

SINGING FOR EQUALITY

ESL to coeducate through music.



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1. ABSTRACT

The learning of a second – or consecutive – foreign language is extremely necessary if we want to develop ourselves, both in the academic and labor field within a stereotyped society in which we are nowadays. The teaching of languages has been evolving throughout time, emerging, in this way, a series of innovative theories which work to update the faculty in the methodology as well as in the knowledge of the students to address. Nevertheless, it is possible to observe that there is certainly a general discrepancy between these theories and their implementation in the classroom. Therefore, the main aim of this work is to offer a guide of a methodological and didactic proposal to work on the teaching of the English language as a foreign language in the secondary education high schools through the real use of the English language, employing a corpus of songs as the basis for the work in the class. Throughout this material, transversal education is included. The moral values of respect and inclusion, gender equality, and rejection to gender violence are exposed in this work. The reached conclusion after having carried out a social and educational analysis focused on the discovery of these techniques in the class indicates the necessity of a continuous and hard work to reach the real equality in the classroom, as in our society. But, in addition to that, it discovers that the use of real material in the acquisition of a second language has to be more implemented in the schools.

Keywords: coeducation, second language, songs, equality.

RESUMEN

El aprendizaje de una segunda – o consecutivas – lengua extranjera es altamente necesario si queremos desarrollarnos, tanto académica como profesionalmente en una sociedad estereotipada como en la que nos encontramos en la actualidad. La enseñanza de las lenguas ha ido evolucionando a lo largo del tiempo, surgiendo así una serie de teorías innovadoras que trabajan por actualizar al docente en los métodos de enseñanza, así como en el conocimiento del alumnado a tratar. Sin embargo, es posible observar que hay un cierto desfase general entre estas teorías y su puesta en práctica en el aula. Por ello, la finalidad de este trabajo es ofrecer una guía de propuesta metodológica y didáctica para trabajar la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa como lengua extranjera en los centros de secundaria a través del uso real de la lengua, usando un corpus de canciones como base para el trabajo de aula. A través de este material, se incluye la enseñanza transversal. Los valores de respeto e inclusión, igualdad de género y rechazo hacia

la violencia de género se ponen de manifiesto en este trabajo. La conclusión alcanzada tras realizar un análisis social y educativo enfocado al descubrimiento de estas técnicas en el aula denota la necesidad de un continuo y arduo trabajo para alcanzar una igualdad real en el aula, así como en la sociedad. Pero, además, descubre que el uso de material real en la adquisición de las segundas lenguas ha de incrementarse en los centros educativos.

Palabras clave: coeducación, segunda lengua, canciones, igualdad.

2. INTRODUCTION

English is considered to be one of the most necessary second languages to be learnt because it offers the speaker the possibility to travel all over the world being able to communicate as well as it appears to be a compulsory requirement in most of the current jobs. But, are we really self-confident speaking in English?

Traditionally, Spanish education has been characterized by the grammar-translation teaching system, which implied that communication was never an objective for teachers to teach or learners to learn. This method was focused on the writing accuracy of the learner, providing fixed templates to be reproduced and memorized by the students.

Those old theories have suffered a lot of changes since they were firstly stated by Krashen in the early 1970s (Tesol Class). But, opposing what we could initially think, those approaches continue to be used in our current English classes (Nativos Language Consultants, 2017) and our student do not feel comfortable with their learning (Soler, 2017).

In order to try to eliminate this rudimentary procedure, this work is going to introduce a more recent theory, based on the use of real material to learn a language, taking advantage of the structures in a real context. As it is focused to be used in a secondary education class, the curriculum of the ESO has been checked to establish the main linguistic objectives to be covered, according to the current legislation (RD 1105/2015, de 26 de diciembre). Moreover, transversal elements are included in this analysis as a vehicle to teach students how to develop their inner being, encouraging them to grow while they build up a great world to live in.

Once the main problem of methodological and didactic procedures is solved, the content needs to be considered. In that point, it has been considered the age, the likes and the hobbies of the

teenagers, as well as some extra elements which influence their apprenticeship, such as motivation, the atmosphere created in the class and their disposition to learn.

There are three fundamental objectives which are desired to be achieved with that work. First of all, the linguistic learning of the English language in context, attending to the communicative approach principles. Secondly, the inclusion of a controversial topic, gender inequality, which is going to affect the students for the rest of their lives. And to end up, the potential use of song is highlighted as a good source to be worked on the English lessons.

Recently, the news has shown a lot of cases in which women have suffered from sexual harassment or even they have been killed after being raped. These facts made me wonder about the current society in which we are living nowadays. How are our members educated? Which moral values do we have, if any? How could I contribute to that change?

The statistics offered by the Delegación del Gobierno para la Violencia de Género (2018) show how last year, 2017, there were 51 women who were murdered victims of gender issues. This year, in those first five months that have passed, twelve women died for cases of gender violence. Moreover, the number of phone calls the specialized institutions – police officers, the number against violence 016 – received was 77,796 during 2017. In the first half of this year, there were 23,688 phone calls done.

If those data are analyzed and compared with the available registers of the last 10 years, it can be appreciated that the rates oscillated and, in the last years, they showed a significant increase. This growth can be justified by the lack of coeducational patterns, so if people are not warned, they would act according to their inner instincts and not by what it should be done, following the rights of the human beings.

Nowadays, teenagers are exposed to many influences or situations which can end up in violent cases. However, if a clear anti-violent consciousness is created, promoting equality among men and women, these data can be reduced to their minimum. And here is what the contribution of teachers begins.

3. JUSTIFICATION

The work which is proposed in this paper is focused in the development of the English language as a Second Language studies, as well as having parts that deal with the coeducation

and transversal elements which are compiled in the curriculum of the Secondary Education. For those reasons, the following justification is presented divided in four main parts. Firstly, the main linguistic aspects of the learning of a second language are going to be introduced and explained. In order to do that, the Spanish legislation (RD 1105/2015, de 26 de diciembre), which is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Little, 2006), is going to be analyzed and taken as the paradigm to design the didactic and methodological proposals. Then, regarding the second aspect of the proposal, coeducation is going to be presented, analyzing and comparing several definitions which are driven to, firstly, provide an explanation of what sexism and coeducation are and, ultimately, propose how to fight sexism in the classroom to achieve an appropriate atmosphere in the class. Thirdly, the use of songs in the ESL teaching is going to be explained, relating this use with the coeducational part. Thus, a corpus of songs (see 6. Materials) has been chosen as the ones which can represent some of the values that can be interesting for those previously explained aims. In that part of the paper, the analysis of each song is presented highlighting the principal characteristics that can be taken as the starting point to begin a critical analysis in the classroom. And, the last part is going to deal with the theoretical background in which the main educational theories linked to support this work are going to be introduced.

3.1. Learning a second language

Learning a new language is a must in our days. Nowadays, and according to the educational system in which we are living, our students learn, at least, one foreign language in their lives, having the opportunity to access others in their studies. The materials that are used in this paper to teach English as a L2 in the high schools are framed and agreed with the requirements of the curriculum of Secondary Education which is published in the BOE (RD 1105/2015, de 26 de diciembre). Moreover, there are some factors that contribute to the development of the English learning since those methodological approaches – the use of songs in the classroom – facilitate the process of learning while providing a wide range of new vocabulary and structures which can be included in the students' knowledge (Salas & López, 2017).

The linguistic contents, which are detailed in the BOE (RD 1105/2015, de 26 de diciembre) treated in the selected songs, can be visualized if the curriculum is analyzed in depth. Some of those contents can be listed in the following points.

- The expression of logical relationships: conjunctions, disjunctions, opposition, concession, cause, finality, comparison, indirect speech...
- Temporal relations
- Affirmative statements
- Negative statements
- Interrogative statements
- Time expression: verbal tenses, adverbs and adverbials...
- Aspect expression: punctual, habits...
- Modality expression
- Existence expression

All those elements are part of the structures presented in the songs (see 6. Materials). According to De Castro (2014), music is used as a very useful tool to be included in the English classes and in any language classes since it helps to break the monotony and it motivates our students to learn.

Moreover, music would help the students to learn faster and better. According to Rauscher (1998), music was defined as the element which contribute to the faster enhancement of spatial-temporal reasoning, experimented in rats.

The criteria used to compile the corpus of songs was based both, in linguistic and content means. First of all, the songs were selected according to their frequency on the radio. Then, they were chosen analyzing the linguistic elements that the curriculum of 4th ESO specifies (RD 1105/2015, de 26 de diciembre). They should include most of the linguistic content that the curriculum denotes so as to be useful during their apprenticeship. Moreover, they should be motivating compositions, so the topic was chosen to offer them the possibility of discovering the real messages of their idols' songs.

Sometimes people like music because of its rhythm or just because of the singer, without noticing the message. That fact is also seen among teenagers. The approximation and analysis of this corpus of songs offer the possibility to the student to discover if what they listen to is what they like to – according to the meaning – and agree with, but also, it contributes to the updating of the teachers. Knowing what our students like, their hobbies and idols will helps us to create a better class atmosphere and this will contribute to offer a better teaching and learning process.

3.2. Coeducation

Coeducation is a topic which is included in the twenty-fifth disposition of the BOE (RD 1105/2015, de 26 de diciembre) as it can be seen in the following quotation.

Disposición adicional vigesimoquinta. Fomento de la igualdad efectiva entre hombres y mujeres.

Con el fin de favorecer la igualdad de derechos y oportunidades y fomentar la igualdad efectiva entre hombres y mujeres, los centros que desarrollen el **principio de coeducación** en todas las etapas educativas, serán objeto de atención preferente y prioritaria en la aplicación de las previsiones recogidas en la presente Ley, sin perjuicio de lo dispuesto en los convenios internacionales suscritos por España.

The basic principles of the BOE establish the main objectives that our education has to achieve. Thus, principle “L” states the following: “1) El desarrollo, en la escuela, de los **valores que fomenten la igualdad efectiva entre hombres y mujeres**, así como la **prevención de la violencia de género**.” According to those statements, teachers’ functions are mainly two; first of all, they have to transmit the respective knowledge of the subject in which they are experts, but also, they have to educate their students. So, both aims are worked together in this paper focusing the realization on the coeducational parts.

Moral values are thought to be something weird or even trivial in our current society. Nowadays, talking about respect or even asking for it seems to be something old-fashioned (Ávila, 2017). However, I believe that today we lack those values more than ever before. Our digital era has made great progress in a lot of areas but that one seems to be abandoned. That is the main reason why this topic is included in the proposal.

Moreover, several elements affect how gender roles are defined in our world. Some of these influences are society and their members. Although society clearly controls the path of the consideration of those gender issues, this area escapes from any kind of control which could be done by a single person. For that reason, teachers should focus their attention on the area they can control, the classroom. In our classroom, the mediation and guidance of the students is more easily done and, through songs, some controversial topics can be reached avoiding any damage or any misunderstanding with our students.

Regarding that initial worry, Carretero & Nolasco (2016) stated that teachers exercise influence over the students in the classroom. They pointed out that bullying or violent situations in high

schools are consequence of the existence of sexism. So, how do they consider sexism? In their work, they presented some previous theories and experiments which tried to identify and classify the different types of sexisms. According to them, there are three types of sexism: Hostile sexism, Benevolent sexism and Ambivalent sexism.

Hostile sexism will be characterized by the negative answers and behavior that a person shows when being with a woman and treating them. That first type of sexism is pointed higher in men than women. Women who do not accept their traditional role, typical of a patriarchal society, would be physically or psychologically punished.

Benevolent sexism appears to be more commonly found in women although men also show some significant proofs. It is defined by Glick & Fiske (1996, 1999) and explains how that new concept of sexism offers a positive affective and subjective point of view. Summarizing what this kind of sexism is, it can be stated that women accept an inferior position and, socially, they will be rewarded if they show the acceptance of their traditional role – they have to claim for male protection, idealizing the man who takes care of them and giving charming attention to the rest of people who surround them (In Carretero & Nolasco, 2016).

Those two first types of sexism allow the authors to establish the initial question. Who must fight against sexism? They wondered about some possibilities. Among those, there can be mentioned that they proposed special formation and education to the faculty; then, they talked about a possible reformation of the established law, including some specific curricula which main topic would be sexism, or leaving that problem to the action of a single person who were sent by the government in order to educate us.

Related to that, and describing the third type of sexism, Ambivalent sexism – following with the sexist differentiation of the possible types of Glick & Fiske (1996, 1999; in Carretero & Nolasco, 2016) – is defined as the combination of these two previous types of sexism but which add a special subgroup of women that needs to be explained.

In the previous cases, the female role can be widely contrasted in two ways; a woman can accept their inferior role, submitted to men (Benevolent sexism) or she can fight against this and be punished because of that contempt (Hostile sexism). And a new model of woman is added in Ambivalent sexism. That third type of woman can be depicted as a non-traditional woman whose power is to be “sexy”.

Los hombres sexistas **temen a las mujeres no tradicionales** puesto que amenazan su **poder** y **temen a las mujeres sexys** al entender que su poder de seducción y su interés por el sexo

les puede hacer también perder el poder. Las **mujeres sexys y no tradicionales** son las que reciben las **conductas más hostiles**. El sexismo hostil se convierte en un castigo a las mujeres no tradicionales, feministas y sexys mientras que el **sexismo benévolo** se emplea para **recompensar a las mujeres tradicionales**. (Carretero & Nolasco, 2016, p. 22)

So, if these statements are analyzed in detail, it can be seen that the matter which maintains the sexist conducts is a fighting for power.

Once this experiment was carried out, the results confirmed that the male students of Education showed higher levels of Hostile sexism and Benevolent sexism than the female ones. So, according to those findings, there can be more probabilities to find a sexist behavior if the teacher is a man than if this is a woman. Women showed a high punctuation in the data obtained related to Benevolent sexism.

If this work is considered, traditional roles seem to be nowadays kept and established socially. That means that, although our educational function is focused on the subject we are teaching, more education in that area is needed if we like the situation to change. But, why do we need to change that?

Tomé & Rambla (2001) explained how our world is still ruled by male precepts. Why do men get better jobs if they got worse marks in school than women did? Our culture is male-centered and men occupy the head in the hierarchy. However, there is a problem which was identified in the previous step, in the educational system. What does “being a man” mean? According to the statistics provided in this notebook, men suffer a kind of loss when they realized that they usually get worse academic results during their high school period. The supremacy of male identity is disregarded when women can get good jobs that allow them to be economically independent, although, in our Spanish society, women continue earning approximately a 15% less than men doing the same job (Alonso, 2018).

Those facts affect the way students are going to pre-visualize their educational effort. The statistics compiled by the Ministerio de Educación y Cultura (2017-2018) show the following data.

Percentage of baccalaureate students passing grade. 2014-2015 school year

	TOTAL	Public	Private	Males	Females
First grade	81,2	77,2	92,5	77,9	84,1
Second grade	78,2	73,8	89,9	74,9	81,1

University entrance examination. 2016

	Enrolled	Pass	% pass/enrolled		
			Total	Males	Females
June	213.313	197.216	92,5	92,7	92,3
September	46.775	34.948	74,7	75,6	74,0
Over age 25	34.061	11.823	34,7	35,7	33,4
Over age 45	6.083	2.413	39,7	38,5	40,8

Figure 1. Percentage of baccalaureate students who pass grade. (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2017, p. 20)

Another relevant data which is offered in the statistics of the Spanish government (Figure 1) is that, if students are analyzed according to their gender when they finish their Baccalaureate, there is approximately a 7% less of men who pass grade than women. That difference means that there are more male students who abandon their studies at an early age.

Moreover, a study carried out by the Ministerio de Educación states the following.

Hay que empezar señalando que el **abandono** es un **rasgo** predominantemente **masculino**. Las tasas de abandono son permanentemente mayores en el caso de los hombres que en el de las mujeres. Se trata de un **patrón habitual** en el conjunto de la Unión Europea, pero que en el caso español resulta más acusado. Así, en el primer trimestre de 2013, la tasa de abandono es del **27,5% entre los hombres** y del **20,2% entre las mujeres** (en el caso de la Unión Europea la diferencia por sexo no llega a los cuatro puntos). Esto tiene como consecuencia que **en la actualidad los hombres representan el 58,7% del abandono total**. (IVIE, 2013, p. 12)

According to that analysis, more than a half of the percentage of school abandonment is represented by men. So, an important response is needed to avoid this abandonment and to motivate our students, regardless of their gender.

Some proposals to coeducate teenagers are offered in the work of Tomé & Rambla (2001). For instance, they argue to question the cultural hierarchies that our society establishes between male and female behaviors. Also, they claim to reformulate the sexist contradictions between the school or the educational system and society in general. They ask to increase the rights of men and women.

If their work is continued, some methodological and didactic proposal are offered to be put into practice in the classroom. They advise teachers how to react when they work with coeducation, which patterns they should follow to avoid a sexist behavior in the classroom that would ease the path for a part of the students because of their gender, while the rest would be denigrated or ignored. Also, they attend to the differences male and female students show in their learning process, classifying and attributing them some characteristic features and skills that, maybe, teachers would not notice at a first sight. Those would be useful in the planning of the following lessons.

3.3. Songs

Songs are daily companions of our lives. Whether we hear music on the radio while we drive or while we go jogging, we listen to music almost constantly. There are lots of activities in which music is implied conscious or unconsciously. And a data which is more surprising is that almost all this music we are exposed to is in the English language (Gabriel, 2016).

According to the article of Gabriel (2016), teenagers are exposed to a great influencer, music. This human period, adolescence, is a constant epoch of physical and emotional changes in which the beings are trying to discover themselves. Music is a vehicle which offers the listener a good and easy way to escape from reality. At the same time, it is a possible mirror in which youngsters have the possibility to find their idols while feeling identify in the messages their favorite songs claimed.

Therefore, nowadays, our teenagers are constantly exposed to songs in English whose messages are being sent to them. The must for a teacher should be that their students develop the necessary skills to be self-sufficient and autonomous enough to continue increasing their knowledge. Here is when the monitor/facilitator role of the teacher is materialized. This monitor role of the teacher corresponds to the Monitor Theory of Krashen in the 1970s (Tesol Class).

That theory explains the change on the teachers' role performance. Traditionally, the teacher was considered to be the owner of the knowledge, the only one who could transmit the content and the model to be followed by their students. However, this role disappeared with this theory. Krashen stated that the new function of teachers is to contribute to the self-development of the students. So, how can teachers achieve that? Well, the main function of a teacher is to facilitate the materials and methods to the student to develop their own learning.

Besides, in order to develop their facilitator roles, teachers should help the students to widen their Zone of Proximal Development (Schunk, 2016, p. 243). As the author stated, quoting Vygotsky (1978, p.86), this area is defined as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”. Teachers should contribute to the monitorization of the student while they acquire the knowledge. Students need to be monitored in order to get access to their real learning in the Zone of Proximal Development. With that technique, collaborative learning is used since, as Schunk mentioned, peers are a fundamental part in the learning process.

Moreover, the selection of this list of songs can be justified by the fact that most of the songs are or have been hits in the radio and in the social networks (YouTube) having millions of visualizations. Some of these artists who are considered as the driver of those hits into the Spanish culture are, for instance, Rihanna, Beyoncé, David Guetta or Nicki Minaj (Gabriel, 2016).

But, why are those singers so popular? Marketing is a good seller and knows how to attract teenagers. Most of the topics that are the message of the songs talk about love. Personal relationships constitute one of the biggest worries of adolescents in their age. Besides, the scenarios presented are attractive; singers are good-looking, they are usually wealthy people or courageous people who fight against whatever is between them and their objectives. That determination is one of the most impressive and increasing transformation teenagers are suffering. Self-determination is their maximum motto at that age.

Now, the amount of time we consume music needs to be analyzed. The report *Marco General de los Medios en España* published by the Asociación para la Investigación de los Medios de Comunicación (AIMC) provides an analysis of the main features which characterized the behavior of the radio listeners. The analyzed features – time frame, type of radio station, and schedule – showed that Spanish people usually listen to the radio in the morning, and that the day which has most consumption is on Saturdays. This day, there is an average of 38.2 minutes (Redacción pnoticias, 2018).

However, it can be thought that teenagers do not usually listen to the radio because it can be seen as an old media to listen to music. Our digital era has given us a lot of available tools which can leave us free access to any music genre we would like to listen to. That is why Navarro (2018) confirmed, “streaming y las descargas en internet generan 152,4 millones de

euros frente a los 79,2 de la venta de cedés y vinilos”. According to the data presented in the article, 65,8% of the market belongs to the digital scope. Some platforms, such as Spotify, received approximately 84 million euros. Streaming became the way to get access to music. Free platforms, which main difference is the appearance of adverts while listening to music, also received 30 million euros in 2017.

In that last group of consumers, students can be mainly classified and included since teenagers usually prefer online platforms to listen to music rather than traditional, old-fashioned ones. And, how are songs going to be a helpful tool in the English classroom?

Well, as students are constantly updated thanks to the social networks they access, including some elements of their daily routines in their lessons, such as music, allow them to listen to their idols and their musical preferences in the classroom. Doing that, teachers will contribute to increase students’ extrinsic motivation and, consequently, encouraging their intrinsic motivation in their language learning.

Furthermore, allowing them to discover that something as simple as listening to their favorite English music can contribute to their learning highlights the application of the monitor role of the teacher, by facilitating new ways of learning which are close to the students’ sphere.

3.4. Theoretical background

As it has just been stated, motivation is a fundamental part in the learning process of teenagers. The fact that they are legally forced – the first four years of ESO, until 16 years old – to go to school implies that their initial motivation is not going to be good enough to get and keep students’ attention during the whole time of the lesson. That weak point can be solved if teachers included in their classes extra motivational elements which engage students to be active and participative in the lessons. So, in order to discover how teachers should deal with students’ motivation, how can motivation be defined?

As Bénabou & Tirole (2003) explained, there are two kinds of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic ones. “Extrinsic motivation (contingent rewards) can sometimes conflict with intrinsic motivation (the individual’s desire to perform the task for its own sake)” (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003, p.489), so here, the main difference between both motivations can be appreciated. For our students, extrinsic motivation would come with the positive rewards teachers will give to them – extra points in their marks, positive verbal recognition, less tasks to do, etc. Intrinsic

motivation, on the other hand, will be framed by the students' personality. It is the student the one who should want to learn and to be active in the lesson.

So, if we, as teachers, are able to start a good extrinsic motivation, in which effort is rewarded, and, consequently and sequentially, we start to leave the student alone, making them realize that the best reward they can get is their own recognition and self-esteem, intrinsic motivation would be positively affected, achieving the independence of the individual as a self-sufficient student.

To achieve this situation in which the students feel sufficiently motivated, teachers need to "defeat" an initial trouble, the affective filter. The Affective Filter Hypothesis was proposed by Stephen Krashen in which he explained how the acquisition – not learning – of a second language is directly related to several affective factors, such as "motivation, self-confidence and anxiety" (Du, 2009, pp. 30-33). When a teenager starts to learn and acquire a second language, the first barrier which they found is anxiety. Embarrassment limits the students' capacity of acquiring the new language because they are frightened by the possibility of being ridiculed in front of their mates. Then, this anxiety grows up since they do not feel comfortable enough to use the second language freely. Accuracy has been the main aim of language classes, so grammar was the most worked area on the language. However, nowadays, according to the communicative approach, fluency takes a higher and relevant position, so students just should try to be understood and establish a message which is able to get the receptor's answer. And the use of authentic materials should be prevalent in the teaching of a second language since it offers a real example of the language to be learnt – pronunciation, slang word, collocations, etc.

All those previous steps relate the theories to the one of David P. Ausubel, the theory of the Meaningful Learning (Rodríguez, 2011). That theory established that the real learning is no another than the acquisition of that concepts which are being learnt. This mean that a person, and in this case, our students, needs to include the new concepts as a relevant part of their inner knowledge.

According to what Ausubel illustrated, human beings have a limited capacity to memorize information and new concepts, that is why this theory highlights the importance of being critique while learning. There is no arbitrary options nor literal apprenticeship in the acquisition of a second language. Some new concepts which are learnt need to be significant for the learner (Rodríguez, 2011, pp. 31-32).

So, if students are guided to develop this critical thinking to be able to distinguish which information is going to be relevant for their learning and improvement, they need to be initially guided on how to develop their critical thinking. While we grow old, we are used to receive orders to obey. Since we are children, there are many models to follow, for instance, our parents, our relatives, even our teachers. They have the power to tell us what we should or could do, what to say, when and how. These restrictions are positive in an initial period in which children need to learn some social values and patterns of social behavior. However, the adolescence is an age in which the individual is reaching their turning point into adulthood, so they are going to become independent soon. So, what happens? Teenagers and young adults are not prepared to think by themselves. We have not been taught how to do it – and I say “we” because sometimes I have experimented that myself. So, that is what teachers should fight against; preparing students imply a lot of values that are linked to the human being as a person and their individual realization, as well as it offers a source of technical knowledge in several subjects.

4. OBJECTIVES

Some of the main objectives which are searched in this work are justified with some educational theories. Krashen explained in his theory the importance of the classroom atmosphere in the success of the teaching and learning process (Du, 2009). According to his theory of the Affective Filter, the students’ learning is more significative if the class atmosphere is relaxed and the levels of anxiety are reduced to their minimum. Moreover, it is linked to the Meaningful Learning Theory of Ausubel, as it has been stated in the previous point. Scaffolding theories are achieved by constructing meaning beginning from the already known reference the learner has in their background knowledge. This theory was stated by Vygotsky and it was named Sociocultural Theory. The basic principles explained in his theory stated that human beings are interfered by several factors when they are trying to develop. The individual is affected by their own personality, by the society to which they belong and their cultural-historical background. So, according to that, students will need to develop their own apprenticeship by themselves (Schunk, 2016).

Vygotsky’s theory stresses the interaction of interpersonal (social), cultural–historical, and individual factors as the key to human development (Tudge & Scrimsher, 2003). Interactions with persons in the environment (e.g., apprenticeships, collaborations) stimulate developmental processes and foster cognitive growth. But interactions are not useful in a

traditional sense of providing children with information. Rather, children transform their experiences based on their knowledge and characteristics and reorganize their mental structures. (Schunk, 2016, pp. 242)

Once those first concepts are clearly defined as of the main objectives of this proposal, the following objectives need to be established, regarding some extra elements of the classroom.

- a) To ease the learning of English as a second language.
- b) To encourage the development of the students' skills – oral and reading skills – of the students.
- c) To diminish the Affective Filter of the classroom.
- d) To create an encouraging atmosphere to achieve an improvement in the students' skills of pronunciation and speaking.
- e) To motivate the students to learn the language offering them the possibility of a different didactic proposal in their teaching.
- f) To include the linguistic content which is included in the curriculum in a playful way in a nice atmosphere.
- g) To help the students, providing them the path, to develop a critical thought while they experiment their personal development while growing up and maturing.

5. CONTEXTUALIZATION

The work proposed could be applied in a course of 4th ESO since it accomplishes the main objectives and paradigms which are dealt in the curriculum of this course. Regarding the specific legislation of 4th ESO which can be found in the BOE (RD 1105/2015, de 26 de diciembre), particularly the items which concern the requirements of the study and learning of the second language, the main objectives previously presented can be covered with the proposed material.

This work could not have been put into practice in a real secondary education class. However, thanks to the observation carried out during the practices' period in a high school, several aspects were valued and evaluated as a germ of this work since the principal ideas were found in the classroom while students had their classes. There were some aspects which were primarily thought as to be possible of being analyzed such as the gender issue in the coeducation

of teenagers as well as their gender treatment, in both ways, teacher-students and students-students.

According to Meyer (2010), teachers-students' relationships and students-students' relationships can have a great influence in the gender issues troubles that our society suffers every day. In her book, she explained some real cases she had suffered while working as a teacher in different high schools in the United States and Canada. Although it can be thought that the roles of teachers do not affect the students' behavior, she explained how different violent situations – of bullying or harassment – occurred in the classes she was and nobody wanted to be involved in their solution. The main controversial topic she stated is that teachers mainly ignore those problems which had some kind of violent or sexual implication. They just preferred to continue thinking on the curricular contents, without considering the potential elements that were affecting their students.

As she described herself as being one of the teachers who worked against these behaviors, she ended up her book by saying that the faculty community would need to determine their functions better, including the complete education of teenagers which means something else apart from mere curricular content. However, in the years she worked with that issue, she did not receive any kind of support. Consequently, she suffered from depression, what contributed to her decision of resigning her job, leaving teaching forever.

During my practices' period, it could be seen how the worked methodology was mainly based on the grammar-translation approach (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, pp. 3-5), so listening was not an active skill in the planning and curriculum of the lessons. As communicative skills were not a real part of the lessons, the development of the critical thought of the students was not part of the routine either. So, that work tries to offer a possible starting point for a didactic and methodological practice to be included in a classroom, developing more skills that just the ones which are mainly linked to the teaching and learning of a second language.

6. MATERIALS

The material compiled to design this work is a list of songs which are currently listened by youngsters. The songs included in the analysis are eighteen which belong to different artists but which share common features; all these songs are in the English language and all of them have some gender issues treated on their main messages. The gender issues that can be

identified in the songs can be illustrated in the way they represent women, in the way they show relationships between men and women or in the way the social role of women in society is openly claimed.

In the following paragraphs, each of the songs is going to be presented and briefly analyzed to demonstrate the importance it has to be included in this proposal. The complete lyrics of the songs are available in the links in the appendix part of this work.

All the lyrics of the songs have been taken from internet. There are several webpages which offer the lyrics of these songs online; the ones checked to select the lyrics were mainly two: *AZLyrics* and *Genius*.

In order to carry out the analysis, the pattern which is followed is the following. First of all, the title, the author(s) and year of the song is presented. Then, each of the songs' analysis is divided in two different parts which are going to cover the main objectives of this paper. The first part deals with the linguistic application of these songs in the English lesson, which would cover the first objective. This content is justified by the syntactic-discursive content that appears in the curriculum (RD 1105/2015, de 26 de diciembre). Then, the gender education part is presented – second objective, analyzing the content of the songs, focusing on the role of women and men respectively. After these two parts, as a kind of conclusion, the third objective is presented as a summary of the previous analysis, proving that the use of songs in the English lessons can be a good source of real material to be used with teenagers.

6.1. *Hey Mama* – David Guetta ft. Nicki Minaj (2014)

6.1.1. Linguistic application

The song presents a variation between two verbal tenses: present and future tenses. Imperative is another linguistic feature commonly seen in the song. There are also some conditional sentences (type 1) whose main characteristics are the use of the conditional particle “if/when” and the present and future tenses in each of the clauses, for example, “when you need that/I’ll provide that”. Also, the song provides some examples of comparative structures in the superlative form, such as “in the worst way”. There are also some examples of subordination, including or not the subordinate pronoun “that”, as in “I like the dirty rhythm you play”. Logic relations are expressed through resultative linkers as “so” whereas time expressions appear

when some particles as “when” or adverbs as “forever” are used. Another significant feature of the song is the use of indefinite pronouns, such as “whatever” or negative ones as “nothing”.

The use of slang expressions or abbreviated words is very relevant in the song and it can be seen in some examples such as “ain’t”, “gotta”, “I’mma” or “wanna”. Those offer the student a source to learn colloquial English in the class through the songs’ context and with rhythmical patterns which may help them to improve their oral skills and pronunciation.

Regarding content application, according to the legislation, some activities of the house can be learnt thanks to the content of the content of the song.

6.1.2. Gender education

The female role is identified with the female voice of Nicki Minaj. In that song, a kind of dialogue is established between the male and female voices. In the first verse of the song, the objectification of women is clearly seen since the woman is presented as a mere object that this man can own whenever he wants.

Yes, I’ll be your woman, yes, I’ll be your baby

Yes, **I’ll be whatever that you tell me when you’re ready**

Yes, I’ll be your girl, forever your lady

You ain’t ever gotta worry, I’m down for you baby

In the second line, the objectification and disposition of the woman is presented to the wish of the man.

However, if the song goes on, in the verse two, the submission of the woman in the domestic atmosphere is exemplified in the lyrics, showing a girl which their duties are in the domestic sphere.

Yes, **I do the cooking, yes I do the cleaning**

Plus I keep the na-na real sweet, for your eating

Yes you be the boss, and yes I be respecting

Whatever that you tell me, cause it’s game you be spitting

Women are traditionally related to domestic affairs and in that part of the song, this “idea” is reaffirmed, keeping the role of the woman framed to the domestic sphere – cooking, cleaning and taking care of the children. Moreover, it establishes the hierarchy that should be established within a couple – male-female. The role of the man is thought and presented to be the head of the couple; he is the one who must rule and, as it has been traditionally seen, be the “boss of the house”, the one who maintains the home. Women are put in a subordinate position.

6.2. *Run the World* – Beyoncé (2011)

6.2.1. Linguistic application

In this second song, some features can be found which are similar to the ones found in the first lyrics. Time expression is mainly achieved through the present – simple and continuous – and future tenses. That implies that the vindication proposed in the song is a current situation whose objectives will be achieved in the near future. There are also several examples of *Wh-questions* whose *wh-* pronouns are “who” and “what”, practicing through that the structure of subject questions. There is also a huge number of negative particles – adverbs, pronouns or auxiliary verbs – such as “no”, “don’t”, “none”. Imperative form is seen in the text and the use of the modal “can” to express modality. Word formation is shown in the lyrics in some words such as “endless” and quality expression is seen in the use of the adverb “so” + an adjective.

If the content of the song is depicted, it can be said that activities and feelings are the main points to deal with.

6.2.2. Gender education

In this second song, it can be seen how the author tries to emphasize the female power and highlight the independence of women in all the areas of life. In the hook, the motto is strongly presented as a vindication for the right of women. *Who run the world? Girls!* is the way the power of women is claimed. With this indirect question the vindication is stated. Now, if the different verses are analyzed, different scopes that surround women’s spheres are dealt. For instance, in the first verse, it can be seen how physical contact is shown. There is no kind of permission for disrespect women. Women are the ones that rule over their bodies.

Some of them men think they freak this

Like we do, but no they don't

Make your check, come at they neck

Disrespect us, no they won't

Boy, don't even try to touch this (touch this)

Boy, this beat is crazy (crazy)

This is how they made me (made me)

Houston, Texas, baby

Then, if the song is analyzed further, it can be seen how in verse 5, labor stuff and domestic affairs are claimed to be done by women and tell the men to avoid kidding on them.

Boy I know you love it

How we're smart enough to make these millions

Strong enough to bear the children (children)

Then get back to business

See, you better not play me (me)

Don't come here, baby

Hope you still like me

F U Pay Me

So, it shows how women do not need any kind of extra help to do things. They do not depend on anyone to fulfill themselves.

6.3. *Freedom* – Beyoncé (2016)

6.3.1. Linguistic application

Slang words appear again in the song, offering the student an example of colloquial language. Some of those expressions are “tryna”, “I’ma” or “gotta”. According to time expression, the verbal tenses which are used in the song are present – simple, continuous and perfect continuous – and future. Passive voice is also presented in the lyrics, such as in the following example “I was served”. Time expression appears in the use of some adverbs such as “always” or “forever”. Logic relations’ causative conjunctions, such as “cause/because” are

used in the text, verbalizing the idea of the lyrics; actions and vindications are expressed by their causes. There is also a use of modality exemplified by the modal “can” and the imperative. *Wh- questions* appear in the song whether using *wh*-pronouns, “What you want from me?”, or interrogative auxiliary questions “can you hear me?”. Compound nouns are also part of the potential linguistic application as it is seen in these examples “bulletproof” (noun-noun compound) or “misleading” (affixation).

6.3.2. Gender education

In this third song of Beyoncé, the main lemma is the vindication for freedom. This song was used by the Global Goals organization in the International Day of the Girls to claim the right of the girls and women around the world, exposing several situations in which women suffer some troubles or denigrating moments in which their rights are eliminated. In the video, this United Nations organization which was established in 2015 adds some girls dancing while messages to start the alarm caused by these denigrating situations appear on the screen.¹

Some of the messages are the following ones.

- a) “Every five minutes a girl dies as a result of violence”
- b) “One in four girls gets married as a child”
- c) “71% of human trafficking victims are female”
- d) “63 million girls have undergone female genital mutilation”
- e) “130 million girls are out of school”
- f) “Girls are twice as likely to become infected with HIV”

These messages summarize and clearly exemplify the different troubles women, and in this case, little girls, suffer around the world. The percentages shown in the video – marriages, trafficking victims or illiteracy – are a clear justification for vindications to be done. With this material, the education of a part of the youngsters, who maybe are not aware of these situations, is initiated.

And they claim for some rights, such as “put girls into schools, end the aids epidemic, end child marriage” while asking for the viewer to collaborate with their fighting.

¹ The video could be seen in YouTube.

The Global Goals. (2017). *Freedom – International Day of the Girl*. [Video] Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BMgV8jj9IU>

6.4. *If I Were a Boy* – Beyoncé (2008)

6.4.1. Linguistic application

The main significant feature of the song is the use of conditional sentences (type 2). So, the verbal tenses that are the most relevant in the song are past tense and conditional form “would” to express time. There is also a time word, “when”, used in the lyrics, and logical relations are established through causative particles as “cause” and conjunctions such as “and” to provide coherence and cohesion. Existence is expressed with some pronouns such as relative pronouns as “who” or indefinite pronouns as “everyone”. There are also some instances of quantity expressions such as “a little too late” and negative sentences as “don’t”. Comparison is seen in the irregular adjective “better” and passive voice is also a feature of the song, such as “he’s taken you”.

6.4.2. Gender education

If I Were a Boy narrates a story in which male and female roles in a hypothetical way. In the first half of the song, the lyrics tells how the woman – in the video, Beyoncé – has a complete life which is characterized by her work, as a policewoman, her home-life with her husband and her free time with her friends and colleagues as well as it insinuates an affair between the protagonist and her colleague. When the climax of the song – an argument between the couple – starts, roles are exchanged and seen how they really are. All that first part, as it can be taken from the linguistic analysis of the title of the song, was a hypothesis. If she had been a boy, all those previously mentioned things – an affair, an “amazing” job...- can be part of the life of the woman. Nevertheless, once the roles are restated, the woman appears having the traditional lifestyle with a traditional role in the house and work, as a secretary.

Those preestablished roles are again restored in the collective imagination of the viewer, and in this case, in our students. If the song is considered as a vindication, the message could be understood as a claim to reach the possibility to get access to the positions that you want as a person, without considering your sex or gender as a barrier of any kind.

Furthermore, there are some advices implied in the hypothesis used during the song which are analyzed as a teaching lesson on how to become a good man.

If I were a boy

I think I could understand

How it feels to love a girl

I swear **I'd be a better man.**

I'd listen to her

'Cause I know how it hurts

When you **lose the one you wanted** (wanted)

'Cause **he's taken you for granted** (granted)

And **everything you had got destroyed**

That verse shows the feeling she experiments when she realizes the betrayal. Moreover, she expresses her own feelings and hypothesizes about how the man should act if he had the chance to know what she feels.

Then a recognition of the woman is stated in the fact that she is not going to continue being given in to the man's life.

It's a little too late for you to come back

Say it's just a mistake

Think I'd forgive you like that

If you thought I would wait for you

You thought wrong

The man in the story appears to be the typical patriarchal follower who thinks that women's life is controlled and submitted to male desires. The last verse of the song shows the disappointment the woman feels when realizing that he, as a boy, is not going to understand it ever.

But you're just a boy

You don't understand

Yeah, you don't understand, oh

How it feels to love a girl someday

You wish you were a better man

You don't listen to her

You don't care how it hurts

Until you lose the one you wanted

'Cause **you've taken her for granted**

And everything you had got destroyed

She is predicting what is going to happen since he is not changing his behavior nor his manners. As she had been suffering for a long time, he will lose what he considers to be a belonging of him, the woman who is treated as an object whose owner decides its use. She breaks up her subjugation, she becomes free.

6.5. *Perfect* – Ed Sheeran (2017)

6.5.1. Linguistic application

This analysis has been done following the same pattern and the results are the following ones. The main tenses which appear in the song are future tense, past simple and present – simple present, continuous and perfect. Time expressions include the use of “when” and adverbs as “tonight”. Negative statements are seen in examples as “not” or “never”. The structure of the lyrics is achieved through the logic relation's expressions of contrast “but” and conjunctions “and”. Compound nouns are also part of the linguistic features of the song, as “barefoot” (adjective + noun). Indefinite pronouns as “someone” and personal pronouns or possessive determiners contribute to determine the characters of the song, their relationship and the structure of the main topic, the relationship between the characters. There is also a relevant use of comparative structures, such as “more than” or “stronger”.

6.5.2. Gender education

This song has its counterpart in the following point, 6.6. *Perfect*, when it is sung by two artists, including a woman in the song. In this first case, the main voice of the song is a male one whose point of reference is himself. All the narration of the song is focused on the life of the boy while the woman that appears there seems to be a kind of complement for the male protagonist.

The characteristics of the woman that are mainly highlighted in the song are the physical ones. If the first verse is analyzed, the female part is described physically, taking into consideration things like her beauty and charming behavior.

I found a love for me

Darling, just dive right in and follow my lead

Well, **I found a girl, beautiful and sweet**

Oh, I never knew **you were the someone waiting for me**

It also emphasizes that the woman aspirations were to wait for the man to arrive, and, somehow, as it is traditionally considered in fairy tales, wait for the man to be saved and rescued.

6.6. *Perfect* – Ed Sheeran ft. Beyoncé (2017)

6.6.1. Linguistic application

This analysis can be taken from the previous song since the only difference that exists between them is the fact that, in this song, the female role is given voice, so some of the pronouns changed their gender.

6.6.2. Gender education

Following the previous analysis, this duet is going to be analyzed to be contrasted with the one before. Moreover, this song was created some months after the previous one was recorded.

The fact that Beyoncé empowers the role of the woman in the couple allows both parts to be active during the song. In the previous version, in which the male role is the one presented, the woman appears in the background of the story. This empowering helps female roles to be seen and heard in the social media, giving importance to both partners in a relationship.

Well, I found a man

Stronger than anyone I know

He shares my dreams

I hope that someday we'll share our home

I found love

To carry more than just my secrets

To carry love, to carry children of our own

6.7. *Shape of You* – Ed Sheeran (2017)

6.7.1. Linguistic application

Present and future tenses, and the use of some time expressions such as “now”, “every day” or “one week”, can be seen as the features used to show time in the song. A range of logic expressions give cohesion to the lyrics, such as “so”, “and” or “although”, expressing result, addition and contrast respectively. Some pronouns also appear in the song, for instance, wh-pronouns “where” or indefinite pronouns as “somebody”. The use of modality can be analyzed in the examples of the imperative and the use of the modal “may”, as well as comparison is found in the superlative form, “the best place”. Then, compound nouns are a significant part of the song, allowing the analysis of different forms of building words, such as “handmade” (noun + past participle), “bedsheets” (noun + noun) or “backseat” (adjective + noun).

6.7.2. Gender education

In this seventh song, women are objectified and qualified as mere objects used to give pleasure to men. When the song begins, the scene is described as follows. There is a group of men in a bar having something to drink when, suddenly, a woman arrives to talk to the protagonist.

Once this happens, the answer that the protagonist offers qualifies this woman as an object which has been created to satisfy his inner pleasures.

Girl, you know I want your love

Your love was handmade for somebody like me

Come on now, follow my lead

I may be crazy, don't mind me

Say, boy, let's not talk too much

Grab on my waist and put that body on me

Come on now, follow my lead

Come, come on now, follow my lead (mmmm)

If the reading or listening of the song is continued, the voice of the woman is just shown to claim the temptation the boy is suffering, implying sexual references in the situation described. The answer the boy reveals when this situation occurs is expressed in the following verse.

I'm in love with the shape of you

We push and pull like a magnet do

Although my heart is falling too

I'm in love with your body

Last night you were in my room

And now my bedsheets smell like you

Every day discovering something brand new

I'm in love with your body

Those two highlighted sentences show the importance the song gives to the physical appearance of the woman, describing her as a lovely thing to be liked.

6.8. *Thinking Out Loud* – Ed Sheeran (2014)

6.8.1. Linguistic application

The main characteristics of this song is the use of the future and present tense and the questions – auxiliary questions – of the lyrics, such as “will your mouth still remember the taste of my life?”. The use of “when” shows a time expression as the logic relations offered by the conjunctions “and” or the causative “so” give cohesion to the lyrics. Modality is expressed through the use of the imperative and the modal verb “could” or the adverbial “maybe”.

6.8.2. Gender education

In that case, the song can be understood as the fact of loving somebody while aging and getting old, adding all the implications age contains. For that reason, it does not imply any kind of objectification or gender vindication but just a claim for true love, which is described as the

fact of taking care of the person you love when they need you because of the possible illnesses they suffer, such as dementias or physical problems age causes. It can be seen in the following verse.

When your legs don't work like they used to before
 And I can't sweep you off of your feet
 Will your mouth still remember the taste of my love?
 Will your eyes still smile from your cheeks?
 And darling I will be loving you till we're seventy
 And baby, my heart could still fall as hard at twenty-three
 And I'm thinking about how

6.9. *Photograph* – Ed Sheeran (2014)

6.9.1. Linguistic application

This song also offers the possibility of reinforcing the learning of some linguistic features such as pronouns – personal pronouns, such as “you”, “me”, “us” – or determiners as “your”, “our”. Comparatives are also seen, such as “easier” and modality is expressed through the imperative and the use of “can”. The lyrics shows time expression through three main verbal tenses – past, present and future – and some expressions such a “when” or “sometimes”. And logic relations, which organize the text, are “and” or “but”. Negative structures are analyzed in examples as “never” or “won’t”. There is also an instance of colloquial language in the word “ya”.

6.9.2. Gender education

This song is a love song whose main theme regards love or relationships linked to the memories and feeling these images could resemble. In that case, the values that are highlighted are the ones which try to keep people together, far in the distance, by using a picture as a symbol of bond. This idea is shown in the chorus of the song which follows.

We keep this love in a photograph
 We made these memories for ourselves

Where our eyes are never closing

Hearts are never broken

Times forever frozen still

6.10. *Happier* – Ed Sheeran (2017)

6.10.1. Linguistic application

The main tense used in the song is the past tense. The contrastive conjunction “but” is the most frequently used in the text since the topic is mainly contrastive, showing the both sides of the relationship from the point of view of the singer. There are some instances of indefinite pronouns “someone”, “everything”, “something” and some negative ones as “nobody” or auxiliaries as “ain’t”, which is also a feature of slang language. Conditional sentences are also included in the lyrics, through the use of the particle “if”. Comparative forms appear in some instances such as “happier”, “like” or “as ... as”. And there is an instance of a question tag too.

6.10.2. Gender education

This song deals with a breakup of a couple and how the guy feels when he sees the woman with another guy. In that case, the perspective which is shown is considered as appropriate since the guy accepts that the woman is free to choose whether she wants to be with somebody else or not.

Ain't nobody hurt you like I hurt you

But ain't nobody love you like I do

Promise that I will not take it personal baby

If you're moving on with someone new

Emotions are put into words to express how the man experiences that breakdown when he is still in love with her.

Ain't nobody hurt you like I hurt you

But ain't nobody need you like I do

I know that there's others that deserve you

But my darling I am still in love with you

Moreover, he tells the woman that he will be waiting for her in case she realizes that she wants to come back with him because her current relationship would not be as she expects.

Baby you look happier, you do

I knew one day you'd fall for someone new

But if he breaks your heart like lovers do

Just know that I'll be waiting here for you

6.11. *Love the Way You Lie* – Eminem ft. Rihanna (2010)

6.11.1. Linguistic application

In this song, there are a lot of examples of time expression, such as “and”, “when”, “as long as”, “next time”, “even though”, “because”, etc., which offer a wide variety of conjunctions. The main tenses which appear in the song are present, past and future tenses. There is also an instance of direct speech in one of the verses of the song, as well as the use of modality, “can”, and negative statements with “not”. Comparison is also seen in the lyrics, as “as bad as”.

6.11.2. Gender education

In that song, the relationship that is presented shows a really difficult situation in which both partners have an argument. This relationship is characterized by the need both partners have to be together at the same time they cannot stand each other. Also, in the video there is a strong fight which implies violence.

I can't tell you what it really is

I can only tell you what it feels like

And right now there's a steel knife in my windpipe

I can't breathe, but I still fight while I can fight

As long as the wrong feels right, it's like I'm in flight

High off her love, drunk from her hate

It's like I'm huffin' paint

And I love her the more I suffer, I suffocate

And right before I'm about to drown she resuscitates me

She fuckin' hates me, and I love it, "Wait!

Where you going?," "I'm leaving you." "No, you ain't

Come back!" We're runnin' right back, here we go again

It's so insane, 'cause when it's goin' good it's goin' great

I'm Superman with the wind at his back, she's Lois Lane

But when it's bad it's awful, I feel so ashamed

I snap, "Who's that dude?," I don't even know his name

I laid hands on him, I'll never stoop so low again

I guess I don't know my own strength

According to the lyrics, the relationship is qualified as “insane”. It describes how their behaviors decline until they get immersed on a violent relationship. If the videoclip is seen while listening to the song, violent images are shown when the couple is living together².

6.12. *Born this Way* – Lady Gaga (2011)

6.12.1. Linguistic application

The tenses mainly used are the same that in the previous analyzed songs – future, present and past – as well as the time expressions used. Logic relations are established through causative connectors, such as “so” or “cause”. Negative statements appear with some examples as “no”, “ain’t” or “don’t” and modality is seen in the use of the imperative and the modal “must”. Reported speech is another significant feature of the song, in which a dialogue is represented.

² The video could be seen in YouTube.

EminemMusic. (2010). *Eminem – Love The Way You Lie ft. Rihanna*. [Video] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uelHwf8o7_U

6.12.2. Gender education

This song is a clear vindication of the natural being and their desires, whichever they are.

My mama told me when I was young

We are all born superstars

She rolled my hair and put my lipstick on

In the glass of her boudoir

"There's nothing wrong with loving who you are"

She said, "'Cause he made you perfect, babe"

"So hold your head up, girl, and you'll go far

Listen to me when I say"

Self-acceptance is the main message that is understood in the song. God is also presented in the song, so religion is included in the characters of the song. The protagonist tells the listener her story and the self-doubts she had while growing up and defining her sexuality.

6.13. *Something Just Like This* – The Chainsmokers ft. Coldplay (2017)

6.13.1. Linguistic application

The most significant features of the song are the following ones. Reported speech is used to contextualized the argument the characters of the song are having. Therefore, the main tenses of the lyrics are past and present tense. Then, there are some interrogative sentences which exemplify the structure of the interrogative pattern in *wh- questions*. Compound nouns and pronouns appear constantly in the development of the song's lyrics as well as modality is again expressed through the use of the modal "can". Comparative structures are shown in the use of the particle "like".

6.13.2. Gender education

The relationship described in the song avoids any kind of idealization, defining the characteristics of the situation as follows.

But she said, where'd you wanna go?

How much you wanna risk?

I'm not looking for somebody

With some superhuman gifts

Some superhero

Some fairytale bliss

Just something I can turn to

Somebody I can kiss

The fact that the situation is presented in a more realistic way helps to destroy the tales' idealizations of love that can be, sometimes, harmful for teenagers and their idealistic dreams.

6.14. *Ain't Your Mama* – Jennifer Lopez (2016)

6.14.1. Linguistic application

Questions are the main feature of the song which allow to verbalize the main vindication of the song, “can we go back to how it was?” and “when did you get too comfortable?” are two examples of interrogative sentences using auxiliary verbs or *wh-questions*. Imperative is used in the song to express modality as negative statements are said with the use of “no” or “ain't”. “Cause” is the principal causative linker used in the song to express logic relations. Slang vocabulary is included in the song too, offering the possibility to approach a wider language variety in the class.

6.14.2. Gender education

Ain't Your Mama is considered as a feministic song of Jennifer Lopez (El País, 2016). In that song, several female stereotypes are described. Society attribute women the actions which concern the household, the care of children and elder people, and being pleasant with their husbands when they come back from work. The maintenance of the home is still focused on the hands of the man. Those traditional roles are broken in the song. This female vindication claims for a big change in the fixed stereotypes society has fossilized and transmitted through years.

I ain't gon' be cooking all day, I ain't your mama

I ain't gon' do your laundry, I ain't your mama

I ain't your mama, boy, I ain't your mama

When you're gon' get your act together?

I ain't your mama

No ooooh, I ain't your mama

No ooooh, I ain't your mama, no

Those stereotyped actions are compared with the parental cares a child benefits from. So, there are two vindications exposed in the main message of the song. First of all, the male role is compared with the behavior of a little child who needs to be looked after. That is considered to be a social problem in our days since men are presented as being incapable of taking care of themselves. Then, the main stereotypes of a traditional patriarchal society are highlighted since women are limited to the domestic sphere, doing the household, while men are dedicated to work outside the house; they are the ones in charge of the economic maintenance of the family.

So, with this song, the traditional female role is broken, showing and warning about the effects that love can cause in the blindness women have suffered for years.

6.15. *Just the Way You Are* – Bruno Mars (2010)

6.15.1. Linguistic application

In this case, two of the main verbal tenses that appear in the song are present and future tenses. Then, negative statements are seen in some instances such as “won’t”, “not” or “never”. Text cohesion is done through logical relations with the conjunctions “cause”, “but” or “and”. Modality appears in instances as “could” and existence is reflected in the use of the expression “there’s”.

6.15.2. Gender equality

If this song is approached in a simple way, it can be misunderstood and analyzed as a compliment for any women who could feel identified with it. However, if it is completely uncovered, there is a point which can categorize it as controversial. The image which is shown

in the song is the one of a man who describes something and admires it. That thing is a woman, who is supposedly his partner. According to that, it could be interpreted as something positive. Nonetheless, the following verse is going to show how the woman presented is considered.

Oh, **her eyes**, her eyes

Make the stars look like they're not shinin'

Her hair, her hair

Falls perfectly without her trying

She's so **beautiful**

And I tell her everyday

Yeah

First of all, it can be found that this woman is just described by her physical appearance. Her eyes, her hair... and if the song goes on, then there are her lips, her face, her laugh... So, that means that the beauty of women is just based on how beautiful they are – always regarding physical appearance. There is no moment in the song to refer to this woman attending to any other quality she may have. Moreover, it shows a worse point. “And I tell her everyday” is what the man says. According to those words, it can be inferred that the real value of a woman resides in the opinion of the man. The main message that can be learnt from that song is that if a woman is not beautiful enough to be loved by a man who recognizes this value, she cannot be considered a good and real woman.

6.16. *Ciao Adios* – Anne Marie (2018)

6.16.1. Linguistic application

This song uses three main pronouns, “I” who refers to the main character, the female one. Then, “you” who refers to the male character and “she” who refers to another female character. The main tenses are present and past ones since this song narrates a story that happened and the current situation. Some conditionals are also used to give coherence to the story. And time expressions contribute to contextualize the situations in the song, such as “after three, four times”, “now”, “and”, “then”, “when”, etc.

6.16.2. Gender education

The main topic of this following song is an infidelity that the man of the story of the song has committed. In this case, the situation is told from the perspective of the woman. This song is the way she uses to say goodbye to him. At the same time, she offers the listener the facts that has caused her doubts and, consequently, her last decision.

Ask you once, ask you twice now

There's lipstick on your collar

You say she's just a friend now

Then why don't we call her?

So you wanna go home with someone

To do all the things you used to do to me

I swear, I know you do

Moreover, the main reason of this decision of breakup is the fact of the man lies to her constantly. Confidence is a quality which appears as to be the main characteristic a relationship has to offer, so, as the character does not rely on her partner anymore, she needs to solve her problems finishing the relationship.

After three, after four times

Why did I bother?

Tell me how many more times

Does it take to get smarter?

Don't need to deny the hurt and the lies

And all of the things you did to me

I swear, I know you did

In those two verses which has been just presented, the last sentences are almost the same. With that closure the effect that is achieved is to make the listener rely on what the woman is telling. Thus, as she is not just only telling something but swearing, the statements become something truthful, and reading the things the man did, the listener would empathize with the female perspective.

6.17. *Friends* – Anne Marie ft. Marshmello (2018)

6.17.1. Linguistic application

Time and space expressions are expressed in the song in some examples such as “here” or “morning”. Then, questions appear in the negative form using the auxiliaries with a rhetorical use to make the listener to reflect. The main tense used in the song is the present tense – simple and perfect – and negative structures such as “don’t”, “nothing” or “ain’t”. Comparison is also a relevant characteristic of the lyrics such as “more like” or “more than”.

6.17.2. Gender education

In that second song of the same author, Anne Marie tries to describe a different relationship. In this case, it is found a situation in which there are a man and a woman who feel contradictory emotions. The fact that they are classified as contradictory is because of the following aspects.

The woman shows a kind of rejection about the behavioral pattern of the male character. She argues that he states that he loves her while she is trying to make him understand that her only feeling is one of friendship.

You say you love me, I say you crazy

We're nothing more than friends

You're not my lover, **more like a brother**

I know you since we were like ten, yeah

In that first verse of the song, it is clearly stated the perspective of the woman. If the initial consideration had stopped in that point, there would not have been more than a simple confusion between the two characters and their feelings. However, if the song continues, there is a turning point in which some characteristics of a stalker and a kind of harassing behavior is described.

Have you got **no shame, you looking insane**

Turning up **at my door**

It's **2 in the morning**, the rain is pouring

Haven't we been here before?

The male character does not accept the refusal. So, the female protagonist starts to list a series of things that she has already done to try to make him understand the situation but nothing served.

So don't go look at me with that look in your eye

You really ain't going away without a fight

You can't be reasoned with, I'm done being polite

I've told you 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 thousand times

The only possible solution that is thought in the end is a fight or an argument, so the fact that the reason cannot be used as a vehicle to allow communication exemplifies a violent conduct which is forced somehow by the male character.

Haven't I made it obvious? (Haven't I made it?)

Haven't I made it clear? (Haven't I made it clear?)

Want me to spell it out for you?

F-R-I-E-N-D-S

Haven't I made it obvious?

Haven't I made it clear? (Haven't I?)

Want me to spell it out for you? (To spell it out for you?)

F-R-I-E-N-D-S

F-R-I-E-N-D-S

Those rhetorical questions show the exasperation of the female character after having lived and suffered the insistence of the man. He cannot be given a negative answer, so her mood turns into despair.

Also, there is a word repeatedly spelt in the song, which is “friends”. This spelling tries to emphasize the idea of her feelings and her decision during the whole narration. It seems to be a technique used to leave the idea clearer for the man to comprehend.

F-R-I-E-N-D-S

That's how you fucking spell "friends"

F-R-I-E-N-D-S

Get that shit inside your head

No, no, yeah, uh, ahh

F-R-I-E-N-D-S

We're just friends

That last verse is one of the latest verses of the song. As it can be read on this fragment, the speech of the protagonist turns into a rude discourse. In the previous part, she complains that she had been trying to be polite with the man, but in that last part, there are some rude words – “fucking”, “shit” – are used because they are the mark of the consequence of her anger.

6.18. *Youth* – Shawn Mendes (2018)

6.18.1. Linguistic application

The main characteristics of the song are those of space and time, such as “here”, “away”, “today”, “as long as”, “night”, etc. Verbal tenses are mainly present and future ones since it vindicates a current situation the character is feeling. Compound nouns are included in the lyrics too, such as “headlines”, as well as negative structures, such as “won’t” or “never”.

6.18.2. Gender education

This last song changes completely the analyzed topic though the rest of the songs. In this last case, the main topic to be dealt with is about youth. It is a kind of reflection about the fugacity of life and how fast time moves on. However, the singer shows a resistance against these consequences of time and bad features life shows.

You can't take my youth away

This soul of mine will never break

As long as I wake up today

You can't take my youth away

In that sense, this song would be used as a kind of reflection about life itself and how students should face the real world and the special characteristics, such as “pain”, “headlines filled with devastation” and “hopelessness”, which are the items that illustrate the singer’s world.

So, as a general conclusion of the analysis of the songs, the third aimed objective can be achieved since the practicality of these proposed songs in the English lessons can be done since they offer the possibility of an example to be used to work the curriculum. Therefore, as it is considered, these songs can be used to reinforce the students' previous knowledge to help them to acquire those issues in their learning process. Moreover, activities of different aspects can be proposed to work with them during the lesson. In this following paragraph, some general proposals are going to be included to be the guide for a deeper lesson planning.

As it has been shown, most of the songs present a complete use of linguistic and grammatical structures which can be used in the English lessons as a reinforcement for the students. In order to take advantage of them in the lessons, the lessons should be focused on the development of several tasks which contribute to the acquisition of the dealt structures. One possible approximation to do that would be the one below.

To begin the lessons, it would be important to contextualize each of the songs, asking whether the students like them or not, if they have heard them and what their previous appreciations and thoughts are about the song of the lesson. Then, an activation of their previous linguistic knowledge should be done to take more benefits after the work done during the class. That could be done through questions or activities that work those competences. To work with these songs, the tasks which can be proposed should include both content and formal linguistic aspects to work with. And, after the lesson, in the last part of it, a debate should be established with the students in order to know their worries and inquisitiveness about the gender issue.

Having followed those proposals, the competences explained in the curriculum would be covered since there would be a listening part which concerned the listening competences and skills. Then, establishing the activities, speaking and writing skills would be developed since the students could be required to write about what a verse of the song transmits to them or how they would answer to the singer according to what they have just read or listened. Thus, reading skills are also included in the work. And, finally, speaking would be covered through the debates that would be carried out in the classroom. Moreover, the fifth skill, interaction, can be planned to be worked in the class since cooperative work and debates are thought to be one of the possible ways to be done in the lessons, always through a disruptive and nice atmosphere of respect, in which students feel comfortable to express their ideas freely.

7. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude this work and as it has been seen during the whole dissertation, there are several aspects which concern the learning of the English language as a second language and the fact that coeducation can be included as a transversal educational element in the English classes.

The social roles of women have been presented through the perspective of different songs with the main aim of creating a kind of awareness on how society depicts female performances. Romantic visions of relationships, as well as the feelings of jealousy and ownership are shown to be linked to the way women appear to be, sometimes, a mere object which men can take advantage of. That is then considered as a controversial topic to be worked in the classroom.

The age in which our students are when they come to high schools favors the development of sexist behaviors if their only influence is the one they received from social media and corrupt influences. We, as teachers, must guide our students to be able to distinguish which behaviors should be accepted or not. Being able to justify their beliefs, their arguments, our students will develop their critical thinking, a feature which may characterize them for the rest of their lives, allowing them to decide what to think, who to believe and how to act.

There are so many influences on which they are going to be exposed, but, in that time, there will be the moment to show if they have really known to be independent and self-sufficient. Teachers have the support on several theories to design their own methodological approaches and didactic plans to guide their students in their personal development while learning a curricular subject. As Richard Dawkins said, “do not indoctrinate your children. Teach them how to think for themselves, how to evaluate evidence, and how to disagree with you.” (Good Reads, 2018)

At the same time, students will approach radical points of view and experiment extreme emotions which are going to influence on them too. Vindications and idealizations are going to be a significant part for teenagers in that period. They are going to live the fighting between their changing thoughts and the traditional and stereotyped roles with which they have been always living.

Then, the fact that songs were used in this analysis show how different artists can offer different perspectives about the same topic – gender issues – in the same decade, influencing their

audience in a way or another. For that reason, a last classification of the songs can be done. According to the current analysis, some of the songs can be understood as a vindication for female rights, breaking up with the stereotyped roles of women, which are understood as sending a potential positive message to their audience, and thus, to our potential students. Those songs are: *Run the World, Freedom, If I Were a Boy, Born This Way, Something Just Like This, Ain't Your Mama*. There is a group which can be characterized by soft vindications related to gender issues, for example, *Ciao Adios, Friends*, or to life issues, as *Perfect (duet), Thinking Out Loud, Photograph, Youth*. Some others have implicit strong sexist messages, such as *Hey Mama, Love the Way You Lie, Just the Way You Are*, and the rest can be understood as including slightly sexist implicatures, for instance, *Perfect, Shape of You, Happier*.

So, after that last consideration, it can be seen how we are constantly exposed to a wide variety of diverse influences. Those influences need to be analyzed and that would be able to be done if our critical thinking is activated on its own.

As Christopher Hitchens stated, “the essence of the independent mind lies not in what it thinks, but in how it thinks” (Good Reads, 2018) and that is what we, as teachers, have to provide to our students, a free and independent mind.

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9. APPENDIX

9.1. *Hey Mama* – David Guetta ft. Nicki Minaj (2014)

<https://genius.com/David-guetta-hey-mama-lyrics>

9.2. *Run the World* – Beyoncé (2011)

<https://genius.com/Beyonce-run-the-world-girls-lyrics>

9.3. *Freedom* – Beyoncé (2016)

<https://genius.com/Beyonce-run-the-world-girls-lyrics>

9.4. *If I Were a Boy* – Beyoncé (2008)

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/beyonceknowles/ifiwereaboy.html>

9.5. *Perfect* – Ed Sheeran (2017)

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/edsheeran/perfect.html>

9.6. *Perfect* – Ed Sheeran ft. Beyoncé (2017)

<https://genius.com/Ed-sheeran-and-beyonce-perfect-duet-lyrics>

9.7. *Shape of You* – Ed Sheeran (2017)

<https://genius.com/Ed-sheeran-shape-of-you-lyrics>

9.8. *Thinking Out Loud* – Ed Sheeran (2014)

<https://genius.com/Ed-sheeran-thinking-out-loud-lyrics>

9.9. *Photograph* – Ed Sheeran (2014)

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/edsheeran/photograph.html>

9.10. *Happier* – Ed Sheeran (2017)

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/edsheeran/happier.html>

9.11. *Love the Way You Lie* – Eminem ft. Rihanna (2010)

<https://genius.com/Eminem-love-the-way-you-lie-lyrics>

9.12. *Born this Way* – Lady Gaga (2011)

<https://genius.com/Lady-gaga-born-this-way-lyrics>

9.13. *Something Just Like This* – The Chainsmokers ft. Coldplay (2017)

<https://genius.com/The-chainsmokers-and-coldplay-something-just-like-this-lyrics>

9.14. *Ain't your Mama* – Jennifer Lopez (2016)

<https://genius.com/Jennifer-lopez-aint-your-mama-lyrics>

9.15. *Just the Way You Are* – Bruno Mars (2010)

<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/brunomars/justthewayyouare.html>

9.16. *Ciao Adios* – Anne Marie (2018)

<https://genius.com/Anne-marie-ciao-adios-lyrics>

9.17. *Friends* – Anne Marie ft. Marshmello (2018)

<https://genius.com/Marshmello-and-anne-marie-friends-lyrics>

9.18. *Youth* – Shawn Mendes (2018)

<https://genius.com/Shawn-mendes-youth-lyrics>