

USING SONGS IN THE ESL CLASSROOM: A REFLEXION AND A PROPOSAL



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ABSTRACT

This final work and proposal will be focused on the use that songs can have during the English as a Second Language lessons. The main objective of the final work will be explaining the different benefits of using songs. Through different theories and studies, it will be explained how songs motivate the pupils during the lessons and how they help them understand and remember the new language they are studying.

The lesson proposal will show the different types of songs that can be used during a lesson, the different outcomes each one has and what type of activity works better with the songs. It will also show how to prepare a class including songs.

KEYWORDS

Second Language Learning, Songs, Music, Language Acquisition, Multiple Intelligences, Total Physical Response, Motivation, Routines, Lesson Plan,

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1. INTRODUCTION

The topic for this final work is a study about how songs can be used in the classroom with pupils of English as a foreign language and a proposal for a real intervention in a classroom with 1st year Primary Education pupils.

In my own experience, there is a lack of motivation when studying a second language and I defend the idea that teachers are the ones that have to work to change this situation. Having in mind the things that pupils like and enjoy will make them be interested and motivated to study English.

Children don't acquire a second language the same way that they acquire their first language. They don't have a real interaction with that language in their day-to-day lives or the possibility to practice it outside of the classroom and that makes the acquisition even more difficult.

Millie Grenough (1994) says that students of English as a second language don't hear a lot of spoken English outside of the classroom, but that all of them are exposed to American and English songs on radio, TV or movies. Music is a part of the students' real world and that explains the fact that they find songs easy to relate to.

Tim Murphey (1996) calls this same situation "the song stuck in my head" phenomenon. He says that not only music and songs can relate to students in a personal level but also reinforces the idea that songs work on their short and long-term memory.

In the next pages, several theories and methods that defend the use of music and songs to study a second language will be explain and analyzed. Those same theories and methods will be taken into account to plan a lesson for pupils in the 1st grade of Primary Education, using as a reference the school I did my training period in.

According to Krouse (1988), with active singing in the classroom, the learners discover new language structures and vocabulary incidentally and spontaneously and they can transfer that to conversation situations. So it can be said that the ultimate purpose of using songs in ESL classes is to make the pupils be able to transition from singing the language in the songs to actively use it in meaningful conversations.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE FINAL WORK

The following goals are the ones I wanted to achieve with this final work:

- Identify the relationship between music and English as a Second Language classes: Identify the benefits that music and songs provide to the English lessons and what the best way to work with them is.
- Identify the appropriate use of songs in English as a Second Language lessons: Know when, how and for how long pupils will work with each song.
- Identify appropriate activities depending on the outcome: Be able to choose the right activity for the outcome pupils have to achieve.
- Follow the process of planning activities with music in different lessons: Identify the different times in a lessons and which type of song should be used in them.
- Plan activities with music to develop the four skills of communication, listen, speak, read and write: Be able to combine activities with songs and other types of activities to assure that pupils develop the four skills equally.

2.2 GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THIS FINAL WORK FOR AN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER

The following objectives can be found in the official document ORDEN ECI/3857/2007, de 27 de diciembre. In that document we can find the objectives that an English teacher should develop during the four years of training. Some of them are reflected in this final work:

1. Know the cognitive, linguistic and communicative bases of the acquisition of new languages, in this case English - Later on this final work, second language acquisition theories will be explained, and they will be taken into account when planning the lesson.
2. Use body expression and dramatization as communicative resources - The use of the body will be the most important aid when working with songs in a classroom. Dramatization and body movements will be done to help pupils understand and remember a new language.
3. Plan what is going to be taught and evaluated, and select and make teaching strategies and different types of activities - When planning a lesson decisions like what is going to be taught and how are the pupils going to be evaluated have to be made. The different types of activities will be selected knowing the characteristics of each one of the pupils.
4. Know the curriculum for Primary Education and the curricular development of English as a Second Language - To be able to plan a lesson accordingly to the pupils' expectations in each year, it is important to know what the official curriculum for Primary Education and especially for English as a Second Language requires.

5. Work with the oral language as much as with the written language - Using song during the lessons is a way to assure the use of oral language in the classroom.
6. Develop the communicative competence using the four skills in language, speak, listen, read and write - Working with songs will help pupils improve their speaking, listening, reading and writing. Combining songs with other types of activities makes them improve in their reading and writing skills as well.
7. Take into account the diversity between the students and their contexts when planning the activities - Knowing the pupils' characteristics will allow the planning of the lesson to be more personal, to be specifically designed for those pupils taking into account the things that work better with them, the things they have to improve or what they like to do and enjoy.

3. JUSTIFICATION

The decision to use the topic of music in English as a Second Language (ESL from now on) in the classroom for this final work was made taken into account the last four years of training, especially the English Language Teaching courses, and also the experience of working with pupils in a real classroom during the training period.

Music has always been very important in my learning process, especially in my English learning process and it is a strategy that has always worked for me. After seeing how pupils learned and interacted between each other during the English lessons of my training period I decided I wanted to focus my work on that.

The idea is to create something personal and meaningful based on real work and real experiences that can be used as a reference in future teaching situations.

One of the main documents that are important for an ESL teacher and that has been taken into account when researching for this work is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (2001). The CEFR is a guideline used to describe achievements of learners of a foreign language across Europe.

According to the CEFR, a very important thing while learning a new language is the interaction. At least two individuals participate in an interaction, either in an oral or writing exchange, alternating their roles as producers or receivers, so it is important that they know how to behave in this situation. Some of the aspects that will be important in an interaction will be respecting the turns taking when talking, knowing the different intonations in a conversation and understanding what each of them means. Music and songs will be very useful to practice this in the classroom.

Another important aspect that was taken into account while deciding this topic was the language acquisition theories. One of the main theories about how people learn their first language is the interactionist position (Lightbown, P.M and Spada N., 1993). This theory focus on the role of the linguistic environment, meaning that language is developed as a result of the human characteristics of the children and the environment in which they develop themselves.

A case study showed that children that are exposed to language but in the absence of one-to-one interaction do not develop language normally (Lightbown, P.M and Spada N., 1993).

Michael Long (1985) agrees with this theory for the second language acquisition process saying that the interactional modification in conversations between native speakers and non-native speakers are the necessary mechanism for the comprehension input to take place.

In the current educational system most of the teachers are not going to be native speakers but that is going to be their role in the classroom. Kids have certain characteristics that will help them learn a new language but they need the interaction with others, especially with the teacher but also with the rest of the kids in the class.

Songs are going to help us in that interaction; they will allow pupils to listen to real language and not only vocabulary, but also how to use it in different real life situations.

Singing the songs as a group, listening to questions and their answer in a real context, listening to different intonations in a real conversation, all of this allows the students to develop the second language in the most natural way, just the way they learn their first language.

Another idea that helped me decide on this topic was the concept of "connected speech". According to Rixon (1986), "connected speech is the natural way we speak, linking together and emphasizing certain words, rather than each word standing alone". Pupils in the classrooms are used to listen to a very careful and clear pronunciation of the words they are learning, but that is not the way native speakers usually talk. Native speakers connect the words and sometimes when they do it they sound different. This makes it harder for the non-native speaker to recognize the words when they are in the country where the language is spoken.

This happens because usually learners work with words individually and they pronounce them separately. This can change by using songs in the classroom. Songs provide real examples of how phrases are pronounced and the flow of the words.

Kids live in a community where it is not easy for them to speak to someone using the second language they are studying. Their teachers and their classmates become the only chance of a real interaction, and the English classes the only time they have to practice it. That is why it is so important to make good use of that time

4. THEORETICAL BASIS

Songs are frequently used by teachers in ESL to help students acquire a second language. Through music, second language learners learn new vocabulary and grammar, they also improve their spelling, reading, writing, speaking and listening. But there are other reasons why music in ESL classes is important.

Singing and listening to music are enjoyable experiences and they make students more positively prepared for the experience of learning a new language, making it better than the previous ones they could have had.

The use of music to help students learn a second language has been studied in the fields of linguistics and psychology, and there is theoretical support for its use inside the classroom.

Different theories and strategies to learn have been studied and experienced in a real classroom with children and the results showed that not everybody learns the same way and that to assure success in education all the different characteristics of the pupils have to be taken into account and the work developed inside the classroom should be adjusted to them.

Among other important theories to be taken into account in this topic, we will refer to Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Hypothesis (1993) where he explains the different types of intelligence that people possess and Krashen's second-language acquisition hypothesis (1982) where he explains five different hypotheses about second language learning, including the Affective Filter Hypothesis and the Input Hypothesis

4.1 GARDNER'S MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE HYPOTHESIS

The theory of Multiple Intelligence (MI) was proposed and elaborated by Gardner (1993). It points out that there are different types of intelligence, and that each individual possessed them in varying degrees.

According to the MI theory, human intelligence can be categorized into at least nine different types: verbal/linguistic intelligence, mathematical/logical intelligence, visual/spatial intelligence, body/kinaesthetic intelligence (movement), musical/rhythmic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence (understanding others), intrapersonal intelligence (understanding self), naturalist intelligence and existential intelligence.

All of these different types of intelligences are interdependent and they complement each other. But being interdependent doesn't mean that they operate independently, they are used at the same time to try to help people develop skills or solve problems. For Gardner, all humans are born with a propensity to excel in all of these areas but it depends on the influence of culture, motivation level and experiences which usually means that most people tend to excel in only one or two of these areas.

This theory has several implications for educators, and the most important is that the responsibility to cultivate all these intelligences lies in the educational institutions. Schools usually focus on the development of two of these intelligences, verbal/linguistic and mathematical/logical. Gardner believes that that is a narrow perspective, since according to him, humans possess a bigger number of intelligences.

Schools should take into account this theory and acknowledge all the different types of intelligences. It is impossible to work using all the intelligences at the same time, but teachers can incorporate different strategies to work with the students in more than one way. By doing that they could reach more pupils and be more successful with them than working as they have been in the past.

Pupils who have a strong musical intelligence have the ability to appreciate and produce music. They are usually aware of tone, pitch and timbre and they often respond tapping their feet or a pencil when they hear music. They also think in rhythms, patterns and sounds. Using songs and rhythms in the classroom can increase their attention and interest and motivate them to learn.

But not only the musical/rhythmic intelligence is used when working with songs and music in the classroom, there are several types of intelligences that pupils use that help develop their linguistic competence and that improve their ability of learning a second language: verbal/linguistic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence and body/kinaesthetic intelligence.

There are also different ways of working with music, listening to instrumental music in the background while the students make a writing activity, using story songs to present new vocabulary and showing cards with the pictures, working with songs that contain the language structures we are working with, using songs that change the rhythm... (Lalas, J. & Lee, S., 2002)

4.2 KRASHEN'S SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION HYPOTHESIS

Stephen Krashen is a linguist and educational researcher that has contributed to the fields of second-language acquisition, bilingual education and reading. He has introduced various concepts and terms, including the Affective Filter Hypothesis and the Input Hypothesis (1982).

4.2.1 The Affective Filter Hypothesis

Using songs in EFL lessons can improve the atmosphere of the classroom, it can reduce the student's anxiety and it can make them be more interested and motivated to learn the new language. Students will be entertained while doing the work, and they will enjoy learning English more than before.

Anxiety is always associated with negative feelings, such as frustration, self-doubt and fear, and it is one of the reasons why students learning a second language usually fail, so, minimize the amount of anxiety in the ESL classroom becomes very important if we want the students to succeed in learning a second language.

According to Krashen's hypothesis (1982), the affective filter of the students will be weak when they are highly motivated, self-confident and at ease; they will have a positive attitude towards learning and that moment is when the affective learning will occur.

The filter will become stronger when the students are anxious, unmotivated or they simply lack confidence. These negative emotions will limit their language acquisition.

Providing an atmosphere that produces positive emotions in the students, that motivates and encourages them, will lower their affective filter and will create the perfect environment to learn a second language.

Using songs in an ESL classroom provides us with that atmosphere. It is usually a pleasurable experience for students. The perfect atmosphere for an ESL classroom can be created by listening to instrumental music while working, singing or dancing in unison following the rhythm of the songs.

4.2.2 The Input Hypothesis

According to this hypothesis, new and unfamiliar vocabulary is acquired when its significance is made clear to the learner. Illustrations, photos and actions can work as extra linguistic support to help make the linguistic input comprehensible to the students.

According to Krashen (1989), students acquire new vocabulary through stories because the familiar vocabulary and the syntax contained in these stories help students to give meaning to the less familiar vocabulary. Pictures also clarify the meaning of unfamiliar words and incoming verbal information. One thing is clear, meaning is critical to the acquisition of new vocabulary for a second language.

Acquisition of a new language requires meaningful interactions in the language we want the students to learn. During this interaction, the students are more focused on meaning than in form.

Songs share the same elements of an oral story; the only difference is that the vehicle used to tell the story is musical rather than spoken. Story songs presented through illustrations and songs using photos or gestures provide the necessary interaction to produce that learning.

While listening to the songs, pupils begin to connect the movements or illustrations with the meaning of the words, which will help them to understand and internalize that meaning. After understanding and internalizing them, they will be able to say the words themselves in an oral production.

5. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

5.1 METHODOLOGY

The use of music and songs in the classroom is something that teachers have been doing for a long time. Using a rhythm to help students remember something, playing a song to help the student relax after a long day of work or rehearsing and performing a song for a special occasion were common things are done in the classroom. Right now, a lot of different reasons as to why use songs in the ESL classes can be found.

Shelley Vernon¹ explains in her article "Using ESL songs" why using songs as a part of ESL teaching has a lot of benefits and gives ten different reasons:

1. Songs help pupils learn vocabulary, grammar and syntax: They hear complete sentences in the songs and absorb grammar and syntax subconsciously helping them to remember words and phrases.
2. Pupils hear meaningful language in context: They hear different words and structures in a natural and meaningful context.
3. Songs are catchy and re-usable: If the songs used in the classroom are fun and catchy pupils will be happy to hear them many times over a short period of time.
4. Songs enhance listening skills: As long as the language used in the songs is within the grasp of the learner, pupils will improve their listening skill by trying to understand what the song is saying.
5. Pupils improve their speaking fluency: They hear the natural rhythm and stresses of English while listening to the songs which improve their pronunciation.
6. Including music and actions in the lessons makes them more appealing: Actions can be used with any song and not just with the "action songs". This makes the students enjoy the activity and it helps us reach to more pupils since we are using different learning styles.
7. Songs are fun and motivating: Using music lifts the atmosphere in class and brings in a boost of energy making the pupils be motivated and paying more attention.
8. Sometimes songs act as confidence builders: Songs allow students to practice English in a group and achieve more with each listening.
9. Songs are memory aids: Songs stick in our heads and are very useful for English learners.
10. Songs help with classroom management: Songs attract the attention of the pupils and they join in singing or with the actions, in that moment the teacher knows that they are paying attention.

There are different types of songs that can be used when using music in the classroom to teach English, ranging from nursery rhymes to contemporary pop music. Sometimes teachers can even use personal adaptations of popular songs. They use the rhythm of a song the pupils already know and change the lyrics to make them more suitable to the topic they are working in class.

¹ The article can be found in: http://www.teachingenglishgames.com/Articles/Using_ESL_Songs.htm

Among these songs there are four main types that can be used in the ESL classes:

- List songs: Songs in which structures and lexis are repeated constantly. E.g. "Good morning, good morning".
- Story song: Songs that tell us a story. "Goldilocks and the three bears"
- Jazz chants: Songs that use the rhythm of traditional American jazz to show the natural stress and intonation of the conversational American English. E.g. "Good morning Ernie"
- Action songs: Songs in which students are required to do some actions while listening to the song. E.g. "If you are happy", "Head, shoulders, knees and toes".
- Special occasion songs: Songs that are used in special occasions during the year. E.g. Christmas Carols, Halloween songs.

Action songs are going to be used the most in a class with smaller kids. According to De Kock (1989), the relationship between movement and music recognizes three different types of movement:

- Locomotor movement: This is the movement of the body from one place to another. There are different types of movement that can be done; it will depend on the availability of space in the classroom. In a small classroom this may be done by walking, hopping or crawling.
- Non-locomotor movement: While the pupils stand in one place, the rest of the body moves. This can be done bending, twisting, bouncing, reaching or clapping.
- The combination of locomotor and non-locomotor: This can be done by using two movements at the same together at the same time, running and clapping or hopping and reaching.

These songs are also an efficient way of teaching where the stresses lie in a phrase and which syllable or words have less emphasis. Pupils will experience and feel the rhythm when words are spoken. They will follow the rhythm of the music with the gestures

Since there is a lot of material that can be used, it is important to pay attention to decide which song is more suitable in each situation. It is important to be sure about what we want to work with, what is our intention and what we want our students to learn. Having all those things clear in our minds choosing the right song and activity is not going to be a problem. Repetitive and simple songs are usually useful to teach younger children who are starting to learn this new language since they contain a recurrent grammatical structure and more difficult songs can be used to introduce new vocabulary and idioms to older students or to tell a story, discuss what happens in it or plan some writing activities about that story.

There are different ways of planning ESL lessons using songs, and is the teacher the one that is going to decide the best way to do it. Choosing the right songs can be a difficult task, and everyone has their own criteria. Some teachers choose the song depending on what they think their students need to improve after analysing the work they have done in the classroom. Another criteria that can be used to choose songs is the following by Curtain and Pesola (1988):

1. The song should contain limited vocabulary.
2. The song should contain language compatible with the one used in the classroom.
3. The song should present a limited musical challenge.
4. The rhythm should be straightforward and repetitive.
5. Song topics should be within the experiences of children.
6. For primary level 4 and 5 it is useful if songs are accompanied by actions.
7. It is also helpful if the words of the songs are highly repetitive and if they have a refrain: a repeated stanza, between verses of the song.

What teachers need to make sure when choosing songs is that there are a lot of songs, chants and rhymes, and that the ones that should be used in an ESL classroom are the ones that provide comprehensible input and language that pupils may use in their day-to-day lives.

Popular songs for native speakers of English, like "London Bridge", aren't necessary appropriate for pupils learning English as a second language. Pupils may not be able to relate the meaning of the song with their day-to-day lives.

If the lyrics of one song are not appropriate for a group of pupils, it doesn't mean that the song can't be used at all. If the melody is catchy and the teacher thinks that it can work well in the classroom, the lyrics can be changed, making them more suitable for the class while keeping the catchy rhythm.

One important method taken into account for this classroom proposal was the Total Physical Response Approach (TPR from now on).

The TPR (1977) is a teaching method developed by James Asher based on the coordination of language and physical movement. TPR involves active participation of pupils who learn the new words by watching and imitating as teacher says and physically demonstrates each word. This facilitates more rapid comprehension of vocabulary and allows students to retain what they are learning easier.

TPR is based on the idea that the body is as much a part of thinking as the mind is. With non-verbal activities, teachers are forcing their students to "listen" in a different way. It is also supported by the pupil's natural desire to move.

Using movement to learn, allows the pupils to make connections between language and actions through the use of their body. Language teachers provide directions for students, while language learners respond to these directions by performing relevant actions. Students can respond re-enacting stories, accompanying songs with actions or drawing pictures. Using this method, students are mainly using one of the intelligences in Gardner's theory (1993), the bodily kinesthesia intelligence.

TPR research introduced the concept that comprehension must be developed before speaking for children to successfully acquire another language. Pupils show that they understand the meaning of a song by performing physical actions as they hear the words. They do this before they are able to produce the language themselves.

The TPR approach is also similar to first language learning in that it links speaking words and actions. Its use assures that students start to understand language sooner and use it with greater confidence. Movement is incorporated in songs to internalize meaning for words. Pupils internalize the meaning with no analysis. They do it in the same way that they acquire their first language (Asher, 2007).

5.2 CONTEXT OF THE CLASSROOM

Before planning any lesson it is important to know things about the group of students that are going to be a part of that class. Knowing how they have been working in the previous years and some characteristics of each one of the pupils will give the teacher the opportunity to plan the lessons especially for those pupils.

I wanted to have in mind a real classroom with real pupils so I decided to focus my proposal in the school I did my training period this last year. During my training at the school in the CRA (Centro Rural Agrupado) Campos de Castilla (Grijota), I experienced working with different groups of students. I worked with the 3, 4 and 5 year old groups in Infant Education and with the 1st and 2nd Years of Primary Education. The English teacher was the same for all of these groups, and she has been their teacher from their first year at school so they were used to work with her and they were all familiar with the routines in her class. It is really important to follow a similar line of work with the students, even if it is not the same teacher, since it will help us in the classroom and it will allow us to continue where the other teacher ended.

I based my work in the 5 year old group, since they are going to be in the 1st course of Primary Education next year and they have had a couple of years to get use to this type of English class. The group is formed by 10 students; none of them are students with special needs or need some kind of extra help in the classroom during the lessons. This means that there is no need to do a special planning of activities for some of the students; all of them are going to be able to work together, doing the same thing at the same time.

Being with them in class allowed me to see how these students usually work in their English lessons, how they respond to different activities and which one of them worked better. Their English lessons had clear routines involving songs that they were all familiarized with and that was taken into account when planning the lesson.

Another important thing to take into account when planning is the size of the classroom where the work is going to be done. In this case the classroom was quite small so there wasn't much space to perform the action songs and move around the class.

5.3 PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

The next proposal for using songs in an ESL lesson is done based on the group mentioned before, taking into account their previous experiences and the characteristics of each one of the students.

First, there will be a general explanation about the different moments that can be found during a lesson and how songs are going to be used in each one of them. After that, the design of a specific lesson will be explained. (The songs mentioned next can be found in the appendix)

5.3.1 Welcome to the class

The first thing a teacher does when entering a classroom is greet the pupils. In this ESL class with pupils from the 1st Year of Primary Education this greeting will be done through a song. Singing a "Good morning" or a "Hello" song at the beginning of the class let the kids know that the time for the English class starts.

These two songs are a part of a routine for the pupils at the beginning of every ESL class. This routine introduces the class and the pupils automatically know that from that point on the teacher will speak only in English and they must try to do it too.

As Krashen said in his Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982), it is important to reduce the anxiety pupils may feel in the ESL classes and create a certain atmosphere in the classroom that will make them be more interested and motivated. This routine will help create that atmosphere and it will make pupils be more willing to learn a new language.

The "Good morning" and "Hello" song will not only introduce the class but will also teach the pupils two different ways to greet someone in a different language and how to respond to that. They will learn it in the right context, learning the words and their meaning at the same time that they learn in which situations they can use them.

These songs will make the pupils feel welcome to the class and it will also make them feel they belong to a group. Some of them might feel embarrassed singing in front of everyone at first, but since all of them are singing together as a group, they won't feel pressured to sing and they will do it when they are ready.

5.3.2 Revising songs

After these two songs the routine continues and pupils will sing some other songs. While working with these songs, pupils will be singing about things they already know. Sometimes they will sing to get up from the chairs and go to sit down on the carpet, e.g. "Walking walking". Other times, if they are already seated, they will sing songs to remember the meaning of certain words and the right context in which they have to use them, e.g. "Peter and Paul", "Count your fingers", "If you're happy", "Head, shoulder, knees and toes", "Old McDonald had a farm", "The days of the week" or "The fingers song".

These songs will be worked in different ways in the classroom. Sometimes these songs will be accompanied by gestures, each one of them will have certain movements that pupils will make while they sing. These movements will help pupils remember different things and have a better understanding of the words they are singing, e.g. while singing a song about the numbers from 1 to 10, every time they say a new number they will use their fingers to show what number it is.

Other times pupils will work with the rhythm of the songs, following it clapping their hands, stomping their feet on the ground, or making sound with other parts of their body. Without noticing, by following the rhythm of the songs they are putting the stress in the right place, the same way they would have to do if they were speaking. This will help them create a natural flow of language and it will also help them build up their fluency.

Songs with commands and instructions are another different type of songs that this routine works with. A song like "If you're happy" gives them different instructions and they have to do what the song says with gestures. This will help them improve their confidence since those gestures will help them understand the meaning of the command and every time they listen to that word they can remember the gesture and know what it means at any other time during the lesson.

Pupils don't have to sing all the songs every day. Having a wide collection of songs for this routine means that each day pupils can start singing different songs, maybe their favourite ones, or a song that the teacher needs to remind them having in mind the topic they are going to be working with later.

We can also change the speed of these songs. We can work with them slower at first, and speed the rhythm when students feel more comfortable singing them and make it a game for them.

5.3.3 Transition songs

Children react to music in a way that they don't react to other things. The moment they hear a song that they recognize, they start singing along or doing the things they usually do while listening to that song.

Transitions songs are songs used in the classroom during the lesson to relax or motivate the pupils, indicate a transition between two different activities or even indicate the students what they have to do during an activity. They belong to a routine the pupils are familiar with.

During an ESL class a lot of things can happen, pupils can lose their attention, they can start to talk with the rest of the class, they can have a lot of energy they need to release, they can feel bored and a little tired or they can find it difficult to focus to start working on a new activity. Transition songs are used in these moments.

There are different songs for each situation, that way, every time the pupils listen to a certain song, they know what they have to do and they start doing it without wasting any time. These songs help students recognize what is going to happen next and it helps teachers to move smoothly between activities.

Sometimes the class is full of energy and pupils need to let it all out before settling down and continue working. Making them sing and dance a really active song like "We all fall down" or "Count and move" usually makes them burn that excess of energy and makes them settle down and concentrate to continue with the activity.

Sometimes during the ESL lesson pupils need to be quiet to be able to pay attention to what they are doing and sometimes, especially with small kids, this becomes a really hard task. One good way to make pupils that are talking with their classmates to be in silence again is using a song. When they hear the teacher singing the song they know it means they have to be silence because something is going to happen or the teacher is going to explain something new. While singing the song to make them be silent, the rhythm of the song has to get softer and slower, to calm the pupils. Using the gesture the teacher usually uses to make them be in silence helps in this situation if there are still some of them that are not sure what they have to do.

Using pictures while singing the leading activity song means that a lot of the activities are going to require for the pupils to close their eyes and then open them. A lot of time can be wasted if every time they have to close their eyes the teacher has to explain it to them, but this can be avoided by using a song. Pupils will know what they have to do when they listen to the song, and they will do it quickly, being ready to start the activity not wasting any time. As always, gestures help, so showing them that they have to close their eyes can help them understand in case they are still not sure what they have to do when they listen to that song.

It is important to always use the same words so they will always know what they have to do. It is important to take into account that they can still have some problems understanding English. When they are with their eyes closed they won't see the gesture the teacher is doing to let them know they can open them, so using always the same words or expression will make them feel confident about knowing what they have to do.

5.3.4 Leading activity

The main part of an English lesson is the leading activity. During this time, pupils are going to work and participate in activities in order to achieve the objectives that are established for the lesson.

The songs that are going to be used during these activities are going to be related to the specific topic the pupils are learning about. These songs can be used in different ways, singing and performing the song can be the main objective of the activity or the song can be used only as an aid to other type of activity.

One element that is always going to be used along with these songs is illustrations to help the pupils understand the meaning of what they are listening. The combination of illustrations and music produces positive effects in vocabulary gain. This was shown in one of Suzanne L. Medina studies (1993).

Medina studied the effects of music on the acquisition of English vocabulary in a group of pupils with limited English fluency. The groups in which music or illustrations were used were the ones with high vocabulary gain scores and the group with the highest score was the one in which both, music and illustrations were used.

Illustrations will help the pupils recognize the meaning of the new words they are listening. They will also be an important part of the activities worked in the classroom

about the different topics, helping the students show that they understand and know what every word mean.

Activities based in the TPR approach (Asher, 1977) where pupils have to respond with actions to the commands of the teachers are the ones that are going to be done in the classroom with the help of the illustrations. Pointing to them, sticking them on the blackboard or picking them up when they hear the name are some of the actions pupils can make to show they understand the meaning of the different words they are listening.

Using song in the activities will clearly benefit pupils with musical intelligence but if movement is added to the activities it will also benefit the pupils with kinesthesia intelligence. It is important to have the Multiple Intelligence theory (Gardner, 1993) in mind when planning a lesson. Knowing that pupils have different ways to learn, teacher should try to make sure that the activities will reach to all of them.

Pupils will watch the teacher dramatize the song, making gestures or movements around the classroom. They have to be able to relate the gesture with the words and understand the meaning. Then, they will be able to perform the song along with the teacher.

There are different types of movements that can be done but the most used ones are:

- Clapping: Pupils will use their hands to clap following the rhythm of the song. Clapping along with the song allow us to mark the changes in the intonation during a song, showing which word in a phrase is more important by clapping when that word is said. This movement can be done individually, in pairs or in a big group making a circle.

- Stomping: Pupils will use their feet to stomp on the ground. This will also allow us to mark the changes in the intonation, but instead of marking the important word clapping their hands they will do it stomping their feet. This movement can be done staying on the same place or moving around the classroom.

- Walking: Pupils will walk around the classroom while listening to a song. More movements can be done while walking, pupils can move their arms, touch a part of their body, turn around, jump on their place... There can be also a change in the pace of the song, making the pupils walk faster or slower.

- Parts of the body: Pupils will also move their arms, hands and face to give meaning to the song, following the rhythm or representing what the words they are saying mean.

When using movements and gestures the teacher has to make sure that the pupils understand the meaning of them. The idea of using gestures is to help pupils understand and remember the words they are singing, but if they don't understand them it will only make it more confusing.

To introduce a new song to the pupils, it would be useful if they are familiarized at least with one of the following two things, the melody of the song or with the words in the lyrics. If both melody and lyrics are new to them, it can become slightly more difficult for the pupils and the teacher would have to work harder in the way he presents the song, or they can lose interest in the activity.

Getting the pupils familiarized with the melody prior to listening to the lyrics will help them be more focused on understanding and learning the lyrics when they finally listen them. Playing the melody of the song while the pupils are doing other activity won't interrupt the rhythm of the class and it will make them be able to recognize it later.

The use of songs will be complemented with other activities in order to develop the four different skills in communication, listening, speaking, writing and reading. At first the focus will be in listening and speaking. These two skills will be developed mostly through the songs that are being used in the classroom. Writing and reading will come later, when pupils have shown that they truly understand the meaning of the words they are using.

5.3.5 Ending of the lesson

At the end of the lesson pupils will have another routine. It will let them know that the time for the English lessons is finishing and that they have to prepare themselves and the classroom for the next one. This routine has three different parts:

- Clean Up.
- Relax.
- Goodbye.

The "Clean Up" part is the first in the routine. It is the moment for the students to put everything they have used during the class in their place, the crayons, scissors, and glue, their books and pencil cases. This part of the routine will teach them that they are responsible of their own material and that they have to put everything in their place before going somewhere else or before starting with a new class.

Pupils usually don't like the part of the class when they have to clean up, but doing it while singing would be like a game to them. The teacher won't have to explain anything, pupils will start singing along and cleaning up the tables as soon as they hear the song.

The "Relax" part is going to be done in order to prepare the pupils for the next class, relax from all the activity they have done and make them rest for a little while. Pupils will be seated on their chairs while singing these songs. Sometimes they will make finger plays, like with the song "Round and round the garden", other times they will pretend they are sleeping, like with the song "Are you sleeping?" . But in the end, they will be relaxed and ready to begin a new lesson.

The last part, the "Goodbye" part is where the pupils and the teacher say their goodbyes. They already know it is time to finish the class since they have cleaned up their tables but it is important to show them the proper way to say goodbye to someone. The "Goodbye" song is going to be used the same way that the "Hello" song was used, to show the pupils a real interaction in the real world. They are going to understand the meaning of the word goodbye in the right context and, as always, gestures will help them understand it.

5.3.6 Lesson proposal

The following Lesson belongs to a Unit proposal about the human body that can be found in the appendix at the end of the final work.

The following lesson is the second lesson in the Unit. In the first lesson, pupils are going to remember what they learned about the human body in the previous years and the melody of the topic songs will be playing while they are working.

According to the official curriculum for Primary Education that can be found in Real Decreto 1513/2006 del 7 de diciembre, the pupils will be developing the following objectives for the English as a Second Language course:

- To develop strategies to improve the comprehension and oral expression by paying attention at the visual context, the previous knowledge in that topic and the knowledge about that topic in their first language.
- To repeat simple oral texts such as poems, songs, stories, repeating the whole texts or only parts of it.
- To write known words or phrases in an oral interaction and be able to read them after with the intention of share information.
- To use the right rhythm and intonation to help the understanding of the second language and interact orally.
- To show an interest in using the second language in different situations.
- To recognize and practice basic forms of social interaction in the second language.

In the first part of the lessons, the welcome routine, pupils are going to sing the "Good morning song". After that, pupils will sing the "Today is..." song to say the date. Next, since they are going to be working with the human body, during the revise songs routine they are going to sign "Head, shoulder, knees and toes" and "If you're happy". These two songs will help them remember things they are going to be using during the rest of the activities.

"If you're happy" is an action song in which the commands that the teacher gives can be changed, or add to adapt to each lesson as required. In this lesson some of the actions pupils are going to use later in the topic song will be included here.

We continue with the leading activity. In the previous lesson pupils listened to the melody of the song while working in other activity so they already know the rhythm they will have to follow later. The different flashcards with the parts of the body were used to remember them.

In this lesson the flashcards of the different actions are going to be introduced. The name for the leading activity for this lesson it is going to be: *"What are you doing?" Identify the different actions with the flashcards.* Pupils will look at the flashcards and represent the movement to the class. The rest of the pupils will have to guess which one of the movements of the flashcards is that one.

Through different activities pupils will get to know the different actions, their spoken words and the movements that go with each one of them. The song "Move your body along" will work as an aid to show the different movements. It will also allow the pupils to perform each movement several times, giving them time to relate each word and movement and look at their classmates for help.

At the end of the lesson all the pupils will be able to, at least, make the actions during the song following the teacher and identifying the illustrations with the different movement.

Pupils will help the teacher to clean up the classroom while singing the clean up song and once they are back in their seats they will sing the "Are you sleeping" and "Goodbye" song.

Lesson					
Learning objectives		Learning outcomes		Evidence for Assessment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To identify the different spoken words for the actions. - To connect the different movements with the spoken word of the action. - To connect action with the illustrations. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the different actions and recognize the words for them. 		Students will look at the action the classmate is doing and they will recognize the right flashcard. They will also be able to make the action just by looking at the flashcard.	
Discourse/Text targeted			Language targeted- Non-verbal L Targeted		
<p><i>"Clap your hands"</i> <i>"Stomp your feet"</i> <i>"Stretch your arms"</i> <i>"Twist your waist"</i> <i>"Jump up high"</i> <i>"Sway so slow"</i> <i>"Sit down"</i></p>			<p>The gestures of the teacher are very important. Most of the times, pupils will use those gestures to know what they have to do, using our hand to show them when they have to write, or colour and pointing at our ears to let them know they have to listen or pointing to our mouth to let them now they have to talk.</p>		
Outline of leading activities					
"What are you doing?" Identify the different actions with the flashcards.					
Classroom Management	Timing	Grouping	Pupils	Teacher	Resources
	2 min	Group	Say "Hello" to the teachers. Sing along the song.	Say "Hello, it's time for English" to the pupils and sing the "Good morning" song.	----- --

5 min	Group	Sing along with the teacher, using the body movements they already know	Sing and make the movements for the revise songs: <i>"Today is ..."</i> , <i>"Head, shoulder, knees and toes"</i> and <i>"If you're happy"</i>	-----
3 min	Individual	Pay attention to the teacher and answer the questions. Stick the right flashcards in the blackboard.	Revise the flashcards of the parts of the body and help pupils stick the right one in the blackboard.	Flashcards
4 min	Group	Look at the flashcards. Try to guess what is the action. Say the name (usually in Spanish)	Show the new flashcards to the pupils. Ask them if they know what that if. Make the gesture to help guess it. Once they have said the name in Spanish repeat it in English and stick the flashcard in the blackboard.	Flashcards
3 min	Individual	Look at the teacher. Try to follow the movements the teacher is doing.	Tell the pupils to get up. Sing the song. Make the different gestures and point at the flashcards every time a new action is mentioned.	Flashcards
5 min	Individual	Listen to the teacher. Look at the flashcards in the blackboard and try to remember the movement for the different actions.	Without music, ask them about the actions, pointing at the blackboard so they can make the gestures they remember. Repeat the name of the actions clearly.	Flashcards
4 min	Group	Look at the flashcard and make the action they see in it. Repeat the name of the action after the teacher.	Ask the pupils to make some of the actions by showing them the flashcards. Once they have done they right movement tell say the name of	Flashcards

			the action and make them repeat it.	
6 min	Individual	Try to sing the song and make the different movements.	Sing the song again, walking around the pupils to help them make the right movement.	-----
10 min	Group	Look at one flashcards and make the action to the rest of the class. Guess what the classmate is doing.	Help the pupils to guess the action.	Flashcards
2 min	Group	Tidy up the class, and put the books in the correct place.	<i>"Is time to finish the class..."</i> . Sing the <i>"Tidy up song"</i>	-----
2 min	Group	Sing the songs with the teacher.	Sing the <i>"Are you sleeping"</i> song. Sing the <i>"Goodbye song"</i> .	-----

Assessment Criteria

<p>All children must be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the illustration with the movements. - Make the actions during the song after the teacher has done them. 	<p>Most of the children will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the illustration and the movement for the actions. - Repeat the words after the teacher. - Make the actions during the song following the teacher. 	<p>Some of the children could</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the spoken word for the actions and the movement and illustration for each one of them. - Repeat the word after the teacher and sing it in the song while making the movements.
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6. CONCLUSIONS

This proposal is based on my experience in the English as a second language classes during my training period. Because of that, even though I didn't apply it in a real classroom I was able to observe how this type of lessons using music is developed and how pupils responded to them.

Linking the things I saw during my training and the different theories and methodologies studied in this final work allowed me to design a lesson especially for those children, but it also allowed me to understand the process of designing this type of lessons to do it again in the future.

The observation and participation in a real classroom was the ultimate thing that made me decide to work on this topic. I saw how pupils feel more confident when using songs in the English lessons. They didn't feel pressured to talk in English, or shy if they had to sing in front of others, it felt natural to them.

This gave me a clear idea about how to plan the activities for these kind of lessons, not expecting the pupils to speak in English from the very first moment but giving them time to feel comfortable with the language and confident about using it with other people to express something.

The elaboration of this final work also helped me realize that is the teacher the one that has to do the class of English as a second language interesting for the pupils, make them excited for the next lesson, and working with songs does exactly that. They were always asking for the next English lesson, practicing the songs with the classmates or asking to sing certain song they liked during the lessons.

This experience proved to me that songs are a useful aid in the teaching of a second language not only for small kids but also for adults. Even though adults are not specifically addressed in this research and proposal, songs can be used in the same way with them. Songs will be chosen taking into account their characteristics the same way than with pupils in the 1st year of Primary Education. The dynamic of the activities will also follow the same lines, which means that this research can be applied when planning for an English as a second language class with adults.

This final work should be updated continuously, adding new experiences with pupils to keep improving the way that lessons are developed to be able to offer them the best learning experience, making sure that we reach to the majority of the students with our work.

The final objective will be to create a wide collection of songs and activities, each one of them with an explanation of how they worked in the classroom to use them in the future to plan new lessons.

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8. APPENDIX

8.1 LEADING ACTIVITY SONG

- "Move your body along"

Clap, clap, clap.
We're going to clap, clap, clap.
We're going to clap our hands
And sing this song,
So move your body along.

Stomp, stomp, stomp,
We're going to stomp, stomp, stomp.
We're going to stomp our feet
And sing this song,
So move your body along.

Stretch, stretch, stretch.
We're going to stretch, stretch, stretch.
We're going to stretch our arms
And sing this song,
So move your body along.

Twist, twist, twist.
We're going to twist, twist, twist.
We're going to twist our waist
And sing this song,
So move your body along.

Jump, jump, jump,
We're going to jump, jump, jump.
We're going to jump up high
And sing this song,
So move your body along.

Sway, sway, sway,
We're going to sway, sway, sway.
We're going to sway so slow
And sing this song,
So move your body along.

Sit, sit, sit.
We're going to sit, sit, sit.
We're going to sit on down
And end this song,
So move your body along.

8.3 UNIT DESIGN

About the unit/ Where this unit fits		UNIT 6: I move myself
<p>This is unit is number six in literacy. This unit fits in the second term of the school year. In this unit student have to get the key words of some of the actions that human bodies can make. Pupils are going to work with instructional texts, giving instructions to their classmates and responding to those commands with actions.</p> <p>This unit will be the first one when they come back to school after Christmas holidays.</p>		
Prior Learning	Language used in the unit	Important Resources
<p>The previous knowledge of their mother language about the different actions.</p> <p>The parts of the body that learn studied the previous years.</p>	<p>The students are going to work with instructional texts to follow some actions. They are going to work giving commands to other persons using the action verbs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flashcards with the illustrations of the different actions. - CD with the "Move your body along" song. - Worksheets about the actions.
Expectations		
<p>At the end of this unit all the children must</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognise some of the actions. - Identify the movement of the actions with the illustrations. - Follow the actions the teacher or classmates are doing. 	
<p>At the end of this unit most of the children should</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognise most of the actions. - Identify the movement of the actions and link them with the illustrations. - Identify the spoken work for the action with the movement. - Follow commands of the teacher or classmates. 	
<p>At the end of this unit some of the children could</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognise all the different actions. - Identify the spoken word of the action with the illustration. - Identify the action with the illustration. - Identify the written word for the actions and link them with the illustrations. - Respond to the command of a classmate making the right action. - Give commands to the rest of the class about the actions. 	

Lessons Overview

Lesson	Learning goals	Learning outcomes	Main activity	Assessment criteria
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To identify the different names of the parts of the body. - To recognize the different parts of the body in a human body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the different parts of the body and their names and locate them. 	"Complete my body" Worksheet about the human body completing it with the right parts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils will be able to complete the human body with the different part in their place.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To identify the different spoken words for the actions. - To connect the different movements with the spoken word of the action. - To connect the actions with the illustrations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the different actions and recognize the words for them. 	"What are you doing?" Identify the different actions with the flashcards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils will be able to relate words, movement and illustrations.
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To identify the different parts of the body. - To relate the parts of the body and the actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognize the parts of the body and which ones are used in the movements. 	- "What am I moving?" Identify the different parts of the body that they are using in each action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils will relate each picture with one action and will be able to say which parts of the body are they using
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To relate the spoken words with the actions. - To respond to a command. -To take turns in interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interact with other people giving and answering commands. 	- "I command you" Pupils will form a circle and they will command one of their classmates to make and action. They will continue until the have completed the circle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils will be able to respond to the command with the right action respecting the turn- taking of the activity.
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To listen to a story and understand it. - To follow a story. - To participate in telling a story. - To represent a story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the different parts in a story and place then in the correct order. Predict what is going to happen in a story. 	-Represent the story the have listened using the specific words and structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils will know in what order things happen in the story and what is happening in each picture.

8.3 SONGS USED DURING THE LESSONS

- "Good Morning"

Good morning, good morning
How are you today?
Good morning, good morning
How are you today?
Good morning, good morning
Fine thank you
Good morning, good morning
Fine thank you

- "Count to ten"

1,2,3,4,5...
I can count to five,
I can count to five...
1,2,3,4,5
Now let's start again
Now let's start from six
6,7,8,9,10
I can count to ten
I can count to ten
6,7,8,9,10
Now it's time to end.

- "Old MacDonald had a farm"

Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.
And on that farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O.
With a "moo, moo" here
And a "moo, moo" there,
Here a "moo", there a "moo,"
Everywhere a "moo, moo,"
Old MacDonald had a farm,
E-I-E-I-O.
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O.
And on that farm he had a horse, E-I-E-I-O.
With a "neigh, neigh" here,
And a "neigh, neigh" there.
Here a neigh, there a neigh,
Everywhere a "neigh, neigh".
Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O

- "The Days of the week"

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday, Saturday, Sunday
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
Friday, Saturday, Sunday
These are the days of the week
Seven days of the week
On Monday work or school we do
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, too
Saturday's the day we like the best
On Sunday, the 7th day we rest
So we can start all over....with
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,...

- "Head, shoulders, knees and toes"

Head, shoulders, knees and toes
Knees and toes.
Head, shoulders, knees and toes
Knees and toes.
And eyes, and ears and nose and mouth.
Head, shoulders, knees and toes
Knees and toes.

- "We all fall down"

Walk around the circle.
Walk around the circle.
Walking walking.
We all fall down.
[Everybody stands up.]
Gallop.
Gallop around the circle.
Gallop around the circle.
Galloping galloping.
We all fall down.
Shh... Let's tiptoe.
Tiptoe around the circle.
Tiptoe around the circle.
Tiptoe tiptoe.
We all fall down.
I'm so sleepy!
Sleepy sleepy sleepy.
I'm so sleepy.

Wake up, everybody!
Come on, we're going to hop!
Hop around the circle.
Hop around the circle.
Hopping hopping.
We all fall down.
Let's twirl!
Twirl around the circle
Twirl around the circle.
Twirling twirling.
We all fall down.
Let's hop AND twirl!
Hop around the circle
Twirl around the circle.
Hopping, twirling.
We all fall down

- "Peter & Paul"

Two little dicky birds sitting on a wall,
One named Peter, one named Paul,
Fly away Peter, fly away Paul,
Come back Peter, come back Paul!

- "Walking Walking"

Walking walking. Walking walking.
Hop hop hop. Hop hop hop.
Running running running. Running running running.
Now let's stop. Now let's stop.
Walking walking. Walking walking.
Hop hop hop. Hop hop hop.
Running running running. Running running running.
Now let's stop. Now let's stop.
Tiptoe tiptoe. Tiptoe tiptoe.
Jump jump jump. Jump jump jump.

Swimming swimming swimming.
Now let's sleep. Now let's sleep.
Wake up!
It's time to go!
Are you ready to go fast?
Okay!
Walking walking. Walking walking.
Hop hop hop. Hop hop hop.
Running running running. Running running running.
Now let's stop. Now let's stop.
Walking walking. Walking walking.
Hop hop hop. Hop hop hop.
Running running running. Running running running.
Now let's stop. Now let's stop.
Whew!

- "Close your eyes"

Close, close your eyes
Close, close your eyes...

- "Close your mouth"

Close, close your mouth
Close, close your mouth...

- "Clean Up"

Now it's time to clean up
Clean-up, Clean-up
Now it's time to clean up
Let's all do our share

- "Goodbye song"

Goodbye everyone,
Tra lala lala
Goodbye everyone
Tra lala lala.

- "Are you sleeping?"

Are you sleeping, are you sleeping?
Brother John, Brother John?
Morning bells are ringing, morning bells are ringing
Ding dang dong, ding dang dong.

- "Round and Round the garden"

*Round and round the garden
Like a teddy bear
One step, two step
Tickle you there!*

*Round and round the forest
Like a little deer
One step, two step
Tickle you there!*