

PROCEEDING

EFL Theory & Practice: Voice of EED UKI

English Education Department (EED)
Collegiate Forum 2015-2018

Editor

Parlindungan Pardede

Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
FKIP UKI
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“EFL Theory and Practice: Voice of EED UKI”

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PREFACE

English Education Department Collegiate Forum (EED CF) is an academic forum organized by the English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Kristen Indonesia (EED FKIP UKI). Initiated in 2008 by Mr. Parlin Pardede Dean of FKIP UKI, the event was held bi-monthly in every even month. It aims at providing a friendly and open opportunity for the faculty, students, alumni, and English teachers to share ideas, research findings, and experiences in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) field. It is expected that the forum can cater the interested parties an innovative and exciting opportunity to share, care, and collaborate for developing their professionalism in EFL learning and teaching.

Following related parties' recommendation, starting from 2015 the papers presented in the forum will be compiled and published in a proceeding in every four years. This proceeding, therefore, includes the 24 articles presented in the forum from 2015 to 2018. Since the presentation in this forum is voluntary, every resource person is free to decide the EFL topic he or she presents. Consequently, the articles in this volume cover a broad theme. Despite the broad theme, the topics covered in the articles do represent current hot issues in EFL, such as learning and teaching methodology and strategies; language skills, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar development; curriculum, evaluation and assessment matters; language research methodology, and the implementation of technology in EFL.

On behalf of EED FKIP UKI, I would like to offer my appreciation all faculties, students, alumni, and fellow English teachers who had contributed in EED CF along 2015-2018. My special thanks should go to Parlindungan Pardede whose hard work in editing the articles in this proceeding has made this publication possible.

Finally, I hope each article in this proceeding can inspire every reader as it had inspired the audiences when it was presented in EED CF.

Jakarta, July 26, 2019
English Education Department Chairperson,

Hendrikus Male

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Employing Music and Songs in EFL Classrooms¹

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Abstract

The effectiveness of using music and songs to promote language learning has long been acknowledged. However, they are still underutilized in EFL classrooms due to the overemphasis of EFL learning objective on meeting the students' particular, practical, and occupational needs, teachers' uncertainty about the power of music and songs to boost EFL learning, and teachers' lack of practical ideas to use them. This article reviews and synthesizes current ideas and studies concerning the what, why and how of using music and songs to facilitate language learning in EFL classroom.

Keywords: music, songs, EFL learning and teaching.

INTRODUCTION

Music and songs are probably the most effective elements of culture teachers and learners can use to enhance English as a foreign language (EFL) learning due to many reasons. First, they are universal and an integral part of people's daily life. Most human activities involve them, be they are the major or supporting elements. They are present in various settings including religious, educational, and leisure communities. Second, they are also so pleasurable that every member of any society loves them. With the help of technology, music and songs are now ubiquitous. People today listen to music and songs not only in concert halls but also in shopping malls, in cafés, in cars, in bedrooms, in the shower, and everywhere. Young people, in particular, listen to music almost nonstop. Third, musical intelligence is one of the eight intelligences. Gardner (2011) accentuated that everyone draws his musical intelligence, i.e. the ability to produce, remember, and make meaning of different patterns of sound, independently or corporately with the other seven intelligences to create products and solve problems relevant to the societies in which they live.

¹This article was presented in The UKI English Education Department Bimonthly Collegiate Forum held on Friday, August 10, 2018

Various studies in different fields have shown that music and songs are a powerful tool to promote learning. For instances, musical training improves a wide variety of different skills, including memory (George & Coch, 2011), spatial learning (Rauscher, & Zupan, 2000), and language skills, including as verbal memory (Chan et al, 1998), literacy (Tala & Gaab, 2006) and verbal intelligence (Forgeard, et al, 2008). Campabelo, et.al. (2002), various studies have revealed that preschool children taught with early exposure to music through games and songs showed an IQ advantage of 10 to 20 points over those taught without exposure to the songs. The studies also revealed that students aged 15 years, got higher reading and mathematics scores compared to children without musical experiences. Also, exposure to music alters and increases the function of the brain to make the required connections for higher-order thinking. Besides, songs also develop academic success and humanity. Southgate and Roscigno (2009) found that children and adolescents' music participation, both inside and outside of school, correlates with their academic achievement. Chorus America (2009) found that children joining in a choir have academic success and valuable life skills, and adults who sing in choruses are remarkably good citizens who volunteer significantly more frequently than the general public, contribute much more financially to philanthropic organizations than the average American, exhibit greater civic leadership, better team players.

The positive effect of music and songs on EFL learning has been quite widely acknowledged by several studies. Some studies (Schon et al. 2008; Cooper, 2010; Mashayekh & Hashemi, 2011) found that music and song promote language acquisition. They facilitate language acquisition because their motivational features promote a more relaxed learning environment (Coyle & Gracia, 2014) and their cognitive and linguistic facets encourage vocabulary and language learning (Chou, 2012; Coyle & Gracia, 2014; Davis & Fan, 2016). Some others (Fonseca-Mora, 2000; Salcedo, 2010) show how music and songs help teachers to create a learning environment with various activities that foster imagination. The integration of music and songs into foreign languages also provides teachers with resourceful possibilities for motivating and activating students. Paquette and Rieg (2008) revealed that continual use of music in language learning also offers a refreshing means to support different language skills development and provides an encouraging way to support students' cultural awareness.

Despite this evidence and numerous good practice from all over the world, the use of music and songs have tended to be underutilized in recent years. To a higher extent, this is caused by three factors. First, language learning objective has been over-emphasized on meeting the students' particular, practical, and occupational needs. Consequently, EFL teachers rarely use music and songs although they could be easily accessed using the internet connection. Second, many teachers are probably still uncertain about the power of music and songs to boost EFL learning due to the limited number of accessible relevant literature. Third, many teachers are still unsure about how to use music and songs in the EFL classroom.

This article is an attempt to provide information for "reducing the intensity" of the second and third factors above. It briefly overviews current ideas and studies concerning the what, why and how of using music and songs to facilitate language learning in EFL classroom. The discussion begins with the nature of music and song, and the

relationship between music and language which is used as the rationale for music and song employment in language learning. After that, the discussion focuses on criteria in choosing songs and a review of some current studies in EFL classroom.

DISCUSSION

Music and Songs

The term "music" is quite tricky to define. Although it is one of the oldest forms of art in every culture and many definitions have been offered, there has never been a universal definition that can accurately and concisely explain music's essential nature or basic attributes. Existing definitions describe music based on the perceptions which vary from culture to culture, from nation to nation, and from person to person and from language to language. In many non-European languages, there is even no word that translates easily as "music" in the way it is understood by Western cultures (Netti, 2005).

Most definitions generally describe that music is an art made up by successively combining human and/or instrumental sounds or tone. *Merriam Webster Dictionary* (2017) defines music as the science or art of ordering tones or sounds in succession, in combination, and in temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity. In a broader sense, Epperson (2015) describes music as "... an art concerned with combining vocal or instrumental sounds for beauty of form or emotional expression, usually according to cultural standards of rhythm, melody, and, in most Western music, harmony."

Unlike the ideas in these definitions, Griffiee (1995) contrasts the music made up of instrumental sounds from those produced using human sounds. For him, music is a work produced using instrumental sounds, i.e., symphonic, chamber, easy listening, or solo instruments such as the organ, flute or guitar; while the work produced using human sounds, especially popular songs such as those one hears on the radio, is a song. Richard (2002) asserted that a song is a relatively short musical work composed for the human voice actualized in words or lyrics. To beautify the lyrics, songs often include rhymes and employs a language style that is different from the formal language style. The lyrics are sung in specific tones, rhythms, speed and style and are often accompanied by musical instruments. Kamien (1997) accentuated that song is a rather short musical composition for the human voice that can be supplemented by other musical instruments which features the lyrics. Based on these definitions, music can be defined as the artworks produced by using instrumental sounds, and songs are artworks intended to be sung either with or without instrumental accompaniments. For the purpose of this article, the terms music and songs will be used in this sense

Music and Language Relationship

Based on a literature review, Engh (2013) identified four categories of disciplines that support the use of music and songs in EFL classrooms: (1) sociological considerations; (2) cognitive science; (3) first language acquisition; (4) second language acquisition and (5) practical pedagogical resources. Sociological Considerations include four distinct exploration sections: anthropological arguments, community, breaking boundaries and culture.

1. Sociological Considerations

Social anthropology views that the use of song plays a great role in the survival of literature, epic poetry, and ballads in oral traditions. The oral literature could be passed on from generation to generation because they were expressed in songs which enable the multifaceted patterns of sound, rhythm, linguistic meaning, and emotional content to function simultaneously Rubin (1995). The use of songs in childcare also plays a big role in infants' language development. Engh (2013) accentuated that to some extent, human languages development is connected to music and song.

In terms of community creation, singing has not only evolved as an individual activity conducted by caregivers and individual storytellers but also as a collective activity. With or without musical instruments accompaniment, people with a wide range of musical experience levels practice singing in a variety of settings, such as graduation ceremonies, religious services, the inauguration of state officials, and leisure groups. Levitin (2006) emphasized that whenever humans assemble, they sing. By singing together, people create a specific feeling of belonging to a cohesive community. Concerning this, songs use can promote essential factors for effectively attaining teaching and learning goals in EFL classrooms. The use of songs enhances social harmony (Huy Le, 1999), generates a safe space to experience collective learning (Gao, 2008), and contributes to the construction of a community (Lake, 2003; McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Music and songs have also long been used to break down boundaries between the members of a community having different backgrounds. Murray (2016) claimed that music has an enormous capacity to bind people together and nurture cultural understanding. Nagy and Herman (1987) suggested that music and song can potentially help teachers to remove boundaries among students. Medina (1990) recommended using songs to create a learning environment closely resembling life outside of the institutional classroom, which is commonly full of music, songs, stories, and visual images. Huy Le (1999) suggested music and song can bridge the formal and informal learning environments, including the linking teachers and students' gap as well.

The importance of songs culturally can be seen in the fact that songs are products and practices of a society that can elucidate the philosophical outlooks of that society (Gold & Revill, 2006). Galloway and Goldberg (2009) described that songs are saturated with sense, naturally embed cultural knowledge, values, and perspectives condensed in the Seven Cs (context, condition, chorus, conflict, connotation, comparison and continuity). Savignon and Sysoyev (2005) accentuated that "language both shapes and is shaped by culture. Access to one is essential for access to the other" (p. 364). Therefore, songs provide students plentiful learning opportunities, such as exchanging meaningfully nuanced language and cultural meanings hidden in the lyrics or melody of a song (Conrad, 1991). In line with this, Candlin (in Griffiee, 1992) argued that in addition to the potential to create friendly and co-operative atmosphere which are very essential in language learning, song also offer insights into the culture and provides a window for seeing the frames of reference and values of the peoples of the language being learned.

2. Cognitive Science

The results of recent cognitive research which investigates the anatomic structure of the brain and its neural functions describe that the human brain consists of two hemispheres: left and right. The left hemisphere is in charge of storing, translating, and conveying concepts and thoughts through oral or written language. On the other hand, the right hemisphere handles the non-verbal faculties, such as emotions, feelings, and special artistic (including musical) abilities. Although they are processed in different hemispheres, Georgetown University Medical Center (2007) explained that music and language depend on the same two brain memory systems. Information in both language and music, e.g., words and meanings in language and familiar melodies in music, is memorized by a brain system located in the temporal lobes. The rules underlying both language and music, like syntax rules in sentences and the rules of harmony in music, are unconsciously learned in another brain system located in the frontal lobes. Since they share a large number of properties, several brain areas are similarly involved or overlap in the processing of music and language (Patel 2014). That is why music can strengthen retention and language learning.

3. First Language Acquisition

Research results in first language acquisition field have offered several insights that confirm Cognitive Neuroscience arguments for the innate language and music connection in human beings. Corbeil et al, (2016).found that infants stayed twice as calm while listening to an unfamiliar song then when listening to speech. This indicated the importance of music, especially nursery rhymes which appeal to the human desire for simplicity and repetition and revealed that singing helps teach babies about speech sounds and provides them the opportunity to hear and practice them. Howle (1989) posited that nursery rhymes and lullabies are some of the first language input which occurs with sufficient recurrence to encourage memorization and acquisition. Carl et al (2011) showed that nursery rhymes and songs positively impacted literacy and language abilities. The findings verified the idea of the relationship between young children's nursery rhyme abilities correlate with their phonological- and print-related skills, including emergent reading. However, as children grow up, nursery rhymes and music are replaced by pop music (Murphey & Alber, 1985). To a certain extent, melodic musicality of speech obtained through sufficient nursery rhymes and lullabies that differentiate first and second language acquisition. Teachers, therefore, should optimize the use of pop songs to keep on providing students the power of songs to facilitate EFL learning.

4. Second Language Acquisition

A large number of studies have suggested that use of music and song augments students' success in second language acquisition because their elements, including melody, harmony, timbre, rhythm, tempo, and lyrics can lower affective barriers and assists in making students more relaxed; increase motivation; promote recall and memory, and develop language skills. This is supported by Krashen (1982) who posited that language acquisition does not happen instantaneously but through practices and natural experiences. By practicing in real-life situations, learners acquire the rules of the

structure of language. The best methods, therefore, are those that provide —comprehensible inputl in the situations with low anxiety, in which students can get the message they want to hear as repetitively as needed.

The repetitive nature of songs and the inherent supra-segmental features in them make them effective to use for pronunciation development (Lems, 2001; Wong & Perrachione, 2006). Mora (2000) asserted that songs have a positive outcome on the students' language acquisition and that lexical patterns kept in long-term musical memory can be easily reclaimed at a later date for mental practice, memorization or during oral communication. Conrad (1991) found that song lyrics can be an excellent source for vocabulary and grammar, due to their inclusion of rich idiomatic language and everyday grammar and structure. Besides, the lyrics of a song lyrics present a range of style, register, and trope, often in creative tension with the musical setting. Through the use of modified cloze procedure music can be used to improve aural comprehension and spelling (Froehlich, 1985). In the area of reading and writing, DiEdwardo's (2004) study revealed that combining music and linguistic intelligence improves college students' reading and writing skills.

Criteria in Choosing Songs

One of the problems encountered by teachers and material developers in employing songs to support EFL learning and teaching is which songs to choose. Aquil (2012) presents the criteria for choosing songs based on the lyrics, intelligibility of the words and accent, vocabulary nature (idiomatic, colloquial or archaic), music, topic, and the stickiness of words, phrases, and chunks. Considering these elements, the criteria are classified into three groups listed in the following table.

Table 1. Criteria for Choosing Songs (Aquil, 2012)

Criteria	Guiding Questions
Music and singability	Is the song singable (whole or parts)? Does the instrumental music overpower the singer?
Language and accent	Are the words intelligible? Is the accent comprehensible? Do the lyrics use natural speech? Does the repetition of keywords or phrases add to the meaning or singability? Is the vocabulary too idiomatic or colloquial, or is it archaic, obscene, or nonsensical?
Topics and concepts	Is the topic something students can relate to? Does the song expose learners to new concepts?

Arleo (2000) suggested three major factors to consider while selecting songs in EFL classroom: whom the songs will be used with, when to use the songs, what types of songs to use, and how to use the songs. The first factor concerns with the levels of students whom the songs will be used with. To this, she proposed that songs can be profitably used with virtually all language learners. However, the selected songs should meet the age, language level, cultural background and musical interests of the students as well as the general learning context. For example, repetitive songs which are very easy to understand are suitable for young learners. Recent pop and rock songs suit

middle school students. For adult learners, it's wise to ask them the songs interesting to their age. Also, the students' language level not only define which songs to use but also what activities to do with the songs. Songs having fast-delivered lyrics and song appreciation essay writing might be extremely frustrating to lower levels.

The second factor is related to when songs should be used in class sessions. Arleo (2000) suggested that music can be used very flexibly, and this is one of its main advantages. Music can cover the occasional fifteen-minute activity to the whole course over a semester or academic year. Songs can be included in the syllabus at regular planned intervals or employed spontaneously to introduce surprise or change pace and break up the routine. In relation to this, Eken (1996) proposed that teachers can use songs when they want: (1) to introduce a topic, a language point, lexis, etc.; (2) to exercise a language point, lexis, etc.; (3) to concentrate on common learner errors in a more indirect way; (4) to boost extensive and intensive listening; (5) to encourage discussions of attitudes and feelings; (6) to promote creativity and imagination use; (7) to cater a relaxed classroom atmosphere; and (8) to create variety and fun to teaching and learning.

Concerning the third factors, the kinds of music to use, Arleo (2000) suggested considering the huge amount of available musical material, comprising popular and traditional songs, ethnic music, jazz, hip-hop, reggae, rock, classical music, rap, film music, etc. In this context, selecting songs has now been much easier to do with the help of technology. The internet has now made music and songs ubiquitous. Ferlazzo (2018), for instance, provides numerous sites from which teachers can get songs and ideas for using them to facilitate beginning, intermediate, and advanced EFL classrooms. Another web resource teachers can use is the Internet TESL Journal or Humanizing Language Teaching Magazine, which offers examples of practical lesson discussions with theoretical support. In the selection process, Griffiee (1992) recommended considering both the student and the teacher's preference. As far as possible, the songs used are those favored by both students and teacher. Thus, it is a good idea to survey students' song type preferences or even involve them in the songs selection process.

Although most people find music interesting, it is possible that some students do not hear music, not to mention talk about it. This is the fourth factor, and considering this, teachers should find out stimulating activities for using songs in the classroom. This could be done by including activities in the use of songs (e.g. role-playing, karaokeing, musical appreciation, reporting or oral presenting specific singers, bands and types of music, etc.) in the preference survey. Numerous authors have proposed ways of employing instrumental music or sound sequences in the classroom. Ward (1980) describes how to use songs to develop pronunciation. Ostojic (1987) presents a successful and enjoyable experience in which students wrote simple poems or short prose pieces in English while listening to classical music. Ahola (2005) describes the use of music while writing to develop critical thinking. Orlova (2003) presents ideas on how to use music in conversation classes. Lorenzutti (2014) proposes a simple three-stage framework for exploiting songs for effective and dynamic listening activities. He also describes procedures and exemplifying activities. Kryszewska, (2010) proposes activities to use song lyric 'word clouds' as corpora language classroom. Saricoban and

Metin (2000) describe how to use music in language play. Murphey (1992) describes various activities, including background music, musical reactions, the stream of consciousness writing, film music, and advertising jingles.

Reviewed literature above shows that that songs can easily be used to practice language skills and develop vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar in various ways in EFL classroom. However, to suit their teaching contexts, teachers may need to adapt these ideas. Some of the activities are intended for younger learners and might not be appropriate for older students. At the same time, activities that might look "silly" on paper can go over quite well when used at the right time and in the right context. For instance, even adult students can enjoy chanting the letters of the alphabet in a rap style (Arleo, 2000).

Some Current Studies on the Use of in EFL Classroom

Dzanic and Pejic (2016) conducted their study aiming at exploring the effect of using songs supported with written lyrics to students' acquisition of vocabulary items and their level of motivation created by the songs use. To achieve the aims, two groups of second-grade students in Bosnia and Herzegovina were taught the same three lessons under different conditions. The first group was exposed to audio recordings of songs, whereas the other was taught with the video of the songs with lyrics. Data necessitated to examine the effect of the songs' use was collected using a pretest and a posttest, while data needed to see the level of motivation was collected using a questionnaire. The results revealed that songs positively influenced vocabulary retention of young learners enhanced their motivation and helped them develop a love for language learning.

To investigate the effect of using song and movie on language achievement of high school students', Haghverdi (2015) conducted an experimental study involving 60 high school male and female students aged 15 to 17 years old at Sae learning English institute in Dehdasht, Iran. The participants were divided into a control group (n=30) and an experimental group (n=30). Both groups were taught the same lessons, but the experimental group was taught with music and watching movies, while the control group was taught without music and watching movies. To collect data, two instruments were administered: a pre/post achievement test and a questionnaire. The independent samples t-tests and paired samples t-tests were administered to analyze the data obtained from the administration of the test and the questionnaire and the findings were compared to examine the effect of song and movie on student's learning. The results showed that song and movie implementation had a significant effect on student's language achievement in their listening, reading, vocabulary and grammar.

The study of Koksala et al (2013) aimed at determining the effect of teaching English vocabulary to elementary school students through music on their achievement in vocabulary, attitudes towards English learning, and new words retention. The study involved 56 fifth graders who were divided into the experimental group (n=28) and the control group (n=28). The experimental group was taught the new English words through songs composing in easy rhythms and melodies by the researchers, while the control group was taught the same new words without songs. After 12 weeks of instruction period, English Vocabulary Test and Attitude Scale for English were administrated to

both groups. Then, to assess the new words retention, English Vocabulary Test was re-administrated one month later. The data obtained at the end of the implementation were submitted to statistically analysis. The results of the statistical analysis of the data revealed that the experimental group outscored the control group on the English vocabulary test and English vocabulary retention test and the attitude scale as well.

To determine whether intelligibility could be improved through the instruction of word and sentence stress that included the use of rap songs, Fischler (2009) conducted an action research project involving six learners aged 13-17 years with intermediate to advanced English proficiency level. Lasted in a month-long with 32 hours in total, the participants practiced English using pronunciation phonetic instruction, the contrast of correct and incorrect speech, rhythmic practice with songs, and communicative speaking exercises. Data was collected using a pre- and post-course speech from readings and picture story descriptions. The results showed that five out of the six participants had higher intelligibility ratings at the end of the project.

Rengifo (2009) also conducted an action research project to help improve EFL students' pronunciation using karaoke activities. The project involved 12-15 Colombian adult EFL learners ranging aged 18-60 years studying at an English education institute. The action research procedures included were talking about the song, listening to the teacher singing, the students singing (alone or in a group), and discussing the lyrics. Specific procedures and tasks related to pronunciation (in which both American and British English were the target models) included the activities of explaining the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) use, minimal pair and intonation activities, matching sounds in a sentence, and looking for sound patterns. At the end of the project, it was found that the use of karaoke improved the participants' pronunciation, increased their motivation and confidence, and reduced fear when speaking.

Romero et al (2012) conducted an action-research to motivate students to speak English by employing songs as the main resource in conjunction with different kind of activities for providing them the opportunity to learn in a fun way. Eighty-four sixth-graders aged 11 to 13 years of Álvaro Gómez Hurtado public school located in Bogota, Colombia were involved in the study. The whole participants who belong to two classes were taught English as usual, but English songs were added to the learning activities. However, the researchers focused on the analysis and the recollection of information on five specific students having different profiles. S1 was a high achiever, S2 was a smart student, S3 was lazy, S4 was a difficult student who did not like English classes, and S5 was naughty. During the action implementation, data were collected through observations of the classes using daily field notes, videos, and surveys. The results revealed that the use of songs not only helped the participants to develop speaking, but also grammar. It also increased their motivation and helped them talk in a non-threatening environment.

To investigate the effect of games, songs, and stories on students' motivation and vocabulary learning and whether or not different techniques of testing would affect students' performance in the vocabulary test given, Chou (2012) carried out a mixed-methods study involving 72 Taiwanese primary school students aged 8 to 11 years. The participants consisted of 20-second graders; 16 third- graders; 17 fourth-graders; and

19 fifth-graders. All of them were given five 100-minute lessons about international holidays. Qualitative data was collected through classroom observation, field notes, and a semi-structured interview. Quantitative data was collected using a vocabulary pretest and post-test, and a self-assessment questionnaire. Each of the vocabulary tests consisted of four techniques, i.e., true/false, matching, anagram with pictures, and gap-filling with pictures. Data obtained through the field notes and the self-assessment questionnaire showed that games, songs, and stories had a positive effect on vocabulary learning. The participants reported that songs helped them understand vocabulary and topics in the story (especially in the lower levels), but stories had a higher impact. Games, songs, and stories also positively affected vocabulary gains, particularly for students in higher courses. It was also found that results were influenced by the test technique.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the discussion in this article, it can be concluded that music and songs are a powerful tool to promote EFL learning. Various studies showed that the use of music and songs in EFL classroom have positive effects at the cognitive, linguistic, pedagogical and motivational levels. Music and songs can be effectively used to develop the four language skills, improve pronunciation, build vocabulary, and enhance grammar knowledge. Besides, music and songs can help teachers to create a learning environment with various activities for fostering imagination. What is more, the positive effects could be obtained in various settings, from kindergarten to university. Realizing these, teachers are highly recommended to employ music and songs to promote learning and teaching success in their EFL classroom.

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