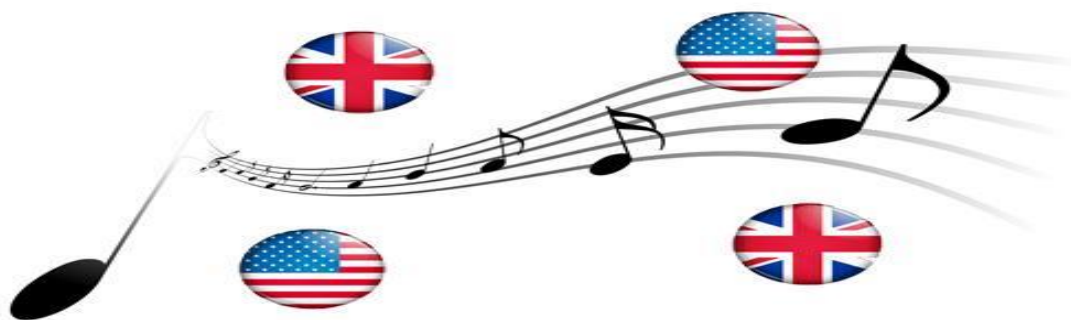




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EDUCACIÓN PRIMARIA**

**ABOUT SONGS AS A RESOURCE FOR  
EDUCATION**



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## **Abstract**

This project consists on the selection of songs as one of the many resources that can be used in the classroom when it comes to teach a foreign language. However, we are not referring to the kind of songs that are found in the text books, but in real songs, the ones that surround us all the time on the media.

In order to know whether this kind of songs are beneficial or not in the classroom we will considerate first of all the opinion that some experts have on the matter. After that we will design a class in which its activities are based on a song and we will obtain our own conclusions. Finally, we will evaluate the results and compare them with the theories previously mentioned.

As a result we will have an idea about the positive and negative implications of songs in the classroom that will help us as teachers to improve our intervention on the Educative System.

### Key words:

Songs

Resources

Classroom

Foreign language

Beneficial

Design

## Justification

The objective of this project is to analyze the songs, one of the many resources that can be used in the English classroom. However we are not going to focus on the kind of songs that we find on the text books, but the real songs we hear on the radio, TV, internet and the media in general.

Songs are very frequent in language teaching. Medina says: "*It is currently a common practice to use songs in the classroom to support second language acquisition.*"(Medina,1993, p.1). But we have to make a wider use of songs.

Due to reasons that we will examine later, the language and slang that real songs offer have a positive influence on language learning and have results that adapted songs from the text books don't have. This is the key point we want to highlight: how real songs can be helpful in the classroom.

In order to prove that real songs are essential in teaching and learning, we have selected a group of students and we have designed a lesson based on a song that doesn't belong to a text book.

Since we have to give accreditation to our project and provide a solid foundation, we have selected some of the advantages and disadvantages that, according to the knowledge some authors and experts have on the matter, songs have.

Finally we have put into practice the designed lesson by making note of the results obtained and identifying the advantages and disadvantages of songs that, according to those experts mentioned before, were reflected in our lesson.

The final aim is to have a general idea of the positive and negative points that songs have on the teaching and learning process. This will help us as teachers to be concerned about putting into practice real songs as a resource in a teaching reality in which a lot of teachers base all their classes exclusively on the use of the text book and give little attention to the real songs, the ones this projects tries to defend.

## **Songs and audiovisual resources throughout history**

Before we address the songs as a resource we consider that is fitting to make a brief review of the evolution that audiovisual resources in general have experienced. Since songs are part of audiovisual resources they are also included in the following explanation. In fact as the time passes by the use of songs has been affected by the evolution of new technologies. For example, some decades ago it was not possible to listen to a message and at the same time see an image. In contrast, now we have a wider variety of sounds and images and the combinations among them are almost infinite. The invention of different machines has made possible for songs, as we know them now, to exist. This is the evolution that we have seen along the years:

For decades humankind has been able to see the evolution and changes reflected on the media: from the invention of the radio to the new efficient and complex computers that are getting a more important role in our lives each day. Along the years the media has been expanded to more than just some few uses such as engineering and technological advancement for medicine, etc. Nowadays the media is seen as essential in the teaching field as well.

Audiovisual resources are the vehicles used by the people to have access to information that is shared through images and sounds. These resources appeared around 1930 in the States and they were only known by the people with this name because it was by that time when the audiovisual resources became global and commercialized. This means that audiovisual resources already existed before that date but in a more rudimentary way. Now we are going to see in a wide scope how these resources became to existence.

The radio was one of the first technological inventions related with audio resources. It is based on the communication through electromagnetic waves and it makes possible for sounds to travel from one place to another independently of the distance between to places. The radio appeared between the mid 1850's and the end of the century and it's difficult to attribute the invention to just a single man because there were many the people who made trials and investigations about the electromagnetic waves and its use. One of these men was the Scottish James Clerk Maxwell who formulated the electromagnetic waves theory.

At the end of the 30's the radio was commercialized and widely used by most people. Right after the arrival of this new tool, communication began to flow quickly by means of programs, news, etc. that kept the listeners informed about all the events that were taking place at that time. Today the radio keeps on being one of the most important ways to share information and promote communication.

Another important invention that appeared some decades ago and still has an important role in our days today is the cinema or video. This resource is mainly related to the images but the working together of both images and sounds was something still to achieve.

The cinema appeared in the nineteenth century as a result of the large sequence of inventions related to the photography that had been took place before that time. At the beginning the cinema was supposed to be an improvement in the scientific field and it was far to have a commercial application.

After a long list of video devices that were getting more and more approximated to what would be the actual cinematographic film, the cinema, video and movie became a new way of communication.

When the image was available for everyone, there was the need to unify the sound transmission, previously existent with the radio, and the image transmission that came about with the cinema. Both together gave birth to the sounding cinema which implied a revolution in audiovisual evolution because at last these two important elements of communication had become one. By the early 30's the images of the movies were combined with dialogues.

With the pass of the years both resources continued improving and spreading throughout many countries. In fact, the spread and improvement of the technological advancements were so rapid that few decades after appeared the computer, a device that went a step further, it aimed to make possible not only existence of the image and sound, but the interaction between the machine and the person using it. This new advancement implied another way of communication.

All of these inventions: the sound system, the images and the combination of both of them along with the computers have made possible that now in the classrooms at school the teaching and learning process speed up.

## **Songs: a communicative perspective**

After the brief analysis of the audiovisual resources evolution, it is remarkable the fact that all the inventions have something very important in common and that is communication. Communication is the last aim that humans have tried to enable and here is where we find the connection between audiovisual resources and its application in education. This leads us to the school, the classroom and the teaching reality.

What is 'communication'? According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary the word means *"the act of imparting, especially news", or "the science and practice of transmitting information"*.

Traditionally, teaching has been based on a drilling and repetitive way of learning in which real communication was never present in the classroom. In fact, even with the arrival of new resources and technologies, drilling activities have still been presented in the classrooms and as a result little advancement has been made.

An example of this is the use that it has been given to the songs. The way to practice listening and learn vocabulary with a song has always been by filling the gaps, but there are many activities that can be used to make the most of this motivating resource. In addition, the songs used have always been adapted to the students' level and in few situations students have been exposed to the language that real songs provide.

But, what does communication pursues in the teaching and learning process? According to Brown (1994) some of the ideas that summarize communicative goals are the following:

- Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.
- Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the necessary skills for communication in those contexts.
- The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower of knowledge.
- Students are therefore encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others.

Communication in the teaching field aims to reach communicative activities. These activities and tasks are those that only can be implemented or carried out with the use of the target language. This factor promotes the use of the language that will lead to learning. We are tired of seeing lots of activities that consist on drills or that can be made with the use of the mother tongue. That doesn't lead to learning. On the contrary, when students find

themselves in situations in which they are forced to use the target language there is advancement in their learning.

We consider songs as a vehicle, along with many other resources, to make our lessons more communicative. Some of the reasons that convince us about songs being a communicative resource are the following:

- Students can learn to make a meaningful use of the language with songs if we as teachers design activities that lead to a use of the Target Language to complete activities related to a song.

- As we will analyze later, activities with songs contribute to a better memorization and acquisition of structures and expressions that can be very useful in other contexts or communicative scenarios out of the classroom.

- When working with songs the teacher stops being the one who is in possession of all the knowledge and delegates this role to a song that is a source of real language used in the culture from which the song is taken.

These are some of the communicative principles that are reflected on songs. Along the following pages we will design a lesson in which activities are aimed for the target language to be used and this way promote communication in the classroom. But firstly we will focus our attention on the benefits and drawbacks that song can present



## **Advantages and disadvantages of the use of songs in language teaching**

Before we give attention to the lesson we are designed and the results of it we consider that is very important to know first the advantages and disadvantages of songs and the role they play. In order to give credit and trustworthiness to the advantages and disadvantages of songs we are going to analyze the opinion that some important authors have on them.

The first advantage, related to the communicative teaching method, has been explained in the previous section and claims that songs are useful tools to put into practice communicative activities in the classroom. Although songs in themselves are not communication because in a first instance we just can listen to them, they make easy the design of communicative activities that will lead to a better learning and acquisition of the Target Language.

According to (T. Murphey, 1992), these are some other advantages of the use of songs in the classroom:

*“In our time, it is hard to escape music and song as it occupies ever more of the world around us: in operating theatres, restaurants and cafés, shopping malls at sports events, in our cars, and literally everywhere. It would seem that the only place music and song is slow to catch on is in schools”* (T. Murphey, 1992, p. 774).

As we can see, one of the benefits of songs is that they are everywhere. They are part of our lives and as a result they are familiar to us enabling a comfortable atmosphere when it comes to learn a language.

*“They provide variety and fun”* (T. Murphey, 1992, p. 774)

When we are in a relaxing setting it is natural to add some music to feel even better. We have fun with music and we use it to enjoy ourselves. It seems that life is better with music and some even say that the world couldn't exist without this resource. This is the case of Nietzsche who thought that life without music would be an error. (F.Nietzsche, 1987)

It is also needed to have fun in the classroom and make of learning an enjoyable experience and we think that songs have a remarkable role on it.

*“Songs may strongly activate the repetition mechanism of the language acquisition device”* (T. Murphey, 1992, p.774)

Repetition helps us to remember information. Sometimes we don't stop to think and meditate on what we are repeating, but at a certain point we might find ourselves in a situation in which a determinate feature of a language appears and suddenly we remember something we repeated and that helps us to understand that feature.

Chomsky is one of the pioneers in the developing innatist theories. He talked about the LAD (Language Acquisition Device). This is an endowment that all humans have that enables

them to learn through mental processes in which no reinforcement is needed. All the learning is based on exposure to positive evidence or input without correction. Correction is seen as useless since a mental evolution will take place and change gradually to the better the internal grammar a person has. The internal grammar is the compendium of the principles underlying a language that helps us unconsciously to build messages and be able to communicate and understand the input we receive. (Chomsky, 2000)

Songs are a source of input. In addition this input is repeated over and over again enabling, as Chomsky says, to develop Internal Grammar of a language. Unconsciously, those structures which are repeated in a song can become part of the Internal Grammar the student has and this contributes to the learning and acquisition of the Target Language.

*“A favorite song can be repeated again and again with equal enjoyment”* (T. Murphey, 1992, p.774)

It is true that basing teaching in repetition can be boring, but if there is something that children like they can spend a lot of time doing that thing over and over again, and the same happens with songs. If students like them they will listen to them many times and this will result in the learning of grammatical patterns used in real communication outside the classroom.

Related to the repetition that songs provide the opportunity to develop “automatism”, defined by (Gatbonton y Segalowitz, 1988, p. 473-492). *“Automatism is a component in the consecution of fluency in the spoken language that includes knowing what to say and produce messages in a fluent way without pauses”*.

*“Many learners are accustomed to hearing a very careful, clear pronunciation of words, such as native speakers might use when talking very emphatically or saying words in isolation”* (S. Rixon, 1994, p. 38).

When students have the opportunity to listen to the real language and way of speaking of people whose first language is English, they have an idea of how the target language is in reality. It is good for them to get used to the speed, pronunciation and colloquial sentences that they will find in real contexts outside the classroom. Songs are a resource that provides this important factor.

*“Songs offer many codes that strengthen student memory such as choruses, rhymes and melodies”* (Maley, 1987, p. 93-109).

There can be found lots of expressions, collocations, etc. in songs that are part of the daily life and the culture of the places in which the language is used. These expressions aren't normally taught in the lessons so a good way to have access to them is by means of songs.

Now, we will draw our attention to the main drawbacks found in teaching and learning a language based on songs. Taking into account the following information is of vital importance as well because it will guide us as teachers in our practice so as to know what aspects we have to avoid and be careful of.

According to (Terhune,1997), these are some of the disadvantages of the use of songs as a resource in the classroom:

*“As each student has a different way of learning, some students may have difficulty in studying through music”.*(Terhune, 1997, p. 8-12)

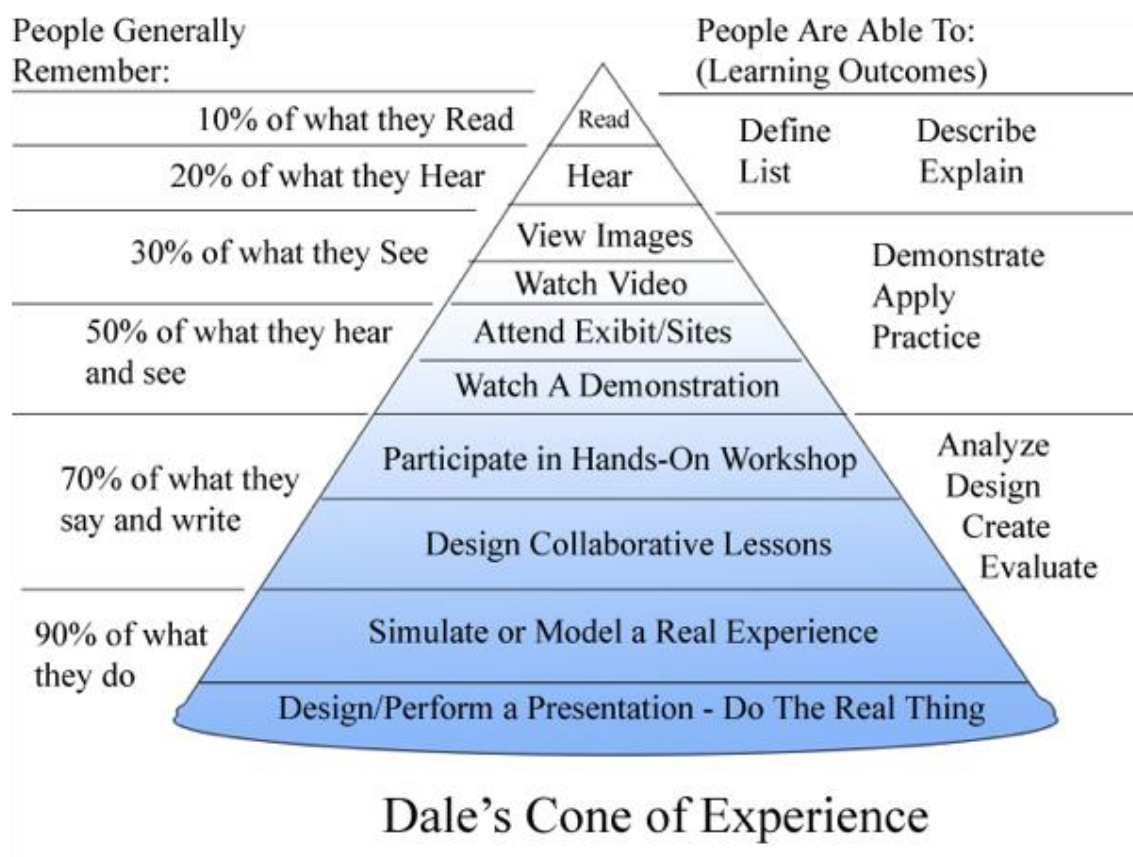
What can be useful for some people can be unhelpful for others. There are different ways to learn. While some learn by reading or by listening, there are many others who learn by doing or even joining all these three together. However, there is something clear and it is that we, as individuals, don't use the same techniques to learn and this fact leads us to the idea that songs might not always have the same positive effects in our students. This is an important factor to ponder over.

Regarding this idea we have to consider theories like the one of Gardner about the Multiple Intelligences to understand why there are students who present more or less facility to learn a language through songs. According to Gardner there are eight principal intelligences, the academic intelligence is not the only one, as some experts thought in the past, but there are many others and Gardner tries to identify them: Linguistic intelligence, mathematical intelligence, space intelligence, musical intelligence, kinesthetic intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, interpersonal intelligence and natural intelligence. (Gardner, 1995)

Each person has developed all these intelligences differently and that is why some may find more or less difficult to learn any knowledge in a certain way.

It is also important to mention Dale's conceptions about learning because he gave attention to this aspect as well. Dale made a cone with the results coming from different ways to learn. Whereas visual and sound activities help considerably in the remembrance of the information we want to learn, the activities in which action on the student part is required have a greater impact in learning. (Dale, 1946) This theory can help us to understand why not all of our students will benefit the same way from songs.

Whereas we can retain a 50% of the things we listen to and see, as we could be the case of listening to songs and watching videos about those songs, there will be a greater retention and a better learning as we do things or use the language and don't limit to just listening and watching. This means that we need to be careful with the use we give to songs and try to build significant lessons that allow students to interact with the language and not only listen to it.



*“Inefficient sound systems, computers and beamers in schools may cause problems when or while listening to songs”. (Terhune, 1997, p.8-12)*

In this area of technology, sound and visual systems are being implanted in schools more and more. They offer a lot of facilities in teaching and even speed the learning process, but at the same time they are a source of problems when we organize our lessons around them and then we find out that they are not working properly. This make us waste time and energy repairing them or looking for alternative solutions to go on with the lesson. Sometimes, the sound system at school doesn't work properly and so appear difficulties in understanding the message of songs.

*“Songs which are not grammatical or those involving complicated sentence structures may confuse students”. (Terhune, 1997, p.8-12)*

Since songs provide expressions belonging to the daily use of the target language, there can be some complicated grammatical structures that confuse students. Obviously we cannot avoid those expressions because they are part of the song and that explains that we have to deal with them, but we need to be careful when choosing the songs we intend to work with and ensure that the grammar or structures that appear in the song won't lead the students to confusion.

## **Lesson plan with the song as a main component**

- Title: Live your life

- Description of the lesson: we are going to work along the four skills: listening, writing, speaking and reading, with a song. However, this lesson is not going to consist on a succession of a filling the gaps activities. This is something that students can do at home. As mentioned before we are going to work along a communicative view of the teaching.

- Resource in which it is focused on: songs (audio and images with the video of the song)

- School period: 3º cycle.

### **Activity 1**

- Title of the activity: Let's build a song

- Timing: twenty minutes

- Grouping: four groups of people

- Materials: paper flashcards

- Description of the activity: we will divide the song in four important parts: three lyrics and the chorus. The class will be divided in four groups and each one of them will be in charge of a part of the song that will be assigned to them.

We will deliver to each group of students the vocabulary that appears in the part of the song they are in charge of. The vocabulary will be presented by means of flashcards showing the concept of every word. We will also give the definitions of the words written in a piece of paper. Finally we will deliver the concepts in Spanish written in some little pieces of paper.

The students will have to read the definitions of the vocabulary words in English and link them with the corresponding picture and with the word that translates the concept.

Once they know the meaning of all of them we ask them to tell what they think the song is about.

After that, the groups will change with the group they have next to them the part of the song they have been working on and will repeat the same activity until all the groups have worked on all the parts of the song and have an idea of the words that they will listen to in the song.

The song will be played after each change of the parts of the song that the students make among their mates so that they can confirm that the vocabulary they have been given is the right one. At the same time they will be practicing the listening and pronunciation they expect to find in the song.

- Skills worked: reading and speaking.

## **Activity 2**

- Title of the activity: Live your life song
- Timing: seven minutes
- Grouping: individual work
- Materials: song, sound system
- Description of the activity: the “Live your life” song will be played twice for all the students to listen and a piece of paper with the whole print of the song will be delivered to each child. They will be required to fill in the gaps with the nouns, verbs and expressions that they will have been working on before the play of the song.

The students will be allowed to listen to the song twice because we are aware of the need of time to collect all the words and write them on the paper.

This is the only fill-in-the-gap activity that the students are going to do.

- Skills worked: listening.

## **Activity 3**

- Title of the activity: I write my own song
- Timing: ten minutes
- Grouping: individual work
- Materials: pen and paper.
- Description of the activity: Once the song has been listened several times and the previous activities have been finished we are going to do an activity that consists on transforming the real song into a writing of the same song but a little bit changed.

The students will have to underline the words learned in the print of the song, not only the ones they have been working on but also the ones they don't know the meaning of.

After that they will have to rewrite the song replacing the words with their definitions. Since the definitions have already been provided in the first activity, in order for the students not to copy the definitions, the teacher will remove the pieces of paper with the definitions and student will have to use their memory to write the definition by themselves.

- Skills worked: listening and writing.

#### **Activity 4**

- Title of the activity: I give my opinion about the song
- Timing: ten minutes
- Grouping: individual work, little group work and big group work.
- Materials: a piece of paper and pen
- Description of the activity: The students are given two questions that will be posted in the whiteboard and will have to write the answer and after that explain out loud what they have written.

The questions they will have to answer are the following: Would you like to be the person the song talks about? Why? Why not? Do you think it is important to have a charismatic personality?

- Skills worked: listening: writing and speaking

#### **Activity 5**

- Title of the activity: Let's sing together!
- Timing: three minutes
- Grouping: big group work.
- Materials: sound system.
- Description of the activity: At the end of the class all the students will sing the "Live your life" song. We will use the first groups of the beginning because each group will sing the part of the song they had to work on in the first activity. The class will only sing together the song's chorus.
- Skills worked: singing and speaking

## **Results obtained from the lesson proposed**

During the class with a group of the sixth year of Primary School we could put into practice the lesson designed around a song. Here we could see the real pros and cons of songs as a resource in this classroom.

Before we proceed to the analysis of the results we have to say that the level of the class wasn't in accord with the one expected from the students at this age. This fact made difficult the development of the lesson and it made impossible to carry out all the activities proposed. In addition we had to use two hours at two different days to carry out four of the activities designed.

The first lesson took place on Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of May from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. First of all we have to mention that the whole class accepted with enthusiasm the song we selected. We were careful and chose a motivating song that all the students felt like singing it and was understood by them.

After , the class was divided in groups and each group was given the words that appear in the song, their definitions and the pictures that illustrate each concept to facilitate the finding out of the word's meaning. They worked on this task for fifteen minutes. Each group was in charge of one part of the three parts in which we had divided the song.

When the students finished to give a meaning to each word we played the song for them to make sure that the word they had been working on were part of the song.

We repeated this process three times so that all the groups could work on all the words making the song.

By the time the students had finished this first part of the lesson there was the time to leave so we had to continue with the second activity the next day.

The following day at the same time the second lesson took place. The students had an idea of the words they were to listen in the song because of the activity they did the last day with the vocabulary words. Then we proceeded to make with them the second activity consisting on filling the gaps of the song. Firstly we played the whole song without stopping so as to see whether the children were able to identify the key words. After that we played the song several times stopping it every time they had to fill in the gap with one of the vocabulary words studied the previous day. Because of the little English level and the few occasions in which students have listened to real language, this activity was slow and difficult to implement.

Another factor that didn't contribute to the understanding of the song on the children part was the inefficient sound system. The speakers didn't work properly and some parts of the song were not as clear as we had wish.



However we could see a positive point in this activity regarding a similar one the students made on another occasion. Some weeks before the teacher had worked with them another song with no previous presentation of the vocabulary and the students spent two whole lessons in completing the fill in the gap activity. In contrast with our lesson, due to the previous activity consisting on a pre-listening activity with the vocabulary and the definitions, the students were able to fill in the gaps in just one lesson.

Finally, in the second lesson we had some minutes to talk about the song. So although in part, at least we could work on the fourth activity designed in the lesson plan. We asked the students what they thought the song was about and if they would like to be like the person the song talks about. With some help from our part some of them were able to form some sentences and give an answer.

We finished the lesson by singing all together the song. Here we could see how motivated the students were. They enjoyed a lot singing and we could notice the motivating effect a good song has on children.

## **How the advantages of songs have been observed in the lesson**

According to the advantages of the use of songs in the classroom stated by Murphey, here we are some of them that we have observed in our lesson:

*“They provide variety and fun”*, (Murphey , 1992 p. 770-774)

In our lesson, from the very moment we told the students we were going to work with a famous song they liked, they responded enthusiastically to it showing that they were looking forwards to stop working with the book for one day and doing something fun. So this time, instead of telling the students to open their books and as a result of it see their bored faces, we could work with them on something motivating.

This was a good way to start our lesson because we could notice that almost all the students were motivated and willing to make an effort to learn and to be involved in all the activities they were about to do. Moreover we consider that is very important to start the lesson having our students highly motivated, because as the time passes by and they get more tired their motivation level might decrease, but if we start the class and they are not motivated, at the end of the lesson the motivation levels will be even lower.

*“Songs may strongly activate the repetition mechanism of the language acquisition device”* (Murphey, 1992, p.770-774)

The song we selected has a repetitive chorus easy to understand in which all the time it appears a structure consisting on a subject, a verb and a complement. The continuous repetition of this structure contributed to the students learning and acquiring of the order in which the components of sentences in English are organized. This fact helps students to produce messages with more fluency without having to stop to think about how to build a sentence because they have already integrated that structure in their minds.

*“Many learners are accustomed to hearing a very careful, clear pronunciation of words, such as native speakers might use when talking very emphatically or saying words in isolation”* (Rixon, 1994, p. 38).

In our lesson we have seen the advantage of songs mentioned by Rixon as well. At the beginning it was hard for students to understand the song because of the accent. Even though the singer is Spanish his accent sounds British, but in the end, after having listened to the song several times students were able to understand many of the words. This idea leads us to think that if students had the opportunity to work with more songs, their understanding would be affined and in time their language competence would improve even more.

## How the disadvantages of songs have been observed in the lesson

Disadvantages: by (Terhune, 1997)

*“As each student has a different way of learning, some students may have difficulty in studying through music”.* (Terhune, 1997, p. 8-12)

As we have mentioned before all our students were highly motivated when they were informed about working with a song during the whole lesson. However, as we went through the different activities designed there were some students who became distracted and didn't make as much effort as the rest of their mates. We consider that maybe the activities leading to the understanding of the song might be boring for this group of students somehow, or maybe working with a song didn't help them much to be motivated and improve their language skills.

Here we have a chart showing the motivation and effort that students put on the lesson. First of all we show the attitude each student showed when working in the first activity in groups trying to guess the meaning and definition of each vocabulary word.

Secondly, we present the attitude the students showed towards the song in itself and the enthusiasm we could see on them when listening to a different song from those ones that appear on the text books.

Finally, we have added the number of words that each student was able to understand and write in the filling the gaps activity after having worked with the vocabulary words before listening to the song. The chart shows that those students who were motivated and worked hard were able to write more words than those who didn't benefit from the activities.

STUDENTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Group collaboration	A	A	P	P	A	A	A	P	A	A	A	A	A	A	P	P	A	P	A	A	P	A	A	A
Attitude towards the song	p	p	-	-	p	P	p	-	p	p	p	P	P	p	-	-	p	-	p	p	-	p	p	p
Nº words identified/group	11	12	5	7	17	15	16	5	9	14	13	18	19	14	8	10	17	3	15	17	4	13	15	15

**A: active**

**P: passive**

**p: participative**

**-: non-participative**

We also have to take into account the different intelligences that Gardner talked about and have clear in mind that since we as teachers didn't know all our students preferences we only could choose one way to work with the song and this is the way of working that we put into practice with the class. However maybe some students would have preferred to read the song lyric before we listened to it, or have would preferred to listen to it while they were finding the definition of the proposed vocabulary words...etc.

Whatever the case, this phenomenon helps us to understand that when we are responsible of a class and we have the opportunity to know the students and the way they learn better, we have to design lessons in which the activities can be adapted or design different activities each day, or using different resources instead of songs each day to cover all the different ways to learn that can be found in the classroom.

*"Inefficient sound systems in schools may cause problems while listening to songs".*  
(Terhune, 1997, p.8-12)

This is a problem that has been present in the classrooms since the appearance of the new technologies in the teaching field. In our lesson there were some problems with the sound system. The speakers didn't work properly and some words which were quickly pronounced in the song were very difficult to understand by the students.

So to the fact that not all the students were motivated by the song or that the activities designed were not the ones all the students benefit from when studying a language, we have to add the problem of the sound system.

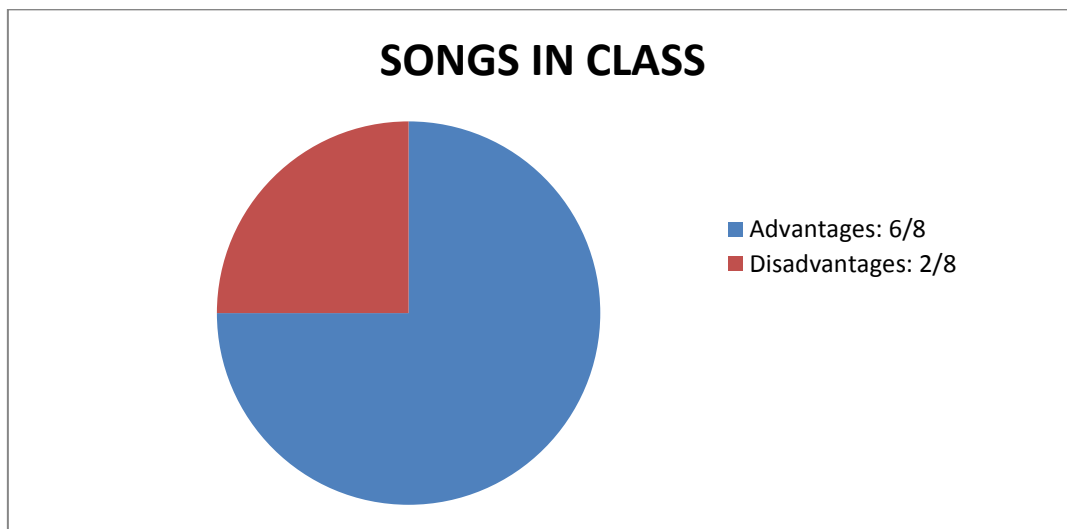
### **Are songs useful for teaching?**

After making this project we have reached the conclusion that the use of songs in the classroom has got both advantages and disadvantages and before we plan our lessons we have to think about them and balance whether is worthy to use this resource or not. In addition we have to consider the level of the class and have in mind the importance of getting to know our students so as to know what kind of learning benefits them the most.

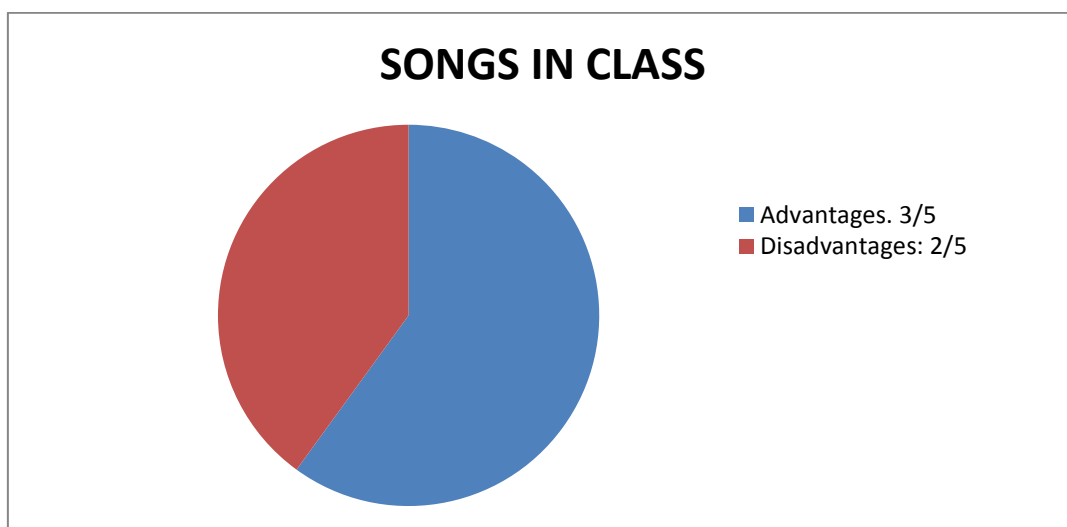
However, we have to recognize that in both the theory and the results obtained in the implementation of the lesson, we have seen more advantages than disadvantages. So this fact leads us to think that building lessons around songs is a very good way of teaching.

In order to have a clearer view of the advantages and disadvantages, we proceed to the presentation of this graphics:

#### **Advantages and disadvantages of songs according to the theory:**



#### **Advantages and disadvantages according to the result obtained in the lesson:**



## Conclusion

Our project has aimed to show what the benefits of using songs as a resource in the classroom are by analyzing the opinion some authors have on the matter and providing an example of how a lesson can be built around a song. The results have been positive even this doesn't mean that we have to neglect important aspects such as getting to know our class level, their interests and ways of learning each student has and adapt our lessons.

However when we come back to reality, to the schools, we notice that this resource is not being used very often. If we examine English text books there are a lot of adapted songs for the students. But these songs are not always motivating, they are not well known by the students, those are not the song that children hear on the radio or TV and that explains why they are not so catching.

Moreover, most teachers limit their lessons to listen to the songs on the text books and don't design motivating and communicative activities around them. And although it is said that the foreign language teachers are the ones that innovate the most, according to the newspaper 20 minutos, Mexico, under the job subheading titled: "*The foreign language teachers are the ones who innovate the most in education*", there are still some teachers that don't change their methods. Why does this happen?

Sometimes the answer to this question is found in the fact that teachers don't have time to prepare new lessons and motivating activities. As the magazine "Teaching in focus n°2 September OECD 2012 page 3" says:

*"The new teachers dedicate more time to the management than more experienced teachers. In average the new teachers spend 9% of their time caring of administrative tasks, the 18% maintaining the order in the classroom and its management and the 73% in the teaching and learning process".* (Teaching in focus, 2012, n°2, p.3)

Sometimes, because of the behavior of the class, it is difficult for teachers to leave for one day the routine they have established with the text book and innovate.

More than the 70% of the primary and secondary school teachers in countries like Spain, Mexico and Italy consider that "*the excitement in class makes difficult the teaching process*", indicates the Organization for the Cooperation and the Economic Development (OCED).

20 minutos, México, under the subheading international and the title of the new is: The bad behaviour in the classrooms prevents an efficient teaching according to the OCDE.

Of course several changes have to take place to facilitate teachers the teaching and learning process such as the behavior of the class and the time they spend caring of all the responsibilities they have; but as a conclusion, something that can help teachers to improve in

the way they innovate in class is the following statement from (Latapí, 2003, cuaderno de discussion 6):

*“The essential condition for the teacher to learn is for him to have the disposition to learn. Learn implies making ourselves vulnerable, suppress securities, assume risks”*

Teaching will always demand time and energy from our part as teachers, as well as making mistakes and learning from them; but if we make an effort we will see the fulfilment of this proverb written by the wise king Solomon in ancient times: *“There is nothing better for a man than to drink and find enjoyment in his hard work”* (Ecclesiastes 2:24)

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## Appendix

(Holbrook, M. 2013) “*Live your life*”

Lyric of the song: “*Live your life*”

### Group 1

You've got the whole world in your pocket  
But you just don't know  
Everybody's smilin' at you everywhere you go  
It's like you've got that secret  
Everybody else wants to know  
Oh yeah

Anywhere you are is just like home to you  
From the beaches in Manila  
Down to Katmandu

Yeah you've got that secret  
Everybody else wants to know  
And you won't ever let it go oh

### Group 2

Everybody wanna hold your hand  
Everybody wanna shine that bright  
Everybody wanna say they can  
Everybody wanna live your life

Everybody wanna talk like you  
Only wanna do the things you do  
'Cause they always gonna turn out right  
Everybody wanna live your life

### Group 3

We take a whole room full of strangers  
And we make them friends  
We do it all around the world  
Just so it never ends

It don't matter where we're coming from or going to  
You're the only one that ever turns a grey sky blue  
And everybody needs a friend like you

Everybody wanna hold your hand  
Everybody wanna shine that bright  
Everybody wanna say they can  
Everybody wanna live your life

Everybody wanna talk like you  
Only wanna do the things you do  
'Cause they always gonna turn out right  
Everybody wanna live your life

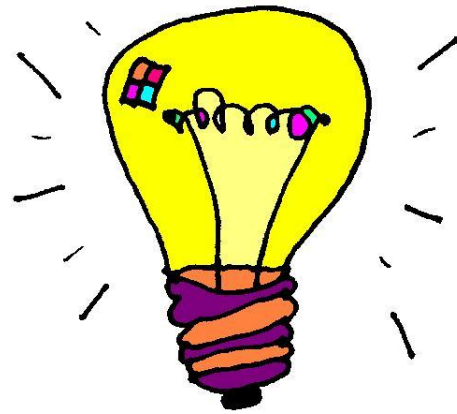
Somos ciudadanos del mundo, así  
Yo siempre a tu lado y tú junto a mi  
El mundo está en tus manos, no lo sabes ya  
Como un diamante siempre brillara

Everybody wanna hold your hand  
Everybody wanna shine that bright  
Everybody wanna say they can  
Everybody wanna live your life

Everybody wanna talk like you  
Only wanna do the things you do  
'Cause they always gonna turn out right  
Everybody wanna live your life

## VOCABULARY WORD CARDS:











*"Just remember, son, it doesn't matter whether you win or lose—unless you want Daddy's love."*



- World: the earth, the place in which human kind live.
- Pocket: it's a useful part of our clothes, specially found in trousers and jackets that we can use to put little things in.
- Everybody: all the people
- Smiling: it comes from smile. A gesture we make with our lips and face when we are happy.
- Everywhere: all the places
- Secret: something personal you share with someone and don't want any other person to know about.
- Want: to have the desire to have something.
- Know: knowledge of something.
- Home: your house or flat, the place in which you live alone or with your family.

- From: if you want to travel anywhere, “from” is the word you use to say where you start your journey.
- Down to: go down
- Let it go: let something happen without interfering.
- Hold your hand: take somebody’s hand
- Say they can: believe that you are able to do something and express it with words.
- Live your life: enjoy the moment, enjoy your life.
- Talk like you: imitate the way somebody talks.
- Do the things you do: imitate the way somebody does things.
- Turn out right: change to better.
- Whole: everything.
- Room: a place separated from your house that has got four walls, floor and ceiling.
- Strangers: people you don’t know or you’ve never seen.
- Make: do.
- Friends: people you get on well with and help you every time you need it.
- Around the world: surrounding the world.
- End: the final.
- It don’t matter: it is not important.
- Turn a gray sky blue: change a grey sky into blue.

## SONG’S VOCABULARY WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS TRANSLATION

Mundo

Bolsillo

Todo el mundo

Sonriendo

En todas partes

Secreto  
Saber  
Querer  
Hogar  
Desde  
Hacia abajo  
Dejarlo pasar  
Coger de la mano  
Decir que ellos pueden  
Vivir tu vida  
Hablar como tú  
Hacer las cosas que tú haces  
Cambiarlo a mejor  
Todo  
Habitación  
Extraños  
Hacer  
Amigos  
Alrededor del mundo  
Final  
No importa  
Cambiar el cielo gris en azul



## POST ACTIVITY QUESTIONS

Would you like to be the person the song is addressed to? Why? Why not?

Do you think it is important to have a charismatic personality?