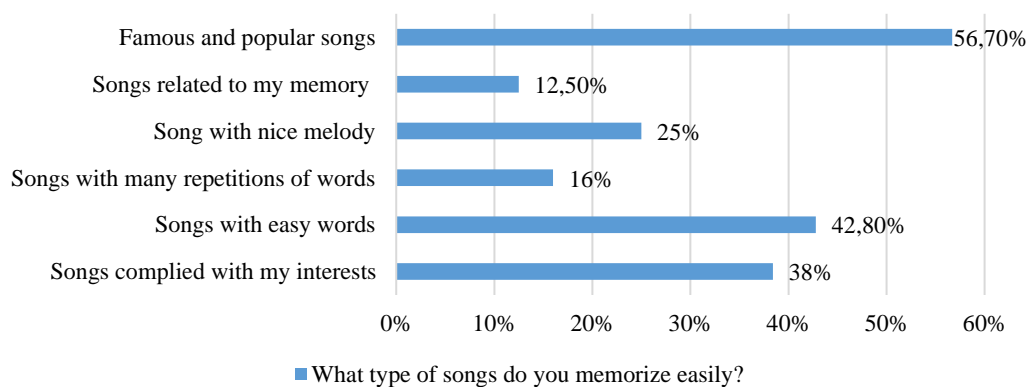

Figure 5. Type of songs in frequency of reciting

The graph demonstrated that 56.7% and 42.8% of all students recited the most popular and easy words songs in duplicate. This means majority of 134 students eager to recite well-known songs with easy words due to the uncomplicated and obtainable aspects. What's more, if the songs are related to their interests, they tend to recite it quickly.
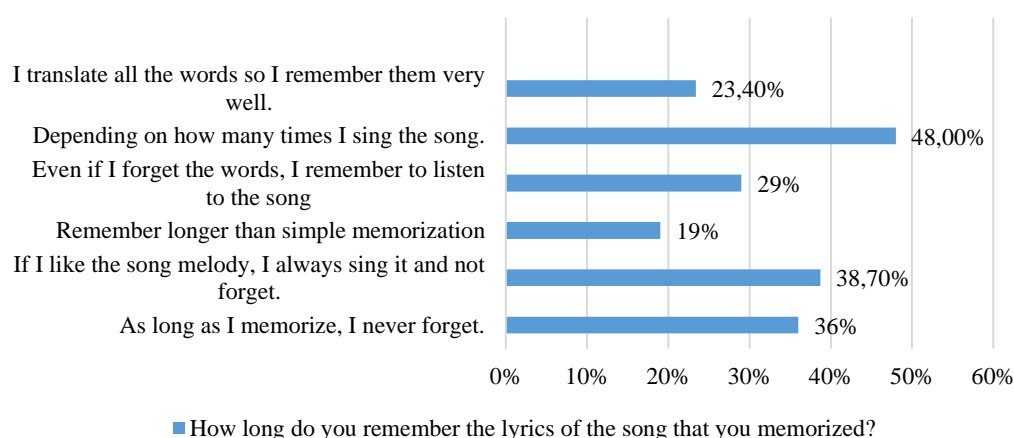
Figure 6. Remembering period of recited English songs

Students remember the song's lyrics in the longer-term if they liked the melody, translated all the unfamiliar words and many times they sang the song. For that reason, as long as they recited the desired songs, 36 percent of them never forgot the lyrics and unfamiliar words of the songs.

Integrated summary of students' answers to the 5 questions after conducting the survey:

After 4 weeks of survey to build up vocabulary through English songs, we re-asked the 5 open questionnaires regarding improvement of their vocabulary knowledge by reciting English songs, and the students answered as follows:

In this section, 52 percent of all respondents illustrated their opinions that after reciting 4 English songs which met our age and mindset for a month, we expanded our vocabulary resource in depth in the terms of some phrases such as sayings, idioms and terminologies. Specially, when we were listening English songs that is connected with our emotion many times, we recited lyrics of the songs unconsciously. It was one of the most interesting methods of reciting new words. Before participating in the survey, we tended to recite just a part of songs such as a chorus, verse or some phrases that we liked. But after attending this treatment course, we realized that reciting a song entirely gave us more motivation and enthusiasm to learn the next song in order to extend individual's lexical knowledge.

Now we have known 4 English songs and recited more than 40 unfamiliar words, this directed us to learn English songs in an entertaining method. For definite meanings of English songs, we needed to choose the type of songs which influenced on our reciting performance. Some English songs couldn't imply perfect meanings when we translated the lyrics into Mongolian mentality. Therefore, we considered that the phrases were more important things rather than full meanings so as to improve our experience of developing lexical knowledge through English songs.

Conclusion

The final comparison result of inbound and outbound tests represents that building vocabulary through English songs worked well for both treatment and control groups due to the guidance of researchers, diligence and collaborative work of students in English class and out of the class.

Qualitative data analysis revealed that pre and post responses of students are dependent on receptive and practical strategies of students during the class and after the English course. Lexical resource development of control group is higher than treatment groups due to the advantages including more number of participants than treatment groups and English intensive class students who worked hard for the translation themselves without support of researchers.

For the control group students, after the treatment of developing lexical resource with the English songs enabled students to maintain pushing themselves for reciting the unfamiliar words based on the comprehension and diligence rather than giving up it after the class.

Finally, teaching songs to develop the vocabulary of students encouraged them to recite the words due to the persistence of both individual effort and classmates' support.

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