

LEXICAL COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE USE OF MUSIC

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DEDICATORIA

En primer lugar a DIOS quien me ha permitido culminar con éxito esta hermosa etapa de mi vida. A mis hermanas Mariana y Susana que con su amor colmaron mi alma de felicidad y tranquilidad en momentos difíciles por los que he atravesado en mi vida, y han celebrado mis logros y recompensas a mi lado con el mismo afecto incondicional.

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Yeny Viviana Ruiz Cardona

Quiero dedicar especialmente a mi Hermana Johanna la consecución de este triunfo y todas las satisfacciones y Bienaventuranzas que a partir de éste lleguen a mi vida; porque es ella la luz que jamás se negó a brillar, quien sembró razón y amor celestial a lo largo de un camino señalado por su inmenso conocimiento e infinita bondad.

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Fabio Giuseppe Osorio Pinzón.

RESUMEN

Una cantidad considerable de investigadores coinciden en que la inclusión de la música en el aula beneficia el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del Inglés. Por lo tanto, el presente estudio se llevó a cabo como una forma de observar las ventajas que ofrece la incorporación de la música en la enseñanza de este idioma, específicamente, en términos de desarrollo léxico. El principal objetivo de este proyecto fue el de informar cómo la competencia lexical se desarrolla mediante el uso de canciones en inglés en relación al aprendizaje de una segunda lengua de un grado quinto en una escuela pública de Pereira. Para lograr este objetivo, cuatro implementaciones se realizaron con treinta y tres estudiantes de nueve a once años de edad quienes fueron expuestos a algunas canciones en inglés, las cuales a través de su lenguaje conversacional informal permitieron que los estudiantes practicasen el uso de un lenguaje cotidiano real. Los resultados sugieren que las canciones en inglés en el aula estimulan el desarrollo de la competencia lexical, además, son convenientes no sólo para fines gramaticales, sino también para establecer un ambiente ideal de aprendizaje en actividades diversas y secuenciadas.

ABSTRACT

A considerable number of researchers agree that the inclusion of music in the classroom benefits the English teaching and learning process. Therefore, this study was conducted as a way to observe the advantages of incorporating music in English teaching, specifically in terms of lexical development. The main objective of this project was to inform how the lexical competence is developed through the use of songs in English in relation to second language learning in fifth graders from a public school of Pereira. To achieve this goal, four implementations were conducted with thirty-three students from nine to eleven years of age who were exposed to some songs in English, which through its informal conversational language allowed the students to practice using real everyday language. The results suggest that the use of songs in English in the classroom stimulates the development of lexical competence; in addition, it is suitable not only for grammatical purposes, but also to establish an ideal learning environment for diverse and sequenced activities.

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1. JUSTIFICATION

The lexical knowledge is a main aspect of the communicative competence that embeds to comprehend, acquire, recover and memorize vocabulary items successfully, and it is essential to make reflective assumptions in second language acquisition where it can be a determining factor in learners' accomplishment, Meara (1996). For his part, Folse (2004) states that "vocabulary seen as the achievement of words with its semantic and pragmatic function is perhaps the most important component in L2 ability". He also clarifies that the value of mastering a language goes beyond the knowledge of its structure or form which has grown several considerations and questions regarding the way English has to be taught; thus, lexical competence has to do with the semantics of the language, it provides students with a range of alternatives to reach the meaning whatever the purposes could be. Huckin and Bloch (1993) declared, "Research has shown that a lack of vocabulary knowledge is the largest obstacle for second-language learners to overcome." Therefore, English second language students must place emphasis on learning specific vocabulary that they require to implement for the academic context, mainly in their classes where the opportunity of learning it for later real life situations will make the academic context become an exceptional complement for practicing within the classroom.

In order to communicate, it is not only necessary to know about the structure of language, but also to achieve a range of vocabulary that can be used in real life situations. Therefore, teachers are called to design and implement new teaching

methodologies to improve lexical competence learning. This is supported by Rodriguez & Villa (2011) whose observations explicate that the activities for learning vocabulary in several books are often highly repetitive and make learners to be not motivated during practice, besides, it could be identified from the language learning experience that most of teachers do not give lexical competence the relevance that deserves, relegating many times this competence to a second place as a result of the absence of creative ideas to apply. That is why lexical competence will be integrated in the classroom through activities that stimulate understanding, retention and use of words, which can contribute to develop autonomous learning strategies in learners. It is evident that teaching English nowadays must be oriented to the inclusion of the communicative language competence in the lessons, for it is vital to improve peoples' second language proficiency. In this sense, learning vocabulary has to be seen as a necessary and unceasing activity that permits the learner to incorporate in his/her linguistic competence all the learned lexical units; thus, teaching vocabulary must provide students with all the background and tools that guarantee that goal. In relation to that, Rodriguez & Villa (2011) indicate that the proper use of lexical units will lead to a richness of language and adequate linguistic accuracy.

According to what the former paragraph describes, teachers should encourage students to assimilate the lexical items at any circumstance inside and outside the classroom. Thereby, as music and language learning are related to human communication through sounds, students may find enjoyable learning through music. Studies on music such as Griffin (2006) "Background music and learning environment"

have shown that music increases concentration, improves memory and decreases stress and, the fact of including music in class will help students to pay attention easily and remember the information presented. In addition, Schoepp (2001) argues that there are linguistic reasons for using music in classrooms, highlighting some of them as great examples of colloquial English, which prepare students for the genuine language they will be faced with.

Due to Colombian education is being constructed on an English as a second language policy "Programa Nacional de Bilinguismo 2004-2019", English teachers should have enough knowledge to collaborate enabling citizens to communicate in English using comparable international standards for them to be part of current communication processes related to cultural opening. According to Figueroa (2013) director of quality for preschool, primary and secondary, the national project "Programa de Fortalecimiento de Competencias en Lengua Extranjera", has been oriented towards the improvement of the assessments' results for students and teachers as a big challenge for upcoming years, it is necessary, to take one step forward in order to make ourselves participants of the existing challenges and projects that our government is concerned to carry out in the country.

In schools, the teaching of lexical competence must go beyond what the dictionary offers, in terms of meaning and parts of the speech, so that students can have a comprehensive knowledge of the words they are learning. Teachers have to raise awareness of the fact that lexical competence is more than a group of words with their definition, but it is the usage of the vocabulary of a language. Accordingly, teachers

should focus on other components such as parts of speech, which help students to know more about words, and the ability to use them correctly in a specific context.

The importance of this project resides in the commitment to consider several aspects that lexical competence embraces, contributing to give to it the required significance not received in schools. To do so, songs will be used because their lyrics display real life language, which is useful inside and outside the classroom, fostering as well an entertaining learning environment, (Grenough 1994).

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 General:

- To report how the lexical competence is developed through the use of English songs in the classroom in relation to second language learning of fifth graders.

2.2 Specific:

- To foster the comprehension of verbal input in English songs through the design and implementation of listening tasks.
- To inform about the applicability of using music in order to increase the vocabulary range.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this segment, the different points of view from authors who have been working on the value of lexical competence will be presented and its essential role that it plays in second language learning and teaching. This importance has been recognized in theoretical and empirical second language acquisition vocabulary research wherein its inclusion in the classroom has allowed students to have a wider conception regarding the importance of placing focus on the lexical competence development.

3.1 Lexical competence

Dik (1997, p.5-6) states that it seems natural to define lexical competence as the ability to use words in appropriate and effective ways in verbal interaction, and as a part of the communicative competence as well. Laufer (1998) claims that the most remarkable difference between foreign learners and native speakers is the quantity of words each one possesses. This idea reveals that the most important task for language learners is to acquire a large vocabulary size, which will permit them to recognize and interact in a variety of contexts. Laufer (1998) also suggests that English students, especially those in non-English speaking countries, need to put emphasis on real academic situations as an appropriate way to English proficiency. This concept mentioned by Laufer is also shared by Lewis (2000), who states that the most relevant task that language learners face is to know sufficient vocabulary to differentiate

meanings and register, which Nordquist (2011) defined as degree of formality in language use.

Additionally, Wiegand (2000) states that lexis should not be only seen as part of linguistics but almost as an independent discipline, based on that, he clarifies that it is more than a sum of linguistic aspects leading to signification. On the other hand, the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (2001) considers that lexis is part of the linguistic competence. Likewise, CEFRL defines lexical competence as “the knowledge and ability to use the vocabulary of a language”. Garcia (2007) views this competence as the aptitude to use words properly during verbal interaction, underlining its linkage with the communicative language competence. It is worth to highlight that lexical competence is the basis of language that determines the vocabulary in the teaching/learning process; besides, it indicates what the learners know about words, how many they have learned and how well they use them.

3.2 Listening

Richards (1983) defined listening mainly as an active procedure of choosing and understanding information from audio indications. He also explains that the perceptive and major function of listening in second language learning is to make easy the speech comprehension. So, this element can be central in the present study since the principal goal is the development of the lexical competence, which is essential in the communicative competence.

Richards (2008) considers that activities not typically employed when comprehension is the focus of listening are those that require accurate recognition and recall of words, syntax, and expressions that occur in the input. From the already said, it is remarkable to notice that it can be relevant to study as well as to include the vocabulary in the listening comprehension task, since students' listening comprehension relies on their exposure to language for the achievement of a specific language objective towards lexical development.

It is well known how listening can make the difference in achieving a language goal in the learning process, listening is an arduous process for the reason that it embeds several aspects that distinguish who listens, the narrator, and what the message is, (Brown & Yule 1983). Among different authors, Morley (1991) argues that listening is still one of the lowest comprehended processes in language learning and it has an essential role in both communication and language acquisition. Although Rubin (1994) draws the attention to the fact that as teaching listening comprehension has risen, the analysis towards second language listening comprehension has also increased.

3.3 Music in the ELT classroom

Currently, it is difficult to be apart from music due to the fact that it is played everywhere; people listen to music that comes from the radio, technological devices and assorted public places to make people feel comfortable. Some views indicate that music

is a matter of daily communication and it is something that always exists in people's lives. Brewer (1995) considers that as it has been part of the human development, music have become an essential part of the language knowledge. He also states that music can be very helpful to teach English vocabulary with the possibility that students will finally understand what is being taught.

Schoepp (2001) points out that there are linguistic reasons for using music in classrooms, highlighting some of them as great examples of colloquial English, which prepare students for the genuine language, they will be faced with. The earlier statement suggests the relevance of being involved in an everyday context provided in this case by the musical supply. Consequently, being in contact with such an informal but real daily language, reinforces the development of lexical knowledge inasmuch as it is part of the communicative context. Accordingly, Greenough & Kittredge (1994) state that second language learners must hear spoken English outside their classroom; he considers language and songs as a whole and part of their real world. Thus, on the way of lexical competence improvement, students may be given a variety of resources to search for an even participation in the classroom. One of these resources is the use of music.

On the other hand, Murphey (1996) refers to what he calls "the song stuck in my head phenomenon". He assures that this phenomenon supports the idea that songs are involved in our short and long-term memory. This phenomenon clarifies why some students acquired most of everything they have learned through songs usage. The statement already mentioned, suggests that the repetition of sentences and the effect of

rhythms in songs have been observed by researchers as suitable elements for improving vocabulary learning, grammar rules, pronunciation and intonation as well, in particular for ESL students. It is worth noting Ayotte (2004) who remarked that music and language have similar auditory interactions and cognitive mechanisms to analyze a language structure in the information when it is captured by the senses.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

On the degree work "*Music embedded in English lessons: A case study with a group of 3rd graders in a public school*" submitted as partial requirement to obtain the UTP title of English Language teaching, Vargas (2012) conducted and experienced on teaching English to third grade students through musical exposure. In this study, ten English sessions were guided in a group of 35 students. The research process length was two months long at the school "Tokyo" located in Pereira. The purpose of this study was to evidence the English teaching labor through music-based activities, based on the use of rhythms, lyrics, background music and cultural aspects of music. The data collection process included different methods such as; interviews, observations, journals and artifacts. The results of this research concluded that using musical aids in the ESL lesson enabled participants to learn vocabulary, improve motivation, encourage pronunciation and intonation patterns, to practice and increase cultural aspects and knowledge embedded in language; besides, the learning environment became more appropriate for the communicative competence development.

On the other hand, the study "Developing lexical competence trough online exercises: Evaluations through the eyes of students" conducted by Ekmekci & Yaman (2013) places emphasis on lexical competence. In the study, the authors rely on Decarrio (2001), who considers lexical competence as the central part of the communicative competence, whether the language is first, second or foreign. Accordingly, Ekmekci & Yaman (2013) suggest that being lexically competent in a language, particularly in a

foreign one, its important by both, language teachers and learners. This study investigated the effectiveness, practicality, and usefulness of a specific online vocabulary-learning program. The participants were 74 class students from Turkey who used the online program actively during 2012-2013 academic year. The results revealed that learning vocabulary through the online program is valued by most of the students as the program provides them with visual aids to learn and help them to remember the lexical information better. If students are motivated to learn the target lexical items through the methods they employ, they can easily internalize what they have learnt.

In the Magazine: *Teoría de la Educación*, Mora & Fuentes (2012) declared that the use of songs in the ELT classroom might affect the development of the four communicative skills and incorporate new grammatical and lexical elements for students. The main objective of their study was to start creating a teaching English program with musical intervention, and a methodology oriented to learn through music-based tasks in order to improve listening and vocabulary retention of students in sixth grade. The participants were 49 Spanish students of sixth grade from a school in the town of Lepe, Huelva during the academic year 2008-2009. All began to study English at primary and all students had the same language teacher. The authors appreciated that certain difficulties in the process of teaching and learning in a bilingual context are reduced through the use of songs.

It can be concluded that the inclusion of sound elements produce a suitable and recommended environment for foreign languages learning because it improves pronunciation, the recognition of grammatical structures and new vocabulary as well. “Practically all grammar points can be found in music texts, and the texts also offer a wide variety of vocabulary, all of which can be used to practice the four communicative skills” Falioni (1993). This confirms what Harmer (1991) argues regarding that the words displayed in the lyrics of students’ favorite songs remain in the active store as long as they listen to them.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Context

This classroom project will be carried out at a Public school in Pereira. The institution covers the population of the neighborhood of Boston and surrounding areas. Classes are taught in the morning and in the afternoon and the students belong to a low-medium socioeconomic background.

5.2 Participants

This project will be guided with pupils who belonged to a fifth grade; the amount of the students is 33 per group. This project is going to be developed in one group where the same in-service teacher conducts all the subjects, this teacher has a pedagogical background but not in the branch of languages. The average age of the students was from 9 to 11 years old. The learners were placed in an English beginner level (A 2.1) according to Guia 22 “El Reto”; however, they actually belong to a lower level because the English educational context in Colombia is still in development. One practitioner will implement the classroom project activities that demand a role as social mediator, learning facilitator, and reflective leader to act in a more deliberative and intentional manner in class, the second practitioner will be in charge of taking field notes, photographs and video recordings in class in order to keep track of the students general process.

5.3 Design

The classes were conducted with music-based activities to permit not only to help students increase their lexical knowledge but also evaluate and observe that learning process. During the week, students were exposed to some English songs, which through its informal conversational language allowed students to practice for the authentic language they will be in contact with (Schoepp, 2001). The purpose was for students to become familiar with music in the class, to do so; we selected popular songs. Besides fostering the lexical competence, students were assisted to develop listening abilities; thus, students could build awareness and selected better, where, and how to take advantage of the words they achieved.

The type of material for this implementation was designed by ourselves. English common words and expressions were included in the lyrics of the songs, therefore, the authenticity of the material proposed was reflected in these aspects. In order to take students preferences into account, a survey was made to classify the results since if students are exposed to songs which they enjoy, more learning is likely to occur because they may look for the music outside of school settings, (Schoepp, 2001). This author also claims that “the repetitive style of songs helps to promote automatization of colloquial language”. At lesson planning stage, the students’ English proficiency level was considered in relation to linguistic and cognitive demands to elaborate the material.

Though the focus of the project is the lexical competence development, the use of audio material in the classroom was incorporated; consequently, the three listening stages recommended by Coghlan (2001) were borne in mind to reach that goal. According to this author a pre-listening phase was implemented in which students activated their background knowledge and they were contextualized with the topics and the song, besides, flashcards were presented according to students' likes so they were easily accepted by learners. Then, a while-listening phase was conducted in which students listened to the song and developed some activities corresponding to filling the gaps or highlighting some known words. And finally a post-listening activity in which they applied the knowledge acquired; they wrote short sentences using the words learned and some of the colloquial expressions listened in song. This was a good opportunity for students to practice target language; new vocabulary learning and listening comprehension improvement were encouraged.

Four implementations were carried out by one of the practitioner; these were performed along the Guided Practicum subject. Each implementation was done on Mondays, and it was fifty minutes long.

Here, the activity plan for each implementation is detailed:

Implementation number one.		1
Standards: Escucha ✓ Memorizo y sigo el ritmo de canciones populares de países angloparlantes. Monologo ✓ Recito un trabalenguas sencillo o una rima, o canto el coro de una canción. Escritura ✓ Enlazo frases y oraciones usando conectores que expresan secuencia y adición.		
Materials: Cellphone, speakers, copies, images.		
Activity one	Aim: By the end of the activity, learners will be able to familiarize and recognize lexical items including in a song.	Time: 25 min
Steps	Description:	Time:
1	Easy new vocabulary will be presented in flashcards to familiarize learners with the topic (sail, sea, submarine, waves, yellow). To support the pronunciation the practitioner shows the word in its written form to reinforce the new words.	5 min
2	Using those words teacher write on the board some phrases related to the song and students pronounce the sentences.	5 min
3	Teacher asks for students to work in pairs; learners must circle the words that they listen according to the previous activity. Teacher plays the song twice.	10 min
4	Teacher asks students go to the board and write the words that they circle.	5 min
<p style="text-align: center;">The yellow submarine:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">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.</p>		

6. RESULTS

In this chapter, it will be described in detail all the results, experiences and reflections collected in the implementation of the classroom project. The management of data will be oriented to display what we –as teachers- have developed in terms of professional growth, students' responses and language outcomes.

6.1 Professional growth

This part of the study will report our professional growth during the classroom project implementation related to lesson planning, material design, classroom management and personal growth. To do so, the strengths and challenges lived during the guided practicum will be presented.

6.1.1 Lesson planning

A strength evidenced in lesson planning was the achievement of lesson goals as well as the implementation of listening stages. It is worth to highlight that lesson objectives were mostly attained given the fact that in some circumstances students went beyond what we required them to do. For instance, in the implementation number two the aim was learning the days of week; clearly, at the reflective stage, it was noticed that students not only achieved the aim but also learned expressions about emotions and

feelings related to the days of the week. As it was reported in the reflection of the first implementation, *“this may be occurred because they usually have some previous knowledge that place them one step forward than the others”*. From this, we learned we must contemplate that part of the students have already taught some of the topics in previous courses; consequently, it may be possible that these learners reach the general aim of the lesson easier. Another strong point was the inclusion and implementation of the listening stages supported by Coghlan (2012), an initial pre-listening phase, then a while-listening stage and finally a post-listening phase. At the pre-listening stage, we contextualized students towards the content of the song introducing target language through flashcards and power point presentations. At while-listening stage students listened attentively to songs to search for key words presented during contextualization. Lastly the post-listening phase made learners demonstrate through worksheets, presentations and performances what they learned. The implementation of these three stages was a strength because it allowed us to have a sense of organization in each lesson, and also assisted students along the implementation. They started to comprehend each phase and know what should be done in each one of them, the following is a part of the reflection of the fourth implementation that supports the previous statement: *“We observed that students start to understand that there is always something important to do after listening to the song as it is not only listening without a purpose. Most of the learners have understood that before playing the song, they have to contextualize some words presented in the lyrics.”*

The challenges regarding lesson planning were: the students' pacing to develop each activity and the availability of technological tools provided by the institution. To begin, the length to finish each activity became a challenge; although we calculated a specific time for each stage of the implementation, not all students finished simultaneously. To illustrate, in the first implementation, we found that some students ended activities sooner than expected and the question was what to do with those students considering that they regularly promoted misbehavior after finishing the activity. As it was reported in the reflection section, "*students with high English proficiency level usually finish the task first. As they are always expecting for more, we as teachers must know how to manage their time in order to have them involved in the complete lesson, this treatment must not become learners overtaken but aware of their strengths.*" We decided to implement what Felder & Brent (2008) explain in their study about cooperative learning, "strong students faced with the task of explaining and clarifying material to weaker students often find gaps in their own understanding and fill them in". This was positive to the class since it avoided misbehavior. As a conclusion, it is relevant to consider these types of situations as anticipated problems when designing a lesson plan. Secondly, the booking of technological aids in the institution such as computers and video projectors was also a challenge as it was not possible to count on their availability. At the moment to make a reservation for a video projector or the computers room, we experienced how devices were denied sometimes inasmuch as there was not a person in charge of these devices. Furthermore, unexpected changes in the school's schedule modified previous reservations of electronic aids, which led to make changes in the lesson planning and to have always a plan B in order to handle this

type of situations. Our plan B was oriented to supply the absence of a video projector by using colorful flashcards.

6.1.2 Material design

A positive point in the design of material was the use of realistic photographs as flashcards to present vocabulary related to the songs and the selection of them to be played in class. Presenting flashcards during pre-listening stage was favorable because they were designed according to students' likes, so learners easily accepted them. The flashcards were letter size and contained diversity of colors that were agreeable for students and actual pictures were included, as learners did not feel enthusiastic for cartoons; some of the flashcards also displayed the written form of the word referred to the image and a phonologic transcription. This supports what Ramirez (2008) points out that the use of flashcards in an English lesson provides the facilitator with an actual control of the class due to vocabulary can be presented and practiced taking into account students' age and level. Another strength was the songs choice to work in class because we could align them with the topics to be covered in class. This led us to decide the type of song to use in activities. For example, in the third implementation we had to search for a song in which we could focus on the structure of simple present questions, so we decided to use the song "Is this love?" that included words students already knew as well as new ones that they could learn for the first time.

Concerning material design some challenges were the time we spent elaborating the material for the lesson and the use of a proper written language in the worksheets. The time invested in the elaboration of flashcards, power point presentations and worksheets was a challenge. Taking into consideration that class material for each session had to be relevant and consistent with this implementation, the selection of adequate images connected with the lyrics of the songs and the selection of content displayed in the exercises demanded a complex endeavor in order to facilitate language achievement. We overcame that time issue by applying the experience we had gained elaborating flashcards and selecting songs as the only way to become proficient in our duty as teachers to be. Another challenge was including clear instructions in the worksheets since we must use an appropriate language for learner level so they can follow written directions correctly. In the third implementation the students did not comprehend the instructions given in the worksheets as it was reported in the reflection log 3: *“A number of students started with the step number 3 some others did it well but there was a general disorder at that point”*. Proctor, Carlo, August & Snow (2006) argues that it is very important to use a language according to the level of students to provide written instruction; otherwise, teacher would have to spend much more time explaining each activity.

6.1.3 Classroom management

The strengths in terms of classroom management were the seating arrangement and the positive learning atmosphere in the class. Classroom seating arrangement was

satisfactory for the reason that the two sitting shapes we applied were successful to develop the lesson effectively; in two of the implementations we initially asked students for making rows, then they could get organized pairs. Scott & Ytreberg (1993) suggest that organizing students in rows facilitate pair work activities because pupils only have to turn their chairs over their neighbor's desk to be ready. In the other two implementations students were placed in groups of four; they got together with the partners they preferred in order to avoid interpersonal issues and develop collaborative learning and oral interaction. It was also positive, as it did not promote misbehavior despite the fact that the in-service teacher warned us about the disruptive consequences to set groups of work in class, conversely, it promoted collaborative work. The above, was evidenced in the reflection of the last implementation: "*The collaborative work was evident in this implementation since students wanted to be the winners all the time and worked as a team to make it.*" The second strength was the good learning atmosphere in the classroom given the fact that most of the students showed enthusiasm to attend the class and with expectations towards the songs to work on; as an example, from the beginning of the second implementation, students started asking what song they would learn that day. As it was reported in the reflection section of that day, "*this day in particular students showed excited towards the song that is going to be played and they participated actively in the class, learners asked constantly for the name of the song and tried to guess how the flashcards look like.*" This confirms what Brewer (1995) says about music as part of human development; it could be positive not only for grammatical purposes but also to create an optimums learning atmosphere in the classroom.

One of the challenges perceived from classroom management was dealing with learners who live under adverse conditions as well as teaching multiple proficiency levels in the same classroom. There are some factors related to students' sociocultural background which in most of the times act in a negative way in their lives, students with unprivileged economic situations cannot separate what they live at home from school life; on the contrary, they transfer the upsetting behavior raised by their parents, relatives, friends or neighbors to school where confrontations and retaliations take place even in the classroom. In this sense, English learning became more a challenge matter than a time to develop linguistic skills. We had to be informed about some critical profiles of students in these situations to be aware of how to manage them at certain circumstances that might result uncomfortable for us to deal with. That is why affective factors appeared as an undeniable reality that made us concentrate on supporting students with disruptive behavior. For instance, students who had a reluctant attitude towards the lesson did not pay attention to instructions nor corrections of any kind, and if they were older than their classmates, their actions usually led others to follow them since younger students saw them as role models. Nevertheless, we worked on not to make them the focus of attention by encouraging those who followed them to prefer the lesson rather than disorder; we began monitoring their work in class to check any progress which could be highlighted to the rest of the students. Thus, the group saw disruptive learners, as they were really committed to class demands. According to Thompson (2014) teachers must determine disruptive students' goals and dreams in life and show them what they need to do to accomplish them. The facilitator can make the aims simple at first for them to see that they can reach achievement gradually. Provide them with chances to display their knowledge and other good qualities to help the class

and not to disturb it. Therefore, the teacher discovers their interests and strengths and uses them to foster good behaviours in the classroom.

6.1.4 Personal growth

Related to personal growth the strengths seen were the teaching experience itself and accomplishing interpersonal communication with students. This teaching training was worth because being exposed to hours of leading English lessons made us aware of the fact that we must not only teach, but also learn to distinguish the qualities and conditions of each student. That experience taught us that there are particular factors that influence language acquisition. As Ellis (1994) states, the knowledge of a person embraces all what has influenced its language learning such as age, types of intelligence, affective elements associated to motivation, personality, socio-cultural factors and learning styles. Another strength was the interpersonal communication improvement reflected on students' requirements to be explained again, this time they did not feel intimidated for having doubts and expressed what they felt instead. In situations when learners misunderstand a direction or an explanation given during the lesson, they are likely to remain with the confusion as long as the facilitator detects it. For this, it becomes necessary to interpret students' personalities to transmit comprehensively whatever the message is.

The lack of experience on teaching English to young learners became a challenge that led us to focus on cultural and personal implications in the classroom,

which required teachers to be humanistic professionals primarily. Teaching has been priceless for our personal development, even more at this practicum in which we were committed to achieve subject goals reflectively. Wheatley (2000) contemplates that teaching effectiveness has to do with teachers' personal beliefs about their ability to generate an effect on students' results. Teachers with high self-confidence on their methodology may shape a successful model based on their own personality patterns. Accordingly, conducting a lesson would always be a chance to increase our English knowledge and the teaching – living linkage. However, for us who had not the classroom experience, it was intimidating sometimes and not only a matter of how much information and results we have collected along the implementation, but showing humbleness and becoming more sensitive towards students' affective factors to avoid egocentric feelings visible in teacher-centered classes.

6.2 Students' responses

In this section, students' responses during the development of the classroom project will be reported and described. To do so, strengths and challenges that emerged during the implementation will be exposed.

One strong aspect was students' age and the implications of new technologies. The age of the students (*9 – 11 years old*) was an aspect to take advantage of, for in this time of life learners are in search of their musical preferences, Beltran (2006). This

fact allowed them to be interested in the class, which included different songs for them to enjoy. Another strength was the effects of current technologies. Nowadays, most of the learners have already had a first contact with English songs; this was reported in the reflection from the implementation number three *“the song had been already listened before by students. This could be a result of the use of new technologies and the internet”*. Some students also knew some English speaking music bands from the web, which occasionally permitted learners to propose some bands or songs to be showed in class.

One of the challenges presented in the implementation were the bad reactions from some students against children songs. At the beginning of the implementation the survey that was made revealed that some children songs did not satisfy their expectations at all; for this, we needed to seek for what students love or feel enthusiastic about, remaining them motivated along the activity and promoting language usage. We found interesting the way students responded at music activities when content was displayed through well-known English songs. Aligned with Phillips (2003), music and rhythm are essential parts of language learning for young learners because they enjoy learning and singing. However, as it was quite difficult to please each one of students' likes, for example, in the last implementation we reported *“this song was enjoyed by some of the students because of the slow rhythm, which allowed them to perceive better what it was said in the song, however, the rest of the students rejected this song due to it was not funny at all”*, we had to vary the type of songs we brought to class. Similar to an appropriate type of songs to select, we had to choose from several activities that

could make students feel identified with. In this sense, the purpose of the activities had to be a commonality among students, something that reflected their feelings and ideas; otherwise, they would have not considered the lesson important for their lives. Horwitz (1998) argues that there are classroom realities differing from learners' expectations that may generate frustration and positively affect language learning; accordingly, we committed ourselves to have learners involved with English learning, so they can use language with different purposes becoming meaningful for their lives. This is consistent with Kern (1995), who states that all the activities designed to take place in the classroom have the potential to produce a change on students' beliefs.

6.3 Linguistic outcomes

In this section, the strengths and challenges regarding linguistic outcomes will be presented. Laufer (1998) differentiates foreign learners and native speakers by the quantity of words each one possesses; besides, he claims that English students in non-English speaking countries must put emphasis on real academic situations as they can learn a foreign language depending on the extent and variety of exposure to the target language; by the end of the implementation we could evidence a significant number of words learned by students, which contributed to the improvement of their lexical knowledge.

Inasmuch as lexical competence in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001) has to do with *“how many words are known, what is known about words, how well words are known and which words are known”*, we decided to place emphasis not only on how many words are known but also on how well students know them. In terms of linguistic outcomes, the strengths noticed along the implementation were that students recognized the grammatical function of the words when they were in a determined context; they also were able to formulate present simple questions and answered them correctly, and increased their English lexicon. To begin, learners recognized and used some words extracted from the songs and adapted them to a particular communicative function; as an example, they manifested their emotions and feelings through adjectives as in phrases like: *“Today I feel... happy, sad, afraid, angry,”* and some others from the song such as fall apart, to be in love, to break one’s heart, this was reported in the implementation number two in that *“Students did more than learning the days of the week; they associated the days of the week with expressions about the emotions and feelings, as an example, some students wrote that they feel happy on Fridays because it is weekend.”* This is supported by Brewer (1995) who points out that as the music has been part of the human development for as long as we can remember, it have become an essential part of the language knowledge and it can be very helpful to teach English vocabulary and common expressions. An additional strength was that students knew about the grammatical function of some words and not only their meaning. For example, in the first implementation students could differentiate which words were verbs or nouns; reflection number one reports *“Learners recognized the group of words given at the contextualization as nouns and verbs.”* An additional strength was that learners increased the number of words learned

in English; this is consistent to one of the features of the lexical competence related to how many words are known. In the last implementation, the participants demonstrated the words they had learned by the end of the implementation creating a glossary on the board; each student fed this glossary with the meaning of the words and parts of the speech and provided a written sentence to exemplify, for example the word “sea”, meaning: ocean, part of the speech: noun, sentence: there is a submarine in the sea. This was reported in the reflection number four in which it was evident that *“students increased their English range of words because they were able to say the meaning of the words, specify part of the speech and use them in sentences given as examples.*

One challenge was learning common English collocations. In order to produce language more fluently and naturally, it is important to be aware of collocations of words that native English speakers use. It was a challenge because learners barely identified the meaning of some verbs when they were together with another word. For example, in the last implementation the selected song was “All that she wants” by Ace of base, which displays certain word collocations such as “catching sun”, “having fun”, “get you” among others. Consequently, students gave those phrases incorrect interpretations; for instance, they did not understand how the sun could be caught because they literally translated the phrase, so we had to explain to them the real meaning of that phrase, which is to get a tan. This could be a result of the natural guessing strategy they implement to get to a meaning. As it was reported in the reflection number two, *“when we focused on teaching certain common English collocations also included in the song, students thought that the meaning of those expressions was consistent to their*

assumptions. We consider it was basically because they do not know those words have different meanings and uses.”

7. CONCLUSIONS

- This implementation evidenced that the use of English songs in the classroom stimulates the development of lexical competence.
- Using pre, while and post listening as a strategy, was positive in the attainment of good listening comprehension results.
- The use of music in classroom activities increases the range of vocabulary learned in English.
- Grammatical goals planned in the implementation could be achieved through the use of songs in the classroom as a result that they facilitate language learning.
- The use of songs in the lessons is appropriate not only for grammatical purposes, but also to establish an ideal learning atmosphere for diverse and sequenced activities, which contribute to promote willingness to participate in students.
- For this type of implementation, it is recommended to make a survey in order to know the students' likes in terms of music genres; consequently, lesson planning will be based on those preferences.
- Learners were able to go beyond learning the meaning of words and could recognize their grammatical function when they were used in a contextualized sentence.
- It is suggested to focus on teaching word collocations due to the fact that most of the times students give those phrases literal interpretations as they may be unusual or seem to be erroneous to foreign language learners.

- Depending on students' age, it is recommended to use photographs as flashcards instead of cartoons. Students like photos because they look more real and students could recognize easily their meaning.

8. ANNEXES

Lesson plans

Implementation number two.		2
<p>Standards: Escucha: Sigo instrucciones relacionadas con actividades de clase y recreativas propuestas por mi profesor. Lectura: Ubico en un texto corto los lugares y momentos en que suceden las acciones. Monologo: Recito un trabalenguas sencillo o una rima, o canto el coro de una canción. Escritura: Uso adecuadamente estructuras y patrones gramaticales de uso frecuente.</p>		
Materials: Cellphone, speakers, board, marker, copies...		
Activity two Fishing words	Aim: At the end of the activity the students will be able to recognize the days of the week.	Time: 20 min
Steps 1	Description: The teacher writes down one line of the song on the board.	Time: 2 min
2	<i>“I don’t care if Monday’s blue, Tuesday’s grey and Wednesday too.”</i>	
3	Then teacher instruct the students to write down one word that relates to that line under the lyric. Then, the class can try to guess what the song is about.	10 min
4	Students follow the lyrics of the song while listening to it and check if some of the words that they wrote are included. They listen to the song three times.	13 min
5	Then, students write one sentence related to the activities that they do in the different days of the week.	5 min
<p>Friday I’m in love</p> <p>I don’t care if Monday’s blue, Tuesday’s grey and Wednesday too. Thursday, I don’t care about you. It’s Friday, I’m in love. Monday, you can fall apart. Tuesday, Wednesday, break my heart. Thursday doesn’t even start. It’s Friday, I’m in love. Saturday, wait, And Sunday always comes too late, But Friday never hesitate... I don’t care if Monday’s black, Tuesday, Wednesday, heart attack. Thursday, never looking back. It’s Friday, I’m in love.</p>		

Implementation numer three.	3
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Standars:
Escucha: Participo en juegos y actividades siguiendo instrucciones simples.
Lectura: Identifico las acciones en una secuencia corta de eventos.
Conversacion: Mantengo una conversaci3n simple en ingl3s con un compa1ero cuando desarrollo una actividad de aula.

Materials: Cellphone, speakers, copies, images.

Activity three Organize story	Aim: At the end of the activity students will be identify the structure of a question with verb to be (singular).	Time: 30 min
Steps	Description:	Time:
Pre-listening	Visual contextualization through flashcards about target language will be presented to students. As the title of the song is a question itself showed to students the way a question is formulated, teacher will write it in the board.	10 min
While-listening	Students will listen a song while read the lyrics, they should highlight the words study before. Song will play twice.	10 min
Post-Listening	Students will do a wordsearch with the words learnt and then they should write some sentences and questions relate to the words listened in the song and with personal information.	10 min

Is this love?

I wanna love you and treat you right
 I wanna love you every day and every night
 We'll be together with a roof right over our heads
 We'll share the shelter of my single bed
 We'll share the same room, yeah,but Jah, provide the bread
 Is this love, is this love, is this love
 Is this love that I'm feeling?
 Is this love, is this love, is this love
 Is this love that I'm feeling?
 I wanna know, wanna know, wanna know now
 I got to know, got to know, got to know now
 I, I, I, I, I, I, I, I, I, I'm willing and able
 So I throw my cards on your table
 I wanna love you, I wanna love and treat, love and treat you right
 I wanna love you every day and every night
 We'll be together, yeah, with a roof right over our heads
 We'll share the shelter, yeah, oh yeah, of my single bed
 We'll share the same room yeah,but Jah, provide the bread

Implementation numer four.		4
Standards: Escucha: Participo en juegos y actividades siguiendo instrucciones simples. Lectura: Identifico las acciones en una secuencia corta de eventos. Conversacion: Mantengo una conversación simple en inglés con un compañero cuando desarrollo una actividad de aula.		
Materials: Computer, video-beam, speakers, copies, images.		
Activity four Organize story	Aim: At the end of the activity the students will be able to follow the sequence of a song identifying key words.	Time: 30 min
Steps 1	Description: New vocabulary is presented to familiarize learners with the topic. Elicitation of students' prior knowledge about addressed vocabulary.	Time: 10 min
2	Each group of students will be required in order to participate in the activity. Students listen to the song twice while reading the lyrics to follow the order of the events and singing if it is possible.	10 min
3	Students are given detached verses from the song to organize them in the appropriate sequence. Students listen to the song again so the group finishing first will be the winner if they have the song well organized.	10 min
<p>All that she wants On a dark desert highway Cool wind in my hair The warm smell of 42alifor Rising up through the air Up ahead in the distance I saw a shimmering light My head grew heavy and my sight grew dim I had to stop for the night There she stood in the doorway I heard the mission bell And i was thinking to myself This could be heaven or this could be hell Then she lit up a candle And she showed me the way There were voices down the corridor I thought i heard them say Welcome to the hotel 42alifornia Such a lovely place, such a lovely face There's plenty of room at the hotel 42alifornia Any time of year, you can find it here.</p>		

In this part we took into account a self-reflection chart that allowed us analyze our own work:

Task No 1:		Date: March 12th 2014
Linguistic aim: <i>By the end of the activity, learners will be able to familiarize and recognize lexical items including in a song.</i>		
Professional aim: <i>Time management due to the children always spend the same and long time on each ctivity.</i>		
Background knowledge: <i>Personal pronouns.</i>		
Materials and resources: <i>Flashcards, speakers, cellphone, board, marker, worksheets.</i>		
Stages	Procedure	Description
<i>Pre-listening</i>	<i>Easy new vocabulary will be presented in flashcards to contextualize learners with the topic. With the written form showed students support the pronunciation.</i>	<i>Vocabulary was presented through flashcards and it was evident that some of words had been learned before. Students made repetition of short phrases practicing pronunciation.</i>
<i>While-listening</i>	<i>Working in pairs learners should circle the words that they listen according with the previous activity.</i>	<i>Some students got together in groups of three, and did the activity proposed. The general behaviour was acceptable.</i>
<i>Post-listening</i>	<i>Students are asked to go to the board and write the words that they had to circle.</i>	<i>After demonstration students showed interest on going to the board and write the words.</i>
<i>Although some students presented disapproval at the beginning, the lesson was developed in an excellent form. Participation was even. The success of the activity relied on lesson planning selection of the materials, language used when instructions were given. Body language and realia supported new words introduction, current songs from the radio make children feet identified with them.</i>		
Reflection on action:		
<i>Some students ended the activities sooner than expected and started to promote misbehavior, now our task is to search for a solution for this challenge presented in the classroom.</i>		
<i>Students in advantage usually finish the task by first. As they are always expecting for more, we as teachers</i>		

Task No 1:	Date: March 12th 2014
<p><i>must know how to manage their time in order to have them involved in the complete lesson; this treatment must not become learners overtasked but aware of their strengths.</i></p> <p><i>After reflecting on the class finished we decide that we are going to implement a solution for this issue based on Brent (2008) who explains in their study about cooperative learning: “strong students faced with the task of explaining and clarifying material to weaker students often find gaps in their own understanding and fill them in”.</i></p>	

Task No 2:	Date: April 23rd 2014
<p>Linguistic aim: <i>By the end of the activity, learners will be able to differentiate, write and pronounce properly all the days of the week.</i></p> <p>Professional aim: <i>Time management (having the activity done on time).</i></p>	

Background knowledge: *Personal pronouns. Emotions (adjectives).*

Materials and resources: *Flashcards, speakers, audio player, board, marker, worksheets.*

Stages	Procedure	Description
<i>Pre-listening</i>	<i>The teacher writes down one line of the song on the board. “I don’t care if Monday’s blue, Tuesday’s grey and Wednesday too.”</i>	<i>Short introduction regarding days of the week and adjectives of emotions after writing the sentence on the board. Students remain quiet during talk.</i>
<i>While-listening</i>	<i>Then teacher instructs students to get in pairs and write down the words related to a certain line from the lyrics. So, the class can try to guess what the song is about. Students follow the lyrics of the song while listening to it and check if some of the words that they wrote are included. They listen to the song three times.</i>	<i>Grouping didn’t take much time. Instructions were given twice to avoid weaknesses. Learners provided some possible word connections to guess meaning General behavior was acceptable to listen to the song and students started collecting the words they found in the lyrics</i>
<i>Post-listening</i>	<i>Students write one sentence related to the activities that they like to do the most in the different days of the week.</i>	<i>Some volunteers wrote on the board what they like to do and the day they prefer to do it, they say out to the group what they have just written. (Participation almost goes out of</i>

Task No 2: **Date: April 23rd 2014**

		<i>control due to a collective desire to get Involved with the activity).</i>
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Reflection on action:

Students did more than learning the days of the week; they associated the days of the week with expressions about the emotions and feelings, as an example, some students wrote that they feel happy on Fridays because it is weekend, this may be occurred because they usually have some previous knowledge that place them one step forward than the others. This fact confirms that stimulate students curiosity leads to a variety of results.

This day in particular students showed enthusiastic towards the song that is going to be played and there participated actively in the class, they asked constantly for the name of the song and tried to guest how the flashcards look like. We realize the advantages of planning how to present vocabulary differently from many books in which activities are often highly repetitive and make learners to be not motivated during practice; we integrate the lexical competence in the classroom through activities that stimulate understanding, retention and use of words can contribute the learner to develop autonomous linguistic strategies.

However, when we focused on teaching certain common English collocations also included in the song, students thought that the meaning of those expressions was consistent to their assumptions. We consider it was basically because they do not know those words have different meanings and uses.

In this class we implement that Brent (2008) point out for those learners who end first than their partners; those students could help the others in the development of the activities proposed. It was positive since allow that the students feel motivate to help their partners and this could avoid misbehavior in class.

Task No 3: **Date: April 28th 2014**

Linguistic aim: *Language structures and forms (Questions).*

Professional aim: *Participation increase and risk taking.*

Background knowledge: *Verb to be*

Materials and resources: *Flashcards, speakers, audio player, board, marker, worksheets.*

Stages	Procedure	Description
<i>Pre-listening</i>	<i>Visual contextualization through flashcards about target language will be</i>	<i>Teacher did some questions as “Do you know reggae music?” Bob Marley?” Teacher</i>

Task No 3:

Date: April 28th 2014

	<p><i>presented to students. As the title of the song is a question itself showed to students the way a question is formulated, teacher will write it in the board.</i></p>	<p><i>explained personal characteristics of Bob Marley to contextualize learners. Teacher showed images about some vocabulary relate to the song. Feeling-love-you-we-day-night. Teacher wrote the words in the board and the tittle of the song to explain structure.</i></p>
<p><i>While-listening</i></p>	<p><i>Students will listen a song while read the lyrics, they should highlight the words study before. Song will play twice.</i></p>	<p><i>Students listened the song one time without lyrics, only for engage. Students paid attention. The second time learners listened the song with the lyrics for identify the words. Students started to do the wordsearch before they really have to.</i></p>
<p><i>Post-listening</i></p>	<p><i>Students will do a wordsearch with the words learnt and then they should write some sentences and questions relate to the words listened in the song and with personal information.</i></p>	<p><i>Students wrote the sentences in the worksheet and some went to the board and wrote them. Many students wrote the sentences of the lyrics and not create a new sentence with their personal information as were planned.</i></p>

Reflection on action:

It is perceived that students misplace concentration during the activity. We concord the worksheet displays too much information and exercises to do; thus, learners tend not to do the activities in the correct order. A number of students started with the step number 3 some others did it well but there was a general disorder at that point; they misbehave constantly, which reflected a fail when instructions were given and promoted to lose the sequence of the activity.

Students were motivated during the lesson, they started to provide examples spontaneously to the teacher and they did word connections between what they already knew and the words introduced in the contextualization, for example, the verb sail was immediately associated with the famous carton named Popey the sailor.

Additionally learners recognized the group of words given at the contextualization as nouns and verbs as well as the song, which had been listened before by students. This could be a result of the use of new technologies and the internet.

Although the results collected in the class correspond sometimes with the wants presented on theoretical background (input), the behavioral sense in a public school in Colombia is different from SLA books.

Task No 4:

Date: May 7th 2014

Linguistic aim: *The use of L2 through music videos has showed that some students increase listening comprehension results by just looking at a visual complement.*

Professional aim: *Team work and competitive purpose.*

Background knowledge: *Personal pronouns, present simple.*

Materials and resources: *Flashcards, speakers, audio player, board, marker, video-beam.*

Stages	Procedure	Description
<i>Pre-listening</i>	<i>New vocabulary is presented to familiarize learners with the topic. Elicitation of students' prior knowledge about addressed vocabulary.</i>	<i>Students were attentive to flashcards introduction, they immediately try to guess what the pictures were about .</i>
<i>While-listening</i>	<i>Each group of students will be required in order to participate in the activity. Students listen to the song twice while reading the lyrics to follow the order of the events and singing if it is possible.</i>	<i>Some students did not get together in groups, and did not do the activity proposed on time. However, the general behavior was acceptable.</i>
<i>Post-listening</i>	<i>Students are given detached verses from the song to organize them in the appropriate sequence. Students listen to the song again so the group finishing first will be the winner if they have the song well organized.</i> <i>Finally it is going to do a glossary in the board with all the words that students had learned. They should say which part of the speech they are, their meaning and their use given an example..</i>	<i>Learners were concentrated trying to organize the sequence of the song. We evidence they felt enthusiastic. At the end there will be 2 winners groups.</i>

Reflection on action:

We observed that students start to understand that there is always something important to do after listening to the song as it is not only listening without a purpose. Most of the learners have understood that before

Task No 4:

Date: May 7th 2014

playing the song they should contextualize some words presented in the lyrics. In that implementation, some students said to teacher: “que palabras estan en la canción?” “trajo imagines de las palabras que vamos a aprender?” after that they asked: “Que tenemos que hacer después de escuchar la canción?”. That type of expressions show that students recognize the listening stages and they know what it must be done in each one.

At times it is quite difficult to please each one of the students preferences: this song was enjoyed by some of the students because of the slow rhythm, which allowed them to perceive better what it was said in the song, however, the rest of the students rejected this song due to it was not funny at all.

The collaborative work was evident in this implementation since students wanted to win the game and worked as a team to make it. In this implementation was evidence that students increase their English lexicon because they were able to say what was the meaning of the words, what part of the speech were and use them in sentences given examples.

In this implementation we could finally use the video-beam after days of denials. It was difficult to book it because there is not a person in charge of the management of technological tools.

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