Vocabulary Retention Through Pictures and Music in Young Second Language Learners: A Case Study of School Children at IMS

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Abstract
This qualitative study highlights the role of pictures and music in vocabulary retention in young second-language learners. By applying the monitor theory by Stephen Krashen as a theoretical framework, this study sheds light on the tailored learning methodologies for young learners. These creative tools are the strategic integration that makes learning fun in a second language classroom without the fear and anxiety of a foreign language. When the comprehensible input is received engagingly, the focus shifts toward learning while the stress is pushed into the background. The findings of the study contribute valuable insights into pedagogical implications that are contradictory to traditional classroom instructions. Moreover, it plays a significant role in overcoming the challenges faced by young second language learners in an anxious and stressful environment which bears a substantial potential in foreign language learning paradigms.

Keywords: Pictures, Music, Second Language Learning, Vocabulary Retention, Anxiety, Comprehensible Input, Monitor theory.

Introduction
This study aims to highlight the role of pictures and music in vocabulary retention in young second-language learners at IMS. Vocabulary retention acts as an important drive in initiating and maintaining a speech in language learning. It acts as a foundation for language development. Due to this very reason, it is an area of concern especially in the second language learning environment. Thus, it is important to adopt the vocabulary from another language and retain it in mind to carry out successful communication. This adoption can take place in several ways and to many learners, it may seem difficult and stressful without receiving sufficient input. This research particularly incorporates the role of music in creating anxiety-free surroundings and the role of pictures in producing meaningful input, which rapidly leads to language development. It has been designed with
the second language learning environment in view, specifically taking English as a second language to reveal the potential of music and pictures in learning.

Background of the Study

In the world of multilingual environments, the need for learning second and third languages has also grown in popularity. Among these languages, English has gained a special significance due to its globally recognized status. This is the reason why it is penetrated everywhere making it the most learned second language. Surprisingly, this practice of acquiring English as a second language is initiated at a very young age of the learners. Learning English helps advance the overall communication quality of the speakers by improving their ability to communicate with the world. Successful communication in the English language requires a strong grip on its vocabulary. It is stated that the effective use of a second language is strongly influenced by the acquisition of adequate vocabulary; otherwise, it will be hard to use the structure and functions learned from comprehensible communication (Nunan, 1995; Ur, 1996; Wilkins, 1976). As defined by Scrivener (2005, p. 227) in his study "Vocabulary typically refers mainly to single words (e.g., dog, green, wash) and sometimes to very tightly linked two-or three-word combinations (e.g., stock market, compact disc, sky blue, go off)". Generally, vocabulary is also important like grammar of any language, as the grammatical rules are applied to the set of words, and creating these sets is impossible without vocabulary. It is stated by (McCarthy, 1990, p. 8), that: "[n]o matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meaning, communication in L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way" However, learning vocabulary in a foreign language often creates anxiety and tension due to the hectic classroom routine and monotonous environment. From psychologists' view, anxiety is described as the subjective feelings of apprehension, stress, nervousness, and tension connected with the stimulation of the autonomic nervous system (Horwitz et al., 1991).

On the other hand, foreign language classroom anxiety is seen as a situational anxiety that the learner experiences in the clarified situation in a foreign language classroom (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a, 1991b, 1994). Foreign language classroom anxiety is viewed as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz et al., 1991, p.31). These parameters emphasized the situation or context-dependent nature of anxiety in foreign language classrooms.Consequently, to many learners, this may seem like a stressful situation to learn in such an anxious surrounding. It gets puzzling when one thinks about the profound stress associated particularly with learning English. Unfortunately, foreign language classrooms have become centers of anxiety and stress. Such surroundings have become the places that hinder second language learning. This is because anxiety acts as an obstacle in the way of learning language for young learners. They cannot learn and retain foreign vocabulary in an anxious environment. Thus, the environment should be stress-free where the learners do not feel difficulty in finding new vocabulary from the teaching and learning processes. It must be pleasant to such an extent that they not only learn but also efficiently retain the foreign words. In selecting a foreign language teaching program, it is important to know that the language learning process is categorized into two important parts: the first one deals with the surroundings in which the language or new knowledge is obtained, and the second part is how the students or learners interact with new knowledge of the language. This includes the strategies that the learners utilize in an attempt to learn the language (McGlothlin, 1997). Therefore, these strategies should inculcate meaningful input sufficient enough to process the new information or knowledge. This is because understanding comes before learning. It means that learning does not occur until the meaning of the message is conveyed. These meanings act as a driving force to foster learning. Furthermore, it is argued that observing the fact that how children begin to learn their first language may assist in seeing how "some of the magic of childhood" can be utilized in making foreign language

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learning more amusing and more productive (McGlothin, 1997). The fun activities such as singing poems, telling stories, showing pictures, and playing games are effective to engage children lightly in the hard mental activity of learning a second language. To address the issue of anxiety and meaningful input, teachers need to find an effective way to develop vocabulary mastery in children. Some of the solutions include; the use of music in the form of rhymes and presentation of meaningful pictures in a creative way to motivate children to learn vocabulary. Hence, this remains the main focus of the study that views the retention of vocabulary through music and pictures in second-language learning classrooms specifically taking English as a second language.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the role of pictures in vocabulary retention in young second-language learners at IMS.
2. To examine the role of music in vocabulary retention in young second-language learners at IMS.

1.1. Research Questions

1. How do pictures contribute to vocabulary retention in young second-language learners at IMS?
2. How does music contribute to vocabulary retention in young second language learners at IMS?

Problem Statement

The subject matter of vocabulary retention has been discussed in various studies. However, the phenomenon of vocabulary retention through music and pictures simultaneously in young second language learners via creating an anxiety-free environment and providing meaningful input has not been explored before. While the existing research emphasizes the effectiveness of music and pictures in learning language separately, they do not shed light on vocabulary retention via creative strategies like music and pictures together in learning English as a second language. This creates a significant need for exploration in this regard and thus, this study seeks to address the gap efficiently.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lies in its potential to make language learning a fun task. In the practical field, it provides creative insights for improving teaching strategies by incorporating enjoyable ways of teaching a second language in the classroom. On the other hand, in an academic context, the study plays an important role in overcoming the challenges faced by second language learners in an anxious and stressful environment. Thus, the findings of the study are significant for enhancing language learning, overall.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to young learners in second-language classrooms at IMS, Islamabad. The strategies that apply to such learners may or may not apply to adult learners due to many possible reasons. Moreover, the study helps in highlighting the creative strategies of using music and pictures for vocabulary retention, but it lacks the practical and real-life application of these strategies via observational research method or survey method. Thus, being a descriptive study, it leaves a potential gap for further research in this domain to explore the practical implications that can be gathered through real-life experiences of the learners via surveys.

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Theoretical framework
The theoretical framework applied to this research is the monitor theory of second language acquisition by Stephen Krashen (1982) and relies heavily on the affective filter hypothesis and input hypothesis. Although several theories investigate second language acquisition, due to the simplicity and explanatory power of this theory, it has been chosen as a framework for this study. The Monitor theory proposes five important hypotheses for second language acquisition. Firstly, the acquisition-learning hypothesis, suggests that there are two ways of gaining competence in a second language; acquisition, which comes after the use of language in real communication, and learning, which means "knowing about" a language (Krashen, 1982). Secondly, the natural order hypothesis suggests that children and adults acquire new forms of language with a predictable order involving a natural process. Basic grammar and vocabulary come before the advanced level. Memorizing advanced-level rules or vocabulary before knowing the use of basics results in reduced fluency (Krashen, 1982). In addition to it, the third hypothesis; monitor states that the students try to correct errors to form accuracy by monitoring their second language output. For monitor use, the learners should know the rules to apply them, they should have time to think about the rules and they should focus on form rather than meanings. Similarly, the fourth input hypothesis argues that for learning a second language, information must be understandable. If the learners do not comprehend what is being said, language acquisition reduces (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). For this purpose, they need a comprehensible input, which is i + 1. In this case, "i" refers to the current knowledge of the learners, while "1" is the language knowledge slightly beyond their level. This kind of meaningful input can help learners effectively acquire a second language because it reinforces the significance of using the target language.The fifth affective filter hypothesis suggests that a high affective filter is essentially a barrier to second language acquisition. Such a filter results from environmental conditions, such as high levels of anxiety, low levels of self-confidence, and motivation which interfere with the process of acquiring a second language (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). It further argues that a learning environment should be free of anxiety and where learners are highly motivated so that they build self-confidence for accelerated levels of acquisition. This is because motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety are the factors that are strongly associated with high affective filters (Du, 2009). Thus, the current study highlights the role of pictures in vocabulary learning in second language learners under the monitor theory, more specifically relying on the concept of input hypothesis. Moreover, it also sheds light on the role of music in vocabulary retention under the concept of affective filter hypothesis, particularly confiding to the construct of anxiety in a second language classroom. This study has been designed with a special focus on young English language learners.

Research Methodology
This research is descriptive, and a qualitative analysis has been carried out to highlight the role of music and pictures in vocabulary retention in young second-language learners. For this study, the English language has been taken as a second language specifically to analyze the data, which is in the form of music and pictures. The category of pictures selected for the study is 'word art', based on factors like easy and uncomplicated. On the other hand, the category of music chosen for the study is 'nursery rhymes', which are commonly used rhymes in the English language classroom. The data for this research was collected through classroom observations over two weeks in a special Playgroup 2 (4-5 years) class at I.M.S (Islamabad model school) G-10/2, a government school where the early education program is privately managed by the NGO, ECE (early child education). During this period, the researcher observed the students' vocabulary retention before and after they were exposed to various poems and word art. Initially, the students were introduced

to poems with rhyming tones, attractive cartoon characters, and bright colors. In this case, it was observed that these engaging elements significantly enhanced the students' ability to retain and recall vocabulary, as they were able to answer vocabulary-related questions. In contrast, students showed minimal retention when they were exposed to dull, non-rhythmic poems with straightforward messages, such as basic alphabetic examples like "A for Apple" and "B for Ball." Thus, these poems and word art provided sufficient signals towards the effectiveness of rhyme, visual appeal, and repetition in vocabulary retention for young learners. After the careful selection of the relevant data, it has been analyzed under the monitor theory of Stephen Krashen as a theoretical framework, particularly the affective filter hypothesis and input hypothesis to see the contribution of music and pictures in enhancing vocabulary retention in a second language. It delves deep into the chosen aspects of the research through qualitative analysis in the next section of the study.
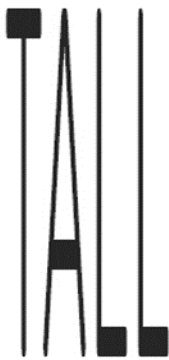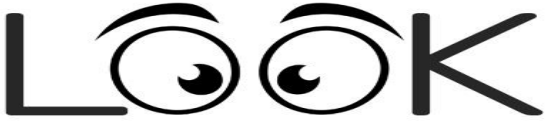
Results and Discussion

The data selected to highlight the important role of music and pictures in vocabulary retention in second language learning is in the form of poems and word art. The data has been qualitatively analyzed by dividing it into subsections for better understanding in light of monitor theory by Stephen Krashen to support the analysis presented in the study.

Vocabulary Retention through Pictures

Table 1: Word Art Illustration

Sample no.	Picture Category	Illustration
1	Word Art	

2	Word Art	
3	Word Art	

The attached visual samples, more specifically word art in table no.1, have been analyzed with the theoretical prism of input hypothesis in the monitor theory proposed by Krashen. According to this hypothesis, second language acquisition occurs in the presence of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). Such a condition is fulfilled with a supportive classroom environment that is barrier-free to language learning and such an environment is created when teachers provide creative meaningful engagement with the foreign language through pictures. The attached samples of the 'word art' visually communicate the meaning of the words; gravity, tall and look in the easiest way which often becomes difficult to learn through verbal instructions. In sample 1, the word art for 'gravity' creatively depicts its meaning i.e., the force of attraction by portraying the falling of letters towards the earth. Similarly, in sample 2, the word art for "tall" draws its meaning i.e., of great height by stretching the letters to give them a heighted look. Likewise, in sample 3, the word art for "look" narrates its meaning i.e., to see something or someone by illustrating the body parts i.e., eyes through which people see. These illustrations sketch the meanings in the minds of the learners and thus act as comprehensible input. This is because, within the context of the input hypothesis, it is stated that comprehensible input has a notable relationship with vocabulary acquisition. The unfamiliar vocabulary is acquired when its importance is made clear to the young students through meanings, which can be conveyed by the use of supporting elements; such as illustrations and pictures. This visualization helps achieve the desired goal of learning vocabulary in an efficient way (Krashen, 1989).

This Pedagogical toolbox of visual aids, such as word art removes the language barriers by using innovative and intuitive associations between pictures and the meanings of words. Such presentation of meaningful input makes the learning process in English as a foreign language, more engaging and understandable, which allows students to learn and retain new vocabulary, without the need for strict rules of memorization. Therefore, these illustrations are highly effective in foreign language classrooms to grasp the large number of vocabularies which ultimately results in foreign language fluency.

Vocabulary Retention through Music
Table 2: Poems' Lyrics and Musical Category

Sample no.	Music Category	Lyrics
1	Nursery Rhyme	Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. And eyes and ears and mouth and nose. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. And eyes and ears and mouth and nose. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. And eyes and ears and mouth and nose. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes. And eyes and ears and mouth and nose. Head, shoulders, knees, and toes, knees and toes.
2	Nursery Rhyme	There was a farmer who had a dog, And Bingo was his name-o. B-I-N-G-O B-I-N-G-O B-I-N-G-O And Bingo was his name-o. There was a farmer had a dog, And Bingo was his name-o. (clap)-I-N-G-O (clap)-I-N-G-O (clap)-I-N-G-O And Bingo was his name-o. There was a farmer had a dog,

		And Bingo was his name-o. (clap)-(clap)-N-G-O (clap)-(clap)-N-G-O (clap)-(clap)-N-G-O And Bingo was his name-o. There was a farmer had a dog, And Bingo was his name-o. (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-G-O (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-G-O (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-G-O And Bingo was his name-o. There was a farmer had a dog, And Bingo was his name-o. (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)-O (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)-O (clap)-(clap)-(clap)-(clap)-O And Bingo was his name-o.

The poems mentioned above have been examined under the critical lens of the affective filter hypothesis in the monitor theory presented by Krashen with a special focus on anxiety in language learning. According to this hypothesis, more learning occurs when the learners are exposed to an anxiety-free environment and less learning occurs in the stressed environments (Krashen, 1982). This argument favors the idea that when young learners are in specific settings i.e. when they learn through poems, they start feeling comfortable and take interest in learning language. This lowers their anxiety towards the adoption of complex foreign vocabulary. This is noticed in the first sample of Table 2 that the poem is enriched with English vocabulary, incorporating the names of body parts in English. If this vocabulary is presented to the young learners with traditional classroom instructions loaded with incrustations, it results in an anxious situation for the students. It may leave them in the condition to think over the instructions or grasp the vocabulary itself. This is because the affective filter is raised when the learners experience anxiety. On the other hand, presenting this vocabulary through the rhythmic and repetitive structure results in the quick adoption of the words and long-term retention in the mind with patterned repetition of the stanzas which appears a normal interaction with a foreign language, especially with its vocabulary. This is because the affective filter is lowered in a stress-free environment which is created via the integration of rhymes. Similarly, when the second sample in the table no.2, is analyzed, it is seen that it also favors the idea of teaching and learning vocabulary more lightly without pressurizing the young learners. In this poem, the transformation of "name" to "name-o" to maintain the rhyme scheme of the stanza helps the student retain vocabulary in the mind by remembering its rhyme i.e., Bingo. Moreover, the repetitive nature of the poem acts as a powerful tool for vocabulary retention. These characteristics of the poems do not create an anxious and exhausting environment for the young learners, rather they reduce their anxiety which facilitates vocabulary learning in the classroom. Moreover, the non-competitive nature of the rhymes involves learning without the fear of making errors or being compared with other students. In this case, all learners can participate without feeling left behind, shifting the focus from performance to learning. Additionally, the rhymes allow the freedom to learn at the own speed of the individual

which reduces the pressure associated with competition and minimizes anxiety to foster a safe space for comfortable learning, thus setting the low affective filter.

Conclusion

The study has explored how pictures and music help in vocabulary retention in young second language i.e., English learners. After the detailed exploration, by tapping into the affective filter hypothesis and input hypothesis of the monitor theory, this study highlights the role of these elements in creating the ideal classroom environment. Such surroundings are contradictory to the traditional ways of instruction. In traditional ways, language teachers are focused on the verbal nature of the lecture, which seems to underestimate the potential role of visual and musical learning aids in language classrooms. This study has pointed out that visual learning aids help provide comprehensible input to young learners in foreign language classrooms. Visual art, being creative, presents the easy association between words and their meanings, which enables young learners to absorb complex vocabulary most easily. In addition, the incorporation of music in second language classrooms sets the low affective filter of young learners by scaling down their anxiety levels. This is because of the repetitive patterns of rhymes that result in vocabulary retention easily and their non-competitive nature which results in reduced pressure of peer comparison. Therefore, young learners, with music, are stimulated to memorize the words subconsciously by memorizing the poem. It engages the second language students in the vocabulary learning activity lightheartedly as it is fun and effective in psychological motivation. Consequently, the strategy of integrating rhymes in second language learning serves as a mnemonic device to retain vocabulary in the minds of young learners where anxiety takes the backseat and learning secures the front seat, setting the low affective filter. Moreover, the captivating power of pictures acts as a comprehensible input for enhancing vocabulary in a second language. These psychological dynamics nurture the ideal environment for vocabulary learning in a second language.

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