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The Show Must Go On: The Use of Gamification and Role-Play for Improving Oral Production in an EFL Classroom

Autor/es

John Walmsley Ortiz

Director/es

Ignacio Guillén Galve

FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN

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1. Introduction

The present unit plan is based on several UK comedy television shows, and draws inspiration especially from *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* (BBC). It is aimed mostly at improving the oral production of the students, as this is one of the main issues that students face in the particular group I had to work with during my practice placement.

The five lessons will be structured as part of the same television show, and there will be a score that carries over from each individual lesson. Gamification plays a very important role, since everything in the unit plan (activities, assessment, structure, etc.) is designed to resemble a television game show.

The unit is designed to be both cooperative and competitive. While the plan could also be designed to not include competition, the assigned group is likely to respond very positively to it: they are not competitive about their marks (likely due to a generally low performance) but during the placement period it was observed that whenever they were presented with a challenge they put in more effort.

The plan also attempts to develop the student's creativity through both the subject matter (Music) and the activities themselves, which encourage them to role-play, argue and think differently. Furthermore, contents from the subject of Music are also tackled in this plan, although only to a certain extent so as to not take too much focus away from the main goal of oral and written production.

All of these objectives are also being reached in accordance with the principles of CLT. While some concessions have been made in instances where changing a certain aspect may help this particular group move towards the specific objectives of the present plan (e.g. use of the three Ps sequence instead of adhering to the strict definition of task), overall the unit aims to develop communicative competence as dictated by the curriculum, which is in turn influenced by the relatively recent principles of Communicative Language Teaching.

2. Purpose and objectives

This proposal results from the fact that during my placement period it was observed that students belonging to the group I was assigned (second year ESO) performed better if the activities were focused on receptive skills (listening and reading) than if they were mainly productive (writing and speaking). This is likely a consequence of the methodology and especially the materials used in the school, which place more emphasis on reading and listening.

The main purpose of the present unit plan is to work on oral production skills and their improvement in order to get the students to be equally proficient in all four skills, since the observed group had a deficiency in this area.

The plan will focus more heavily on speaking, despite the students having trouble in both written and oral production activities. This is because their speaking skills are especially lacking, even more so than writing skills. Moreover, speaking activities suit the TV game show theme of the unit better, as it is a primarily oral medium. It should be noted that the plan addresses the needs of this specific group, but it can easily be carried out with other classes even if their deficiency in the targeted skills is not as severe as a means to review or practice for an oral exam.

 However, the unit plan has a series of secondary objectives which are also explored in this dissertation. Firstly, the plan contains materials and themes related to the subject of Music. This is especially important for a group in second year since under current legislation the subject of Music is not taught in this year. As a consequence, the plan serves as a "bridge" between first and third year, in an attempt to "solve" one of the frequently criticised issues of the current LOMCE legislation, which is that humanities and the arts are overlooked in favour of other more "practical" subjects such as Economics or Mathematics.

Secondly, the plan encourages free discussion and role-play, and these are two key components in every lesson of the plan. Beyond the main objective of teaching students how to speak more correctly, these activities emphasise the need to be able to carry out conversations in real everyday situations, or in other words, the need to speak fluently instead of limiting the lessons to accuracy. Admittedly, something like role-playing as

celebrities is not an everyday event, but the contents and the way the conversations are carried out are the same (talking about oneself, discussing likes and dislikes, musical preferences, etc.).

Finally, the plan also serves to introduce students to cultural expressions from recent decades that they might not be familiar with, thereby providing them with some general cultural knowledge which, while not immediately useful and practical, will serve to help them become well-rounded and knowledgeable individuals in the future who can hold a conversation on these topics.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1.   Communicative Language Teaching

According to Richards (2006) the goal of Communicative Language Teaching (henceforth CLT) is "the teaching of communicative competence" (p.2). Communicative competence, defined as "being able to use the language for effective communication" (Richards, 2006), is one of the key elements of the standing curriculum. As a result, many teachers consider the CLT approach as the most effective for courses, unit and lesson plan designs. CLT is not a methodology, but rather a framework or approach with features that can be shared by vastly different plans.

The present unit plan aims to be communicative and compliant with the standing curriculum (Orden ECD/489/2016) despite its general structure and sequencing (see Section 4.7.) being more traditional than modern approaches such as strict TBLT. Since CLT has many distinct features, this section will focus on those which are more relevant to the design of the present unit plan.

Firstly, CLT aims to develop fluency in language use. Fluency is defined as "natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence"(Richards, J.C., 2006, p. 14). For instance, a role-play activity in which students must engage with each other is a great example of a fluency activity; in fact role-play is chosen by Richards to exemplify fluency tasks (Richards 2006, p.15). The unit plan relies heavily on the use of role-play not only in specific oral production activities, but throughout the whole unit since the students are always role-playing as contestants in a TV show. This idea is further developed in Section 3.5. It should be noted that CLT advocates for the development of both fluency and accuracy, and the inclusion of fluency activities does not mean that accuracy is overlooked in a communicative plan.

Another feature of CLT is communicative practice, which "refers to activities where practice in using language within a real communicative context is the focus, where real information is exchanged, and where the language used is not totally predictable"

(Richards 2006, p. 16). The real communicative context implies that communication is carried out in a context which could be found outside of the English classroom, and the present unit plan provides many opportunities for the students to carry out conversations which fulfil this criteria: discussions about music (which admittedly account for most of the discussion activities in the plan) and the likes and dislikes that they have is not only a plausible communicative situation, but also very frequent and practical in almost any informal context.

Communicative Language Teaching also advocates the linking of the four skills together (Richards 2006, p. 13), however as explained in Section 3.6.the nature of the unit plan and the needs of the students mean that the observed group is likely to benefit more from a more clear-cut approach.

3.2.   Motivation

Throughout the placement period, one of the main issues of the observed group was a lack of motivation towards the subject, at times even directly stated by the students. Therefore, the unit plan will focus on certain concepts which have been proven to have a positive an impact on motivation. But firstly, it is important to explain briefly what motivation is, its importance in an educational context and what role it plays in an EFL classroom.

One of the main factors to consider for improving and encouraging production in an EFL classroom is motivation, especially in the case of a group such as this one which showed a lack of motivation towards the subject. Motivation can be defined as "a need or desire that energizes and directs behaviour" (Myers, 2001, in Anjomshoa and Sadighi, 2015). In recent years numerous studies have been conducted on this topic, as "motivation is one of the main determinants of second/foreign language (L2) learning achievement" (Dörnyei, 1994). In order to find out how motivation can be increased through the implementation of the unit plan it is essential to understand what the components of motivation are and how they can be influenced.

Dörnyei (1994) breaks down three sets of components involved in L2 learning motivation: course-specific motivational components "concerning the syllabus, the teaching materials, the teaching method, and the learning tasks", teacher-specific

motivational components, "concerning the teacher's personality, teaching style, feedback, and relationship with the students" and group-specific motivational components, "concerning the dynamics of the learning group" (Dörnyei, Z., 1994, p. 277).

Course-specific motivational components refer to the actual materials and methods used in the classroom. These include selecting materials that the students might find interesting and relevant, as well as creating lessons and activities that will keep them engaged. The latter is addressed in Section 3.3. (Gamification) and the materials chosen for this unit plan are broken down in Section 4.8.

Group-specific motivational components are further broken down into "goal orientedness, norm and reward system, group cohesion and classroom goal structures" (Dörnyei, Z. 1994, p. 278). Dörnyei states that perceived group cohesion is an important factor in L2 learning, and writes "This may be due to the fact that in a cohesive group, members want to contribute to group success and the group's goal-oriented norms have a strong influence over the individual" (Dörnyei, Z. 1994, p.279).

Classroom goal structures are classified as competitive, cooperative or individualistic. In a cooperative situation, "students work in small groups in which each member shares responsibility for the outcome and is equally rewarded" (Dörnyei, 1994, p.280), and this is consistent with the activities present in the unit plan and the assessment since the whole group shares a score that is influenced by each student's individual performance or by their performance as a whole.

Regarding competitive goal structures, Dörnyei describes them as students working "against each other and only the best ones are rewarded". It must be noted that competitive goal structures do not equate to including competition in a classroom setting. The overall goal structure in the plan is predominantly cooperative, and competition is only included to supplement this cooperation. This notion is further explored in Section 3.4.

Finally, teacher-specific motivational components should not be overlooked when carrying out the unit plan at hand: its success will be largely determined by the attitude of the teacher and how well he or she is able to manage a group of students role-playing as contestants of a television show. Since the focus of many of the activities is on

speaking fluency, feedback should be limited to small pointers at the end of each discussion or activity so that the students have the freedom and the autonomy to carry out the activities by themselves as if they were in a real conversation or discussion, which is the ultimate purpose of a communicative unit plan.

 Ideally, the teacher should not only focus on feedback and following the activities down to the last detail, but also on their role as the host of a television show and in making the "programme" more entertaining, but still being careful not to go overboard and lose the thread of the lesson (see Section 3.3.).

During the observation stage of the placement period, it was observed that in many cases the group's members wanted to help each other with their activities and make progress together, and that allowing them to work in groups helped them to complete the activities faster and with better results.

Because of this, and taking into account the benefits of a cooperative goal structure mentioned above, cooperative and competitive learning will be one of the focal points of this unit plan.

3.3. Gamification

One of the basic pillars of this plan is the use of gamification as a means to motivate student action, the first step towards improving oral production in this classroom.

Gamification is defined by Kapp (2012) as "using game-based mechanics, aesthetics and game thinking to engage people, motivate action, promote learning and solve problems" (in Kiryakova, Yordanova and Angelova, 2014, p.1). In the case of the present unit plan, these mechanics can be seen on an individual activity level, and on a larger scale throughout the plan. Elements such as a score system, the presence of teams, the presence of timers, buzzers, cards, etc., are all game-related aesthetic or mechanical components.

All the aforementioned components fall under the definition of course-specific motivational components described in Section 3.2., since they are elements of the unit plan itself and not dependant on the group or the teacher. The use of these elements as tools to motivate action is consistent with Kapp's definition, and every aspect of this plan related to gamification is in order to engage the students and facilitate their speaking in an environment where they can feel more motivated.

The whole unit is presented as a game, akin to escape rooms and similar unit plans that resemble games. There is a final goal or objective and students are constantly progressing and moving towards that goal. Therefore, gamification is an integral part of the unit plan, and is the groundwork to which the rest of the concepts can be traced back in this case. While cooperative learning and role-playing do not always go together with gamification, in this instance they are a consequence of presenting the unit plan as a television show with different teams.

Gamification also relates to cooperative learning, another of the key elements of the plan (see Section 3.4.), since it "offers the learners an opportunity to interact among them as it's implied in a social game" (Figueroa, J.F., 2015, p. 43). This further ties these two elements of the plan together, which were already related due to the game show theme and their nature as team-centred programmes.

As mentioned earlier, gamification in this unit plan is not only showcased on an individual activity level, but the presence of a score (a typical mechanic in gaming and competitions of any kind) means that the whole unit can be approached as a very long game rather than as a collection of game-like activities. It also means that if an activity does not fulfil the criteria to be considered a game per se, the students will remain engaged if they bear in mind that most of their actions count towards the final score. This emphasis on a final goal that the students are working towards achieving is a concept taken from Project-Based Learning, despite the unit plan not being strictly speaking a project (as there needs to be a final product). Then again, there are many other elements which point towards the game-like nature of the unit (buzzers, cards, timed activities, teams, etc.).

The assessment process for this unit plan is based on scoring systems of game shows, further connecting the theme of the unit to the content. Points are earned by performing the activities of each lesson, but they can also be deducted for disruptive behaviour. Ideally, the score of a group is collective, which means that all the members of the group share a score. Although in case one of the students is dragging the rest of the group back through consistently bad behaviour or lack of interest, the mark of this unit for that particular student will be lowered, even if the group as a whole does not get any points taken away (see Section 4.9.).

Finally, it is also worth noting that the teacher plays a large role in the "aesthetic" component of the game plan, and there are certain small changes that can be implemented to make the experience more immersive for the students as a whole. The teacher plays a role in motivating action in the classroom as one of Dörnyei's motivational components, and being aware of this can improve the experience for the whole class.

An example of one of the changes is in Lesson 4, for example, after each of the interviews in Activity 2. If the teacher asks for a round of applause after each pair of students, this activity mirrors the way game shows are conducted in real life, and the students will find this more entertaining than simply doing the interviews one after another like in a traditional class. Again, it is important not to go overboard with these details and lose sight of the objectives and contents, hence the amount of control over

the classroom that the teacher has dictates how successfully these teacher-specific elements can be implemented.

3.4.   Cooperative learning and competition

Cooperation is usually defined simply as "working together to accomplish shared goals" (Johnson, Johnson and Johnson Holubec, 1994). This definition carries over to the field of EFL teaching, and is at the core of the present unit plan: the classroom is divided into four teams where all the students are working to get as many points as possible for their team. The plan at hand attempts to use cooperation as a tool for students to help each other and improve each other's learning process in a way that is aligned with the theme of the unit plan as a television show.

Cooperative learning is one of the key aspects of CLT (Richards, 2006) and can be defined as "the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (Johnson, Johnson and Johnson Holubec, 1994). The notion of maximising each other's learning is fundamental in the present unit plan, due to the characteristics of the group. Through cooperative learning, the students can help each other to achieve a common goal, which in this case will help the students with curricular adaptation because they can be aided by other members of the group, helping their own learning process. The context of the classroom itself is again the reason why the unit plan relies heavily on cooperative learning.

Furthermore, group activities may help the students who may have more difficulties (see Section 4.2.), since "working in small groups, peers recognize that their rewards are dependent on the success of their teammates and are more likely to provide support for each other's learning" (Quinn, P. 2006, p. 5). This is consistent with the cooperative attitude that was observed in the classroom, as students already provide support for each other's learning when needed.

While it can be argued that letting students organise the groups by themselves can have positive impact on the learning process, in the case of the present unit plan the teacher will form the groups based on the performance of each student throughout the year, to ensure that all the groups are approximately equally capable of completing the activities. Also, by arranging the students in this way, it can be ensured that those who require curricular adaptation are in an environment where they can be helped by their partners if needed.

Although the group has some issues with behaviour in the classroom none of the issues that arose during the placement period had their root in conflicts between students. They are very close with each other and seem eager to work in groups or pairs. The students who need curricular adaptations are often helped by their fellow classmates, which is not the case in other groups where there is a divide between them.

Thus, pair and group work is very appealing to them, because it differs from the traditional classes that they are used to and because they seem to enjoy interacting with any other member of the class.

Furthermore, cooperation and teamwork is often a common element in the shows the unit plan is based on (*Mock the Week, Never Mind the Buzzcocks*). In these programmes, not only do the members of the same team share a score, but they must help each other in many different situations, similarly to how students are expected to carry out activities in a cooperative environment.

Aside from cooperating within their groups, the students will also be competing against the other teams in the class. It is crucial that this competition is presented as healthy and friendly rather than antagonistic. This is why it is advisable to play a clip from one of one of these comedy panel shows before starting the activities: it helps set the tone for the students. The common thread of shows like *QI*, *Have I Got News for You*, *Mock the Week* or *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* is that while there is a score and the teams are competing, there is no money at stake, and since the panellists are most of the time comedians and celebrities, they always address the opposing team in a friendly manner. Their objective is still to win, but not for money or to best the other team, but rather because the challenge makes the experience more engaging for the participants and consequently more entertaining for both the participants and the audience.

Due to the observed group being very cohesive and friendly towards each other (this idea is developed further in Section 4.2.), this form of competition is very likely to develop in a positive manner. The group is not competitive when it comes to their academic results, but during the placement period several activities involving competition among students were carried out, and the results in terms of active participation and involvement were very positive, going from around 25 (four students) to 75 per cent (twelve students out of 16).

Cantador and Conde (2009) write that "the goal of the competition must be clearly set into the process instead of into the results, making it clear that finally winning or losing is very low in importance in comparison to learning and improving while competing" (p. 2). As long as this requisite is met, there should be no issues regarding the students' attitude towards the competition, at least not in the case of a group such as this one where the students are not competitive when it comes to academic results.

A healthy approach towards competition and cooperation is one of the key elements of this unit plan. In fact, getting the students in a healthy competitive mindset will almost guarantee that they will remain motivated throughout all five lessons, whereas if the students become aggressive in their need to win it can result in the plan failing completely. Therefore, this part of the plan, especially during the early stages, must be approached with great care.

3.5.   Role-playing and free discussion

Free discussion and role-playing are the activities that better assist speaking skills (Hedge, T., in Oradee, T., 2012, p. 533). Free discussion in itself fulfils most of the criteria of CLT (real communicative situations, focus on fluency) making it an optimal way to make the students produce orally in a way that will develop their communicative competence. As a result, there are many instances of free discussion throughout the unit plan, although in some cases this discussion is limited in some way by the topics in order to have the students go over the contents taught in the lessons.

Role-playing in the present unit plan is carried out in two different ways. Firstly, there are activities which directly involve the students playing different characters, Activity 2 from Lesson 4 being the most directly related to this concept. But there is also a common thread throughout the whole unit plan, which involves the students taking on the role of participants in a television programme. Thus, role-playing is one of the core features of the unit plan, since it is being used throughout all the lessons.

Regarding role-play and its relationship with the three Ps sequence (which will be explained further in Section 4.7.), "The main elements of Communicative Approach usually appear as three steps in classroom teaching: 1) presentation 2) practices 3)

production. Applied to the third period, one of the effective practice is role-play, which emphasizes much on the comprehensively performance of the target language" (Liu, F. And Ding, Y., 2009, p. 140). This quote references both the focus on role-play as a communicative production activity and the three Ps sequence in relation to the Communicative Approach, although they are often not considered compatible due t the strong association of the three Ps sequence with traditional non-communicative methodologies.

3.6.   The four skills

Since one of the main objectives of the plan is to gradually achieve a balance between the students' proficiency in receptive and productive skills, the focus will be placed mostly on activities and communicative situations which require the students to produce written and especially oral texts. This does not mean that listening and reading are neglected, but rather that they will have less time devoted to them. Advocates of TBLT generally aim for an integrated approach towards the four skills, meaning that they should be dealt with equally and if possible at the same time (Zúñiga, 2016). In this case, however, a more fragmented approach was chosen for a number of reasons. Despite this, most activities involve the use of several skills, but the focus of the activity and its assessment can often be narrowed down to just one of them (see Appendices).

Firstly, the group is demonstrably better at one set of skills, and devoting an equal amount of time and attention to receptive and productive skills would only perpetuate this difference. In order to design a task or activity which could have all four skills targeted at the same level, either the receptive materials would have to be too simplistic (at which point the students would lose interest and more importantly not be challenged) or the productive components would be too difficult for their current level. Nevertheless, since the materials used are taken from real-world sources (television, music) and these are crucial for the development of the unit plan, the solution is to adapt the materials or provide scaffolding in the form of subtitling or highlighting the key elements (see Section 4.8.).

 If the students seem to be lagging behind or have trouble with the materials, there is an option to add scaffolding to most of the activities. Moreover, these measures should not be limited to students with specific educational needs (of which there are four) but

rather should be used for the whole classroom. While using too much scaffolding risks some students finding the activities too easy, the positive effect it can have on the students who need it makes up for this possibility.

Secondly, this somewhat clear-cut division in skills allows the teacher to more easily assess whether the plan has been successful. As in a traditional written exam, the teacher can directly contrast and compare the performance in all four skills individually, whereas in an integrated approach it can be harder to do so, as all the skills are crucial for the completion of the task and build upon each other. Again, this does not mean that the activities are categorised according to only one skill, only that the primary focus is placed on that skill, most notably in the assessment.

All this is not to say that the integrated approach is worse than the one carried out in the present unit plan, on the contrary, there are numerous benefits to the integrated approach supported by recent pedagogic research. Nevertheless, due to the exceptional learning situation that the observed group finds itself in (as explained in Section 4.2.), this more traditional separation of skills may prove useful if not for the learning process itself, at the very least for the assessment process on the teacher's part.

3.7.   Curricular relevance

The plan aims to develop communicative competence as required by the curriculum of the subject (see Section 4.4.), emphasising oral production and fluency due to the characteristics of the group.

The specific contents and objectives have been formulated based on the curriculum and taking advantage of the theme of the unit plan. For instance, this plan provides a great opportunity to improve oral production because game shows are for the most part an oral medium.

While the primary aim of the present unit plan is to eventually get the students to a point where they are equally competent in production skills as they are in receptive ones, there are certain secondary objectives that this plan will try to reach. For example, as mentioned in Section 4.6.the plan also deals with contents from a different subject, in this case Music. The contents of the subject of Music that can be found in this plan are found in the curriculum for the subject, specifically in the Contents section for third

year ESO, which reads "Algunas manifestaciones de la historia de la música occidental y española. Los grandes periodos de la historia de la música en su contexto histórico" and "La expresión, oral y escrita, de juicios y opiniones acerca de la música escuchada y analizada. Uso de un vocabulario adecuado para comentar obras musicales" (p.13). Both of these aspects are dealt with in the unit plan, as it serves boths ahistorical overview of modern music and a way for students to critique and comment musical pieces from the time period.

3.8. Diagnostic assessment

The success of this unit plan can ultimately be determined by whether students improve their results in activities which require production after its implementation, especially oral production. Since the unit plan is supposed to be implemented during the third term of the school year, teachers should have at their disposal results from previous tests or activities the students have carried out in the subject. Ideally, if the plan is carried out with enough preparation time, the students can take an oral exam or test at the end of the second term, and another one at the end of the third. This is a direct way to compare results before and after the implementation of the plan, and will either prove or disprove the effectiveness of said plan in achieving its main goal of improving oral production.

A way to assess the effectiveness of this plan and other similar units with the same theme or structure is to keep track of two groups, one that carries out the new plans and another that keeps being taught in a more "traditional" way, following the textbooks. The only issue with this is that there would have to be a group that could be comparable to the observed group, and its unique context (see Section 4.2.) means that the controlled groups would have to be others which can yield reliable results upon comparing their performance. In summary, provided that the teacher has enough time, it would be advisable to implement this plan (with some variations that account for context) in another group first, and check if there really is improvement in oral production.

4. Unit Plan Analysis

4.1. Unit Plan Description

The present unit plan consists of five fifty minute lessons, and all of them are linked by the common thread of a TV comedy panel show about modern music, similar to *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* (BBC Two). The class is divided into four groups, which the teacher must ensure are balanced in terms of level. Since there are students who need significant curricular adaptations (further explained in Section 4.2.), they should be grouped with students who are more proficient in English in order to make all the groups as similar as possible in terms of their overall level. In the case of the observed group, that means that there should be one of these students in each group or team.

Most of the activities are presented as group challenges or discussions, and the whole plan is carried out in the same way that a game show would, with a recount of the points at the end of each lesson or "episode" and a series of activities in which the students or "contestants" must partake in to defeat the other teams.

While the lessons follow a sequence generally associated with traditional approaches due to the benefits it presents for this particular group (see Section 4.7.), there is an emphasis on CLT aspects such as fluency and free discussion in order to ensure the development of communicative competence, as required by the standing Aragonese curriculum (Orden ECD/489/2016).

The plan has a scoring system which is shared by all the members of one group, and the students know at the end of each lessons how many points they have as well as their competitors. While this score accounts for most of the final mark, individual performance can affect any one student in a group, even if the collective score remains the same (see Appendices). The full unit plan can be found in Section 7.

4.2.   Context

The class is a 2nd year ESO group, consisting of 16 students, a relatively small group when compared to other classes in the same year (even within the same school). Four of them need significant curricular adaptations and are in the observed group because they do not fulfil the criteria to be in PAI or PMAR.

The school has a high percentage of immigrant students (over 40 percent) and in the earlier stages of ESO especially this number is much higher: in this class, only 3 out of the 16 students were born and raised in Spain by Spanish parents. Of course, the nationality of students has no relevance by itself. This is only relevant for the development of the unit plan because some of these immigrant students came to Spain with a level of English that is below what is required to follow a 2nd year ESO class correctly, and were placed in this class only based on their age, as they have not yet met the criteria to be in PAI or PMAR programs. These programs have a series of criteria, such as requiring that the student repeated a year in the Spanish school system, which means that not every student who needs to access them can do so in their first year. In fact, there are cases of students who had never studied English formally before coming to Spain. Because of this, the school likely decided to place all the students with learning difficulties who did not fulfil the criteria to be in one of these programs. As a consequence, the performance of this class is comparatively lower to the other groups in the same year. This is illustrated by the overall results obtained by the group in tests and exams compared to other groups in the same year in the first and second term: the average grades in English are lower, and almost half of the group have failed this subject in a vprevious trimester, whereas in other groups this number is proportionally much lower. However, the disparity in the levels of the students within the group is still noticeable, since many of them come from countries with education systems that follow different sets of criteria.

Despite how heterogeneous the group might seem at first, the group as a whole is very cohesive. This will make carrying out cooperative activities much easier, and it is one of the main reasons why most activities in the unit plan are centred on cooperation among students. Moreover, the observation carried out during the placement period showed that the students in the observed group were more likely to be fully engaged in activities

that set some sort of challenge for them and even those that had them competing with each other. Due to these characteristics, devising a unit plan that has them both cooperate with other members of their own group while also trying to outperform the other teams seems like a good way to take advantage of how close and friendly the students are amongst themselves. This is not to say that the present unit plan could not be implemented with careful planning in a more numerous group or a group where there are conflicts between the students, but rather that the observed group facilitates the implementation of cooperative and competitive learning strategies.

In order to address this issue of students who need significant curricular adaptations, the groups should be made by the teacher, who can place students who may be struggling with the subject alongside more advanced students. This is especially important given that the unit plan has a competitive element, and any significant gap between the levels of the group will be noticed by the students and can potentially discourage those who are performing more poorly, although as mentioned previously this particular group does not seem to have any students who might take issue with this, again making them ideal for the implementation of such a plan.

4.3.   Materials used in the classroom

During the observation period, one of the main issues among the students seemed to be the lack of balance between their proficiency in receptive and production skills. The performance of the whole class was noticeably better in activities involving reading and listening than in those which required the students to produce in oral or written form.

Looking into the possible reasons for this difference in skills, most of them could be traced back to the textbook(s) they were using.

The book used in this class is *English World Student's Book ESO 2* by Burlington Books. The book was published in 2011, before the current legislation (LOMCE) was passed. Therefore, it does not acknowledge some important points from said legislation, such as key competencies.

However, while some of the aspects in this book can be simply due to it being outdated, since it was published before the current legislation was passed, it is hard to find a reasoning for the gap between receptive and production skills. After all, the four skills have been recognised as being of equal importance for many years. It is likely that the book is meant to be used alongside complementary materials (such as the *English World Workbook* and *Language Builder*, which do contain writing materials and resources) that would address this need. However, since during the placement period the *Student's Book* was used almost exclusively in all the lessons, it will be analysed as a standalone material.

On the one hand, the book contains many reading and listening activities throughout all the units and many pages are devoted exclusively to these two skills.

On the other hand, writing and speaking activities are in comparison much fewer, and the activities are for the most part very simple, often requiring students to simply ask and answer questions in oral activities, or write an opinion or summary of a text from a previous reading activity. While these types of activities can be effective, they do not promote action on the student's part, and in the case of the observed group, the result is that they will often attempt to write or speak as little as possible.

 The amount of space devoted to these two productive skills is also much smaller compared to their receptive counterparts. While the core of each unit is devoted to reading and listening, the speaking and writing sections of each unit are reduced to one page each at the end of the unit. There are some exercises which require the students to speak or write, but these are generally part of a larger reading or listening activity. The book, ultimately, is a rather useful tool and source of listening and reading materials, but should be complemented with additional written and oral production activities in order to balance all four skills. Therefore, this unit plan is designed as a way to bring oral production activities to a group that would benefit from practice in this area. Written production is not covered in as much depth in the present unit plan since the issue of oral production is much more severe in the assigned group's case; however it is easy to adapt the plan to include more writing activities. For instance, the interviews in Lesson 4 could instead take the form of a written script for an episode of a television series.

4.4. Communicative Competence and Key Competencies

The development of communicative competence is one of the basic requisites of CLT, and the present unit plan aims to develop said competence while at the same time addressing the specific needs of the observed group. Using the definition provided by the curriculum, communicative competence can be broken down into three different components: linguistic, socio-linguistic and pragmatic.

Linguistic components include lexical, syntactical, orthographical and phonological skills and knowledge (p.1.)., in other words, the elements of the language as a system. In the case of the unit plan, this would include the specific contents (see Section 4.5.) such as grammatical (adjective) forms, prepositions, vocabulary, etc.

Sociolinguistic components refer to sociocultural conditions of the use of the language (p.1.) such as courtesy norms, register and dialect. In the present unit plan, students will familiarise themselves with several registers: televised interview, informal discussion, etc. They are also expected to address the teacher and more importantly their opponents in a polite manner, and failing to do so may result in a student getting points deducted from their final mark (see Section 4.9.).

Finally, pragmatic elements refer to the functional use of linguistic resources in communicative situations (p.1.) and include cohesion and coherency, use of humour, irony, etc. In the present unit plan students will be exposed to irony and humour in the clips shown in the first lesson, and they will be encouraged to use them as long as they remain respectful towards their classmates. Furthermore, cohesion in their speech is one of the components of the writing rubric (see Appendices), and in oral activities such as Activity 3 from Lesson 2 they are likewise expected to speak addressing their classmates' opinions to form a cohesive discussion.

Considering all of these aspects, we can conclude that the unit plan manages to develop all three components of communicative competence as described by the standing curriculum.

Key competencies are a key part of the LOMCE and are based on the competence based model used currently in the European Union. A competence, according to the OECD, "involves the ability to meet complex demands, by drawing on and mobilising psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context" (*The Definition and Selection of Key Competencies*, Executive Summary, 2005). Thus, competencies are defined as something needed to navigate a complex society which demands a set of abilities from any individual: use of ICTs, effective communication, cultural awareness, etc. This is the main reason why competencies are so highly valued in current legislation: they should ideally be developed in all subjects because they go beyond the contents of said subjects and are valuable for all students regardless of what career path they decide to pursue.

On the other hand, balancing all the key competencies in the LOMCE legislation and the contents of the subject can prove rather difficult. When a group is already struggling to keep up with the contents and objectives, as is the case of this class, trying to include all the competencies in a lesson or unit is inevitably going to take part of the focus away from the unit and its aims regarding content. As regards the unit put forward in this essay, it can be said that certain competencies are developed because either the subject or the topics of the activities address them, and others are a result of the methodology used (as is the case with cooperative learning).

Competence in Linguistic Communication is defined as "the result of the communicative action within particular social practices, in which the individual interacts with other interlocutors orally and through texts in multiple modalities and formats" (Ortega, A, *Seven Key Competencies*). This is the key competence most linked to the subject of English (or any language) as the development of this competence is tied to the contents and objectives of the subject, according to the curriculum.

This is the most relevant of the key competencies for the present unit plan, since most activities involve students communicating orally with their partners. In fact, the detected need in the observed group can be described as a lack of communicative action, or at least lack of communicative production of the desired quality for their current level and academic year. Consequently, the plan has been designed to address this issue of their poor skills of written and especially oral production, meaning that Competence in Linguistic Communication will definitely be developed throughout the entire unit.

Digital Competence encompasses "creative, critical and safe use of information and communication technologies, in order to achieve the objectives related to work, employability, learning, use of free time, and inclusion and participation in society" (Ortega, A. *Seven Key Competencies*). While the use of ICTs in the classroom is not one of the focal points of the unit plan, activities such as the interviews in Lesson 4 require the students to independently research and select information from online sources. Furthermore, some digital resources are also used throughout the plan, such as the buzzers, but they are not the focal point of any exercise, instead they serve to cement the game-like nature of the activities.

Learning to Learn competence is also clearly developed here, as most activities are learner-centred: they are working together with their team to solve problems, they are producing oral texts independently and despite the teacher being there to monitor the development of the lessons students are left to figure out the way to carry out the discussions, the role-play, etc. A clear example is the interviews and their assignment in Lessons 3 and 4, where the students are left to solve and carry out the interview in any way they see fit, with very few restrictions.

Social and Civic competence is directly related to cooperative learning, as one of the dimensions of this competence is the ability to "take decisions and solve conflicts, as well as to interact with other people and groups according to norms based on mutual respect and democratic convictions" (Ortega, A. *Seven Key Competences*). The plan is set up in a way that makes the students rely on each other and cooperate within their groups, and competition is framed under a positive light, meaning that the students are expected to treat their opponents with the same amount of respect as they would show to their teammates.

Regarding **Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship**, it involves the students knowing how to "plan and manage their knowledge, and the necessary skills or abilities and attitudes with self-criteria, so as to achieve the desired objective" (Ortega, A., *Seven Key Competencies*). This competence is also at play in most activities of the unit plan (such as Activity 1 in Lesson 3), since the students need to manage the knowledge and skills of the whole group in order to achieve a collective goal or objective, in this case obtaining as many points as possible in each activity.

Competence in Mathematics, Science and Technology is not directly addressed in the unit plan. The subject matter, music, does not lend itself to be approached from a mathematical or scientific point of view, unless there is a heavy focus on music theory (harmony, rhythm, etc.) which this unit plan for the most part overlooks. Nevertheless, while not being addressed directly in any individual activity, there is a number-based scoring system which the students should understand and keep in mind throughout the whole unit, thereby slightly developing this competence. Regardless, this is the least developed of the key competences in the present unit plan.

Cultural Awareness and Expression is developed thoroughly in this unit plan, since the topics are modern music and television, therefore falling under the definition of Cultural Awareness and Expression as "knowing, understanding, appreciating and valuing the different cultural and artistic demonstrations —with a critical eye and with an open and respectful attitude—, using them as a source of enrichment and personal enjoyment, and considering them as part of peoples' wealth and heritage" (Ortega, A.). In fact, this competence is, next to Competence in Linguistic Communication, the most developed in the unit plan, since the whole plan revolves around these cultural and artistic demonstrations (modern music) and the knowledge, appreciation and critique of said demonstrations through the means of a TV show.

4.5.   Objectives and specific contents

The objectives for the unit plan have been formulated based on the objectives of the unit plan (improvement of written and especially oral production) and on the structures and vocabulary that students are expected to know at this point of the school year according to the curriculum.

In this case the unit plan has the use of adjectives, comparative and superlative forms as its focus. This is the focal point of the unit plan regarding its contents, although there are other contents such as use of prepositions in Lessons 3 and 4. The focus of the plan on adjectives and comparative forms is in part due to the structures being aligned with the discussions carried out throughout the lessons. Most of them involve talking about likes and dislikes regarding music, and in everyday conversation this usually manifests

in comparisons between different genres, artists or songs. Therefore, since the "television show about music" theme almost requires the students to be comparing and contrasting, it provides with a chance to explain these forms in a way that the students will find them immediately useful.

However, the students will be asked to use and understand many other structures, although the materials (Section 4.5.) and activities for the most part do not require them to know any structures above their level (2nd year ESO).

As for the objectives for each lesson, they have been formulated taking into account the curricular evaluation criteria, which can be found after the contents of every "Bloque" (each corresponding to one of the four skills), in the Aragonese Curriculum (Orden ECD/489/2016). The specific objectives can be found at the beginning of each lesson in the Unit Plan (Section 7). These are objectives beyond the acquisition of contents, and include developing the students' ability to argue, discuss and carry informal conversations about their personal tastes.

The evaluation criteria focus on the oral production of the students, since the unit plan is primarily focused on speaking and the bulk of the final mark will mainly be conditioned by the oral performance of the students.

The criteria upon which the objectives have been formulated are the following:

Crit.IN.2.1. To produce brief oral messages in an appropriate register and using simple language, about topics of everyday life or that may interest the students, using adequate planning and execution strategies, expressing the communicative functions required through the use of the associated linguistic exponents, discursive patterns, common use lexis and basic pronunciation patterns, in order to organise the text with enough clarity and internal cohesion.

Most oral activities in the present unit plan are related to this criterion, as the students are required to produce oral messages using the grammar and vocabulary acquired in the lessons. This criterion is related to oral exchanges, such as all the activities throughout the unit involving free discussion.

Crit.IN.2.2. To participate in simple oral exchanges which are clearly structured, using short sentences, pronouncing in a clear and intelligible manner, and incorporating the socio-cultural and sociolinguistic knowledge acquired.

This criterion is addressed in every activity which requires an oral exchange between students, most notably the interview activity in Lesson 4.

 As for the development of the four skills, the main purpose of the unit is to improve oral production skills, and therefore the evaluation criteria will correspond to those of these skills. As mentioned in Section 3.6., the different skills are used at different points of the unit plan up to a point, but they are separated in order to make the assessment of the targeted skill (speaking) easier for the teacher.

4.6. Cross-curricular elements

The unit plan is staged as a game show, and why that alone could be considered a unifying theme for the whole set of lessons, a television show will generally focus on a specific cultural aspect. British television has numerous comedic shows that deal with topics ranging from journalism and current events (*Mock the Week*) to science and history (*QI*) and music (*Never Mind the Buzzcocks*). The latter is exclusively about modern music history, and it is the closest to this unit plan out of all of the aforementioned programmes in subject matter and in the way it is carried out. The lessons will approach similar topics to those of the show for two reasons. Firstly, students are more likely to have a certain grasp of modern music history than they are of most other topics, even if they only know a handful of the most relevant bands; this already puts them in a situation where they may feel like they can participate in a meaningful and somewhat informed way. Secondly, modern music (from the 1950s to the present day) is to be studied in 3rd year of ESO (as well as the history of music as a whole; however that would make it difficult to focus on all artistic periods equally in the span of five lessons). Since Music is currently not being taught in second year (in the Aragonese curriculum), this unit plan is a way to keep the students engaged with music and pop culture in general during this year in which the subject is left on hold.

Essentially the plan fills this one-year vacuum where the students would not have any contact with music (at least not directly) within the school. One of the main problems with the current legislation according to its detractors is that arts and humanities are being pushed back in the school system in favour of other subjects. Regardless of whether this is considered beneficial or detrimental for the students, including content from this subject into the English classroom is a solution that is completely viable within the legislation and the curriculum, without having to devote more time to these subjects during the school year.

This treatment of music and its history also contributes to the development of Cultural Competence, as seen in section 4.4.

4.7.   Sequencing of activities

There are two different aspects that must be considered regarding the sequencing of activities in the present unit plan. Firstly, the plan is organised as a television show in which each individual lesson builds upon the previous ones. The score of each of the groups carries over throughout the whole plan, providing a degree of cohesion even if the contents of each lesson vary.

 Secondly, there is a sequencing of the activities within each lesson, which for the most part follows the three Ps sequence or variations of this model. Since the plan is focused on the production of oral texts, organising the plan according to this sequence allows the teacher to place the targeted skills at the end of the sequence. This way, receptive skills can be developed as well, but they will be tackled primarily at the beginning of each lesson.

Furthermore, the three Ps sequence is very useful for low achieving students (Carless, 2009, in Maftoon, 2015, p.34), and as mentioned in Section 4.2.the observed group does get lower marks than the other groups in the same year.

While the three Ps sequence has been criticised by many scholars, especially during the advent of CLT, the sequence has "evolved over the years, cherry picking the more attractive elements of other approaches, and incorporating them into its basic format"

(Evans, 2008, in Maftoon 2015, p. 35). So while the basis of the unit plan remains communicative, the three Ps sequence is used in the present unit plan not as an approach, but rather as a clear and easily implementable technique which can benefit this particular group, while still remaining consistent with the principles of CLT for the most part (focus on fluency over accuracy, use of real communicative situations, etc.). Moreover, the structures may be presented first, but as can be seen in lessons 1, 2 and 3, the presentation is generally a showcase of the structure and the students are left to infer the rules, albeit with assistance from the teacher, separating it from the "traditional" ways focused on directly explaining the structures in a more teacher-centred way.

Another benefit of the three Ps sequence is that it can be broken down into its different components even if they do not take place within the same lesson. While there is production and free discussion in Lesson 1, its function is more of a presentation lesson for the contents which Lesson 2 builds upon (comparative forms). As mentioned above, since the three Ps approach risks being too rigid and teacher centred, there are instances of role-play and free discussion as eminently communicative activities throughout the lessons to balance out lessons which may otherwise not be as aligned with the principles of CLT as lessons such as Lesson 4 or Lesson 5.

It should also be noted that the three Ps sequence is not only used to introduce and teach the contents in this unit plan. In Lesson 1, the idea of the unit plan being carried out similarly to a game show is also introduced and presented in the form of a video clip, is later exemplified and practiced in the next activity and only then are the students expected to produce independently. This is done in order to prevent the shift towards a unit plan that requires them to be playing along constantly from being too jarring. Otherwise, we risk the students getting lost and ultimately taking longer to adapt. Again, the three Ps sequence is not being used as an approach to teaching English, but as a useful technique that serves the unit plan and helps its implementation with this particular group. In fact, the sequence may carry over from one lesson to the next, since the plan does not follow the sequence as strictly as other more traditional methodologies. As an example, the contents presented in Lesson 3 (prepositions) are put into practice and expected to be used by students in production during the interview activity in Lesson 4. In summary, the lessons loosely follow the three Ps sequence, but perhaps more importantly the entire unit plan is designed as a very long lesson where

the students gradually move towards more and more production from the initial lessons which are in comparison more focused on presentation and practice.

4.8.   Selection and adaptation of materials

Adapting and selecting the materials for the unit plan proves difficult due to having to address two different issues: the use of real-world materials, as described in CLT, and the adaptation of said materials to a level where the students can follow the activities in which they are used. Fortunately, the pop/rock music theme of the plan encompasses a large catalogue of songs which can be used or adapted. These two genres are also often described as simple in both their musical framework (rhythm, harmony, etc.) and more importantly in their lyrical content, despite there being many exceptions to this rule. In fact, an advantage of having the unit plan deal with such a broad topic ensures that materials can be found for any level, meaning that the same basic premise is adaptable to almost any level with relative ease.

Most of the materials used in the unit plan involve the use of handouts with lyrics from different songs from the 60s to the 90s. The reason for this specific time frame is that these decades are studied in the subject of Music, making them relevant in within the standing curriculum, and are at the same time modern enough to keep the students interested, but also probably old enough for them to not know about most of the songs and bands, ensuring that they will ultimately learn and discover new content.

As for the specific songs that were chosen for the activities, the songs for each group were chosen for possessing characteristics that make them representative of the music of each decade. Regarding the fragments used in activities, they were chosen because they contain the structures or contents that are going to be tackled in the unit plan. The choice to use Daft Punk's *Harder Better Faster Stronger* in lesson 1Was made because the song was representative of some of the contents to be covered in the unit plan, in this case comparative forms.

Adapting the clips from shows and interviews proved more challenging, since they are carried in a conversational tone and can be difficult to follow for the students in the observed group despite their comprehension level being higher than their production

level (as explained in sections 4.2. and 4.3.). As a general strategy, most of the video clips involving speech include subtitles (Closed Captioning feature on YouTube) used as scaffolding to make comprehension easier. This is especially important in the case of game show clips such as the one shown in the first lesson, since the exchanges are usually more chaotic and it can be difficult even for more advanced speakers to keep track of everything that is being said.

Finally, some of the materials do not adhere to the theme of "modern 20th century music" because they may be more recent (see Materials for "The Greatest Showman" (2017)). This is due to the content showcased in those songs being a better example of the structure in use than other older songs so some concessions have been made in this area in order to have overall better materials for the group.

4.9.   Evaluation criteria

Assessment in this unit plan aims to be integrated into the overall theme of the plan, which is a television game show. Most shows, regardless of whether there is money at stake or not, have a point system to keep track of which contestant or team is winning. In this unit plan, there is a scoring system and all the members of the group share the same score. The final score of each group is for the most part reflective of the final mark the members will get at the end of the unit, barring a few exceptions regarding personal conduct mentioned below.

Not all of the activities will be assessed in the unit plan. The activities that will count most towards the final score take place near the end of their lessons. This is because as mentioned earlier in Section 4.7.the plan focuses on production, and since the plan is designed around variants of the three Ps sequence the activities which will result in the students producing more will inevitably come at the end of the lesson. However, many of those that could be considered presentation and practice activities also award points to keep the students interested, but they represent a relatively smaller percentage of the final score.

The individual mark of each student, while greatly influenced by the performance of the group, is also determined by their individual behaviour and participation. The maximum

possible score of each group, provided that they all get the highest number of points in every activity, is 8000, and that accounts for 80% of the final mark. The remaining 20% is the student's personal effort and attitude, and this is assessed through observation. If a student is involved throughout the plan and is not disruptive, they will get the maximum score in this item. Points are only deducted if a student is being unusually rude or disrespectful, or if their attitude has a negative impact on the other members of their team or their opponents. This ensures that students cannot simply rely on their teammates to get a high mark. For example, if a member of a group misbehaves or is disruptive, this will not directly impact the score of the group, but it will have a negative effect on his or her individual mark.

However, points are awarded for activities beyond the main speaking parts, so there are other evaluation criteria regarding reading or writing at play as far as awarding points (See Assessment Chart), but the majority of the lesson focuses on the two aforementioned speaking criteria. The chart also makes a distinction between the percentage of the final mark each item represents and the maximum number of points a team can get from any single activity or item, since as mentioned earlier they are not completely equivalent in all cases.

Finally, regarding feedback, the teacher should try to keep it to a minimum during the times when the students are speaking for extended periods of time (interviews, discussions, etc.). while there are some activities in which feedback is important, especially presentation activities such as those found in Lessons 1, 2 and 3, interrupting students during production activities impedes the assessment and more importantly he development of fluency, which is one of the aspects of CLT that the present unit plan focuses on. There are, however, certain activities in which feedback is immediate, such as the musical cube (once they have been completed).

5. Conclusions

5.1.   Possible issues

Since the unit plan has not been implemented, it remains to be seen whether or not some of the more traditional features yield positive results for the group. After all, there is literature supporting both traditional techniques (three Ps sequence, separation of skills) and more modern task-based integrated approaches. However, since the unit plan uses these features under the general framework of CLT, it can be said that the plan is at least communicative, which paired with the contents dealt with in the unit plan and the overarching theme and mechanics of a game show in order to keep motivating action from the students all but guarantees that it will be a positive learning experience for them.

Notably, the present unit plan has been designed bearing in mind the situation of the learners in the group as underachievers (within their school). While through compensated groupings on the teacher's part the plan can potentially be completely inclusive, it is possible that some students who find themselves in very precarious learning situations, or have specific educational needs (students who have not studied English before) may get lost at certain points of the unit plan, which means that the teacher has to be paying close attention to all students (especially the aforementioned students with specific educational needs) to ensure that they are provided with guidance or assistance the moment they start to fall behind.

5.2.   Adjustments/Improvements regarding future implementation

The present unit plan was inspired or motivated by the specific need of improving production skills in the assigned group of students after the observed lack. Despite its original purpose, there are some changes that can be implemented in order to use a similar unit concept in other groups with different characteristics and even at different levels. For instance, since the chosen materials and songs were intentionally simple in

order to make them accessible to students of this level, the difficulty can be scaled up by using songs with more intricate lyrics from across many musical genres. Furthermore, the same clips from interviews and shows can be used at higher levels if the scaffolding is removed or at least reduced. As an example, students in 1st year of Bachillerato will probably benefit more from watching interviews without subtitles, so even if the source material is the same the input is closer to their current level.

Regarding the emphasis of the unit on oral production, it can be modified slightly to address all four skills more evenly. While the unit at hand deals with all other skills, the main point is to improve and assess spoken production. As noted in Section 4.7., the ideal approach would be to integrate all four skills evenly, but almost any group struggling with oral production would benefit from a unit plan such as this one, since it evaluates the current speaking skill of the students, improves it and provides the teacher with valuable feedback which can then be used to design and correct subsequent unit plans for that group.

5.3. Final remarks

This dissertation tries to prove the effectiveness of a unit plan which combines techniques from traditional methods with the current principles of CLT to address an issue with oral production. The plan aims to eventually get the students to a point where the students can benefit fully from an integrated approach towards the four skills, which at this stage is very difficult for the observed group.

Through a combination of traditional techniques and applying them within a modern theoretical framework, the plan addresses the specific needs of the assigned group, adjusting to the particular context of the classroom. This fits into B Kumaravadivelu's theory of "postmethod pedagogy", which advocates for the teacher adapting to the "particularity" or circumstances and context of the group, the "practicality" of actually carrying out a plan in a specific way, and the "possibility" or circumstances of the group beyond their academic experience (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 538-543). All the decisions made in the design of the plan are based on these three dimensions, meaning that the context has been greatly taken into account to make this unit plan a meaningful

learning experience for the observed class, although as mentioned earlier in Section 5.2., the unit can be adapted to other years and even to focus on other skills.

Aside from taking the first step towards improving the student's speaking in the long term, the plan also introduces contents from the subject of Music that will be useful in the following year, and can keep the student somewhat in touch with the subject during a year which otherwise would have been a complete gap in their musical learning.

To sum up, the plan is thematically consistent throughout and tailored to provide a significant learning experience to the observed group while still being implementable in other groups with very minor changes in the materials and activities, and if carried out correctly should yield very positive results beyond its main objective of developing oral skills.

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7. UNIT PLAN

Unit Plan		
Teachers: John Walmsley.	**Length**: 5 lessons of 50 minutes each	**Students' age**: 2nd year ESO (13-15 years)

Lesson 1		

Specific learning objectives:

- At the end of this lesson students will be able to:
  - Use both regular comparative forms of adjectives in written form in a way that is coherent and has aesthetic value.
  - Discuss a fragment from a television show and work out the premise and main ideas together.

Procedure	Timing	Interaction pattern
Activity 1: Introduction Since this is the first lesson of the unit plan, the first part will be devoted to explaining the scoring system and making up the groups, as well as telling the students that the unit is going to be structured as a game show. The groups are made by the teacher to ensure that they are balanced since some of the students need curricular adaptations and their level is lower than that of the rest of the class. In this first part of the lesson, each group of students will be assigned one song representing one of the decades from the 1960s to the 1990s (as there are four groups). These will be		

important in Lesson 5 especially. The songs for each group are the following: 1960s: Hey Jude-The Beatles 1970s: Go Your Own Way-Fleetwood Mac 1980s: Jump-Van Halen 1990s: Closing Time-Semisonic The students will be told to make note of these songs and listen to them at home, as they will play a crucial part later in the show. Regardless of what the song of their team is, they should listen to all of them at home. Despite this, it would be advisable to play a clip from each of the songs and ask the group what their first impressions of them are if there is enough time. That way the students can get more communicative free discussion practice in this lesson. Afterwards, the teacher will play a clip from the panel show *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* and ask the students pay attention and try to get a general idea of what the show is about (see Materials). After showing the clip, students will be encouraged to share their impressions of the show and describe the aspects which they find more relevant (for example, the tone of the show, what the challenge is, who is involved, etc.). This serves both to get the students talking and to ensure that they understand the premise and tone of the unit plan. **Activity 2: Comparative Forms 1** After the introduction, the class will move on to the first presentation activity. The teacher will hand each group a copy of the lyrics to Daft Punk's "Harder Better Faster Stronger" (2001), with the comparative forms underlined (in this case, all the adjectives in the song). After listening to a clip of the song, the	10 minutes	T-Ss

teacher will ask what the underlined words have in common. Each group of students will have a buzzer on a phone (see Materials). Each group may only say one thing for each time the buzzer is pressed, and this can go on up to five times (or more if there is enough time). While there are only a few "correct" options (they are comparative forms, they have the same suffix) the teacher should allow the students to give more answers, as. After all the answers, the teacher uses the answers that the students have given (and adds any information that may not have been said during the round) and summarises the features of comparative forms with the –er ending.	10 minutes	Ss-T
Activity 3: Comparative Forms 2 In this activity, the teacher will play a fragment of a different song with a different comparative form, also included in the handout. The song is "Back of Love" by Echo and the Bunnymen (1983). The fragment contains both "easier" and "more difficult than" in the lyrics. Since there are two comparative forms, the teacher will ask the class why they think both forms are different. As in the previous activity, the students must try to figure out the rules to this comparative, which will then be completed by the teacher if necessary.	10 minutes	Ss-T
Activity 4: Songwriting As the final activity of the lesson, each group will be asked to write a few verses of two songs by using the comparative forms taught during the lesson. After about 10 minutes, the teacher will collect the writings of each group. If there is enough time, the teacher may read some of them aloud and have the groups guess who wrote each verse. In order to do this, the teacher should ask one group at a time and about a verse that they did not write, so that they must guess. After each guess, the teacher will ask the group about the reasoning behind their guess, just to further have spoken production from the students. Since the decision must be	20 minutes	Ss-T Ss-Ss

reached by all members of the group, the teacher can ask this question to anyone, so maybe if a student has not participated as much during the lesson the teacher can ask him or her. This speaking time also allows the teacher to assess the written product of the groups using the rubric (See Appendices). At the end of this lesson, and every other lesson thereafter, the current scores of all groups are shown.		39

Lesson 2		

Specific learning objectives:

- At the end of the lesson students will be able to:
    - Ask questions about other people's features and traitsusing the comparative nd superlative forms.
    - Discuss and give opinions about their favourite music genres and artist in a conversational and informal tone

Procedure	Timing	Interaction pattern
Activity 1: Introducing the Superlative This activity serves to present the superlative, the only adjective form left to teach in this plan. Similarly to the presentation activities in the previous lesson, this activity involves the teacher giving a handout with song fragments (see Materials), although this time the key words or forms will not be highlighted. Instead the students will be asked to find the adjective forms on their own, as a way of increasing the difficulty slightly once they are used to this dynamic. As with activities 2 and 3 from the previous lesson, at the end the teacher completes the explanation if needed. **Activity 2: Guess Who?** Now that the students are familiar with all comparative and superlative forms, they can put them into practice in this activity. The teacher will hold a card with the name of a celebrity (most likely a musician or artist) and the students will have to ask yes/no questions	15 minutes	Ss-T

to guess who it might be. If a group thinks they know the answer, they will press the buzzer and try to guess. If they are wrong, they cannot try to solve for the rest of the round, but they can still ask questions. This allows them to practice both the interrogative form "Is he/she..." as well as the recently learned adjective forms. As extension, the activity can be carried out with the names of some students once they have got used to the basic structure with the celebrity cards	20 minutes	Ss-Ss T-Ss Ss-T
Activity 3: Discussion Chain In this activity, students will be asked to talk about their favourite/least favourite music genre and the reasons they like it or dislike it so much. In order to make the activity more interesting, students can only speak by first acknowledging the previous statement. For instance "I like rock because it's very loud" can be followed by "I think rock is not as good as rap, because rap is more interesting". By acknowledging what has been said before, the speaking resembles more an active real world discussion instead of just being a series of unconnected statements. Also, the members of each group will have talking chips meaning that no member can speak again until every other member has talked at least once. More points will be awarded to the groups who go through the chips more times.	15 minutes	Ss-Ss

Lesson 3		

Specific learning objectives:

- At the end of the lesson students will be able to:
  - Infer the use of prepositions, and by extension other words, by their use in a written or oral text.
  - Find out information that is relevant to them through questions in an informal and conversational setting

Procedure	Timing	Interaction pattern
Lesson 3 **Activity 1: Musical Cube** The students will be given a handout with a drawing of a cube and a set of lyrics from famous songs (see Materials). The lyrics will have some prepositions highlighted one for each song. The purpose of the activity is that within a time limit students must infer and discuss amongst themselves the meaning of the prepositions and place them in the correct positions relative to the cube. After the time runs out, the teacher tells the students to hand the sheets of paper with the solved cube. Then, the cube is corrected on the blackboard, either by one of the students or by the teacher, depending on how much time remains for the activity since it might take longer with a student if he or she makes mistakes. 100 points will be awarded for each correct preposition the group has. At the end, if there is enough time, the teacher can ask the student sif they know of any other prepositions that indicate place and where they would be written on the cube.	20 minutes	Ss-Ss Ss-T T-Ss

Activity 2: Assigning the Interviews This activity is used to determine the characters of "Interview with a Star" in lesson 4. Students are given a card from (materials) with either "Interviewer" or "Celebrity" written on it. The cards determine the role the students will have to prepare or research for the following lesson. The Interviewer cards also contain information about the celebrity, while the Celebrity cards contain less information but also have a picture of the person. Most of the cards contain the information in the form of statements with prepositions and comparative forms as a link to the previous lessons and activities. After being handed the cards, students are asked to stand up and look for their interview partners by asking yes/no questions. Students cannot ask directly for the identity of any Celebrity. Some of the information on the cards is deliberately misleading (for example, Cobain and Hendrix are both left-handed) to ensure that the students will generally have to ask more than a single question to find out if the other person is their match. At the end of the activity, the interviewer gives their card to the celebrity and viceversa. Their roles in the following lesson will be reversed, so that one of them plays the role of interviewer to an extent over the two lessons. The final part of the lesson can be used to have the paired students rehearse what they are going to talk about in general, even if the bulk of the research is to be carried out at home.	30 minutes	Ss-Ss

Lesson 4		

Specific learning objectives:

- At the end of the lesson students will be able to:
  - Ask and answer questions regarding their preferences, habits and dislikes, specifically on the topic of music.
  - Talk about themselves and ask questions about others for an extended period of time, similarly to how an interview of any kind would be conducted in the real world.

Procedure	Timing	Interaction pattern
Lesson 4 **Activity 1: Ball Warm-up** Since the interview activity takes up al lot of time, this activity is only meant to get students warmed up for the speaking they will have to carry out later. A small rubber ball is passed around and the student with the ball must ask the person he or she passes it to something music-related ("What is the last song you listened to?" "what's your favourite album?", etc.). The questions may not be repeated to encourage the students to come up with as any original questions as possible.	10 minutes	Ss-Ss
Activity 2: Interview with a Star The students come to the front of the class with the partners they were assigned in the previous lesson through the cards. In turns, each pair will have to carry out a brief interview in which one of the students takes on the role of a journalist and the other pretends to be the celebrity. This activity is carried out with a timer, which means that	40 minutes	

students must talk until the time runs out completely. This ensures that all students talk for approximately the same amount of time, and also discourages them from carrying out very short interviews (which is very likely considering how little speaking practice the group has), since in order to obtain the highest possible score they should speak until the timer runs out. The students are allowed to have notes during the interview, but reading directly from them will result in some points being deducted, since this is a speaking activity.	(5 minutes per interview)	Ss-Ss

Lesson 5		46

Specific learning objectives:

- At the end of the lesson students will be able to:
    - Describe songs by using all the different adjective forms, and guessing based on said descriptions.
    - Argue and defend their own personal taste using reason, in a way that is respectful towards their teammates and rivals.
    - Justify their collective decisions in a clear and concise manner, and providing evidence to support their claims.

Procedure	Timing	Interaction pattern
Lesson 5 **Activity 1: Musical Taboo** This activity serves as a review of adjectives, comparative and superlative forms taught throughout the four previous lessons. One of the members of each team stands at the front of the class and the teacher hands them in turns cards from a deck. The cards have the name of one of the songs chosen at the beginning of the unit written on them (see Materials). For the first round, the students will have to describe the song to their teammates without saying the name of the tune itself or the artist, and only using adjectives in their original form. For the next round, a different member from each group comes to the front and the process is repeated; although this time the person describing the song can only use comparative forms. In the final round a different student comes to the front and the process is repeated with only superlative forms. As an example, if a student gets "Jump" by Van Halen, they could say "this song is happy" in	15 minutes	Ss-Ss

the first round, "this song is happier than "Go Your Own Way"" in the second round and "this song is the happiest" in the third round. If an adjective has already been used in a round, it cannot be used until the next round. Also, the description must be full sentences, and cannot simply consist of the adjectives. Failing to follow any of these rules will result in the turn passing on to the next group and not getting any points for that turn. Each team has 1 minute per round.	25 minutes	
Activity 2: The Final Showdown The final activity of the unit plan consists of a spoken discussion about the respective songs. In turns, each of the groups will argue in favour of the song they got assigned in Lesson 1. While encouraged to use the adjectives and forms taught throughout the lesson, the activity is more focused on letting the students express their likes and dislikes in any way they see fit, simulating a real communicative situation. The students will have "talking chips" and may only speak a second time once all the members of their group have participated at least once. Points will be awarded according to the discussion rubric (see Assessment tools) and bonus points can be given if all students in a group participate in a meaningful way (at the teacher's discretion).	10 minutes	Ss-Ss
Activity 3: Verdict After the discussion, the teacher will announce the final scores to the class. Before that however, as a sort of extension activity if there is time to spare, the teacher can give the students a chance to give another group additional points if they state their reasons for giving them. The person from each group to award the points and speak in this final round should be the student who did not give the clues in Musical Taboo, thereby ensuring that the participation throughout the lesson is as balanced as possible.	20 minutes	Ss-Ss T-Ss

8. Appendices

APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT CHART

Item	Assessment Tool	Curricular Criteria	Percentage	Team points
Interview with a Star (Lesson 4)	Speaking Rubric	Crit.IN.2.1 Crit.IN.2.2	30%	3000
Free Discussion Activities and Debates (Lessons 2 and 5)	Speaking Rubric	Crit.IN.2.1 Crit.IN.2.2	20%	1000 points each
Preposition Cube (Lesson 3)	Number of correct answers (out of 5)	Crit.IN. 3.1.	5%	500 points
Musical Taboo (Lesson 5)	Number of correct answers of the group	Crit.IN.2.1 Crit.IN.2.2	5%	500 points
Songwriting (Lesson 1)	Writing Rubric	Crit.IN.4.1. Crit.IN.4.4.	10%	1000 points
Additional Points (whole group participation, votes during verdict)	Obervation	None	10%	1000 points
Classroom Behaviour (All Lessons)	Observation	None	20%	None

APPENDIX 2: SPEAKING RUBRIC ORAL PRODUCTION (Discussions and Interviews)

	4	3	2	1
PRONUNCIATION	The student has an outstanding pronunciation, making near no errors and almost mirroring a native speaker	The student has a remarkable pronunciation, making few (3-5) errors while speaking.	The student shows an inconsistent pronunciation, pronouncing some of the words correctly and some others incorrectly.	The student struggles and shows visible difficulty when producing oral language, making basic mistakes on a frequent base.
FLUENCY	The student shows and readiness and no difficulty when being prompted to speak, demonstrating confidence and clarity in the oral production.	The student makes few mistakes, but still shows easiness and readiness when being prompted to speak.	The student is able to build simple sentences without much difficulty.	The student shows difficulty when building sentences.

ACCURACY/ WORD CHOICE	The student shows sophistication and a great command of the language in the words chosen in their production.	The student shows a good command of the words chosen of the language in their production.	The student shows a basic command of the language in the words chosen for their production.	The student can only produce a limited number of words.
CONTENT	The student's production reflects a clear and deep understanding of the topic and of the case by giving an elaborate oral product making reference to specific details and data.	The student's production reflects a good understanding of the topic and of the case by giving a suitable oral product making reference to data.	The student's answer reflects basic understanding of the topic by giving a short and undetailed oral product.	The student's oral product reflects a lack of comprehension of the topic, giving an answer that has nothing to do with the required topic.

Adapted from:

https://study.com/academy/lesson/esl-speaking-rubrics.html

APPENDIX 3: WRITING RUBRIC SONGWRITING (Lesson 1)

	4	3	2	1
USE OF VOCABULARY AND STRUCTURES	All of the vocabulary and structures required in the activity were used correctly, and there are barely any mistakes in their use	Most of the vocabulary and structures required were used, with very few mistakes in their use	Some of the vocabulary and structures required were used, there were several mistakes in their use	Almost no vocabulary or structures required were used, and most of them were used incorrectly
COHESION	The content of the verses makes sense and has internal consistency	The content of the verses for the most part make sense and is internally consistent	The content of the verses makes some sense and has some degree of internal consistency	The content of the verses has no internal consistency and is not well connected
ACCURACY	There are barely any grammatical or spelling mistakes in the versesof the group	There are some grammatical or spelling mistakes in the versesof the group	There are many grammatical or spelling mistakes in the versesof the group	The versesof the group contain many grammatical and spelling mistakes not expected at their level

9. Materials

Lesson 1

Show clip: Never Mind the Buzzcocks Episode 2 Series 23 (BBC Two). As available at Youtube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofG86kwD5vE

Lyrics Handout 1 (Lesson 1)

"Harder Better Faster Stronger"-Daft Punk

Work it **harder**

Make it **better**

Do it **faster**

Makes us **stronger**

More than ever

Hour after

Our work is

Never over

"Back of Love"- Echo and the Bunnymen

Easier said than done you said

But it's **more difficult** to say

With eyes **bigger than** our bellies

We want to but we can't look away

The superlative (Lesson 2)

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year- Andy Williams

It's the **most wonderful** time of the year

There'll be much mistltoeing

And hearts will be glowing

When loved ones are near

It's the **most wonderful** time of the year

"The Greatest Show"- The Greatest Showman

We light it up, we won't come down

And the sun can't stop us now

Watching it come true, it's taking over you

Oh, this is the **greatest** show

"You're the Best Around"- Joe Esposito

Never doubt that you're the one

And you can have your dreams!

You're the **best**!

Around!

Nothing's gonna ever keep you down

Celebrity Name Cards (Lesson 2)

Ed Sheeran	Ariana Grande	Katy Perry
Bruno Mars	Kanye West	Beyoncé

Lyrics handout 2 (Lesson 3)

"In Your House"- The Cure

I play at night **in** your house

I live another life

Pretending to swim

In your house

I change the time **in** your house

The hours I take

Go so slow

"Under the Bridge"- Red Hot Chilli Peppers

Under the bridge downtown

Is where I drew some blood

Under the bridge downtown

I could not get enough

"Over the Hills and Far Away"- Gary Moore

Over the hills and far away,

For ten long years he'll count the days.

Over the mountains and the seas,

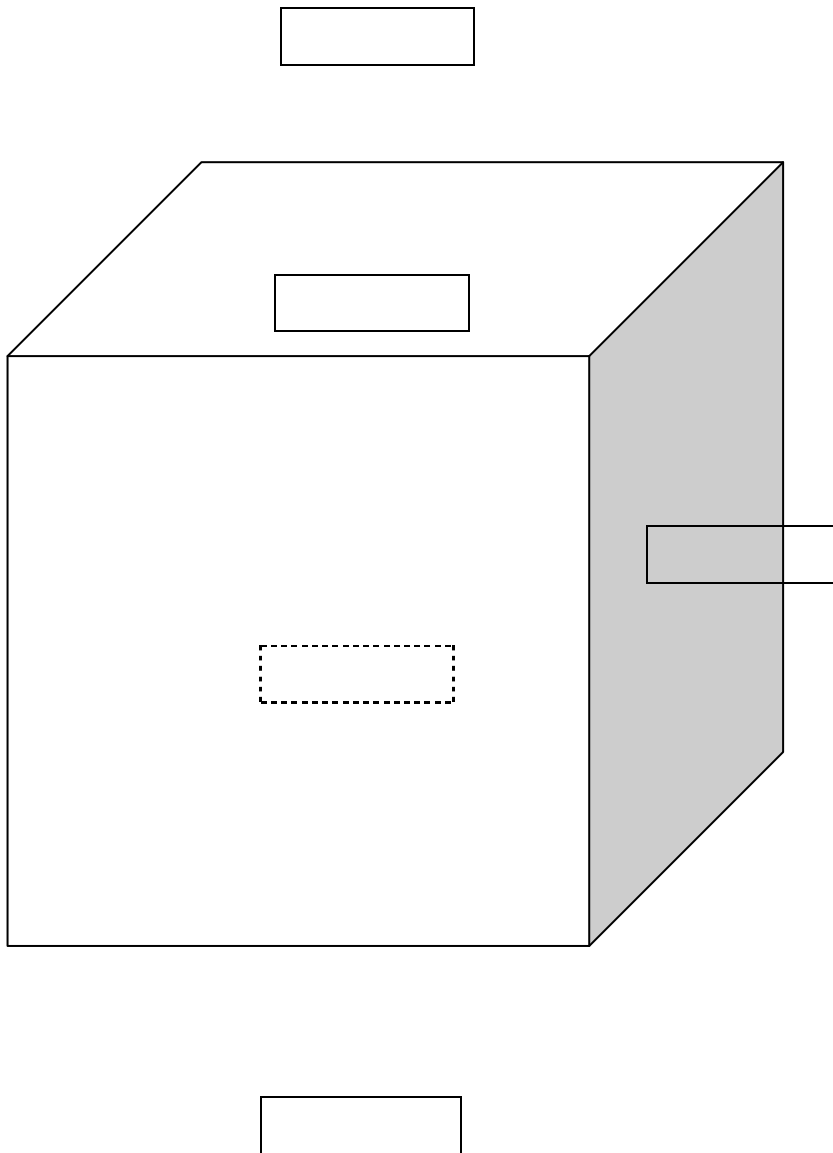A prisoner's life for him there'll be

"On the Roof"- The Drifters

On the roof, the only place I know

Where you just have to wish to make it so

Let's go up **on** the roof (up **on** the roof)

"Sit Next to Me"- Foster the People

So come over here and sit **next** to me

We can see where things go naturally

Just say the word and I'll part the sea

Just come over here and sit **next** to me

- - Complete the cube with the words in bold. Use the song fragments to help you:

Interview Cards Lessons 3 and 4

Interviewer: Jimi Hendrix	**Celebrity: Jimi Hendrix**
Played the guitar	Played the guitar
Was left-handed	Born in 1942
Band: The Jimi Hendrix Experience	Died in 1970, at the age of 27
Wore colourful clothes	Formed a band with his own name
Considered by many as the best electric guitarist in the world	
Died in his twenties	

Interviewer: Aretha Franklin	Celebrity: Aretha Franklin
Singer, songwriter and activist	Started singing gospel at a young age
Popular soul artist	Born in 1942
Died very recently	Died in 2018
Born in Memphis, Tennessee	Known as "the Queen of Soul"
Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame	

Interviewer: John Bonham	Celebrity: John Bonham
Played the drums	Was a member of Led Zeppelin
Was born in the UK	Born in 1948
Also known as Bonzo	The most famous drummer in hard rock
His band has sold over 8 million albums	His son is also a musician
Had long black hair	

Interviewer: Kurt Cobain	Celebrity: Kurt Cobain
Singer and guitarist	Member of Nirvana
Died at the age of 27	Was left-handed
Had long, blonde hair	Born in 1967 in Aberdeen, Washington
Was a member of a popular grunge band	His band's second album sold over 10 million copies
His music was very controversial at the time	
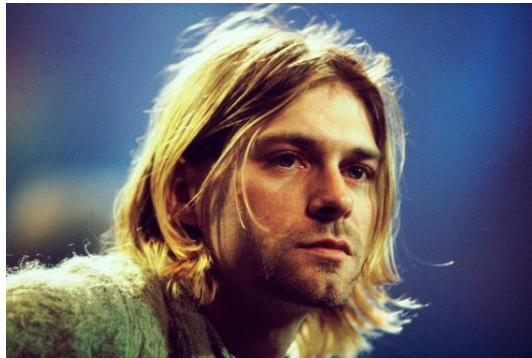
Interviewer: Freddie Mercury	Celebrity: Freddie Mercury
	61
Singer, pianist and guitarist	Member of a very popular English band
Had a moustache	Wore colourful clothes on stage
Born in Stone Town, Tanzania, in 1946	Died in 1994
Considered one of the best singers in rock history	Sang opera, pop and rock music
His band is still playing music today	

Interviewer: Geddy Lee	Celebrity: Geddy Lee
Plays the bass in Rush	Sings in a Canadian rock band
Born in 1953 in Toronto, Canada	Can play several instruments
Has long black hair	Also known as "Dirk"
Wears glasses	Has several Grammy award nominations
His most popular album is "Moving Pictures"	

Interviewer: Joan Jett	Celebrity: Joan Jett
Singer, guitarist and actress	Born in 1958
Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Her most popular song is "I Love Rock n Roll"
Plays hard rock and punk music	Member of The Runaways from a very young age
Has straight black hair	Has appeared in several films
Started her own band at the age of 15, and she is still playing music	

Interviewer: David Bowie	Celebrity: David Bowie
Died very recently	Musician and actor
Performed under many nicknames	Born in England in 1947
Played guitar, keyboard and saxophone	Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame
Appeared in the musical film *Labyrinth*, released in 1986	Often wore makeup and costumes onstage

Musical Taboo Cards (To print several copies)

Hey Jude- The Beatles	Go Your Own Way- Fleetwood Mac
Jump- Van Halen	Closing Time- Semisonic

- **Buzzer app used:** *Kahoot!* Each of the four groups is assigned one colour, and the teacher asks for the answer of the group whose colour was pressed first.
- Link https://create.kahoot.it/details/buzzer-app/eabdd887-85cd-4b8d-b2ed-4ee7db79e111

Songs used in the plan:

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-King, C., and Goffin, G. (1962). "Up on the Roof" (Recorded by The Drifters). On *Save the Last Dance for Me*. Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC (1962). As available at YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=puM1k-S86nE

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-Lewis, R., Paul, J.,and Pasek, B. (2017). "The Greatest Show". (Recorded by The Greatest Showman Ensemble). On *The Greatest Showman Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*. Warner/Chappell Music, Inc, Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC, Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd (2017). As available at YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NyVYXRD1Ans

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-Smith, R.J., Tolhurst, L.A., Gallup, S., Hartley, M. (1980). "In Your House". (Recorded by The Cure). On *Seventeen Seconds*. Universal Music Publishing Group (1982). As available at YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZ8h_m8vmpQ

-Van Halen, A., Van Halen., E., and Roth, D. (1984). "JUMP". (Recorded by Van Halen). On *1984*. Warner/Chappell Music, Inc. As available at YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwYN7mTi6HM

-Willis, A., and Conti, B. (1995). "You're the Best Around". (Recorded by Joe Esposito). On *The Karate Kid*. Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC. As available at YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFUJrg5GAvs

-Wilson, D. (1998). "Closing Time". (Recorded by Semisonic). On *Feeling Strangely Fine*. Warner/Chappell Music, Inc. (1998). As available at YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGytDsqkQY8