



# The use of music in the english classroom: An experience report in a public school in Goiás

**Tales Ramos Monteiro dos Santos**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study, in the form of an experience report, aims to show how the use of music in English language classes can bring many benefits in learning a foreign language. In addition to a brief report of mine, I also applied a questionnaire to find out the students' perception of the use of music in English classes.

**Keywords:** Music, English language, Benefits.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

This study, in the form of an experience report, aims to show how the use of music in English language classes can bring many benefits in learning a foreign language. In addition to a brief report of mine, I also applied a questionnaire to find out the students' perception of the use of music in English classes.

As it is an experience report, a part of the writing will be discussed in the first person so that the reader can feel more closely my experience as a teacher and researcher. Next, this work is divided into 05 parts: contextualization, methodology, motivation in the classroom, music in English teaching, pedagogical reflections on the use of music in English classes and final considerations.

## **2 CONTEXTUALIZATION**

Among the various didactic ways of learning and practicing another language, it is the use of music as a motivating and engaging tool, as it is able to reach almost all students in a room, whether by rhythm, lyrics, artist or musical genre. Still, it instigates students' curiosity for reading and textual interpretation, and also for the cultural and artistic learning that surrounds the musical world.

Therefore, music becomes a pedagogical tool for interaction, which enables not only involvement, but also the development of the aforementioned skills in small groups and in an individualized way. In other words, music in English language classes allows me to reach the student in all abilities, making the student stay focused on the content of music with different learning strategies.

Whenever I play a song, I notice that the students really like it. They are very excited to know the artist, the group, the music, among other characteristics. I start the class by saying that I'm going to play a well-known song that most of them have heard and know about through social media.

To get rid of the idea that music in English is difficult, I always say that they will see and hear words



already seen in class, in their material and in their notebooks, because I believe that This is a crucial time for me to have an excellent buy-in from the students so that I can keep them focused and attentive to the activity.

Then I always bring one to three trivia to make them even more curious and thus get more attention from them. Then, I explain how the work proposal will be, which is usually a musical lyric with blank spaces and they have the mission of filling in these spaces according to the lyrics of the song. To perform the activity, I play the music at least three times, so that the proposed activity is carried out satisfactorily. It is worth mentioning that, for each song chosen, this dynamic can change depending on the class and the class time.

With the lyrics complete, I read each musical stanza for them to repeat. Thus, I work not only on the auditory part but also on orality, which is one of the most fun and interesting moments of the class, since they are happy to be able to sing and pronounce certain words correctly and fluently. As a result, these are classes that students are eagerly awaiting. For me, it is one of the classes that I like to do the most, because the music provides me with an almost complete involvement of all the students during the class.

Using music as a learning tool is not easy, it requires preparation time, knowledge of music and lyrics and, above all, knowing the group of students or the class in which it will be taught. In addition, working with music also involves knowing cultural and historical aspects that are often strongly inserted in musical lyrics.

That's why I chose to do this study in the form of an experience report to share my experience and prove that music is a tool that is worth working on and exploring in foreign language teaching.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

The present work will have its research based on the author's perspective, that is, his look at all movements, actions and facts related to a certain pedagogical practice, in the context: music, in which the objective of the research is to draw attention to the use of music in English classes.

Horn (2007) points out that the most important thing in the English language is to put it into practice in a fun way, through constant revisions, games where children can exercise memory, vocabulary recognition, oral production, among other aspects, avoiding monotonous and repetitive practices.

In this sense, the main objective of this study is to emphasize that the use of music in English classes as a fun and motivating tool for students, making classes more attractive. The specific objectives are: to show the impact of music in English classes and to reflect on this practice as an effective and instigating tool.

The analysis was carried out in a 6th grade class, with 39 students aged 11 and 12 years, in the afternoon, at the Alceu de Araújo Roriz State School, in Luziânia, Goiás, by means of a lottery. Also, to



corroborate my report, I applied a brief questionnaire, with 10 multiple-choice questions, to certify whether the English language classes, with songs, were more attractive and fun to strengthen the analysis of this study. The questionnaire was administered on September 20, 2023. As I teach 04 classes of that year, the choice was made through a lottery, with the help of the Pedagogical Coordination.

The questionnaire is a qualitative research, as the investigation was carried out through observations made in the school experience and context. According to Minayo (2001), qualitative research is based on the social sciences, dealing with a world of conceptions, causes, desires, convictions, principles, analysis and behaviors. Gil (2010, p. 41) reports that "this type of research aims to provide greater familiarity with the problem, with a view to making it more explicit or building hypotheses"

Lakatos and Marconi (2003, p. 201) state that the "questionnaire is a data collection instrument, consisting of an ordered series of questions, which must be answered in writing". After distributing the questionnaire in printed form, I instructed the students to answer individually and explained what the purpose of the questions was, since they had not yet participated in an academic research.

The information collected through this research instrument was observed and analyzed in order to gather information and contribute to the experience report, supporting the study.

#### **4 MOTIVATION IN THE CLASSROOM**

To begin with, in any act of learning, it is essential that the student has an interest in the subject so that he can learn. In this sense, the teacher is a key player in the teaching and learning process, that is, he needs to seek strategies that motivate his students in the classroom.

Therefore, motivation and learning go hand in hand so that goals are achieved in the best possible way. Without motivation, it becomes impossible to learning and when there are reasons to learn, the more we want to learn. Therefore, motivation is an important necessary condition in the acquisition of learning.

Silva and Souza (2003) point out that the teacher needs to seek knowledge of the students' real interests in order to maintain or guide them to follow the learning path seeking a motivation, preferably a motivation that is strong and lasting. Once this is done, the teacher will have chances to involve the student towards the objectives set to achieve learning.

Following a constructivist line, human beings bring with them various experiences that can be positive or negative, feelings, beliefs, achievements and defeats that affect and influence their motivation. Therefore, when studying motivation, it is understood not only as an internal factor, but also as an external one. Therefore, the desire to learn and acquire new knowledge does not happen in isolation.

In this way, the teacher needs to know his student, his group or his class so that he can use various teaching strategies to motivate his students. In addition, the teacher must be motivated on a daily basis, since motivation must happen in a mutual relationship: teacher X student dialogically.



Freire (1996) emphasizes that the teacher and the student must maintain a dialogical relationship, of interaction, where one speaks while the other listens passively. According to Freire (1996, p. 160), the teacher must have the pedagogical capacity to "awaken, stimulate and develop" the pleasure of studying.

In the context of the English language, motivation can come in many forms. According to Ellis (1997), the motives can be: instrumental motivation, integrated motivation, resultative motivation and intrinsic motivation.

To elucidate, instrumental motivation is a reason that stimulates the individual to succeed in exams, job placement, and factors of educational and financial progress. Integrated motivation is the one that seeks mastery over the culture and daily life of native English speakers. The resulting motivation, as the name implies, is based on results, that is, the good result or performance makes the student want to learn more and more. Finally, intrinsic motivation is linked to a positive interest in the subject itself as a field of study and work.

Therefore, the English teacher needs to be aware of the various factors that condition the motivation to use teaching strategies that enable the learning of new words, expressions, grammar, among other elements that involve the study of a foreign language.

## **5 MUSIC IN ENGLISH TEACHING**

In general, music is seen as an instrument that seeks to draw the attention of students, since it has the capacity for involvement and brings several explicit and implicit elements, which encompass the culture of a people, its characteristics and influences from other peoples.

English, considered a universal language, absorbs cultural influences in which music is constantly present through the main media, since the time of radio and, today, through social networks and streaming channels<sup>1</sup>.

In this sense, according to Nocko (2005), music is present among the elements that characterize a given society and its culture. Also, according to the author (2005), music is a language that communicates with thought and reasoning, working on brain functions and perceptions of individuals. In this vein, it can be said that music is an important element in the social, cultural and historical formation of a society.

Considering that music is an engaging language, as mentioned above, Saldanha (2013) explains that music is the cultural plurality of a country, that is, the cultural manifestation of a nation that happens through various influences thanks to the music industry, the media and entertainment, which constitute a certain structure, which merge and coexist.

In the English language, music is able to stimulate the student with all these characteristics.

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<sup>1</sup> Online content streaming technology that allows you to consume movies, series and music through various mobile devices.



According to Camaron (2001), the student's interaction with this plural environment that music is capable of providing, makes him extract important information to better understand what happens in a given context.

This is also thanks to the repetition that music offers as a relevant factor in learning. When studying another language, the student is inserted in several fronts so that he can acquire the language through songs, books with images, real objects, pictures and stories. All these artifices help the student to fix more easily the words, expressions and phrases heard most frequently, according to Gerngross and Puchta (1998).

## **6 PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE USE OF MUSIC IN ENGLISH CLASSES**

After analyzing the 10 questions, it can be seen that the use of music in English classes is a tool that arouses the interest of students. With this brief observation, in a class of 39 students, it can be said that its pedagogical use can be explored whenever possible by the English language teacher.

In view of this, another factor that cannot be ignored by the teacher is the mastery of technological resources as an integral part of the proposed activity. The use of music in English classes, thanks to the communication technologies present today, allows the teacher to explore various resources, such as: movies, videos, TV series, among others concomitant with music, enriching the experience lived by the student.

Silva and Souza (1999) suggest that the English teacher should promote continuous tasks and work related to the musical universe so that students can learn the content satisfactorily and in what they are really interested. Thus, as a rule, it is possible to keep them instigated in the English language discipline.

## **7 FINAL THOUGHTS**

I conclude that this study, whose main objective was to show the importance of using music in English classes in public schools, as a fun and motivating tool for students, making classes more attractive. The investigation pointed out that the use of music in English classes, based on authors who already talk about the subject, that it is a motivational tool, both for learning and for interest in English language classes.

Music, pointed out here as a cultural element, enables the teacher to build strategies and promote various subjects, such as vocabulary, grammar, culture, among others; in a creative way with each song used in the classroom, bringing English closer to the student.

To clearly show this, the research carried out through the questionnaire revealed that students like music, reinforcing that its use is receptive to them, as long as the teacher makes a good choice, that is, a style, a rhythm or a song that is in evidence. Still, about the research, I can say that it exceeded expectations, since the students, still children, already know that music makes classes more attractive and that its pedagogical use has many benefits for learning.

Finally, this experience report showed, in general, that music is a great ally in the learning of the



English language, which makes it a relevant tool in the teaching practice of any foreign language teacher, which leads us to conclude that the use and assimilation of the content, through music, can be efficient and effective. providing students with more attractive classes, with pleasurable and playful moments in the classroom.



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