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**THE USE OF SONGS IN TEACHING
ENGLISH TO BEGINNER STUDENTS:
CASE STUDY OF LYCEE TOFFA I^{ER}**

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DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my parents for having contributed a lot in my studies, for the sacrifices they have endured in life. It is also dedicated to all my friends who somehow have contributed to this work by their objective comments and discussion.

May God Almighty grant them with everything they need.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

EFL: English as Foreign Language.

ESL: English as Second Language.

INTRODUCTION

The English language is of great and undeniable importance and its importance is remarkable. It is a language that nowadays we cannot do without because it has imposed itself as an international language, that is the language used during debates in the USA and it is getting more and more important every day in the world, especially in the context of globalization. The importance of English reaches French speaking countries. That is the reason why English teaching becomes necessary and compulsory in those countries either in State-owned or private secondary schools. But there are a certain number of problems relative to teaching English in French speaking countries. Some learners regard English language as a very complicated; complex and difficult language. Therefore, they complain that it is too hard to read; speak and understand. I have personally come to criticize the methods that some teachers used during their teaching process especially in beginners' classes due to the widespread of the complaints of the students. I heard some students argue that the roots of their difficulties is the dull and boring way the teaching in majority is conducted. Over the past, these issues of foreign language teaching and learning were of a great and paramount concern for EFL teachers. Among the varieties of studies carried out in this field, some are related to the use of songs to make English learning enjoyable and effective.

According to the studies carried out; there is a direct link between English language and songs. The researchers found out that English language is "stress-timed" language and therefore has lots to do with rhythm. Songs can also be easily memorized because of the rhythm that they contain. For me, the link between them can help in a lot of ways for teaching and learning. That is actually the reason why I chose this topic. People relate their lives, pleasures and sorrow through song, people show who and what they are through songs. So all

these make a song have a huge linguistic value as they provide authenticity and cultural views. Teaching is an art that is developing with the times and requires innovative and creative ideas. It is the duty of the teachers to find ways to reach effectiveness in their classrooms and songs are some of the resources that they should not hesitate to use. Through songs, they can reach their purpose because they can help the students remember the vocabulary items and also the grammatical structures that they have seen in class. Another point is that the songs chosen have to be suitable to classroom situation in such a way that would break the students' ice, relax them and make them like English language.

My survey includes five main chapters.

Chapter one deals with the Introduction to the study in which the problem is stated, the purpose of the study is mentioned, the significance for the study is mentioned and the limitations and scope are unveiled.

Chapter two refers to the literature review and this chapter aims at reviewing books and documents related to the topic.

Chapter three focuses on the methodology I have used to collect data for my study.

Chapter four presents the analysis and the data presentation.

Chapter five deals with discussions; recommendations; suggestion

The last part refers to the general conclusion

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1-1- Problem statement

The scientists who study music also called the “ethnomusicologists” have come to the conclusion that there are different kinds or categories of songs. And also they have noticed that everybody responds to music as soon as it is put on, even kids. If we go back in time, we can understand that there was different category of songs for different private or public occasions like naming ceremony; wedding; crowning and so on. So songs are also part of Africans culture. But the biggest problem is that songs that are so much part of Africans culture are not inserted in the educational system in Africa precisely in Benin. Therefore, it is not helping African proceed any further in their education specially in learning English as foreign language. In order to take the counterpoint, my study aims at depicting how to adapt text with songs. The teachers need to look for appropriate songs and select them for his or her learners. He has to make sure he selects songs that the students like, the ones that will match their educational and language level. I think that this study is very important because of the types of students that we have nowadays that actually do not show any interest in academic study, so using songs appears as a great method that can keep the student interested for a while. This study aims to help the students learn without facing hard times and to take in efficiently and also react appropriately and with accuracy.

1-2-The purpose of the study

There is one very interesting and remarkable idea relating to songs. It is believed that a language is easier to express in songs than in speech. So throughout this research work; I will demonstrate how the use of songs can be one of the greatest methods in reaching effectiveness of the teaching of English. My objective is to make teachers have the awareness that equitable interaction with the students is very important. Songs stress on the rhythmic nature of the

language used in them. Besides, songs can be used to increase motivation. It is up to the teachers to choose appropriately the songs that do not contain hot and dirty words. Furthermore, it is undeniable that in songs, we can read some cultural aspects of the countries the singers are from. CARRASQUILLO 1994 states: “Second language learners need to know not only the linguistic knowledge but also the cultural acceptable ways of interacting with others in different situations and relationship”. Finally, seeing their motivational aspects; songs, nowadays, can be used as a great tool for teaching and learning English as a way or an approach to reduce the learning and the teaching of English language difficulties.

1-3- The significance of the study

Generally, in Benin, it is known that songs do not have a special place in our secondary schools for the teaching of English in particular and also other foreign languages. Some teachers are mindful about the importance of using songs in teaching English to beginners because they have over the past experienced that and found it very fruitful. This category of teachers uses songs when teaching to their students’ beginners. Others do not see the usefulness in teaching English to beginners by using songs. In fact, there are many arguments in favor of using songs in language teaching, especially to beginners. The hopes of every teacher as stated by E. STEVICK are “To find the students comfortable and relaxed even in the midst of intense intellectual activity and vigorous arguments, to find that the students are listening to one another” (1976: 159-160).

Unfortunately, this is not what we remark in our secondary schools, the students are rather left to their own and find English learning and assimilation pretty hard. And that makes the students lose their motivation and do not have any interest in listening or paying attention in classroom situations. So this means that they fail to take part actively during free activities. In order to

palliate this situation, teachers have to look for effective approach in their teaching and the use of songs in certainly one.

1-4- Scope and limitations

The approach of using songs is something accepted worldwide and its relevance is explained in different ways in such a manner that no one can still doubt about its effectiveness. I wanted to travel down to Ghana to have a certain interaction with some teachers and students but unfortunately I failed by lack of money. So my study is just concentrated in looking for information on internet and consulting some books. Also during my practical training at LycéeToffa, I have talked with many teachers about the issue and according to them my research work is very important and can be help solve many problems in the field of education, especially teaching English language.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITTERATURE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a selection of important, interesting and useful points of view, a set of information and quotations taken from a variety of books, internet records. This second chapter gives more weight to the topic by unveiling what some experts of education said and wrote about the use of songs for an effective teaching of English as a foreign language to beginners.

2-1- DEFINITION OF TERMS

- * **Song**: a short piece of music that you sing.
- * **Education**: the process of teaching and learning, especially in schools or colleges, to improve knowledge and develop skills.
- * **Teach**: to give lessons in a school, college or university to help someone learn about something by giving them information.
- * **Beginner**: someone who has just started at something or has only recently started; a person who is starting to learn something and cannot do it very well yet.
- * **Student**: someone who is enrolled in a school or college and is studying a particular academic subject.
- * **Topicality**: the state of something contemporary, interesting or of a current and general interest or topic.
- * **Authenticity**: the quality of being genuine or not corrupted from the original; truthfulness of origins, the state of something that is true and real.

2-2- THE POSITIVE IMPACTS OF SONGS AND THEIR ROLES IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN REGARD TO STUDENTS BEGINNERS

In the field of education, some authors, over the past have done some important works on the use of songs in teaching English language to beginners. According to their researches, songs are powerful materials of motivation for EFL/ESL beginners to develop the four languages skills. One teacher encourages English teachers to use songs in their teaching. He thinks that songs to be a new method to make students learn, practice, and love English in an acceptable atmosphere when he said "Nowadays, I do not need the tolling bell to announce the beginning of the English period. As soon as the mathematics teacher who precedes me finishes and I step into the classroom, my students start singing the latest songs. After allowing them to sing, I ask them questions about grammatical and lexical items in the song. If I am delayed in the staff room, a crowd of protesting students immediately comes to inform me that the time is passing, so no pupil wants to miss 90 minutes with the English teacher, alias choirmaster" Ignatius N.SIBARAH (1999). Indeed, songs best help beginners not only to acquire vocabulary and grammar but also develop in a brief period of time the four language skills which are reading, writing, listening and speaking. Songs can attract students and make them love English. Gilberto Dias said "I truly believe that pop songs have been a great motivation factor for many of those who have engaged in EFL studies. I started to love English through pop songs." Ignatius N.SIBARAH (1999) develops the same point of view when he said "In my experience, the classroom should be a place where gaiety abounds, not a prison where learners sit passively subjected to an overbearing, domineering, all knowing and pedantic teacher. Thus to woo students to English language classes, I began to use songs as a magic tonic. This relaxed the classroom atmosphere sufficiently for learning to take place". In our time, it is

hard to escape music and song as it occupies ever more of the world around us: in operating theatres, restaurants and cafés, shopping malls), at sports events, in our cars, and literally everywhere. It would seem that the only place music and song is slow to catch on is in schools” (T. Murphey, p. 4).

And it is exactly schools, that could use the best and the most the immense potential a song disposes. “Songs have a place in the classroom for helping create that friendly and co-operative atmosphere so important for language learning, but they can offer much more”, claims D. T. Griffiee. Blair (1982) refers to songs as a source of motivation when he said “My university colleagues and i have been amazed by the reactions of our students after they listened to music. Nothing brings more joy to us than having shy and apathetic students participate in music activities. Using music gives students opportunities to become active creators of their own learning process". So it means that songs appear as a good tool for language acquisition. Mc Donald and Ramser (1982) said “Music should be included daily in curriculum for infants as well as older children (p187).The presence of music whether through records or from the teacher's singings, can awaken many responses" (p51). In the same range, Warner (1982) indicates “Music in early childhood classes is a must. It is a teaching tool and has aesthetic qualities" (p134). Another point is that songs and culture have a strong link, so through songs the teacher can teach the culture of the target language community to the students beginners and that will certainly be very interesting for the students. Songs are the best devices to procure a perfect pronunciation. Alice Osman and Jean McConochie (1987:12) think that “Songs are the best means to make a good orator and to procure a perfect pronunciation. Songs can help teachers to teach stress, intonation and also rhythm". Morris Kimura states in article entitled * An idea for using songs in the EFL/ESL classroom* on page 2 that “Using music in one's classroom is a great way to motivate students and generate enthusiasm for what they are learning" But teachers have to be very cautious how to choose the songs and on what

kinds of songs to choose. Beatrice Landecks was saying the same thing when she declared "If you want your child to enjoy music, one of childhood's most rewarding joys, then it depends on you and the music you made".

2-3- Nine reasons why songs are important for student beginners for English language acquisition.

Language teachers can and should use songs as part of their classroom teaching repertoire. Songs contain authentic language, are easily obtainable, provide vocabulary, grammar and cultural aspects and are fun for the students. They can provide valuable speaking, listening and language practice in and out of the classroom. Some key reasons songs can work exceedingly well in the foreign language classroom include the following:

1. Songs almost always contain authentic, natural language

This often contrasts the contrived, stilted language found in many student texts.

Of course songs can also go to the other extreme by using overly crude, foul or otherwise objectionable language. With careful screening, an extensive library of usable songs for language learning can be compiled.

2. A variety of new vocabulary can be introduced to students through songs

Looking to boost student vocabulary with useful phrases, vocabulary and expressions? Songs are almost always directed to the native-speaking population so they usually contain contemporary vocabulary, idioms and expressions.

3. Songs are usually very easily obtainable

Cibemba and Silozi notwithstanding, songs are usually not that difficult to obtain. Local sources may be available including the students themselves.

There's always the internet which can connect you with song downloads in all but the most obscure languages.

4. Songs can be selected to suit the needs and interests of the students

In English especially, so many songs are available that selection of songs with suitable themes, levels and vocabulary is not at all difficult. Allowances can also be made for complexity or simplicity of language, depending on the students, by selecting and using suitable songs.

5. Grammar and cultural aspects can be introduced through songs

Most if not all songs have a recurring theme or story. So excerpting cultural elements is usually a possible, but often overlooked aspect of using songs. I still use "Hit the Road Jack" sung by the late Ray Charles to illustrate spoken contractions. He uses spoken contractions is virtually every line of the song.

6. Time length is easily controlled

Whether you have an hour, 30 minutes, or only 15 minutes or so, a song can be used in the course of a planned lesson. Use of songs is very flexible.

7. Students can experience a wide range of accents

A good thing about songs is that you can expose the students to many different kinds of English. British English, American English, Caribbean English are all widely available through songs. Accents too are well represented by songs from different regions and in a variety of types and formats. Gospel, soul, R & B, Pop, Rock, Reggae, Jazz and other styles change not only accents, but vocabulary and usage too.

8. Song lyrics can be used in relating to situations of the world around us

Songs have been used as vehicles of protest for civil rights, workers' rights, even prisoners' rights along with an untold number of other causes. They've expounded on pollution, crime, war and almost every social theme or cause.

We won't even mention how many songs are about, related to or explore the theme of sex.

9. Students think songs are natural and fun

Well actually they are, aren't they? Fun, even silly songs abound in English. Some singers actually made a career out of them. (Ray Stevens, anyone?) They make offbeat, fun changes of pace with classroom use. These are only some of the many reasons songs are useful in the language learning classroom. They contain authentic language, are easily obtainable, provide vocabulary, grammar and cultural aspects and are fun for the students. They provide enjoyable speaking, listening, vocabulary and language practice both in and out of the classroom. So EFL, English as a foreign language, ESL, English as a Second language and foreign language teachers should all consider using songs as a regular part of their classroom activities

2-4- HOW CAN SONGS ACTUALLY HELP POSSESS ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

2-4-1-THE HELP OF SONGS WHEN LEARNING PRONUNCIATION.

Songs can be very helpful as far as learning pronunciation is concerned. They provide the authentic language with all its „traps“ (such as connected speech, different pronunciation of the same sound, or difficult pronunciation of some words) laid for learners, who should be exposed to it as much as possible to strengthen their ability to understand it. In the following subsections we will concentrate on three areas of difficulties in pronunciation (sounds, words, connected speech), and on explaining why songs can be useful when the learners are caught into these “traps of language”.

2-4-2- THE HELP OF SONGS FOCUSED ON SOUNDS

“Sounds are the smallest unit from which words are formed and can be categorized as vowels and consonants.”

For the learners of English some sounds may be difficult to pick out because they do not exist in their mother tongue, and they “have to learn to physically produce certain sounds previously unknown to them”. Even though it may be a difficult task for some learners, it is quite important because it can sometimes happen that “incorrectly pronounced sounds strain communication, and it can also change a phrase’s meaning”

Songs can help learners because “the rhymes in songs provide listeners with repetition of similar sounds, and when the students choose to listen to songs again, they are indirectly exposing them to these sounds” repeating them, getting better at recognizing them, and finally producing them.

2-4-3- THE HELP OF SONGS FOCUSED ON WORDS

“Words are combinations of sounds which form together to give meaning. A word is uttered in syllables, usually one emphasized syllable (the stress) and the rest weak (unstressed)”

There are several difficulties that may be encountered by a learner. Firstly, “each English word has its own stress pattern, with very complex ‘rules’ to guide learners.” Secondly, “even when the same words exist in both languages, the number of syllables is not always identical.” And lastly “weak syllables are central to English”

There are both several difficulties and several ways songs can support practising these problems. “Words in songs fit the music, helping learners associate the number of syllables / stress in these words, with memorable rhythms. Songs contain endless examples of weak syllables, helping to convince learners of the way English is pronounced”

2-4-4- THE HELP OF SONGS FOCUSED ON CONNECTED SPEECH

“Connected speech is the natural way we speak, linking together and emphasizing certain words, rather than each word standing alone”

Connected speech plays a very important role in English as it is the way English is usually spoken, but unfortunately not always in English lessons. “Many learners are accustomed to hearing a very careful, clear pronunciation of words, such as native speakers might use when talking very emphatically or saying words in isolation” (S. Rixon, p. 38). However, native speakers usually connect the words. And when the “words are used in a connected natural utterance, some of their sounds are different to those used in very careful speech, and they may become harder for learners to recognize” (S. Rixon, p. 39). The problem is that the learners “normally learn words individually and, especially at lower levels, tend to pronounce each word separately.” Concerning this problem Shelagh Rixon claims that words pronounced in isolation often sound very different from the same words said in connected speech, so there is little point in concentrating too much on single words said out of context (p. 30). Another problem is that learners “frequently misconceive contraction as being ‘incorrect’, only used in ‘slang’”. But as said a while ago, a native speaker says the words separately either on purpose or when talking emphatically, which means that connected speech is natural, normal and widely used.

Songs help learners practise the described subject matters because they “provide real and ‘catchy’ examples of how whole phrases are pronounced often to the extent that students find it difficult to pick out individual words. The music further emphasizes the ‘flow’ of the words. Moreover, songs, like other spoken texts, are full of contractions”

2-5- CRITERIA OF GOOD AUDIO AND VISUAL DOCUMENTS

*** Topicality**

This term means that the topic that the teacher has to come up with must meet the learners' needs and interests. It would be useless and boring for the students. But if the teacher overcomes to choose an interesting topic for his students, the whole class will be vivid, motivated and animated.

*** Authenticity**

This simply means that the documents that the teacher will use during his classroom situations with his students must be original, authentic and the subjects within them also must be genuine.

*** Clarity**

Both the sound and the scripts should be clear and neat. It shouldn't be hard for the students to read the scripts and also the audio has to be clear enough for the students to hear without too much heeding. Otherwise, they will find it too hard and difficult to follow otherwise, they will lose focus.

*** Technical qualities**

The machines or materials used to conduct the lesson should be of good quality in order not to decrease or destroy or also alter the quality of the documents.

2-6- THE TYPES OF SONGS THAT CAN BE USED IN CLASSROOM SITUATION FOR STUDENTS BEGINNERS.

Many scholars have conducted different researches about the types of songs that can be used in classroom situations especially with students beginners. Among them all, Bayless (1987) came up with the conclusion that we have five categories of songs as follows:

*** Expandable songs**

Expandable songs are very easy and short songs and make it easier for students beginners to assimilate, make the songs their own properties, and thus create a sense of pride and enhancing self-worth. These kind of songs offer the students opportunities to make up their own words or phrases for particular parts of the songs.

Ex: the song “if you are happy, let me know” becomes an Expandable song as children add their own phrase such as “clap your hand”

*** Nursery rhythm**

They are simple melodies and short verses.

Ex: “I want to know”

*** Old traditional and folk songs**

They are songs that have been for long times sung by children, for centuries. Folk music has many parodies.

Ex: “Ten little Indians”

*** Ballads or Story songs**

Ballads are traditional songs that tell stories and have been handed down from generation to generation. Beginners love them because of the theories that they develop.

Ex: “In a country”

* **Rounds**

They are songs that are sung by group of people which each subset of people starting at different time.

Ex: "This old man"

All put together, It can be noticed that such songs convey some messages. It is up to the teacher to select among these categories; the songs that best fit or match his lesson planning and can motivate the students. He can sing the songs together with the students and make fun sometimes when needed.

Prentice Hall (1967:16) said in his book entitled "Growing with music book 1 " that many techniques may be used in TEFL through songs to teach English to beginners. The techniques are as follows:

- Gap filling
- Focus questions
- True or False statements
- Add the final verse
- Dictation
- Discussion on the topic of the songs using the vocabularies of the songs
- Correcting the wrong words.

But before using any of those techniques, the teacher has the obligation to make sure the ones he wants to choose will help him reach his/her objective regarding his lessons.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Introduction

In this chapter, I have presented information about the design of the study, the setting of the study, the research target population (participants), the research instrument, the procedure of data collection and the method of data analysis.

3-1- Design of the study.

My research method is a description and interpretation of the survey. So, two approaches that were used for this research work are both quantitative and qualitative, since the questions of my investigation are closed and opened. That is, the expected answers will be interpreted in terms of percentage. In this research work I have used a mixed method: the quali-quantitative research method. The qualitative method is used to work on observation data in order to investigate teachers' attitudes to learners' use of French in EFL classroom context. Quantitative research method comes into play in the extent that it helps to deal with statistics and numbers as it seeks to "explain phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)", (Aliaga and Gunderson, 2000). In this research, I am exploring the attitudes of teachers concerning their learners' use of French in EFL classrooms. I have chosen Lycée Béhanzin secondary school in Porto-Novo as site of the research because almost all the learners have lower proficiency in English. It is proved that, some of them cannot express their opinions in English and also they have little vocabulary. Maybe EFL teachers use French all the time or most of the time during teaching and learning process and do not offer to their learners opportunities to express their opinions in English.

3-2- Setting of the study

This research work is carried out in pattern of teaching English as Foreign Language (EFL) in Benin Secondary Schools. The survey has been carried out in Lycee Toffa 1er which is located in the town of Porto-Novo at Adjarra-Docodji, not far from the town hall and CEG DAVIE. In fact, we have chosen the Lycee Toffa 1er as a case study of this research work for having attended our practical training in that school. Lycee Toffa 1er is a boarding school exclusively constituted of young girls, some living in dormitories and others outside in the town. There are many teachers with different status intervening in this school and the majority of them are women and the administrative board is composed of women in great number. Among these teachers, there are teachers' advisers, qualified teachers, part time teachers and even untrained teachers.

3-3- Data collection procedure

The two techniques used to collect the data were questionnaire and class observation. As far as the classroom observation is concerned, it enables me to collect reliable and trustful event which occurs in the classroom. I carried it out in EFL classes by negotiating the time and the date with the teacher I am going to observe. It is centered on the amount of English EFL learners are using. More specifically, it focuses on EFL teachers actual use of songs during classroom learning activities when teaching English to beginners. I always sit at the bottom of the class so as to observe. My observation in seven EFL classes took me about one month as I was in the meantime dealing with my practical training. Regarding the questionnaires, they were used as an efficient way to obtain data from EFL teachers to better represent their positions. A sample of the questionnaires can be found in the Appendices. Fifty (50) copies of the questionnaires were distributed to EFL teachers and students of Lycée TOFFA 1er. I have explained to them that their identity would be kept confidential and only the answers they would provide

would be used as illustration in my research work. Through the questionnaire, I intended to find out teachers' attitudes related to the use of songs during their classroom situations and also the beginners' interests or feelings interacting with songs during their learning process. The questions are so clear that teachers have no difficulty in filling the questionnaire. The number of the copies of the questionnaire addressed to teachers and students is 105, which makes 50 for the teachers and 55 for the students. I did not succeed in collecting back all the questionnaires I have distributed. I failed taking back 10 from the students and 05 from the teachers. The data I obtained from the questionnaire and the class observation have helped me to be aware of how very easy it is for the beginners to assimilate English language when it is taught through songs. The results of my questionnaire and the class observation will be shown in the chapter four of this research work.

3-3-1- The questionnaire

The questionnaire is a set of written questions that are given to the respondent. The questionnaire can be very useful in carrying out research. Questionnaire is the most commonly used method of gathering information because it is the less costly way to reach more people. In my research work, the questionnaire is designed in such a way that the data obtained are quantitative. Before writing the questions, it is obvious to base them on the purpose of one's research. There are only closed forms of questions in order to make it easy for those who are to fill them. A closed question or closed-ended question is a question for which the researcher provides a suitable list of responses. This produces mainly quantitative data. For my research work, I have prepared a set of closed questions; which means that questions to which there are a limited range of responses. These kinds of questions are useful for questionnaire because they are quick to complete, and they provide answers that are easy to analyze. So this method investigation has actually help me ask a fifty-five students their feelings about the use of songs in

their English language learning. Many categories of words of expressing feelings are provided

3-3-2- Classroom Observation

The purpose of classroom observation in the framework of my study is to evaluate the reactions or truthfulness of the students when teachers make use of songs in the process of conducting his lesson in EFL classroom context. It enables me to gather informations about my work. It also helped me see the great efforts that the teachers have to deploy in with care in the selection of the adequate songs. Classroom Observation helped me a lot in the gathering of informations

3-4- The research participants

The investigation of this study has grabbed two kinds of target. The first one is a group of EFL students and the second one is made up of EFL teachers. Such choice has been made because this study has to deal with the use of songs in teaching English to beginners, which involves not only teachers but also learners as well. The first target as mentioned is a group of 45 EFL learners of Form One (6e) and 51 EFL learners of Form two (5e) which put together, gives a total of 96 EFL learners. They are aged between 10 to 14 maximum. The second target is a group of 25 EFL teachers composed of 20 females and 5 males. The target is made up of novice and experienced teachers. Their age is between 25 to 46 years old and the majority of them has teaching experience in English in Secondary School up to 14 years apart from the novices who just have 2 to 3 years of experience under their belt.

**CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND
DISCUSSION**

Introduction

In this chapter, I will provide the feedback of all of my research work. In fact, I will give comments about my questionnaires and give tangible details that will all be put in different tables in terms of figures and percentages.

4-1- Feedback of the classroom observation

The classroom observations that I have used as one tool of my research work actually helped me to come to understand that the teachers of English methods of teaching English language vary from one teacher to another and I noticed this in Lycée Toffa 1er as a classroom observer. There are certain numbers of attitudes that I have noticed with most of teachers in many schools but I am only going to specify myself on what strikes me the most. I have to mention first that the attitudes that I said I was going to talk about are both positive and negative. In Lycée Toffa 1er, some English teachers respect the pedagogical instruction and as soon as they come to the classroom, they make sure every single student is in the mood of the knowledge acquisition by trying to say something to burst them into laughter as ice breaking jokes or whatever. Right after that they ask one student to start a song that all the class in take in choir. I as an observer really appreciate that because when the teachers do that because introducing his lessons, the students are very happy and participate. Most of the teachers I observed use quite often songs to teach their students and I can tell that students were really motivated and showed great interests when it comes to songs activities in all the classes I have been to.

On the contrary, most of the teachers I paid a visit begin their classes directly on what they have to teach. They do not warm-up their learners to arise motivation on them. They do not mind any motivation to reinforce their learners' understanding of the lesson. Some of them even start without any revision of the previous lesson to check out their learners' understanding and that is too bad. It

was anyway clear that even students do not love these types of teachers who do not show any care with the students.

4-2- Feedback of the questionnaire addressed to teachers

Out of 60 handouts given to teachers, only 50 have been returned; so we have collected the data that have all be analyzed and put in different tables below.

1) Do you teach songs in your class?

Table n°1

| | Veryoften | Often | Never | Total |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Frequency | 29 | 17 | 04 | 50 |
| Percentage | 58% | 34% | 08% | 100% |

If we consider the first question, we can see that the great majority of teachers use songs in their classes. Out of 50 teachers, 29 as indicated in the table n°1 said that they use very often songs in the process of their English teaching to beginners and in term of percentage they make 58%. So according to the information in the table n°1 only 08% of the teachers never make use of songs in their teachings. We can then conclude that the great majority of the teachers is mindful of the importance of songs in the English language acquisition of their learners.

2) When teaching songs, what is your purpose?

Table n°2

| | Grammar | Vocabulary | Fun | Total |
|------------|---------|------------|-----|-------|
| Frequency | 25 | 15 | 10 | 50 |
| Percentage | 50% | 30% | 20% | 100% |

Here, we can state that the opinions are diverse but we must not lose sight that most of the teachers focus on grammar when teaching songs to their students in their classrooms. Out of 50 teachers, 25 teach grammatical structures to their students through songs and so doing make it easy for the learners to learn with ease and joy. They make 50% out of 100% to use this procedure. 15 teachers use songs to introduce new words and expressions to their learners through songs for them to be fluent and accurate in real life situations. Only 10 teachers according to the table n°2 use songs in their classroom just for fun.

3) How do you find teaching songs to your students?

Table n°3

| | Difficult | Time consuming | Motivating | Total |
|------------|-----------|----------------|------------|-------|
| Frequency | 06 | 09 | 35 | 50 |
| Percentage | 12% | 18% | 70% | 100% |

From the answers we have in the table n°3, we can notice that the majority of the teachers are aware of the fact that teaching songs in classroom situations to students beginners is very motivating both for the teachers and the learners because if the learners are making easy progress in their assimilation, the teachers also are highly motivated and proud of their students. Out of 50 teachers, only 06 among them think it hard or difficult to teach songs to their students. The 70% out of 100% acknowledge the power of motivation that songs have and their impacts on beginners. 18% of the teachers think that teaching songs to students consume their times. But it is plain to see that even though we add the total number of the teachers who say that teaching songs to students is difficult to the total number of those who think that it consumes times, their overall total number doesn't reach the half of the teachers who think that teaching songs is very motivating.

4) At what moment of the lesson do you use songs?

Table n°4

| | Beginning of the class | During the class | After the class | Total |
|------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Frequency | 19 | 16 | 15 | 50 |
| Percentage | 38% | 32% | 30% | 100% |

The conclusion that we can draw here is that most of teachers use songs right at the beginning of the class to settle the students in the mood of what is going to happen and also and most of all break their ices because this aspect is very important for a classroom to be well animated and vivid. 38% percent of the teachers begin their classes with songs because they are aware of the fact that this can fire up the students and get their attention. During class, 32% of teachers make use of songs certainly to keep students motivation up and their attention high. 15 out of 50 teachers use songs after their classes.

5) How do your students find songs in the process of your teaching?

Table n°5

| | Demanding | Pleasant | Encouraging | Total |
|------------|-----------|----------|-------------|-------|
| Frequency | 05 | 15 | 30 | 50 |
| Percentage | 10% | 30% | 60% | 100% |

Teachers according to the reports that we have in the table n°5 say that students appreciate the use of songs in the process of learning English language certainly because they find it easy to remember the language items used in the songs when they can recall them and sing them as well. 60% of the teachers has testified that their students find the use of songs very encouraging. 15% of them are also saying the same thing just with a different word. So the total number of the teachers whose students think positively about songs are 45 and equals to 90% out of 100%. So it is all clear that students love songs and thinks they help a lot in their learning.

- 6) What type of grouping do you use so often for your songs teaching activities?

Table n°6

| | Individual work | Pair work | Group work | Total |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|------------|-------|
| Frequency | 03 | 20 | 27 | 50 |
| Percentage | 06% | 40% | 54% | 100% |

When taking into account the answers of the teachers, we can come to understand that nowadays, teachers tend to use group works to encourage the participation of all students. If we look at the table n°6, we can see that the percentage of teachers that use group works in their classroom is more numerous than the other options. 54% of the teachers use group works. Right after that is the range of the teachers

who mostly use pair works. If we pull a close look around, we can see that all of these two categories of teachers are looking for the participation of the students. Only 06% of the teachers use individual works in their classroom.

7) Which difficulties do you encounter when carrying out these activities?

Table n°7

| | Timing | Students 'control | Classroom management | Total |
|-------------------|--------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Frequency | 12 | 11 | 27 | 50 |
| Percentage | 24% | 22% | 54% | 100% |

The conclusion that we can draw from the feedback we got from the teachers is that the major problem that they encounter while conducting songs activities is related to the classroom management. Classroom management has to do with both the state of the classroom and the behavior of the students. Teachers up till now don't actually know how to proceed in maintaining a state of order because the students are during these activities so excited and motivated that they tend to disturb their mates who need all his concentration to work. So that issue of classroom management is what the majority of the teachers are facing. 54% of the teachers face that problem. 22% of them think that students are out of control during these activities and even though the classroom is quite well, they still face hard times with students 'discipline.

4-3- Feedback of the questionnaires addressed to students

1) Do you learn songs with your teachers in class?

Table n°8

| | Yes | No | Total |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Frequency | 32 | 23 | 55 |
| Percentage | 58% | 42% | 100% |

Here, we see that the great majority of students learn songs and do songs activities in their classroom with their teachers. And this corresponds to the answers given by the teachers in the questionnaires addressed to them. Out of 55 students that received the questionnaires, 32 say that they are used to the use of songs in their classroom activities and students 23 say that their teachers do not use songs to teach anything to them. So according to the table n°8, we can conclude that the great majority of the teachers use songs in the process of their teaching in such a manner that their students are used to it.

2) How do you find it?

Table n°9

| | Very interesting | Interesting | Not interesting | Total |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------|
| Frequency | 28 | 20 | 07 | 55 |
| Percentage | 51% | 36% | 13% | 100% |

When students answer this question n°2 this way, we can take it for granted that

students find songs very interesting and they help them a lot in their studies. 51% of the students are siding with the fact that songs are of a great importance in their learning and they really appreciate. But we have to underline that if students say that they find songs that they learn in class very interesting, it all depends on the care that their teachers have in the selection of the songs that best meet their students 'interests. 20 students out of 55 find songs interesting and 07 do not find it at all interesting certainly because their teachers do not know how to read their needs.

3) Do you feel at ease when interacting with the songs in your classroom?

Table n°10

| | Yes | No | Total |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Frequency | 34 | 21 | 55 |
| Percentage | 62% | 38% | 100% |

For this question, they are 34 out of 55 to answer yes which means that songs give them joyful mood and put them in a better condition to learn happily. As I was engrossed in a discussion with one of them, he said to me that even naturally, songs have a powerful impact on whoever listen to it and therefore when brought into classroom situation, they boost the participation of the students because they are very motivated and at ease. But again I have to say that it all depends on the teacher methodology in organizing the activities. 38% of the students do not feel at ease when dealing with songs activities in their classroom and this can push to the conclusion that even though the majority of the teachers and students are aware of the importance of songs in the English language acquisition, there are some teachers who still do not know how to

select the songs that the students will love and also how to organize the activities.

4) How do you most often work in class?

Table n°11

| | Individualworks | Pair works | Group Works | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|-------|
| Frequency | 07 | 20 | 28 | 55 |
| Percentage | 13% | 36% | 51% | 100% |

According to the table n°11, students most of the time work together which facilitate real life communication situations. Students no longer work in isolation and this make them communicatively competent. 20 students work in pairs and this also is close to group works which shows that participation and communication is what the majority of the students are asked to do when teachers put them in group and in pairs.

5) Do you learn easily new words and expressions through songs?

Table n°12

| | Yes | No | Total |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Frequency | 32 | 12 | 55 |
| Percentage | 58% | 42% | 100% |

Songs really help students to discover and memorize new words easily. 32 students out 55 reveal that they learn words and expressions very easily through songs. They make 58% in term of percentage. The great majority of the students think that way because first, songs are nice to hear due to the melody attached to

it that runs through veins and secondly because the language used in them are authentic and pure. Only 12 students out 55 do not learn easily through songs certainly because the songs they are used to are not melodious or the language used in them are not authentic.

6) How do you feel while practising songs in class with the teachers?

Table n°13

| | Happy | Sad | Indifferent | Total |
|------------|-------|-----|-------------|-------|
| Frequency | 27 | 12 | 16 | 55 |
| Percentage | 49% | 22% | 29% | 100% |

Most students actually appreciate songs because they really help them enhance their desire to learn English language. Most of them according to the table n°13 are very happy when in classroom they are dealing with songs activities. Their figure in term of percentage is 49% and this outnumbers all the other options of the table. So far all we have been taking is in the same direction with the current table because they learn easily with happiness and also assimilate and this aspect is very important. 22% of the students declare that during songs activities in their different classroom, they feel sad and I think that they do feel sad maybe because of the music that the teachers have come up with. There are some songs that inspire sadness but contain pure and authentic language, these categories of songs can actually make students feel sad but the teachers as stated earlier have a great responsibilities in the selection of the songs. 16 out of 55 students do not feel anything special during songs activities in classroom.

7) Is learning English through songs too difficult?

Table n°14

| | Yes | No | Total |
|------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Frequency | 20 | 35 | 55 |
| Percentage | 36% | 64% | 100% |

Students state that sometimes they meet difficulties but these difficulties are minor ones but most of the times songs work pretty much well and there is no real impediment preventing them from understanding. So as we can see in the table n°14; 64% of the students say that they do not find any difficulties in learning through songs. So it can be drawn as conclusion that songs help a lot students in general and in particular beginners because they are attracted by the melody that the songs contain and that ease their stress and therefore make it easy for them to acquire the language.

4-4- Discussion

As we can see in the data, we can say that the teachers of English in Benin, especially at Lycée TOFFA 1er use songs in their classes in their daily activities. This can be accounted for by the fact students tell that they do them frequently with teachers. Teachers use songs in their classes for various and different reasons. There are some teachers who use them for grammatical purpose; others use them for vocabulary reasons and some others for just fun. It still remains that teachers perform them to achieve their aims. Teachers as well as students find songs very interesting and motivating because they can draw lots of information on them. According to the teachers songs help students to master in a very quickly way for instance the nouns of animals. In this respect they are very informative and constructive. Even if some teachers find sometimes designing songs and games can be a tedious task to perform; students fully

appreciate games in class as they find them pleasurable. We notice today that songs are performed through pair work or group work in order to increase participation of students and prevent at the same time inhibition. When making a cross analysis of results we see that teachers and students have nearly the same opinion as far as the questions they are asked are concerned. They all acknowledge that songs are really important and vital to English Language Teaching.

**CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND
SUGGESTIONS**

5-1- Recommendations to teachers

Teachers, in general, have a great responsibilities in an efficient resolution of problems that hinder the learning and the mastery of English by learners. Therefore, teachers must work for personal and academic development without forgetting the use of internet as a genuine research tool just to reinforce their professional capacities. In the meantime they must collect documents, compact disks enabling them to vary their class activities and consider songs as a working tool exactly as other didactic tool. It is really important for teachers to make use of songs in their classes if they really want to promote their students communicative capacities. We must not lose sight of the fact that when using songs in our classes, we give students sense of self confidence and it is only by being self-confident can students express themselves freely and without constraint. It is an imperative to assert that today teachers should not only worry about the success of their students in exams. What is important is that the teachers of English should strain every nerve so that their students use the English language without any difficulties. This can only be achieved when they are more aware that songs are really an opportunity for them to promote communicative skills. Accuracy is important in a language but the new trend favors fluency. Fluency can be developed in the beginners of English if the teachers use songs regularly in classes.

5-2- Recommendations to students

It is a necessity for students to understand that English is a language that should not be neglected for so many reasons. If students want really to have a high command of the language, following his or her teacher in the daily activities is extremely important. As we show it in the data so many teachers use songs not only to motivate their students, but they also use them to teach

grammar, vocabulary and so on. So, this shows that following songs in class is part of their learning. Beyond the notion of fun, there are many more important things with songs and games. This is the very reason why young teachers even old teachers tend to use them in class more often than not. It is now up to students to avail themselves to profit by this opportunity to develop their capacities because in songs and games they can obtain whatever they want

5-3- Recommendations to educational authorities

No one can deny that in nearly all Beninese secondary schools there is a conspicuous lack of infrastructures and materials aimed at promoting an efficient teaching. There are so many ordeals that the teachers of English are faced with today. If we really want an efficient teaching it is the duty of the educational authorities to have in mind that without adequate materials there is nothing that teachers can do. It is their responsibilities to supply books, tapes, and computers so that people in schools better rejoice new technologies. If you cast a look at schools in rural areas, the impression we have is that decent equipment is quite inexistent and this is a disgusting situation. To better use songs schools are needed to be more equipped in terms tapes, computers, TV sets and so on. The government needs to come up with good ideas aiming at the improvement of the teachers living conditions to motivate them in order to get satisfactory results because the teachers can only give the best of themselves when their monthly income matches their efforts. But I'm mindful that the government cannot solve all the problems raised and that's the reason why I have also made some recommendations to even parents for them to know how to handle the situation.

5-4- Recommendations to parents

Parents should know that songs and games are parts of the students learning. As it is proved songs are valuable and efficient in the students' way of learning. Today parents are becoming more and more conscious that students need to work in a relaxed environment. In this respect, it will be very helpful for parents who can afford materials for their students because songs are not for just fun and nice time; they develop the students' intelligence. Parents should no longer be impediments to their children' learning; instead they should be partners and they are partners they help teachers to achieve their aims by knowing that songs are no harm to their children, it is just that the teacher of English wants to make the student communicatively competent.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Although the communicative approach has become the mainstream in language teaching we notice that students are very positive recipients of knowledge meaning that they are only a minimal role in the selection of learning materials and teaching methodologies. Therefore teachers should allow beginners to take in developing material development through existing materials. We have to acknowledge that today teachers as well as students are truly lucky with the globalization and the information high way from which everybody can benefit. This conception of education is now overshadowed by the notion that it is about developing skills for accessing and progressing information. That is to say that the teacher must always be learning to update his or her knowledge and keep his or her role of monitor. It is clear that the promotion of English language can be improved especially in Benin where in most secondary schools there are English clubs in which songs are performed. Such activities provide meaningful and enjoyable language practice and they encourage the learners to explore the wonderful world of English language through songs. Besides, songs give students a lot of positive emotions and this is also a basic tool in studies. Songs are serious devices by which we can create an interesting activity. Students learn the grammar items without knowing that they are learning. Moreover it encourages their participation. We must admit in this respect that well-chosen songs are really invaluable as they give the students the opportunities to practise language skills. Today it is shown that songs in English Language Teaching are highly motivating and play a paramount role as they can be used to give practice in all language skills and be used to practise many types of real life communication. According to researchers; students in the 4th form get anxious when learning a foreign language. A song can help them forget they are learning and enjoy the experience while enhancing in a quickly and efficient way their knowledge and competences. As demonstrated, the three theoretical reasons are all intertwined and help to demonstrate the value of using songs in the classroom. The next step in the procedure is to successfully integrate the songs into a language lesson. Because

of the Internet, access to music, lyrics, and activities has been simplified which makes it easy for the teacher to effectively use songs in the classroom situations when teaching English language to beginners.

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Appendices

Questionnaire addressed to teachers.

As a student teacher and at the meantime trainee at ENS Porto Novo, I am conducting a research project on the impact of songs in English language teaching to beginners. I would be delighted to get your opinions on these questions. All answers will be kept confidential. Thank you in advance.

Please choose your answer for each question.

1) Do you teach songs in your class?

Very often Often Never

2) When teaching songs, what is your purpose?

Grammar Vocabulary Fun

3) How do you find teaching songs?

Difficult Time consuming Motivating

4) At what moment of the lesson do you use songs?

Beginning of the class During the class After the class

5) How do your students find songs in the process of your teaching?

Demanding Pleasant Encouraging

6) What type of grouping do you use so often?

Individual works Pair works Group works

7) Which difficulties do you encounter when carrying out these activities?

Timing Students 'control Classroom management

Questionnaire addressed to students

I am a student teacher and I am conducting a research project about the impacts of songs on the learning English language especially by beginners. So there are seven questions that are listed below and I would like you to give your opinion by selecting your answers.

Thank you in advance for your collaboration and frankness.

1) Do you learn songs with your teacher in class?

Yes No

2) How do you find it?

Very interesting Interesting Not interesting

3) Do you feel at ease when interacting with songs in your classroom?

Yes No

4) How do you most often work in class?

Individual works Pair works Group works

5) Do you easily learn new words and expressions through songs?

Yes No

6) How do you feel while practicing songs in class with your teachers?

Happy Sad Indifferent

7) Is learning English through songs too difficult?

Yes No

Songs collection

Song1:

I want to know

Everybody wants to know

Who makes the sun

Who makes the sea

Who makes the sky

Song2:

In a country

In a village

In a lovely

Lives a man whose name is freedom

And his friend is happiness.