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Abstract

The use of songs as a technique in teaching is appreciated for their linguistic, cultural, pedagogical and entertaining features. Songs are valuable learning materials which can be used to teach and develop every aspect of a language. This paper aims to review different classroom-based studies focused on the effects of songs on Young Learners' vocabulary development and motivation. This review has the aim of, firstly, exploring the effectiveness of using songs as a means to improve Young Learners' English language vocabulary and, secondly, as a means of influence Young Learners' motivation towards English. Moreover, the paper also contains a theoretical framework of Young Learners in relation to both vocabulary and motivation. It also deals with how areas such as vocabulary and motivation might be related to songs. Finally, bearing in mind the findings on motivation and vocabulary, the paper includes a pedagogical proposal for an EFL class based. The analysis of the different studies show that songs have a positive influence on vocabulary of Young Learners. Furthermore, findings conclude that songs undoubtedly improve Young Learners' motivation and create a positive learning environment. Students motivated with songs feel happy, active and eager to learn.

Key words: Songs, EFL, Vocabulary, Motivation, Young Learners, Primary education, Learning.

Resumen

Hoy en día, el uso de las canciones como técnica en la enseñanza está valorado por sus características lingüísticas, culturales, pedagógicas y de entretenimiento. Las canciones son valiosas herramientas de aprendizaje que se pueden usar para enseñar y desarrollar cada aspecto de un idioma. Este documento tiene como objetivo analizar diferentes estudios de aula sobre los efectos de las canciones en el vocabulario y motivación de los niños de Educación Primaria. El análisis tiene como objetivo, en primer lugar, confirmar la efectividad del uso de las canciones como un medio para mejorar el vocabulario Inglés y, en segundo lugar, como un medio para influir en la motivación de los niños hacia el Inglés. Además, el documento también contiene una parte teórica centrada en el vocabulario y la motivación de los niños de Educación Primaria. También explica la relación entre las canciones y vocabulario, la motivación. Finalmente, teniendo en cuenta los resultados obtenidos previamente sobre la motivación y vocabulario, se incluye una propuesta didáctica para una clase de estudiantes de Inglés como lengua extranjera. El análisis de los diferentes estudios muestra que las canciones tienen una influencia positiva en el desarrollo del vocabulario de los niños de educación primaria. Además, los resultados también indican que las canciones indudablemente mejoran la motivación de los jóvenes y crean un ambiente de aprendizaje positivo. Cuando se trabaja con canciones, los niños se sienten felices, activos y ansiosos por aprender.

Palabras clave: Canciones, EFL, Vocabulario, Motivación, Niños de Educación Primaria, Educación primaria, Aprendizaje

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1. INTRODUCTION

My decision of the topic of using songs as a technique to learn languages was taken since I am an EFL teacher and I am interested in the techniques that I can use to teach Young Learners in the classroom. When I started to work in the language school I am working nowadays, I was really worried because I had never taught children before. Then, I started to be very interested in the different techniques I could use to teach English to children. I discovered different websites which talked about the use of songs with little children. As I did not know exactly how to teach children or what methodology use, I started to work with different songs in my lessons. Then, I discovered that music was an important technique to be used with children and this is why I have decided to focus my TFG on the use of songs in the EFL classroom with Young Learners. Another reason why I chose this topic is the importance of learning English nowadays. Everybody knows how important learning a foreign language is in our society at these days in order to be prepared for the future and professional life. As learning a foreign language is essential, I think it has to be a process as natural and enjoyable as possible. Songs are an amazing technique that teachers can use to make the learning process a positive, participatory and entertaining experience.

Moreover, songs are relevant to the field of language learning since there are many personal experiences which proof the benefits of songs in learning a language. Erika Kerekes, explains her own self-study process while learning English; "Listening to songs and lyrics, singing them and translating them into Hungarian" (Kerekes, as cited in Nunan & Richards, 2015, p. 33). In her experience, she describes how learning songs was "the method that worked best for me beyond the classroom". As everybody knows, songs are valued and appreciated by many children and teenagers, being part of their everyday life. Therefore, songs are an attractive method to use with children and they are relevant to the field of language teaching since there are many studies which confirm the benefits of using songs in learning a language. Songs are also well-known to be valuable in the EFL classroom. As it has been mentioned, many studies show how songs facilitate the acquisition of a language. For instance, a "listen-and-sing" learning condition can help verbatim memory for spoken foreign language phrases (Ludke, Ferreira, & Overy, 2014). Moreover, teaching songs is a successful method that can be used by teachers to decrease students' anxiety (Dolean, 2015). This finding is essential since most of empirical research shows that anxiety has a negative impact on FL student's performance (e.g.

Horwitz, 2001, 2010; Liu & Zhang, 2008; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999; Sparks et al., 1997). According to the affective filter hypothesis by Krashen and Terrel (1983), learners can have better academic results when their "affective filter" is low, this is to say, when they do not have an emotional barrier raised in the learning process. Therefore, being anxious in the EFL classroom means having an emotional barrier in the affective filter and consequently, having a poor academic result. Songs play an important role in the EFL classroom, mediating the anxiety level of students and therefore, improving academic performance. Furthermore, integrating experiences with songs in the early childhood classroom supports the literacy development of Young English language learners (Paquette, K. R., & Rieg, S. A., 2008). Songs are beneficial for language skill development, reading performance and writing process and therefore, they are beneficial for language acquisition.

This paper attempts to, firstly, confirm the effectiveness of using songs as a means to improve Young Learners' English language vocabulary and, secondly, determine whether songs influence Young Learners' motivation to learn English. Moreover, since there is not a specific methodology to learn English through music, it also attempts to develop a pedagogical proposal to put into practise all the knowledge learnt.

The main sources of information for this paper are CRAI, Google Scholar and ELT Journal.

In this paper, first of all, in order to contextualize the work, there is a theoretical framework on vocabulary L2 acquisition for Young Learners. After that, there is an analysis of different classroom studies which are focused on vocabulary development through songs. Then, there is a theoretical framework on Young Learners' motivation for learning English. Continually, there is an analysis of different classroom studies which are focused on the positive motivational effects of learning English through songs. After this section, there is a pedagogical proposal of how to apply songs into a class, bearing in mind, the results of the different classroom studies analysed in the previous sections. Finally, there is a conclusion which summarizes the main points of the paper.

2. VOCABULARY L2 ACQUISITION FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

Vocabulary is the number of words that people know and usually use every day (Nathan, 2013). In addition, vocabulary is a key aspect of language since without enough range of

words, communication can "break down". As Folse asserts, lack of grammar can limit communication, however, without a wide range of vocabulary, communication can break down (Folse, 2004).

2.1. How Young Learners learn L2 vocabulary?

Research on how YL learners learn the L2 is quite scarce since the present L2 research nowadays is related to adults. However, the current investigations on YLL explain how L2 vocabulary development occurs in very young children. According to Hestetræet, recent investigations suggest: "Learners pick up vocabulary and manage to engage in short dialogues even before they start school". Moreover, "pre-primary school children actively use chunks in child initiated play in English" (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 221).

In reference to vocabulary knowledge, Hestetræet asserts, "in order for children to know a word, it is vital to know its form, meaning and use, both productively and receptively" (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 224). This is to say, learners have to know the form of the word; pronunciation, spelling and grammar. The meaning; the actual denotative definition of the word and the use; the words that usually collocate besides that specific word, whether that word is frequent or not and the context where it usually appears. (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 224). Apart from this, learning as in any other process in life is a process and it does take time. This is to say, the learning of vocabulary in Young Learners is incremental, children learn words little by little. As Hestetræet puts it, "it takes many encounters to develop word knowledge of form, meaning and use, and for this knowledge to be consolidated and enhanced" (H estetræet, 2019, p. 224).

2.2. What vocabulary do Young Learners need?

In today's world, English has become one of the languages more used, influential and spoken. Many children are expected to use English in their future private and professional lives. It is due to the widespread use of the language, that learning L2 English vocabulary has become essential in Young Learners' lives. In relation to vocabulary, Long and Richards state the following: "[vocabulary is] an important role in the lives of all language users, since it is one of the major predictors of school performance, and successful learning and use of new vocabulary is also key to membership of many social and professional roles" (Long and Richards in Hestetræet, 2019, p. 222). Moreover, there are two critical factors that teachers should consider when selecting what vocabulary to teach

children: choosing age appropriate vocabulary and vocabulary children find meaningful. Furthermore, chunks, defined as the "group of words that commonly occur together" (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 224) seem to be quite important in YL since they "provide children with ready-made phrases they can use to express meaning" (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 224). As Hestetræet puts it, "Chunks have been described as being very useful for children, both when expressing their needs and when building up an L2" (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 224).

2.3. How to teach vocabulary to Young Learners?

Young Learners who learn English as a Foreign Language may not have the necessary input outside the classroom, since they live in a country where English is not the predominant language. Therefore, it is essential that teachers provide their students with adequate vocabulary. One factor teachers should take into account when teaching vocabulary is interaction. It is well known that early social interaction is beneficial for different areas of child development like for example creativity, empathy and confidence. Interaction also seems to be important in child vocabulary development; in reference to the interactionist approach, Mitchell et al. assert, "is successfully demonstrating many interconnections between L2 interaction and L2 learning" (Mitchell et al. 2013, p. 187). Another advice is that teachers should build on the prior knowledge of vocabulary children have when they start school (Lefever, 2013). A third recommendation is that teachers should have a varied and balanced approach to teach YLL vocabulary. This is to say, the process should contemplate both explicit and implicit teaching and learning.

2.4. Vocabulary and songs

Moreover, as Hestetræet asserts, there are different pedagogical resources teachers can use to develop L2 vocabulary (Hestetræet, 2019). One useful resource teachers can use are songs. They are beneficial to increase vocabulary of Young Learners as shown in many findings (Devi, 2011; Burhayani 2013; and Zhogi and Shoari, 2015).

Songs are usually used in the EFL class to improve Young Learners' L2 vocabulary for different reasons. Firstly, songs can provide the context for vocabulary learning since they are usually focused on a specific theme or topic. For example, the song *I Can Sing a Rainbow* is focused on colours, therefore it might be useful for reviewing colours. Moreover, the song *Old MadDonald had a farm* is about animals, therefore it could be used to review animals. As songs tend to be focused on a concrete topic, they might be

useful for teachers to teach and review a particular lexical set. Moreover, children's songs are characterized by the use of monosyllabic and simple lexical items used in a particular context (for example, the vocabulary of the house). Clear examples of songs with simple vocabulary are lullabies or songs used in storytelling, since they have lyrics with simple vocabulary words, which is repeated many times. In addition, children's songs are also characterized by the use of simple verb tense, present tense verb is key in these songs. Finally, they are also characterized by a clear pronunciation which might also help for the acquisition of new vocabulary.

Moreover, songs are useful since they can expose learners to real vocabulary. This is to say, through songs, listeners have the opportunity to be exposed to real language; daily spoken language which is very different from the language seen in text books or words in isolation. For example, a song can use very informal vocabulary. This might have a positive contribution for students since they can be exposed to common and natural vocabulary which is used in everyday language. Therefore, unlike textbooks which only provide students with artificial language, songs offer students real language.

Finally, the repetitive structure of songs helps YL to acquire and remember vocabulary. This is to say, students listen to songs, they hear the new vocabulary many times and this leads to acquisition. As many researchers into child language acquisition have confirmed, multiple encounters with lexical items are needed before they are internalised by the child. According to Hestetræet, "it may take at least 8–10 encounters to learn a word" (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 228). These repeated vocabulary exposures support the use of songs since repetition (repetition of the structure of the song and lexical repetition in different parts of the song) is a key feature in songs. Such repetition offers a huge exposure to selected words and can help to improve vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, songs help make more memorable and natural the learning of new lexical items and structures. For example, the song *Pizza and chips* follows a very repetitive structure and reinforces the days of the week. Moreover, repetition is seen as necessary in relation to good materials used in Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) and Teaching English to Very Young Learners (TEVYL). As Hestetræet asserts, "the materials used should provide repetition of input" (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 377).

3. CLASSROOM STUDIES ON VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SONGS

Young Learners can learn new vocabulary while working with songs. In the class studies analysed, children acquire vocabulary in different degrees. For example, Coyle Gomez Gracia's study, shows how five-year-old Spanish children EFL learners, were exposed to three 30-minute lessons which focused specifically on the presentation and practice of a well-known children's song. In order to assess the vocabulary knowledge of the children, vocabulary picture pre-tests were administered, as well as a delayed post-test (applied five weeks later). The result was that children acquired receptive vocabulary, this is to say, learners were able to understand a word when was heard or read. Although, they were not able to produce productive vocabulary, this is to say, learners were not able to express themselves in speech or writing. Moreover, an interesting finding of the study was that many children were able to recall more words one month after the lessons had been realized than immediately afterwards. As Coyle and Gómez Gracia assert "some indication can be found in our study that the children appeared to need more time to let the new words somehow 'sink in'" (Coyle & Gomez Gracia, 2014, p. 282). This could be explained if Hestetræet's previous comment on vocabulary learning is taken into account; the learning of vocabulary is a process and it takes time (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 224). However, another explanation for their better performance in the delayed post-test could be related to a matter of familiarity with the test mechanism. This is to say, children having previously participated in the pre and post-tests, had less anxiety level and therefore, in the delayed post-test task, they got better results.

In contrast to the previous results, David and Fan's study showed how children developed productive vocabulary; learners were able to produce meaningful morphemes. This study compared three groups of four-five-year-old Chinese kindergarten kids. The children were taught short English sentences of four-eight words through one of the different conditions; songs, choral repetition and control. The study was applied over a period of fifteen classes of forty minutes. A relevant finding of this study is that the results showed significant acquisition for words learnt through choral and singing conditions, but not for the control one. In the same line, Medina conducted a study which compared Spanish students in the United States. His study focused on the effectiveness of music and use of pictures, so he had 4 different groups learning through different conditions; one group heard the story spoken with illustrations, another group heard the story spoken without

illustrations, another group heard the story sung with illustrations. Finally, the other group heard the story sung without illustrations. The results of those children instructed through the song condition or picture condition were consistently higher than the others and the highest score was for the one which combined the song and the illustrations. However, there were not significant differences in presenting the story as a song or as a speech.

Similarly, to Medina's study, Lesnieweska and Pichette also compared the acquisition of vocabulary items either through speech (stories) or songs. Specifically, the study examined the acquisition of English vocabulary by Canadian French-speaking three-five year-old children across four consecutive weekly workshops. However, in contrast with Medina's results, which did not show significant difference between songs and spoken stories (storytelling), in this study, spoken stories were found to be more beneficial than songs. This is to say, the researchers discovered that story vocabulary was acquired at a more statistically significant level than song vocabulary. Results of this study also stressed that in order to achieve a significant recall of the target vocabulary, students needed to possibly have a higher number of encounters with the target words. This is in line with the previous Hestetræet's idea; repetition is key in vocabulary learning (Hestetræet, 2019, p. 228). Moreover, their results also suggested that animacy could be an important variable in L2; inanimate concepts need more repetition than animate ones. As Lesnieweska and Pichette puts it, "inanimate terms require more emphasis (a higher number of encounters) than animate ones" (Lesnieweska and Pichette, p. 28). In their data "animate items were remembered about twice as well as animate ones" (Lesniewska & Pichette, 2016, p. 28).

As the two last studies show (Lesniewska & Pichette, 2016; Medina, 1990), a common pattern of comparison in these studies are the method of instruction: learning though songs or through stories. In Medina's study, the differences between the song and speech groups were not important. In relation to his results, Medina asserted in 1990;

> Consequently, these findings support past positive claims: A musical medium promotes language acquisition to the same extent as a non-musical medium. Stated differently, the same amount of vocabulary is acquired from listening to a song as listening to a story (Medina, 1990, p. 3).

Moreover, he highlighted the uncertainty in relation to the music medium, and the need of further studies on this investigation, as Medina said, "Further investigation is needed

in order to determine whether a musical medium may promote even greater vocabulary acquisition than a non-musical medium" (Medina, 1990, p. 3). However, Lesnieweska and Pichette's study, showed how stories were more effective than songs at promoting vocabulary acquisition. Moreover, according to a survey (Chou, 2014), over 90 per cent of the students said stories were helpful to understand both vocabulary and teaching content. These results contrast slightly with the ones on songs; between 80 and 90 per cent of student agreed songs were helpful for the same purposes (Chou, 2014).

Another relevant pattern in vocabulary acquisition studies is the comparison of songs and another media such as pictures, illustrations (Medina, 1990). Previous results show how the use of pictures was positive and the combination of pictures and songs was significantly positive (Medina, 1990). However, a study by Džanić & Pejić (2016), which will be analysed in the succeeding section of this paper; motivation, shows that visuals, such as video or pictures are not key to vocabulary retention. This study compared two groups; the experimental group (EG), in which songs were presented in a video format along with the lyrics and the control group (CG), in which songs were presented without any visual support and without lyrics. After testing both groups on the vocabulary acquired, it was found that the group provided only with audio recordings of the songs (CG) performed slightly better results in vocabulary retention. This is in contrast with the results of the past study (Džanić & Pejić, 2016). Moreover, this is also in contrast with Linse's explanation, in which he asserts that visual representation accompanied with sound and text helps storing of information and creates a mental image of the input. Therefore, "visual representation accompanied with sound and text allows storing of information and creates a mental image of the input and thereby should produce a stronger relationship than the one created only through aural channels" (Linse in Džanić & Pejić, 2016). However, the results performed by the Control Group have to be taken into account since they do not confirm this explanation. In contrast, the results show that audio without visual support actually is a good method for learning the language. This is to say, the results prove the Linse's explanation wrong. Findings show that visuals, such as video or pictures, are not a key to success in vocabulary retention. They certainly support learning but are not crucial in such activities. Therefore, aural representation, on its own, proofs to be a very powerful means of vocabulary acquisition.

As a conclusion, the previous studies show that songs can promote successful acquisition of both receptive and productive vocabulary in some situations. Moreover, the findings

confirm that the learning of vocabulary is an incremental process which takes time (Coyle & Gomez Gracia, 2014). Results also confirmed that the more vocabulary items are repeated and encountered, the better results in vocabulary learning; repetition of vocabulary items is essential for vocabulary learning (Coyle & Gomez Gracia, 2014). Furthermore, inanimate vocabulary items need more repetition than animate ones (Coyle & Gomez Gracia, 2014). In addition, in relation to studies which discuss the beneficial effects of using pictures or videos along with songs, findings are quite different. Medina's study shows positive results for the use of songs along with illustrations. However, the use of video or illustrations along with songs does not seem to be better than songs alone according to other study (Džanić & Pejić, 2016). Moreover, as has been shown, a common pattern of comparison in these studies was acquisition of vocabulary through songs or stories. To summarize, none of the studies that included this comparison found a remarkable advantage for songs. However, in one study by Leśniewska and Pichette, was found that stories were better pedagogical resources at promoting vocabulary acquisition. Moreover, a higher amount of children seemed to consider stories as being more helpful to understand both vocabulary and teaching content. These findings imply that stories would be superior to songs at promoting vocabulary acquisition. However, as the number of studies which compare songs and stories is rather limited in this paper (there are only two studies which compare the different conditions), the findings may be considered limited and more research may be needed in the future.

4. YOUNG LEARNERS' MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

At these days, students' motivation towards learning English has become a central topic of many studies. This significant interest towards children' motivation is comprehensible as this individual variable is one of the most important key factors in learning. As Gardner says, "students' motivation and interest is essential for learning" (Gardner, as cited in *Aguirre*, *Bustinza* & *Garvich*, 2016, p. 178). Specifically, motivation is seen as the key variable to successful L2 learning (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). As Dörnyei and Ushioda stated: "motivation does not remain constant during the course of months, years or even during a single lesson. It ebbs and flows in complex ways in response to various internal

and external influences" (Dörnyei and Ushioda, as cited in Li, Han & Gao, 2019, p. 60). YL' L2 motivation is dynamic as well (Dörnyei 2000). A typical factor found in YL' L2 motivation is the decrease usually experiences over school grades (Carreira, 2006). As she argued, "developmental decline for motivation for language learning [and learning in general] may be a common phenomenon among school students, despite the contextual differences". (Carreira, as cited in Li, Han & Gao, 2019, p. 66). In her study she found that "students' motivation decreased with age and intrinsic motivation of third graders was significantly higher than their sixth-grade counterparts" (Li, Han & Gao, 2019, p. 66).

All around the world, YL are learning to speak English, but their reasons for wanting to study English can differ greatly. However, according to research, YL are not motivated by the same reasons, adults are. For example, "YL are less likely to be motivated for integrative reasons" (Li, Han & Gao, 2019, p. 63) since they do not have direct contact with native speakers. They are neither motivated by instrumental reasons since they do not have the pressure of getting a qualified job or entering in university (Li, Han & Gao, 2019, p. 66). In relation to YL's motivation, Li, Han & Gao assert:

> Specifically, motivation can be shaped by people involved in or related to their learning of English (e.g., parents, teachers and peers) and teaching and learning in the classroom environment (e.g., learning activities and way of instructions), or other related factors (Li, Han & Gao, 2019, p. 63).

Among these factors, the learning activities and way of instruction seem to be very significant. In a study which focused on students' motivation for learning L2 Arabic, it was discovered that students' satisfaction with their L2 Arabic language programme could best predict their motivation (Donitsa-*Schmidt*, Inbar, and *Shohamy 2004*). Therefore, teachers are the ones who have to work with an appropriate way of instruction to keep the level of students' motivation as high as possible. One of the learning activities EFL teachers can use to improve YL motivation are classroom songs as they have many benefits. Probably the most obvious benefit of songs in the Young Learner classroom is that they are enjoyable. Most children have fun and enjoy while singing and usually respond well to using songs in the classroom, since they have the opportunity to learn using music, which is one of the things that Young Learners really enjoy and have contact with nowadays. However, there are more significant advantages of using songs other than just being fun.

Firstly, songs can bring variety to the everyday classroom routine. As Keskin indicates: "one of the most important advantages of using songs in the EFL classroom is that they increase students' motivation and save the lesson from being boring and monotonous" (Keshin, as cited in Almutairi, Shukri, 2016, p. 138). This variety makes learners to be interested and pay attention and, at the same time, it can help keep classroom motivation, potentially improve it and thereby help learners to reach higher levels of achievement. This connection between the arts (in this case, music) and learning are well explained by Posner. According to him, the process begins with curiosity, which is stimulated by experiencing an art form; this curiosity creates motivation and interest and leads to heightened attention, and when children are in that alert state of heightened attention, new learning occurs (Posner, 2008). Therefore, since music is motivating, it makes learners to pay attention and activates the learning process.

Moreover, songs, in general, can help to create a relaxed, comfortable and informal atmosphere that turns the classroom into a nonthreatening environment. By reducing anxiety, songs can help increase interest of students and motivate them to learn the target language. Students usually associate songs to entertainment rather than study and consequently, find learning English through songs fun and enjoyable.

Therefore, music is a strategic choice that can increase learner motivation and awareness in the classroom. If music is used effectively, the environment is fun and motivational and this can make Young Learners feel confident when they are using the language. In the following pages, there is an analysis of different classroom studies which focus on the possible motivational effects of learning English through songs.

5. CLASSROOM STUDIES ON L2 MOTIVATION AND SONGS

Songs can be a good way to improve motivation. In the class studies analysed in this section, songs are used as a pedagogical tool to motivate students and create a positive environment. For instance, Aguirre, Bustinza, Garvich (2016) studied two classes (A and B) of eight-year-old children. Each class had to attend four English classes, two with music and two without music (four classes in total). Both classes A and B were given a questionnaire about their perception of their English classes with and without the use of

songs. A significant question of this questionnaire was the following: "What encourages you to learn English?". Their answer show that songs were the favourite learning strategy in class B and one of the two favourite learning strategies in class A (along with writing exercises and assignments).

Moreover, in this same study, a research team carried out observations in both classes (A and B) and in both modalities (music and no music). The researchers investigated three dimensions of motivation: participation, interest and attention. The observations showed that when music was used, there were positive changes in almost all the dimensions of motivation. In summary, in classes with music, students paid more attention, participated much more frequently and asked questions about the exercises; so they were more interested. As the researchers stated, "The classroom environment became more positive and cheerful when there was song playing in the background" (Aguirre, Bustinza, Garvich, 2016, p. 181). Moreover, they did all the tasks with more energy, seemed to be very happy and enthusiastic and felt more involved in the class, as the article mentions, "[students] showed a great desire for participating in groups" (Aguirre, Bustinza, Garvich, 2016, p. 181).

Similarly, Džanić & Pejić (2016) compared classes of 7-8-year-old Bosnian children and also found positive results on motivation. In the experimental group (EG), songs were presented in a video format along with the lyrics and in the control group (CG), songs were presented without any visual support and without lyrics. In order to examine the level of motivation provided by the songs, students were given a questionnaire which contained three different parts.

In the first part of the questionnaire, students had to choose the most and least like activities in English classes. Results were similar to Aguirre, Bustinza, Garvich's study; singing songs had also a positive result, since results showed that it was the second most liked activity in both classes (EG) and (CG). Moreover, in the (EG), anybody did not like singing songs and in the (CG) only one student did not like singing songs.

In the second part of this same questionnaire, students were presented a table in which they were asked to choose "yes" or "no" to some statements about songs. The students' responses to the statements were the following:

	EG (%)	CG (%)
4. I like listening to songs in English	100	78.57
5. I don't like singing songs in English lessons	15.38	28.57
6. Songs are boring	7.69	21.43
7. The songs that our teacher plays for us are not fun	0	14.29
8. It is fun when we sing songs in English	84.61	92.85
9. I like dancing while singing	69.23	78.57
10. I like it when the teacher dances and sings with us	100	92.85
11. I like watching and listening to songs on TV	92.30	92.85
12. I learned some words with the help of songs	100	85.71
13. I can remember the song quickly	92.30	71.42
14. I sing English songs at home	84.61	50

Table 5

Students' responses to the statements about songs

Table 5 are Students' responses to the statements about songs. This table is taken from the article *The Effect of Using Songs on Young Learners and Their Motivation for Learning English* by Džanić & Pejić, 2016.

As it can be seen in the table, most of the students liked listening to English songs. Moreover, they liked when the teacher danced and sang with them and when they learnt words with the help of songs. Furthermore, the majority of students liked watching and listening to songs on TV.

In addition, this table also shows that the responses in relation to songs of the EG (class exposed to the video and the lyrics) were, in almost all the items, more positive than the responses of the CG (only exposed to the songs). Therefore, it seems that the combination of audio, video and lyrics of the songs does have a positive impact on students' perception of songs. An important feature is that in the EG, all students claimed that they learnt some words with the help of songs. This might suggest that support of the video and the lyrics, does influence, at least, the learning perception of students, since they all agree that songs have helped them to learn some words. Consequently, audio-visual material might be more effective than audio material alone.

However, in this table, there is also evidence that some students do not completely enjoy songs in the English class. As it can be seen, positive statements in relation to songs, do not receive a complete positive response by all the students. Moreover, negative statements in relation to songs; such as "I don't like listening to songs in English lessons" and "the songs that our teacher plays for us are not fun" are still receiving some votes by some children. A possible explanation for the negative responses in relation to songs is that children learn differently; children possess several intelligences developed

differently as well; Gardner's multiple intelligence's theory (Gardner, 1983; Gardner 1993). This is to say, some children possess some intelligences which are stronger than others. Therefore, in this questionnaire, the children in which musical or kinaesthetic intelligence is the dominant one, are the ones who probably enjoyed song classes more. However, the children with other dominant intelligences are, probably, the ones who did not really enjoy English lessons with songs and therefore, have negative responses in relation to using songs in the English classroom. Another possible explanation for some of the children' negative responses in relation to songs is that teachers sometimes do not select songs appropriate to the level of difficulty of students. Then, if students feel that songs are very difficult and they cannot understand them, this makes them feel not really motivated and engaged with the activity. Therefore, students who are not able to understand songs completely, probably are not really enjoying the classes and as a result, they have negative responses in relation to songs.

Finally, in the third part of the questionnaire, students were asked to say the reason why they liked or disliked songs in the English class. Most of the students said that songs were "fun and interesting" (Džanić & Pejić, 2016, p. 50).

In another study by Sevik (2014), analysed eleven-year-old students from four different schools in Turkey. He wanted to explore the beliefs of young EFL learners about classroom songs. The students were given a questionnaire which included some young EFL learner beliefs about classroom songs and three possible answers "agree", "undecided" and disagree". Some of the statements were related to motivation, as for example, "I enjoy learning English through classroom songs" which was the second mostly agreed item. Moreover, the statement "learning English through classroom songs increases my motivation" was one of the third mostly agreed items and only two participants disagreed. In addition, 65,89% of students agreed that "learning classroom songs in English lessons increased their self-confidence". Furthermore, a 68, 99% of students agreed with the sentence "we should learn more classroom songs in English lessons". Finally, the statement "learning classroom songs in English lessons is a waste of time" was the mostly disagreed item along with "learning classroom songs is not effective in English lessons" which was the second. These findings revealed that YL perceived songs as an enjoyable and motivational tool. Furthermore, songs in English lessons seem to be an effective tool, since they help to improve students' self-confidence,

many students want to learn more songs in the English lessons and they do not consider them a waste of time.

Moreover, this same study also wanted to analyse the current practise about classroom songs used in Turkey EFL contexts. The answers revealed how passionate and motivated students felt for English classroom songs since the participants would like to learn almost seven times more classroom songs per year. This finding is in line with the statement of the previous questionnaire; "we should learn more classroom songs in English lessons".

Finally, a study by Matthew P. Wallace examined the factors contributing motivation of young EFL learners. The participants were given a questionnaire and were also divided into different levels of motivation; highly motivated learners, moderately motivated learners and lowly motivated learners, depending on their attitudes towards learning English. When asked about their preferred learning tasks, all the learners consistently reported that listening to English songs was among their favoured activities.

As a conclusion, results show that students are motivated and become even more engaged when songs are used in the English lessons (Aguirre, Bustinza, Garvich, 2016). Moreover, three of the previous studies show that songs are one of the most preferred activities in the English classroom (Aguirre, Bustinza, Garvich, 2016, Džanić & Pejić, 2016 & Matthew P. Wallace, 2020). Furthermore, the combination of songs along with video materials and lyrics results in a significant better students' perception of songs in the English classroom (Džanić & Pejić, 2016). This finding could suggest that audio-visual material might be more motivational than audio material alone. In the selected studies, even though there are some students who do not completely enjoy songs in the English class (Džanić & Pejić, 2016), most of them enjoy using songs in the classroom. Moreover, EFL learners have strong positive beliefs about classroom songs (Sevik, 2014).

6. PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL

There is not a specific methodology to learn English through songs, but it is possible to combine both disciplines, music and English, in order to learn the English language. This is to say, the teacher could use different methodologies to introduce songs. In supporting of both the theoretical framework presented and the different classroom-studies analysed before, in this section, there is a pedagogical proposal in which a possible activity using

a song in the EFL classroom is proposed. The activity selected will mainly focus on increasing the two aspects of relevance in this paper; vocabulary and motivation.

As has been stated throughout this paper, songs are beneficial for vocabulary development and motivation improvement. However, sometimes songs are used ineffectively in the EFL classroom; used as activities between learning. Moreover, as Millington points out, "no matter how enjoyable or memorable, singing songs in itself will not teach anyone to use the language, and will not give students the ability to communicate in another language. The words in songs unfortunately do not transfer into use." (Millington, 2011, p. 137). Therefore, it is advisable to look for an appropriate, effective and useful way to present songs into the EFL classroom. Millington was interested in discovering how to use songs effectively to teach English to Young Learners. Then, on his research, he discovered that a possible manner to use songs effectively was turning songs into language learning tasks (Millington, 2011). As Millington stated: "developing a song from an activity into a task with preparation, core, and follow-up stages might be one way to help transfer the words in a song into use and maximize the potential of songs as teaching and learning tools." (Millington, 2011, p. 139).

The following picture proposes the three stages of a song as a task designed by Millington (2011). The three stages are the following; preparation, core activity and follow up.
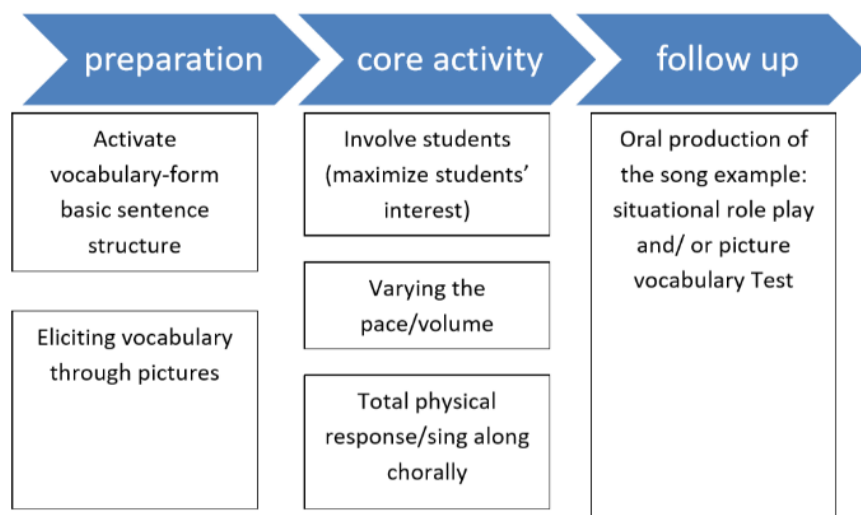

Figure 1. Framework of the song-based learning

Figure 1 is taken from the article by Millington, 2011, *Using Songs Effectively to Teach English to Young Learners.*

Moreover, in each stage, there is a proposal of the different activities which must be done. The pedagogical proposal which will be exposed in the following pages, will keep a similar structure to Millington's approach about using songs effectively turning them into a task. The activity is thought to be implemented with Young Learners around the age of 12 years old, therefore, they are in a sixth grade class.

6.1. An activity based on Yellow Submarine by The Beatles

In this activity, the popular song *Yellow Submarine* from "The Beatles" is used. There are several reasons why this specific song could be suitable for language learning purposes. Firstly, the lyrics contain easy words, many of which are repeated several times. Moreover, sentences are short and there are pauses in between each sentence. The song has also a repetitive rhythm and a repetitive structure which may facilitate the retention of key vocabulary and language patterns. Finally, it is rather a slow song which might help YL to focus on the target vocabulary.

6.1.1. Preparation stage

To start with, in the preparation stage, the teacher invites the children to sing *Good Morning* song. Actually, singing *Good Morning* song has the aim to prepare students to learn as well as to increase students' motivation to learn English. To continue with, as Millington asserts, "given the goal of the task is singing the song in the core activity stage, it is useful to activate the vocabulary and to form basic sentence structures in the preparation stage" (Millington, 2011, p. 138).

In line with Millington's quote, in this first activity of the preparation stage, the teacher will use a picture to elicit the target vocabulary and to form some simple sentence structures of the selected song. Before selecting the picture though, the teacher will select the concepts and expressions he/she wants to work with. For example, the teacher could elicit the vocabulary and sentence structures by asking questions of a picture, in which there is a yellow submarine in the sea and there are sailors living in it. As the actions in the song are expressed with the first person plural "We all live in a Yellow Submarine", the teacher will ask students to imagine that they are, actually, these group of sailors at some point in the past. This will facilitate that students can form easily some sentence structures of the song such as; "we sailed up", "we lived beneath the waves", "we all live in a yellow submarine". Moreover, this will motivate students and will make them feel

more integrated in the activity. The fact of specifying them that they are at some point in the past, will make them notice that they have to use the past in their answers.

For example, the procedure to follow in this activity could be the next one: Firstly, the teacher points to the picture and asks, "What is this?" Students reply, "A submarine." The teacher then asks, "What colour is it?" Students reply, "Yellow." The teacher, then, concludes, "It's a…yellow…" Students reply, "It's a yellow submarine". Moreover, the teacher might then point to a sailor and ask, "What do we usually do in the sea?" Students reply, "We sail." Then the teacher could ask, "Where do we live?" Students reply, "We live in the sea." The teacher then could assert, "Exactly, we live in the sea in a yellow submarine". The teacher, pointing to a wave of the ocean, surprised, could ask "What is this?" Students would reply… "It's a wave". Then, teacher could finally say, "We lived beneath the waves". Moreover, at the same time that the teacher introduces the new vocabulary through the picture, he/she could write the target words or sentence structures on the whiteboard in order to remind students of their spelling. Finally, in order to make sure that the students know about the meaning of the words and as a revision activity, the teacher could ask the meaning of the words on the whiteboard.

It is important to mention that the use of pictures in this activity is just an option. This is to say, the teacher may not have access to pictures to match the song. An optional activity in this case would be to ask the students to draw a picture. In this way, the pictures might be also used to elicit vocabulary and practice the sentence structures used in the song. Therefore, even although the method used to activate vocabulary could be different, the aim is to make sure students get familiarized with the vocabulary they will work with, in the core stage.

6.1.2. Core stage

To continue with, in the **core stage**, as an optional introduction, the teacher could present the song; giving some details about the song they are going to listen to, such as the name of the group and some background information. Then, students will listen to the song of the *Yellow Submarine* for the first time. Later on, the teacher will ask them to pay attention to the vocabulary of the song, to see if students can recognize some words that they have been taught previously. Then, all together will listen to the song several times. In these first times, the teacher will introduce and elicit the vocabulary, previously studied, through the song. He/she will stop the song at some points, in order to pay special

attention to the parts of the song where the target vocabulary and sentences appear. This will facilitate students' recognition of the target items.

In relation to the core stage, Millington asserts "To involve the students and maximize interest, it would be advantageous to sing the song several times in the core, each time varying the pace or volume" (Millington, 2011, p. 139). Therefore, the teacher will ask students to sing the song several times at this stage. However, at the beginning, students will only sing some parts of the song; the target words and structures studied. Finally, the teacher will give the complete lyrics of the song to the students, and all together will sing the song several times. After the students seem to master the song, the teacher will ask students to sing with some variation in the move/ pace and volume. This activity will keep students motivated since they will enjoy varying the singing of the song into; Fast-slow, high, low.

Finally, regarding the core stage, Millington asserts, "[In the core stage], it would be advantageous…having the students perform actions and sing along chorally" (Millington, 2011, p. 139). For this reason, at this stage, students will mimic the target vocabulary and sentence structures of the song. The method used here will be Total Physical Response, using body movements in order to associate them to vocabulary. The teacher and students can arrive to an agreement of the body movements used to express some words or sentence structures sung in the song. The target words that the teacher could mimic are the following: a submarine (pretending she/he is sailing), a wave (imitating the movement of the sea waves with arms and hands). Moreover, the teacher could also mimic the following sentence structures: "We sail" (pretending to be rowing on a sailboat), Furthermore, every time children listen to the pronoun "we", they have to mimic a kind of hug, as if they were hugging all the class. As it can be seen, the vocabulary items and sentence structures correspond to what the teacher has already elicited in the activity of the picture. However, the teacher could also mimic other terms or simple sentences which are also present in the lyrics, but which have not been worked with in the previous activities. For example, a band of music (mimicking he/she is playing a musical instrument), a door (mimicking opening the door), cut the cable (pretending YL are cutting a cable with scissors). Finally, the students and the teacher listen to the song again and perform their mimics when they listen to the words or sentence structures in the song. This part should can be repeated as many times as necessary until students associate the mimics with the corresponding words and sentences.
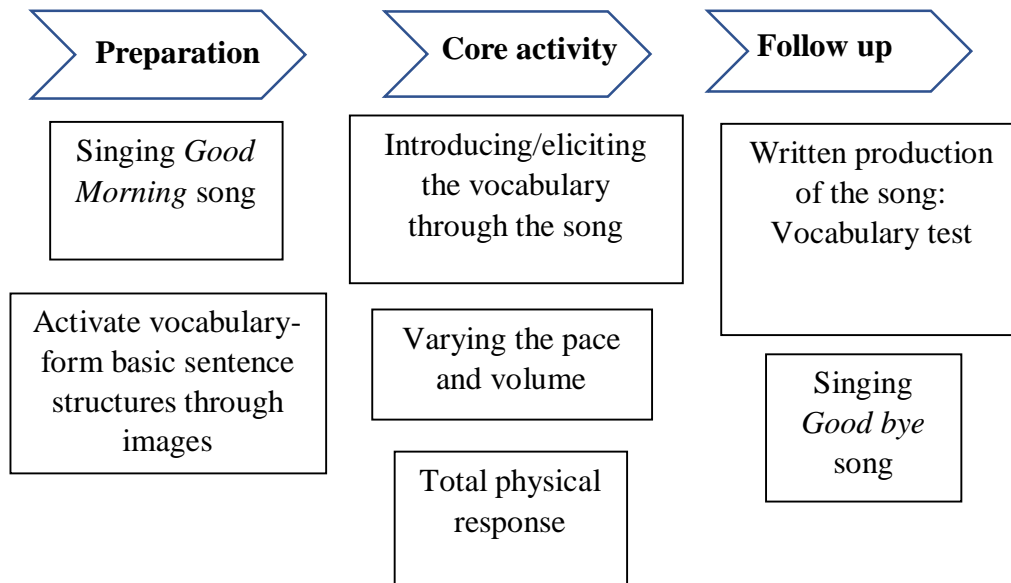
6.1.3. Follow-up stage

According to Millington, in this stage, students should be encouraged to use the previous vocabulary learnt in the core-stage. As Millington asserts: "the follow-up stage should attempt to build on the successful completion of the core stage. In other words, the students have sung the song and now should be encouraged to use the vocabulary or sentence structures from the song" (Millington, 2011, p. 139). Moreover, Millington further mentioned that this stage could be used to develop written production. Therefore, in this stage, the teacher will give the students a sheet of paper with the lyrics of the song. In the lyrics, there are some gaps corresponding to the target vocabulary words or expressions studied before. Then, students have to write down the missing words in the gaps. The song should be played several times, so that students can write down the words correctly. There is an alternative option for very Young Learners who might find difficult this activity; the sheet of paper can include all the missing words and expressions in a box. Then, it is easier for them to choose since they have a concrete list where to select from.

It is important to mention that focusing on written production is just an option. This is to say, it depends on the preferences of the teacher. As it can be seen in . The follow-up stage could be used to develop either written production (writing sentences or gap fill exercises) or oral production (role-playing).

Finally, at the end of this stage, the teacher will end the class by singing *Good Bye song* with the students.

The following picture proposes the three stages of presenting the song *Yellow Submarine* as a task. As it can be seen, these stages are similar with Millington (2011) stages in using songs as a task in learning English. The three stages are the following; preparation, core activity and follow up.

Preparation	Core activity	Follow up
Singing *Good Morning* song	Introducing/eliciting the vocabulary through the song	Written production of the song: Vocabulary test
Activate vocabulary-form basic sentence structures through images	Varying the pace and volume	Singing *Good bye* song
	Total physical response	

Yellow Submarine

In the town where I was born

lived a man who **sailed** to sea

and he told us of his life

in the land of submarines

so we **sailed up** to the sun

till we found a sea of green

and we lived beneath **the waves**

in our **yellow submarine**

We all live in a **yellow submarine**

yellow submarine, yellow submarine

we all live in a **yellow submarine**

yellow submarine, **yellow submarine**

And our friends are all aboard

many more of them live next door

and the band begins to play

We all live in a **yellow submarine**

yellow submarine, yellow submarine

we all live in a **yellow submarine**

yellow submarine, yellow submarine

(full speed ahead Mr. Boatswain, full speed ahead

full speed ahead it is,

cut the cable, drop the cable

aye, sir, aye

captain, captain)

As we live a life of ease

every one of us has all we need

sky of blue and sea of green

in our yellow submarine

We all live in a yellow submarine

yellow submarine, yellow submarine

we all live in a yellow submarine

yellow submarine, yellow submarine

we all live in a yellow submarine

yellow submarine, yellow submarine

7. Conclusions, limitations and future directions

After the analysis of the previous classroom studies, there are several reasons which indicate that songs, in EFL classrooms, do have positive results on both aspects of language analysed; vocabulary and motivation.

In relation to vocabulary, these results are the following; firstly, songs can promote some type of vocabulary acquisition, either receptive (Coyle & Gomez Gracia, 2014) or productive (David and Fan, 2016). Moreover, it is demonstrated that a choral and singing learning condition results in a significant acquisition for vocabulary items, in contrast with the control items (David and Fan, 2016). As can be seen, the effects of songs on vocabulary acquisition have demonstrated to be significantly effective and receive positive results. However, further studies concerning vocabulary would need to be done. Firstly, further research would help to shed light on issues such as the role of visual material; either illustrations or videos, in facilitating vocabulary acquisition. As has been shown, Medina's study shows positive results for the use of songs along with illustrations. However, the use of video or illustrations along with songs does not seem to be better than songs alone according to the other study (Džanić & Pejić, 2016). Moreover, more attention should be paid to the effectiveness of acquiring vocabulary through stories, since it seems to be a better resource than songs. As has been shown, although Medina's study does not find significant results in this respect, Leśniewska and Pichette's study, shows that stories are better pedagogical resources at promoting vocabulary acquisition. Moreover, stories are considered to be more helpful to understand both vocabulary and teaching content (Chou, 2014). However, as the number of studies which compare songs and stories is rather limited in this paper (there are only two studies which compare the different conditions), the findings are rather limited and more research may be needed in the future.

In relation to the other aspect of language, motivation, the results are the following; in general, students become more motivated and engaged when songs are used in the English lessons (Aguirre, Bustinza, Garvich, 2016). Moreover, songs seem to be one of the favourite activities in the English classroom (Aguirre, Bustinza, Garvich, 2016, Džanić & Pejić, 2016 & Matthew P. Wallace, 2020). Furthermore, in contrast with our previous findings on vocabulary; combination of songs and visual material does not seem to be key for vocabulary retention, studies on motivation show a positive result in relation to visual materials. This is to say, the combination of songs along with video materials and

lyrics seems that results in a significant better students' perception of songs in the English classroom (Džanić & Pejić, 2016). This finding might indicate that audio-visual material might be more motivational than audio material alone. Finally, there most of students enjoy using songs in the classroom and have strong positive beliefs about classroom songs (Sevik, 2014). As can be seen, the effects of songs on motivation have demonstrated to be extremely positive. However, further studies concerning motivation would help to illuminate the relationship between the positive motivational effects of songs in the EFL classroom.

Moreover, this paper also had the purpose of developing and presenting a pedagogical proposal focused on increasing motivation and vocabulary development through songs. The stages used in the proposal are similar with Millington stages (Millington, 2011). This pedagogical proposal attempts to be an appropriate and efficient practice for the EFL classroom. However, there might some limitations found in it since it has not been applied in real life.

Finally, songs have a long history of use in Young Learner classrooms, however, there is not a correspondingly long history of their empirical study. Nonetheless, the review of the different classroom studies analysed in this paper, finds that songs do have pedagogical value. As a conclusion, the general pattern of results indicates that songs have positive effects on both, vocabulary and motivation.

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