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Music as a Motivational Tool: Investigating its Impact on Learners Engagement in EFL Classrooms

Case Study: A Sample of Third-Grade

Learners and Teachers at Chefchoufi Talhi Primary School- El Tarf

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Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

All praise and thanks are due to Allah, the One who guided me, supported me, and granted me the strength and success to complete this work.

I dedicate this work with all my love and gratitude to the people who have been my strength and light throughout this journey.

To my father, Ammar, with whom I share a very special bond. Thank you for believing in me, for encouraging me to continue my studies, and for always standing by my side. Your support means everything to me.

.To my beloved mother, for her endless love, care, and prayers that have guided me through this journey.

To my dear husband, Saber, for his constant support, patience, and encouragement. You have been my partner in every challenge.

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This accomplishment is dedicated to all of you.

Soualmia Karima

Dedication

First, I thank Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, for He is my support and upon Him I rely.

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Abstract

This study explores the use of music as a motivational and teaching tool in primary English language classrooms. It examines how songs affect learners' engagement, participation, and language development, particularly vocabulary learning, pronunciation, and listening skills. A mixed-method approach was adopted, combining a classroom experiment with a questionnaire administered to twenty primary school English teachers. The classroom experiment, based on the song "Toy Song – What's in the Box?", showed that learners were more attentive, motivated, and actively involved in the lesson. They participated enthusiastically by repeating vocabulary, answering questions, and taking part in guessing activities. The questionnaire results revealed that teachers frequently use music in EFL classrooms and view it as an effective way to motivate learners and support language acquisition. They emphasized that songs are most effective when they are simple, suitable for learners' age, and linked to lesson objectives. Although some challenges were reported, including noise, distraction, and varying attention levels, the findings were largely positive. The study concludes that the strategic use of music can create an enjoyable learning environment and significantly improve learners' motivation, participation, and language skills.

Keywords: Music, English as a Foreign Language, Motivation, Listening skills.

Résumé

Cette étude explore l'utilisation de la musique comme outil motivationnel et pédagogique dans les classes d'anglais au primaire. Elle examine l'impact des chansons sur l'engagement des apprenants, leur participation en classe ainsi que le développement de leurs compétences linguistiques, notamment l'acquisition du vocabulaire, la prononciation et la compréhension orale. Une approche mixte a été adoptée, combinant une expérience en classe et un questionnaire administré à vingt enseignants d'anglais du primaire. L'expérimentation en classe, basée sur la chanson « Toy Song – What's in the Box ? », a montré que les apprenants étaient plus attentifs, motivés et activement impliqués dans la leçon. Ils ont participé avec enthousiasme en répétant le vocabulaire, en répondant aux questions et en prenant part à des activités de devinettes. Les résultats du questionnaire ont révélé que les enseignants utilisent fréquemment la musique en classe d'EFL et la considèrent comme un outil efficace pour motiver les apprenants et soutenir l'acquisition de la langue. Ils ont souligné que les chansons sont particulièrement efficaces lorsqu'elles sont simples, adaptées à l'âge des apprenants et liées aux objectifs de la leçon. Bien que certaines difficultés aient été signalées, notamment le bruit, les distractions et les différences de niveau d'attention, les résultats sont globalement positifs. L'étude conclut que l'utilisation stratégique de la musique peut créer un environnement d'apprentissage agréable et améliorer significativement la motivation, la participation et les compétences linguistiques des apprenants.

Mots-clés : Musique, anglais langue étrangère, motivation, compétences d'écoute.

ملخص

تستكشف هذه الدراسة استخدام الموسيقى كأداة تحفيزية وتعليمية في أقسام اللغة الإنجليزية في المرحلة الابتدائية. وتهدف إلى دراسة تأثير الأغاني على مدى تفاعل المتعلمين ومشاركتهم وتطورهم اللغوي، خاصة فيما يتعلق باكتساب المفردات، وتحسين النطق، وتنمية مهارات الاستماع. وقد تم اعتماد منهجية مختلطة تجمع بين تجربة صفية واستبيان وُزِعَ على عشرين أستاذًا للغة الإنجليزية في التعليم الابتدائي. أظهرت التجربة الصفية، التي اعتمدت على أغنية – "Toy Song" "What's in the Box"، أن المتعلمين أصبحوا أكثر انتباهًا وتحفيزًا ومشاركة داخل القسم. حيث شاركوا بحماس من خلال تكرار المفردات، والإجابة على الأسئلة، والمشاركة في أنشطة التخمين. كما بيّنت نتائج الاستبيان أن الأساتذة يستخدمون الموسيقى بشكل متكرر في أقسام اللغة الإنجليزية، ويعتبرونها وسيلة فعّالة لتحفيز المتعلمين ودعم اكتساب اللغة. وأكدوا أن الأغاني تكون أكثر فاعلية عندما تكون بسيطة، مناسبة لأعمار المتعلمين، ومرتبطة بأهداف الدرس. ورغم تسجيل بعض الصعوبات مثل الضوضاء، والتشتت، واختلاف مستويات الانتباه بين المتعلمين، إلا أن النتائج كانت إيجابية في مجملها. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن الاستخدام الاستراتيجي للموسيقى يمكن أن يخلق بيئة تعلم ممتعة ويساهم بشكل كبير في تحسين دافعية المتعلمين ومشاركتهم ومهاراتهم اللغوية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الموسيقى، الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، الدافعية، مهارات الاستماع.

List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

BEM: Brevet d'Enseignement Moyen

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

LMD: Licence – Master – Doctorat

TL: Teaching/Learning

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

List of Tables

Table 1: Description of Students' gender	25
Table 2: Teacher's gender distribution.	28
Table 3: Teachers Using Music in English Lessons with Primary School Learners.	29
Table 4: Teachers' Perceptions of Music as a Motivational Tool in English Learning for Primary School Learners.	30
Table 5: Teachers' Preferred Moments for Using Music During English Lessons.	32
Table 6: Perception of Songs as a Tool for Facilitating English Learning among Young Learners.	33
Table 7: Use of Music and Pupils' Engagement in English Activities.	35
Table 8: Teachers' Views on Using Music in Primary EFL Lessons.	38

List of Figures

Figure 1: Language (Boukerkour, 2016).	8
Figure 2: Description of Students' gender.	25
Figure 3: Teacher's gender distribution.	28
Figure 4: Teachers Using Music in English Lessons with Primary School Learners.	29
Figure 5: Teachers' Perceptions of Music as a Motivational Tool in English Learning for Primary School Learners.	30
Figure 6: Teachers' Preferred Moments for Using Music During English Lessons.....	32
Figure 7: Perception of Songs as a Tool for Facilitating English Learning among Young Learners.	33
Figure 8: Use of Music and Pupils' Engagement in English Activities.....	36
Figure 9: Teachers' Views on Using Music in Primary EFL Lessons.	38

Table of Contents

DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT IN ENGLISH	v
ABSTRACT IN FRENCH	vi
ABSTRACT IN ARABIC	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xi

Chapter One: General Introduction

1. Background of the Study:.....	2
2. Statement of the Problem:	3
3. Research Questions:.....	3
4. Research Hypotheses:	3
5. Aims of the Study & Objectives:.....	4
6. Research Methodology:	4
6.1. Choice of the Method:.....	4
6.2. Data Gathering Tools:.....	4
7. Population and Sample	5
7.1. Population:	5
7.2. Sample:	5
8. Structure of the Thesis:	5

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

2.1. What Is Language?	7
2.2. What Is a Foreign Language?.....	8
2.3. The Status of English in Algeria:.....	9
2.4. Teaching English as Foreign Language	10
2.5. Importance of EFL teaching:	10
2.6. The Educational system in Algeria	11
2.6.1. Primary Education	11
2.6.2. Middle Education	11
2.6.3. Secondary Education	12
2.6.4. Higher Education	12
2.7. Benefits of Teaching English to Young Learners:	12
2.8. Listening skill	13
2.8.1. Definition of Listening:	13
2.8.2. The Importance of Teaching Listening Skills:	13
2.8.3. Listening Process:.....	14
2.8.4. Definition of music:.....	15
2.9. Motivation in Language Learning	15
2.9.1. Definition of Motivation:	15
2.9.2. Types of motivation:	16

Conclusion

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

3.1. Research Approach:	19
3.2. Research Method:	19

3.3. Interventional Research Design:.....	20
3.4. Research Problem:	20
3.5. Population and Sampling:	21
3.5.1. Population:.....	21
3.5.2. Sample:.....	22
3.6. Data Gathering Tools:	22
3.7. Research Ethics:	22
3.8. Data Analysis Process:.....	23

Chapter Four: Data Analysis

Introduction

4.1. Description of the Class and the Teaching Material:.....	25
4.1.1. Description of the Class:.....	25
4.1.2. Description of the Teaching Material:	26
4.1.3. Description of the teachers' questionnaire:.....	26
4.2. Data Analysis:.....	27

Conclusion

Chapter Five: Findings and Discussion

5.1. Findings and Discussion:	41
5.2. Recommendations:	43

GENERAL CONCLUSION

References

Appendices

Chapter One:
General Introduction

Music has long been recognized as a powerful medium for influencing emotions, cognition, and motivation in various learning contexts. In the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the integration of music into classroom activities has gained attention as a tool to enhance learner engagement, promote a positive learning atmosphere, and facilitate language acquisition (Murphey, 1992; Medley & Mitzel, 1963). By combining auditory stimuli with linguistic input, music can reinforce vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical structures, while also stimulating students' intrinsic motivation and attentional focus (Paquette & Rieg, 2008a).

Research indicates that music supports multiple aspects of language learning. For instance, songs can improve listening skills by providing authentic language input in a memorable and enjoyable format, and rhythm and melody may aid memory retention and recall (Murphey, 1992; Gordon, 2003). Moreover, music-based activities encourage active participation and collaborative learning, creating opportunities for learners to interact meaningfully and develop communicative competence (Medley & Mitzel, 1963; Fonseca-Mora, 2011).

Despite the recognized benefits, the effectiveness of music as a motivational tool can depend on factors such as age, proficiency level, cultural background, and teaching methodology (Fonseca-Mora, 2011). Therefore, examining its impact in EFL classrooms remains crucial for understanding how musical interventions can foster sustained engagement and improved learning outcomes.

1. Background of the Study:

Learner engagement is a crucial determinant of success in language learning, particularly in EFL contexts where motivation and exposure to authentic language input are often limited (Dörnyei, 2001). Music has been widely acknowledged as a motivational resource that can enhance engagement by creating enjoyable learning experiences, stimulating memory, and facilitating the acquisition of vocabulary and pronunciation (Murphey, 1992; Fonseca-Mora, 2011). Songs, rhythm, and melody provide authentic and memorable contexts for language use, encouraging learners to participate actively and collaborate in classroom activities. Integrating music in primary EFL classrooms has the potential to address common challenges such as learner disinterest, low participation, and limited retention of language structures (Paquette & Rieg, 2008b).

In the Algerian EFL context, several studies have highlighted similar benefits. For instance, Benmoussat (2016) found that Algerian primary school learners showed higher motivation and participation when songs were integrated into English lessons. Similarly, Kheladi (2019) reported that music-based activities improved vocabulary retention and reduced learners' anxiety in EFL classrooms. Boudjelal (2021) also emphasized that teachers in Algerian primary schools view songs as an effective pedagogical tool, particularly for young learners, due to their simplicity and emotional engagement. These findings confirm that music plays a significant role in supporting learner engagement in Algerian EFL settings.

Despite the recognized benefits, the effectiveness of music as a motivational tool depends on factors such as age, proficiency level, cultural context, and teaching methodology (Fonseca-Mora, 2011). Therefore, examining its impact in EFL classrooms remains essential for understanding how musical interventions can foster sustained engagement and improved learning outcomes, particularly in primary education.

2. Statement of the Problem:

Despite the recognized benefits of music in language learning, many EFL classrooms remain predominantly teacher-centered, with limited use of musical activities to foster engagement. Primary learners, in particular, often experience low motivation and reduced participation in English lessons. There is a need to empirically investigate how music can influence learner engagement and identify strategies that maximize its pedagogical impact.

3. Research Questions

- 1) How does the integration of music in EFL classrooms affect learners' engagement?
- 2) To what extent do music-based activities influence learners' participation and motivation compared to traditional teaching methods?
- 3) How does the use of diverse musical activities by teachers impact learners' enjoyment and interaction in EFL classrooms?

4. Research Hypotheses:

- 1) The integration of music in EFL classrooms positively affects learners' engagement.
- 2) Learners exposed to music-based activities demonstrate higher participation and motivation compared to those in traditional teaching settings.

- 3) Teachers' use of diverse musical activities correlates with increased learner enjoyment and interaction.

5. Aims of the Study & Objectives:

The aims of this research study are:

- To examine the impact of music on learners' engagement, including their participation, motivation, and retention of language content.
- To identify the musical activities that most effectively enhance learner engagement and interaction in EFL classrooms.
- To investigate teachers' perceptions of the role of music in promoting a positive and motivating learning environment.
- To provide practical recommendations for the effective integration of music into EFL teaching in order to increase learner engagement and support language learning.

6. Research Methodology:

6.1. Choice of the Method:

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach using an interventional case study design that combines a survey and experimental observation. Integrating quantitative data for statistical analysis with qualitative insights for classroom interactions provides a comprehensive understanding (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

6.2. Data Gathering Tools:

- **Questionnaire for teachers:** To collect information on the use of music in teaching, types of activities employed, and perceived effects on learner engagement.
- **Observation checklist for students:** To measure participation, attention, and motivation during music-integrated lessons.

7. Population and Sample

7.1 Population:

The population of this study includes primary school learners and EFL teachers from selected schools. The learners are children aged 7 to 10 years, who are enrolled in English as a Foreign Language class. This age range is particularly relevant because young learners are at a critical stage for developing language skills and are highly receptive to motivational strategies such as music (Dörnyei, 2001; Fonseca-Mora, 2011). The teachers in the population are those responsible for teaching EFL at the primary level and have varying levels of experience with incorporating music into their lessons.

7.2 Sample:

The sample of this study consists of 32 primary school learners, aged 7 to 10 years, and 20 EFL teachers from different schools. The students and teachers were selected based on availability and willingness to participate. This sample allows the study to explore how music-based activities influence learner engagement in EFL classrooms.

8. Structure of the Thesis:

This thesis is structurally organized into five distinctive chapters. Chapter One: General Introduction presents the overarching topic, contextual background, statement of the problem, guiding research questions, hypotheses, aims, and a brief overview of the research methodology. Chapter Two: Literature Review explores the theoretical foundations of the study, providing a comprehensive discussion of key concepts, young learner characteristics, and previous empirical research on music as a motivational tool in EFL classrooms. Chapter Three: Research Methodology outlines the interventional mixed-methods case study design, offering a detailed description of the pedagogical intervention applied in the classroom, the selected sample of third-grade learners and teachers, and the research instruments used for data collection. Chapter Four: Data Analysis focuses on the systematic processing and statistical presentation of the empirical data gathered from both the teacher questionnaires and classroom observation checklists. Finally, Chapter Five: Findings and Discussion interprets the analyzed results in relation to the research hypotheses, discusses pedagogical implications, offers practical recommendations, and concludes with a general summary of the study.

Chapter Two:
Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter reviews the key concepts and theoretical foundations relevant to this study, which investigates the role of music as a motivational tool in EFL classrooms. It begins by defining language and foreign language, providing the basis for understanding language learning. The chapter then examines the status of English in Algeria, the teaching of English as a foreign language, and the importance of EFL instruction, particularly for young learners. Attention is also given to listening as a core language skill, including its definition, importance, and process, followed by an introduction to music and its potential educational value. Finally, the chapter addresses motivation in language learning, defining motivation and its different types, which are essential for understanding how music can enhance learner engagement.

2.1 What Is Language?

Human beings can communicate with each other. We are able to exchange knowledge, beliefs, opinions, wishes, threats, commands, thanks, promises, declarations, feelings only our imagination sets limits. We can laugh to express amusement, happiness, or disrespect, we can smile to express amusement, pleasure, approval, or bitter feelings, we can shriek to express anger, excitement, or fear, we can clench our fists to express determination, anger or a threat, we can raise our eyebrows to express surprise or disapproval, and so on, but our system of communication before anything else is “language” which is according to Merriam Webster (2004), “...enables human beings, at least, who share a particular language, to communicate with each other by stating ideas, expressing feelings and exchanging information.”(p.25a).

Linguistically speaking, numerous researchers and scientists tried to provide both learners and even educators with significant definitions of the word “language”. One of the main definitions is that Bloch and Trager (1942) who stated that “*A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates*” (p.30). It is clear from the above definition that language has both form and function. It has been pointed out that the form of language, its sounds. The sounds of a language have symbolic functions. This is the reason for the linguists to consider language as a system of vocal symbols. Language is used for the members of the social group to cooperate i.e., it is language that is used by the members to exchange information to request, to order, to love, to quarrel etc. Another relevant definition of language is that of the well-known researcher Noam Chomsky (2002) who

expressed saying that he will consider language to be “a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements”. (p.2). This statement means that a learner can construct easy or complex sentences and each sentence has a number of elements such as a subject, a verb...etc. (Boukerkour, 2016).

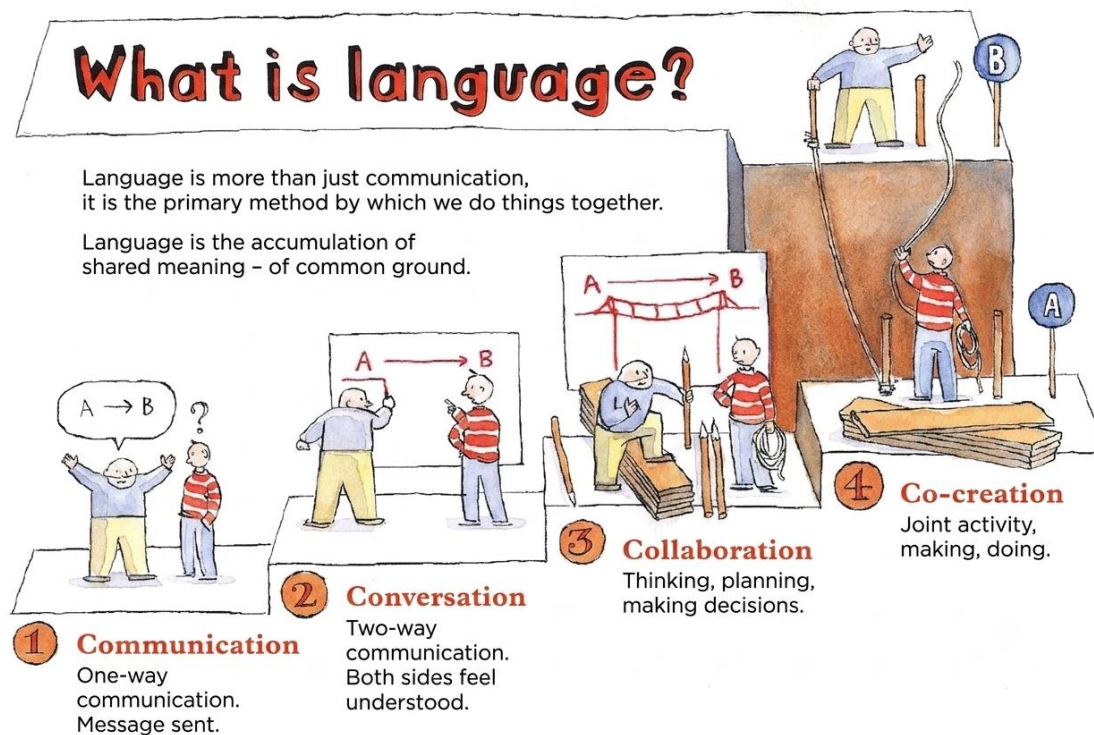


Figure 1:Language (Boukerkour, 2016).

2.2 What Is a Foreign Language?

Language enables individuals to navigate the world and shape their lives. A language is considered a foreign language when it is taught or learned primarily in a classroom setting and is not commonly spoken within the surrounding community. This distinguishes it from a first (native) language, which is naturally acquired and used in everyday communication, as well as from a second language, which generally has a social and communicative function within the society where it is learned. The study of another language allows individuals to communicate effectively and creatively and to participate in real-life situations through the language of the authentic culture itself (Moeller & Catalano, 2015).

2.3 The Status of English in Algeria

English has become the most widely spoken language in the world. It is the universal language of progress and technology. English has recently been incorporated into the official languages of many countries, including former French colonies like Algeria. English language has a considerable status in Algeria. It is considered as the second foreign language. Its daily use is rising in Algeria, especially among the younger generations due to technological advancements and the impact of social media and networking. Its position took a challenging way since 2000, when the government implemented the educational reform that received the most support from the United States; English is now taught in the first grade of the middle school, which is the biggest alteration brought about by this reform (Sennagh et al, 2023).

For a long time, French was the only language spoken by most people outside of Algeria. 132 years of French colonization gave the French language a powerful and privileged position. French is the first foreign language taught in Algerian schools, and it serves a number of significant roles in the nation. However, with the changing economic policies and the openness to the world together with conducting economic deals and agreements with foreign partners from different countries, the need for English in Algeria in different domains is more than necessary. Although French is still widely spoken, English is quite popular in Algeria, similar to Morocco, where French is still widely spoken. (Marley, 2005).

Since the Torch Operation on November 1942, when Algiers served as a military base for American troops, English has been successful in assimilating into Algeria's linguistic profile. (Fodil, 2017).

In collaboration with the Algerian Ministry of Education, the oil corporation Anadarko Petroleum supported a British Council initiative from 2009 to 2012 to train 69 teachers of English. Regardless of the area of concentration, English was included in the curriculum at schools and colleges. In fact, as it spread beyond of the boundaries of schools and into the fields of business, journalism, ads, and music, its growth was highlighted. This is primarily related to the specific prestige that this language bestows. "It is taught as a compulsory subject, introduced from the first year at the middle school until the last year at the secondary school." (Chemami, 2011, Benrabah, 2014, Miliani, 2016)

Although English does not yet have official status, there are numerous attempts to integrate English into Algeria and make it the nation's official language. Tayeb Bouzid, a former

minister of higher education and scientific research, made one of these endeavours when he took considerable measures to promote the use of the English language in Algeria, particularly in the fields of higher education and scientific research. He contends that improvements to the English language take time, and that usage of the language is unavoidable given its importance in subjects like economics, politics, international trade, and the study of hydrocarbons. The minister claimed that it will progressively become widespread following the appointment of an expert group to examine this suggestion. (El Bilad, 2019).

2.4 Teaching English as Foreign Language

English has spread all over the world and becomes a common language that is used for the purpose of communication. Thus, Teaching English became a professional and academic field from a half century ago. Many research achievements in education and teacher training have been conducted in order to raise the EFI trainers' knowledge and capabilities in carrying out effective lessons in classroom. During second millennium of speedily globalized world, teaching English as a common communication tool has become even more significant than half century ago. According to Broughton (1980: 6), *“The most common term 'English as a Foreign Language' (EFL) is mainly used in non-English speaking world, precisely in the field of the teaching and the learning of such language”*. The use or the study of English in Algeria, for instance, is considered as foreign. Since, English is a foreign language in a country when it has no specific role in national and social life. (Miloudi, 2019).

2.5 Importance of EFL teaching

The main important principle of teaching English language is to make the learner aware of his goals. Teachers should give a clear instruction of the language to students. Teaching English as a second or a foreign language can be a complex activity since it differs from the learners' mother tongue. It was considered as an application of a specific approach; however, it is necessary to go beyond that. English language has to be seen as an application of new teaching tools, models and methods in order to go further than teaching a silent language, yet it is a vivid one. English now is not limited with schools (as a module), but it can be taught for different purposes; people may use English for social interaction or professional purposes such as medicines, engineers... When anyone learns a foreign language, instrumentally, he needs it for operational purposes; to be able to read books in the new language, to be able to

communicate with other speakers of that language. The tourist, the salesman, the science student are clearly motivated to learn English instrumentally (Arabi, 2019).

When learning a foreign language for integrative functions, one is trying to identify closely the speech community which uses that language variety; he wants to feel at home in it, he tries to understand the attitudes and the world's view of that community according to Geoffrey Broughton, et al., 1980. As mentioned by Malki (2017), in the introduction to the English Syllabus of second year permitted by the Ministry Education, (2006) stated that: *“The aim of teaching English is to help our society to get harmoniously integrated in modernity through a fully complete participation within a community of people who use English in all types of interactions - this participation should be based on sharing and exchanging ideas as well as experiences being scientific, cultural, or civilisational – this participation will help for better understanding for oneself and the other”* (Malki, 2017 : 28).

2.6 The Educational system in Algeria

in Algeria is mandatory and free for all Algerian children from the age of 6 up to the age of 18. The Algerian education system is divided into several levels: period of five years in the primary education, period of four years in the middle school, and period of three years in secondary education (Belmokhtar, 2022).

2.6.1. Primary Education

Is for a period of five years, it is compulsory and lasts for all children. The age of admission is fixed at six years old. The aim of primary school is to help children to master the basics of reading, writing and numeracy. Moreover, its aim is to promote the development of personality in pupils and to create good habits by training them in community life. The end of primary school education is culminated by a final examination leading to the issuance of a certificate of achievement called "Certificate of Primary Education" (Belmokhtar, 2022).

2.6.2. Middle Education

Is a period of four years, where students learn several subjects. At the end of schooling in the middle school and after a final examination entitled to obtain a diploma called "the Brevet d'Enseignement Moyen"(BEM), students are automatically admitted to the first general and technological secondary year, according to their wishes (Belmokhtar, 2022).

2.6.3. Secondary Education

Secondary education is for a period of three years. It is divided into general secondary education that consists of five specialties: the exact sciences, the sciences of nature and life, humanities and letters, literature and living language, and religious sciences. The technical secondary education includes the following specialties: electronics, electrical engineering, mechanics, public works and construction, chemistry and accounting techniques. At the end of the cycle, students sit for the baccalaureat examination in which they are examined in each subject studied during their final year (Belmokhtar, 2022).

2.6.4. Higher Education

The Algerian system of the university is the so-called LMD launched in 2004. The need for change has come from a high number of dysfunctions that have prevented the university from providing more adequate learning conditions. The LMD reform has come to help universities face globalization and the internationalization of higher education. Furthermore, the other concern was to offer better training in order to satisfy the societal demand for quality education. This reform is based on the new French model: License (baccalaureate + 3 years). Master (license + 2 years). Doctorate (master + 3/4 years) (Belmokhtar, 2022).

2.7. Benefits of Teaching English to Young Learners

Teaching languages to children, not just English has many benefits one of the best advantages is that children are more likely to grasp the language and information than adults, because they are inquisitive about new things, and they have a fresh mind ready to receive and maintain information for a long period of time as it is described in Moon (2005:30) “by starting in primary school you increase the overall time for English and in the long term achieve a higher level of proficiency than those starting later”. Children are more likely to learn language than adult because they have a strong sense to scout about their environment “Some researchers suggest that this exploration through activity provides the basis for cognitive development. In language learning, this means that children are more likely to pick up language.” Moon (2005:31). Furthermore, teaching English to primary school students’ level may be the best period for children to grasp the basics of linguistics, and they have much time to learn more as well (Stakanova & Tolstikhina, 2014).

2.8. Listening skill

2.8.1. Definition of Listening

Listening is one of the most important four communication skills we use to communicate effectively. Many researchers needed help to agree on one definition of listening. Listening to another language is a complex task, and we can help students understand what they hear by applying prior knowledge (Brown, 2007). In addition, Brownell (2002) explains that getting, constructing meaning from and replying to spoken and/or nonverbal signals are all parts of the listening process. Similarly, according to Howat and Dakin, Listening is “*The ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary and grasping his meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously*” (1974 p. 20). Relating to the given definitions, listening and understanding what the speaker means by applying the background knowledge for better understanding (Benachoura, 2023).

2.8.2. The Importance of Teaching Listening Skills

Researches show that listening must be the number one ability in gaining knowledge of a new language. There is proof that selling listening comprehension outcomes in increased acquisition of the opposite language capabilities and therefore ends in acquisition of the goal language. It is the best logical that one cannot provide an output (speak) efficiently unless one comprehends the input (listening comprehension). Listening is the maximum regularly used language ability of the four language capabilities, (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992).

Listening is the primary means by which incoming ideas and information are taken into account. (Devine, 1982). Adults spend in conversation activities 45% listening, 30% speaking, 16% reading, according to (Rivers & Temperly, 1978). Gilbert (1988) states that scholars from kindergarten via excessive faculty spend 65- 90% in their conversation time for listening. Wolvin and Coakley (1988) claim that, in and out of the classroom, listening consumes extra of every day conversation time than other kinds of verbal conversation. Learning pronunciation benefits much from listening understanding. That is, when learners hear spoken English more often, they become more familiar with and sensitive to its pitch, intonation, emphasis, redundancy, and clusters, Bouach (2010).

Wilson (2008) lists a few additional motivations for listening, including knowledge gathering, enjoyment, assessment, criticism, and unanimity. Another benefit of hearing is that

it helps with pronunciation, which enhances speaking ability. There are plenty of reasons for listening skill teaching. There are five principal motives for listening like to interact in social protocols, to alternate information, to experience oneself, to percentage emotions, and to exert control (Hedge 2000).

2.8.3. Listening Process

To achieve an effective communication, the listener needs to have a clear understanding of what comes to his/her ears. This understanding is not only limited to the combination between sounds and meaning but also, it emphasizes much more on deducing the meaning from the surrounding context. (Poelmans 2003:10).

Lyman Steil, Larry Barker &Kittie Watson (1983) (as cited in Atef, 2014: 48), consider the following activities as essential to the process of listening:

- Sensing: is receiving verbal and nonverbal messages.
- Interpreting: is about understanding the message.
- Evaluating: is storing facts, information that can be verified, from opinion. It is also about concurring or rejecting the speaker's message.
- Responding: is reacting with verbal and non-verbal cues to the message.

According to Poelmans (2003: 10), There are four sub-processes that cover the listening comprehension process:

- 1) **Hearing:** is about receiving the auditory sounds or non-speech sounds (perception).
- 2) **Categorization of sounds:** is about arranging the received sounds in terms of how the sound is classified in the language.
- 3) **Word recognition:** is the process of perceiving the symbols of one's spoken language in terms of its linguistic units.
- 4) **Comprehension:** is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected texts. Listeners typically make use of vocabulary and grammatical knowledge helping them in understanding the spoken text.

According to Harmer (2001: 201), there are two distinct ways of processing information. He states that: *"In metaphorical terms, this can be linked to the difference between looking down on something and on the contrary, being in the middle of something and understanding where we are by concentrating on all the individual features"*. (Beltayef, 2016).

2.8.4. Definition of Music

According to worldwide acknowledged dictionaries (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, Penguin Dictionary of Music, Compact Oxford English Dictionary, Merriam-Webster), the word ‘Music’ derives from the Greek word μουσική (mousiké, art of the 9 Muses) and it is defined as “the art or science of combining or of arranging vocal or instrumental sounds” in order to produce “pleasant sounds” (or “sounds in a pleasing way”), and compositions that have beauty, form, harmony, melody, rhythm, unity, continuity, emotional content, etc. (in similar or identical words). This is, of course, a wellfitted definition in the modern West, where music is mostly perceived as an aesthetic object, used for entertainment, mood arrangement, and needs artistry and education. However, even in the Western art canon, music sounds are not always “pleasant”. The notion of beauty excludes many avant-garde forms, ambient music, experimental music based on environmental sounds, etc. (May Kokkidou, 2021).

In Blacking’s words (1995: 224), although every known human society has “what trained musicologists would recognize as music”, there are some societies that have no specific word for it. The term ‘music’ is found only in selected cultures (Trehub et al. 2015). Even so, this does not mean that these cultures have not developed a music system. What this really means is that musical activities in a specific culture are not separated from other ritual-social behaviors with which they are integrated (Cram 2009).

2.9. Motivation in Language Learning

2.9.1. Definition of Motivation

Motivation is considered an essential element that affects the language learning process, the definition of motivation has been presented by many scholars and from different perspectives. In 1998, Dornyei defined motivation as a “*process whereby a certain amount of instigation force arises, initiates action, and persists as long as no other force comes into play to weaken it and thereby terminates action, or until the planned outcome has been reached*” (p. 118), in other meaning, motivation is the primary force, which initiates a behavior and maintains its persistence to reach goals, unless, it is not thwarted by other factors, Harmer (2001:68) defines it as: “*some kind of internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action*” and Brown (1987:114) defines it as: “*an inner drive, impulse, emotion or desire that moves one to a particular action*”, in other words, motivation is the driving power

or force that pushes someone to focus his efforts on achieving a certain goal. According to Ryan and Deci (2000) *“to be motivated means to be moved to do something. A person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated”* (p. 54). In other meaning, the motivated person has a sense of inspiration and enthusiasm to accomplish a goal, while, an unmotivated person lacks these senses (Ghalem, 2022).

2.9.2.Types of Motivation

Walker (2011:4) states that Robert Gardner (1959) and Wallace Lambert (1972) were whose seminal research was the first to investigate motivation in an EFL context. They overcame the traditional notions of language aptitude and the ability to acquire a language, and they linked language acquisition to social psychological factors in the form of integrative and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation is the desire to interact with and become a part of a target language community; whereas, instrumental motivation is learning a language to achieve an intend objective (Aggouni, 2015).

2.9.2.1.Integrative Motivation

Gardner and Lambert (1972, Cited in Brown, 2007, p.170.Cited by Walker, 2011) found that when students were interested in integrative motivation, their achievements were higher on proficiency tests than those who were instrumentally motivated. Motivation makes the learner's orientation and the goal of learning a second language linked. Falk (1978.Cited by Norris-Holt, 2001) supposes that the successful students in learning a foreign/ a second language are the ones who like to speak the language, respect the culture and have a desire be integrated into the community of that language. Norris-Holt (2001) cited from Finegan (1999, p. 568) who states when a person is a resident in another community that uses TL in its social interactions, integrative motivation is what helps the learner to develop some level of proficiency in the language because it is necessary to integrate socially in the community to become a member. He also theorized that "integrative motivation typically underlies successful acquisition of a wide range of registers and a native like pronunciation". Faulkner (2009) points out that integrative motivation does not apply in countries such as South Korea, where the places to use English and interact with native speakers outside the classroom are not often provided (Cited by Walker, 2011, p.4).

2.9.2.2. Instrumental Motivation

In Walker's teaching environment, the students with positive experiences living or studying abroad are the ones who show signs of integrative motivation, and others appear to have a significant interest in English culture by reading books and watching English movies. On the other hand, Norris-Holt (2001) sees the instrumental motivation as the desire to attain something practical from the study of a second language (Hudson 2000). The instrumental motivation carries objectives including, the purpose of language acquisition is more practical such as having the requirements for school or university graduation, applying for a job, demanding high payment because of the high language ability, translation work or having a high social class. Instrumental motivation is often related to second language acquisition (SLA) with a little/without any integration of the learner into a society (Aggouni, 2015).

2.9.2.3. Integrative Vs Instrumental Motivation

Although both integrative and instrumental motivations are essential elements to succeed, integrative motivation is the one that maintains long-term success in learning a second language (Taylor, Meynard and Rheault 1977; Ellis 1997; Crookes et al 1991. Cited by Norris-Holt, 2001). Gardner and Lambert stated in their research that integrative motivation was the most important in academic learning than instrumental motivation (Ellis 1997. Cited by Norris-Holt, 2001). After that, the emphasis on integrative motivation has kept going, yet the instrumental motivation has also an importance. However, instrumental motivation has only been a significant factor in some research; whereas, integrative motivation and continuous second language acquisition success are related. Despite of the fact that most students are instrumentally motivated in the study of language, yet those with integrative approach to language study are usually more highly motivated and more successful in learning a language (Norris-Holt, 2001).

Conclusion

This chapter has established the theoretical background for the study by exploring language, foreign language learning, EFL teaching, listening skills, music, and motivation. Together, these concepts provide a foundation for examining how music can serve as a motivational tool to increase engagement among EFL learners in the Algerian context.

Chapter Three:

Methodology

Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to the practical part of this research. It consists of a detailed description of the methodological framework adopted to investigate the use of music as a motivational tool and its impact on learner engagement in primary EFL classrooms.

This chapter outlines the research approach and method employed, followed by a clear statement of the research problem. It also presents the target population and the selected sample involved in the study. Furthermore, it describes the data gathering tools used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data.

In addition, the chapter provides a detailed description of the classroom context and the teaching material implemented during the experiment, as well as an overview of the teachers' questionnaire. Finally, it explains the procedures used for data analysis in order to interpret the findings and answer the research questions.

3.1. Research Approach

Research approaches are defined as the “plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation” (Chetty, 2016, p.3). There exist three research approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, yet they are not to be perceived as rigid and distinct categories, especially for the qualitative and quantitative approaches since a study can be “more qualitative than quantitative or vice versa” (ibid). The mixed method approach stands in the middle between the qualitative and quantitative approaches incorporating elements that belong to both of them (Chetty, 2016). Henceforth, this study opted for a mixed-method integrating a quantitative survey and qualitative experimental observation to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

3.2. Research Method

This study adopts an interventional case study method (or action research design) to investigate the role of music as a motivational tool in enhancing learner engagement in a primary EFL classroom. The case study method is particularly suitable for this research as it allows for an in-depth exploration of a specific educational context within its natural setting. It provides a holistic understanding of how learners respond to the integration of music during classroom activities.

The method relies on direct classroom experimentation through the use of an audio-based activity, combined with observational analysis of learners' behavior, including their level of participation, attention, and interaction. In addition, the study incorporates teachers' perspectives through a questionnaire, which helps triangulate the data and strengthen the validity of the findings.

This methodological design enables the researcher to assess, interpret, and analyze both behavioral patterns and pedagogical perceptions, making it appropriate for examining motivational factors in young learners.

3.3.Interventional Research Design

The present study adopted an interventional research design (action research), as it aims to introduce music as a pedagogical intervention and investigate its immediate impact on learner engagement in primary EFL classrooms from both teachers' and classroom perspectives. An interventional design is appropriate for identifying and understanding the outcomes of classroom experiments, particularly in relation to the use of music, the nature of learners' participation, the sample under investigation, and the available data collection procedures.

In addition, a mixed-methods approach was employed to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study, as qualitative findings help to support and explain quantitative results. It also provides real classroom insights into how learners experience music-based activities and how teachers perceive their effectiveness in promoting motivation and engagement.

The advantages of combining quantitative and qualitative methods are well documented. For instance, it enables the measurement of patterns in teachers' responses and learner engagement, supports the testing of research objectives, and enhances the generalizability of the findings (Konfeld, 2010). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) also argue that integrating both types of data strengthens the research by providing complementary perspectives and reducing the influence of bias. In this study, quantitative data mainly reflect teachers' responses through the questionnaire, while qualitative data include open-ended responses and continuous observation notes.

The study focuses on the relationship between the use of music (independent variable) and learner engagement in EFL classrooms (dependent variable). The main objective is to explore

and confirm how music can enhance learners' motivation, participation, and overall engagement in the language learning process.

3.4. Research Problem

Learner engagement remains a significant challenge in primary EFL classrooms, particularly when traditional teaching methods dominate instructional practices. Young learners often struggle to maintain attention and motivation when lessons rely heavily on textbook-based instruction, repetition without interaction, or teacher-centered approaches.

Music, as an engaging and interactive tool, has been suggested as a potential solution to increase motivation and participation. However, its actual impact on learner engagement in real classroom settings, especially in the Algerian primary education context, remains insufficiently explored.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the effectiveness of integrating music into EFL instruction by addressing the following research problem:

- To what extent does the use of music as a motivational tool enhance learner engagement in primary EFL classrooms?

3.5. Population and Sampling

3.5.1. Population

Many interpretations have been given to the term “population” in research methodology. For instance, Marczyk et al (2005) defined the concept as “all individuals of interest to the researcher” (p. 18). A similar definition was presented by Sekaran (2003) who defined the term as “the entire group of people, events, or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate” (p. 265).

The population of this study consists of primary school learners and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Algerian public schools. Specifically, it includes pupils enrolled in the primary education cycle, particularly in lower grades where motivation and engagement are crucial for language acquisition, as well as teachers responsible for delivering English instruction at this level. This population represents the educational context in which innovative teaching strategies, such as the use of music, can have a significant impact on learner engagement.

3.5.2. Sample

The sample of the study was selected using a convenience sampling technique, based on accessibility and availability. It consists of one third-grade class from Chefchoufi Talhi Primary School, located in Drean (El Tarf). The class includes 32 pupils. Although the school contains three classes at the same level, only one class was chosen for the experiment.

In addition, 20 primary school English teachers participated by responding to the questionnaire. However, the sample size remains limited, which may affect the generalizability of the results. Despite this limitation, the selected sample provides sufficient data to explore teachers' perspectives on the use of music as a motivational tool and to triangulate the findings from classroom observation.

3.6.Data Gathering Tools

Data for this study were collected using two complementary instruments in order to ensure methodological triangulation. First, a classroom-based audio activity was conducted, in which an educational English song was introduced during the lesson. This activity served as an experimental tool to observe learners' engagement, including their attention, participation, interaction, and overall motivation. Observational notes were taken to document students' behavioral responses during the activity.

Second, a teacher questionnaire was administered to gather quantitative and qualitative data regarding teachers' perceptions of the use of music in EFL classrooms. The questionnaire included both closed-ended questions, aimed at generating measurable data, and open-ended questions, allowing participants to express their opinions and experiences in more detail. Together, these tools provided a comprehensive understanding of the role of music as a motivational strategy in primary education.

In addition, continuous observation was carried out throughout the study period. This ongoing observation allowed the researcher to systematically monitor and record learners' behaviors, reactions, and levels of engagement over time, providing richer and more comprehensive insights beyond a single classroom session.

3.7. Research Ethics

Ethical considerations were carefully respected throughout this study to ensure the protection, dignity, and rights of all participants. Before data collection, all participants were

clearly informed about the purpose and objectives of the research, which focused on the use of music as a motivational tool in primary EFL classrooms. Participation was entirely voluntary, and teachers were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to completing the questionnaire. The researchers ensured confidentiality and anonymity by avoiding the disclosure of any personal or identifying information in the study results. All collected data were used strictly for academic purposes and were securely stored to protect participants' privacy.

In addition, the study followed established ethical guidelines for academic research and respected the principles of honesty, integrity, and respect for all participants. Special care was taken to ensure that the research process created a comfortable environment for teachers, allowing them to express their opinions freely and without pressure.

3.8.Data Analysis Process

After completing data collection, the researchers proceeded to the analysis stage in order to examine the role of music as a motivational strategy in EFL classrooms. Quantitative data obtained from the teacher questionnaires were organized and analyzed using Microsoft Excel. The responses were classified and processed to generate frequencies and percentages, and the results were presented in the form of charts and graphs created using the Livegap platform, each followed by clear interpretation.

On the other hand, qualitative data from open-ended questionnaire responses and continuous classroom observation notes were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The researchers identified recurring patterns, ideas, and themes related to learners' engagement, motivation, and the effectiveness of music-based activities. This approach enabled a deeper understanding of participants' perceptions and classroom behaviors, contributing to a comprehensive interpretation of the findings in relation to the study's objectives.

Chapter Four:

Data Analysis

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methods and procedures used to collect and analyze data relevant to the objectives of the study. It provides a detailed description of the tools, participants, and techniques employed during the data collection process, as well as the strategies used to interpret and present the findings. The aim is to ensure the reliability and validity of the results and to offer a clear understanding of how the research questions were addressed.

4.1. Description of the Class and the Teaching Material

4.1.1. Description of the Class

The observed class is a third-grade class at Chefchoufi Talhi Primary School in Drean (El Tarf). It consists of 32 pupils, including 17 boys and 15 girls, aged between 7 and 10 years old.

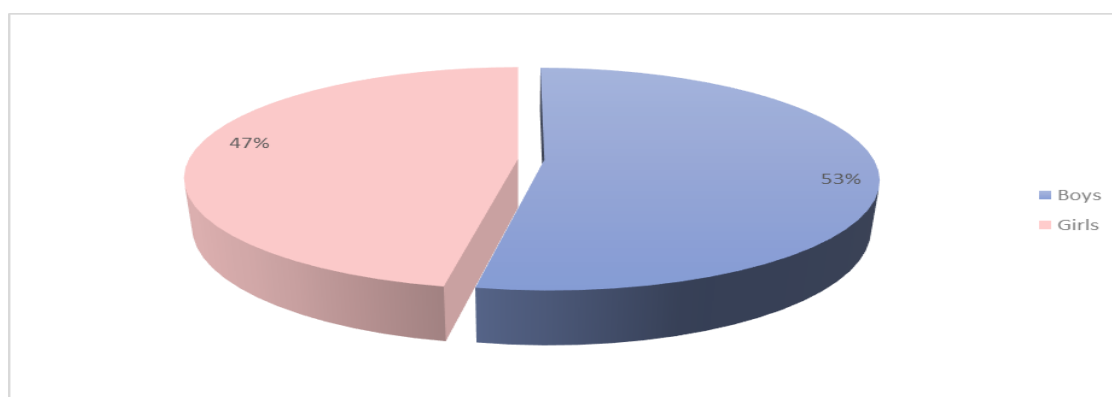
Table 1

Description of Students' Gender

Students' gender	Number	Percentage
Boys	17	53%
Girls	15	47%

Figure 2

Description of Students' Gender.



The learners have mixed proficiency levels in English. Their participation varies depending on the type of activity used in the classroom. Prior to the experiment, teaching was mainly based on traditional methods, which sometimes resulted in limited learner engagement.

4.1.2. Description of the Teaching Material

The teaching material used in this study is an educational English song entitled “Toy Song – What’s in the Box?”, available on the YouTube platform and published by the channel Cris Flowers. This song is designed for young learners and focuses on introducing vocabulary related to toys in an engaging way.

In this study, only the audio component of the song was used in the classroom, without displaying the visual content. The aim was to focus on learners’ listening skills and to observe how music alone can influence their motivation and engagement.

This teaching material is characterized by:

- A simple and repetitive structure suitable for primary school learners
- The use of basic and familiar vocabulary related to toys
- A clear rhythm that facilitates listening and memorization
- An engaging auditory input that encourages participation even without visual support

The main objective of using this audio material is to create a motivating learning environment, enhance listening comprehension, and evaluate the effectiveness of music as a motivational tool in the absence of visual aids.

4.1.3. Description of the teachers’ questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of twelve (12) open-ended and multiple-choice questions designed to investigate the use of music as a motivational tool in primary EFL classrooms.

It begins with a section on general information, collecting data on the teacher’s school, years of teaching experience, and gender. The main section explores teachers’ practices and perceptions regarding music, including its role in motivating learners, facilitating vocabulary and pronunciation learning, timing of use during lessons, and criteria for song selection. Additional questions address the frequency of student participation, challenges faced when using music, and teachers’ opinions on the most effective ways to integrate music into lessons.

Finally, respondents are asked to evaluate the overall usefulness of music in primary EFL teaching. Both quantitative and qualitative data are collected to provide a comprehensive understanding of music’s impact on learner engagement.

4.2. Data Analysis

• General information

❖ Name of the school:

The teachers who responded to the questionnaire come from a variety of primary schools, including Athamnia Ali, Hamza al Arbi Primary School, Bouafia, Zarour A/Rahmane, Zarouki El Tahar, Boukhris Mouhamed El Saleh “El Chatt”, Fedaoui Moussa, AISSA BIUSSEKINE PS, Boutouil Sohamed Saleh Primary School, 1100 Logments Echatt, Brahma Mnaouer Ben Ahmed, Zouiche Talhi P.S, Chaibi Elarbi Primary School, Hamza al Arbi Primary School (again), Amrouci Nouar, Boudila Bachir, and Aissa Boussekine.

This distribution shows that the study includes teachers from 17 different school contexts, ensuring a wide representation of primary school English teaching environments. The repeated mention of Hamza al Arbi Primary School suggests that multiple teachers from this school participated, providing a more detailed perspective from that institution.

❖ Years of teaching experience:

The data on teaching experience shows that the participating teachers have varied levels of professional experience:

- 7 teachers have 1 year of experience,
- 2 teachers have 2 years,
- 6 teachers have 3 years,
- 5 teachers have 4 years of experience.

This indicates that the majority of teachers in the sample are relatively early-career educators, with most having between 1 and 3 years of teaching experience. Such a distribution suggests that the findings primarily reflect the practices and perspectives of teachers who are still building their professional experience, which may influence their approaches to using music and songs in English lessons. The mix of experience levels also allows for some comparison between slightly more and less experienced teachers regarding their classroom strategies.

Question n°1: Gender**Table 2***Teacher's Gender Distribution.*

Gender	Number	Percentage
Female	19	95%
Male	1	5%

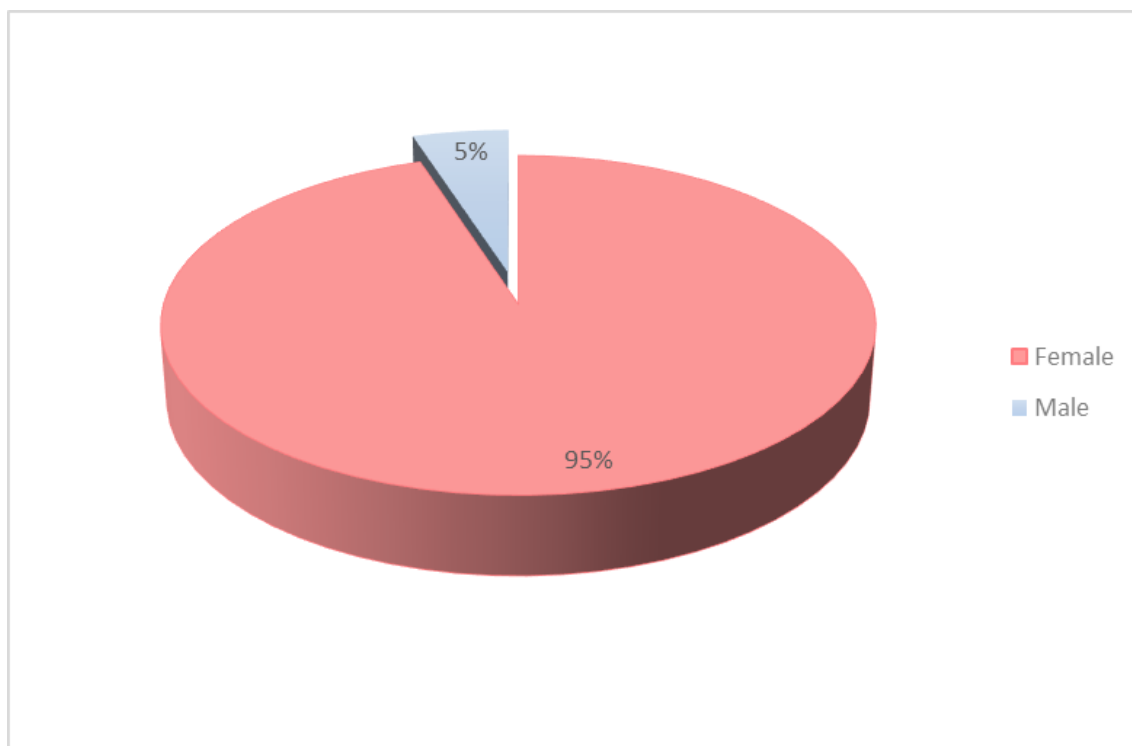
Figure 3*Teacher's Gender Distribution.*

Table 2 presents the distribution of teachers according to gender. The results show that the vast majority of the participants are female teachers, representing 95% (19 teachers) of the sample, while male teachers represent only 5% (1 teacher). This distribution indicates a strong predominance of female teachers within the studied population.

Question n°2: Do you use music in your English lessons with primary school learners?

Table 3

Teachers Using Music in English Lessons with Primary School Learners.

Using Music in English Lessons with Primary School Learners	Number	Percentage
Yes	20	100%
No	0	0%

Figure 4

Teachers Using Music in English Lessons with Primary School Learners.

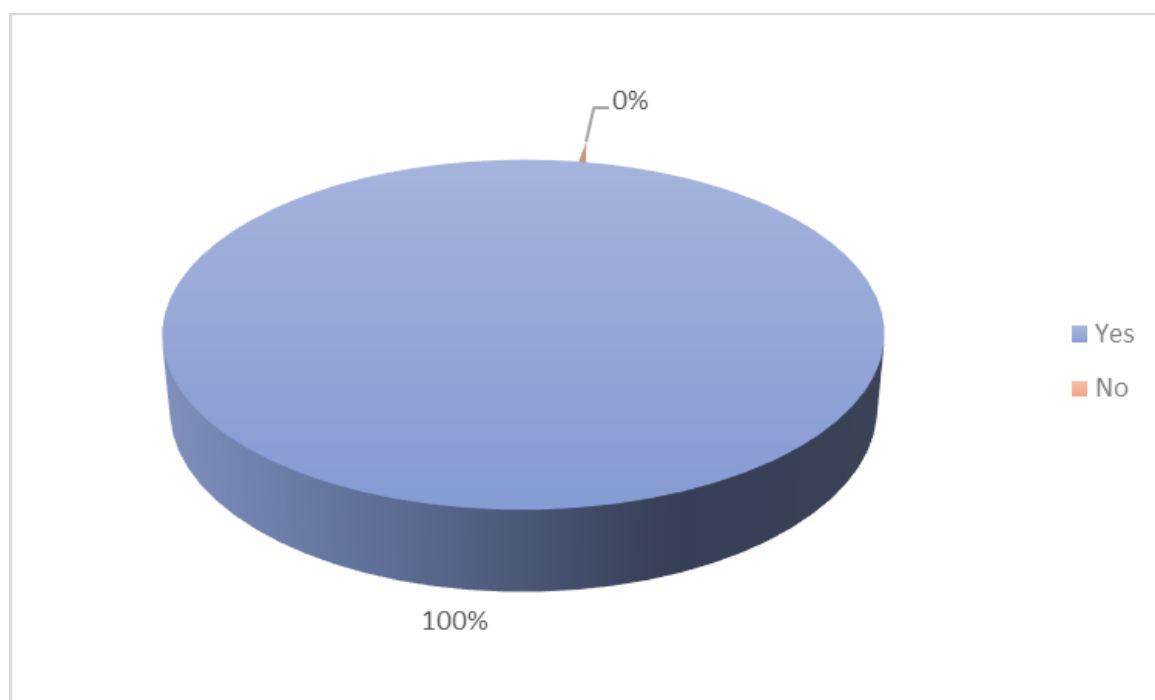


Table 3 shows teachers' responses regarding the use of music in English lessons with primary school learners. The results indicate that all teachers (20 participants), representing 100% of the sample, reported using music in their English classes, while none of the respondents selected the option "No". This result demonstrates that the use of music is universally adopted among the surveyed teachers.

Question n°3: Do you think music helps motivate primary school learners during English learning?

Table 4

Teachers' Perceptions of Music as a Motivational Tool in English Learning for Primary School Learners.

Music as a Motivational Tool in English Learning for Primary School Learners	Number	Percentage
Yes	16	80%
No	4	20%

Figure 5

Teachers' Perceptions of Music as a Motivational Tool in English Learning for Primary School Learners.

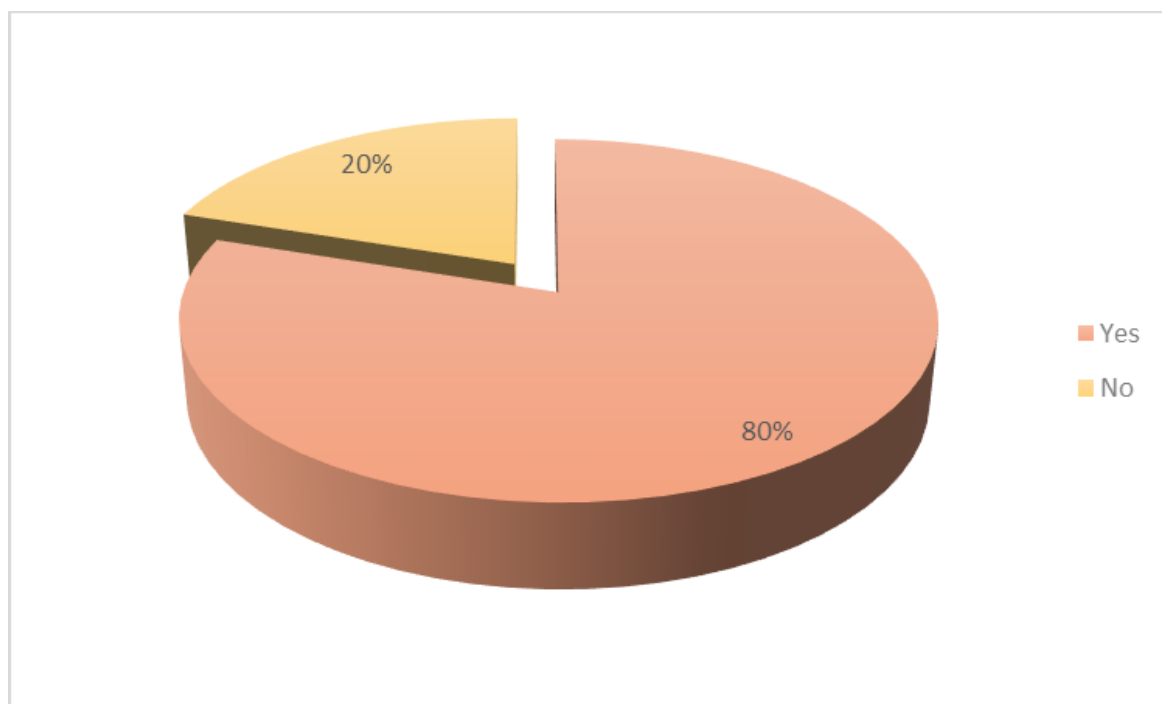


Table 4 presents teachers' opinions regarding the role of music as a motivational tool in English learning for primary school learners. The results reveal that 16 teachers (80%) believe that music motivates learners to engage in English learning, whereas 4 teachers (20%) do not consider music as a motivational tool.

These findings indicate that the majority of teachers perceive music as an effective strategy to increase learners' motivation in the English classroom. Music may help create a more enjoyable and dynamic learning environment, which encourages participation and interest among young learners.

Question n°4: Does music help young learners participate more in classroom activities?

The teachers' responses indicate that most believe music positively impacts young learners' participation in classroom activities. The majority of responses—phrases such as “Yes,” “Yes, it does,” “Yes, it helps a lot,” and “Yes, of course”—reflect a strong consensus that music enhances engagement, motivation, and comfort, particularly for shy or reluctant learners. One teacher emphasized that songs support learning vocabulary, sentence structures, and sentence patterns, showing that music is seen as both a motivational and pedagogical tool.

A few responses, such as “Somehow,” “It depends,” and “Not effectively,” suggest that the effect of music may vary depending on teaching style, classroom dynamics, or the specific activity.

Question n°5: In your opinion, does using songs help primary school learners learn English vocabulary or pronunciation?

The teachers' responses indicate that songs are widely perceived as helpful in learning both vocabulary and pronunciation. Many teachers explicitly stated that songs help learners acquire new words, practice correct pronunciation, and reinforce listening skills (e.g., “Sure it helps them acquire more vocabulary and get the right pronunciation,” “Songs help pupils learn new vocabulary through repetition and improve pronunciation by listening to and repeating correct sounds”). Several responses also highlighted that songs make learning more enjoyable, memorable, and motivating.

Some teachers noted limitations, mentioning that while learners may mimic pronunciation, it may not always effectively promote vocabulary acquisition unless the songs are simple and appropriate for their level. Responses like “Yes but with the appropriate kind of lyrics” or “Yes but it needs to be very simple” reflect the need for careful song selection to maximize learning outcomes.

Question n°6: When do you prefer to use music in your lesson?

Table 5

Teachers' Preferred Moments for Using Music During English Lessons.

Timing of Music Use in English Lessons	Number	Percentage
At the beginning of the lesson (warm-up activity)	15	75%
During the lesson	0	0%
At the end of the lesson	4	20%
I do not use music	1	5%

Figure 6

Teachers' Preferred Moments for Using Music During English Lessons.

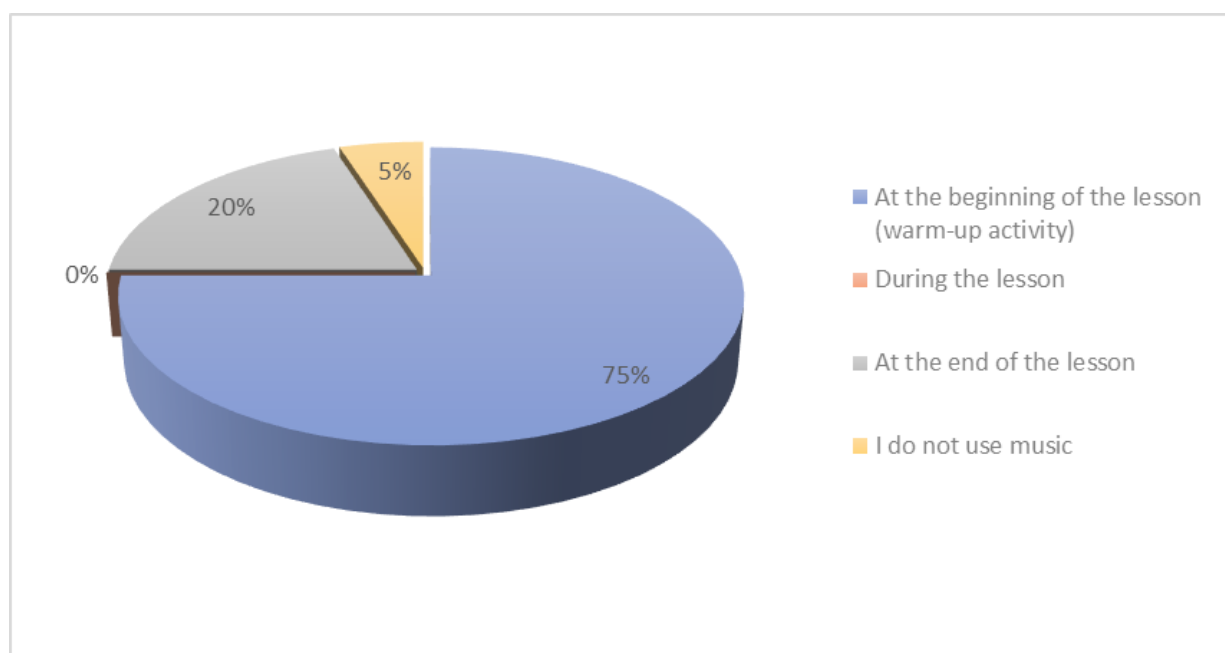


Table 5 presents the timing at which teachers use music during English lessons. The results show that the majority of teachers, 15 participants (75%), use music at the beginning of the lesson as a warm-up activity. In contrast, 4 teachers (20%) reported using music at the end of the lesson, while none of the teachers (0%) indicated using music during the lesson itself. Additionally, 1 teacher (5%) does not use music in their classes.

These findings suggest that music is mainly used as an introductory activity to create a positive classroom atmosphere, capture learners' attention, and prepare them for the lesson. A smaller proportion of teachers use music as a closing activity, possibly to review content or relax learners at the end of the class. The absence of responses for using music during the lesson indicates that teachers tend to integrate music primarily at specific moments rather than throughout the teaching process.

❖ Note on the Discrepancy:

Although Question 2 shows that 100% of teachers use music, Question 6 indicates that 1 teacher reported not using music at all. This minor inconsistency could be due to differences in teachers' interpretation of the questions or an oversight in questionnaire completion. For discussion purposes, it can be explained as a reporting variation rather than a contradiction, while still highlighting that music is generally integrated into lessons, primarily as a warm-up or closing activity.

Question n°7: Do you think using songs makes learning English easier for young learners?

Table 6

Perception of Songs as a Tool for Facilitating English Learning among Young Learners.

Using Songs to Facilitate English Learning for Young Learners	Number	Percentage
Yes	16	80%
No	4	20%

Figure 7

Perception of Songs as a Tool for Facilitating English Learning among Young Learners.

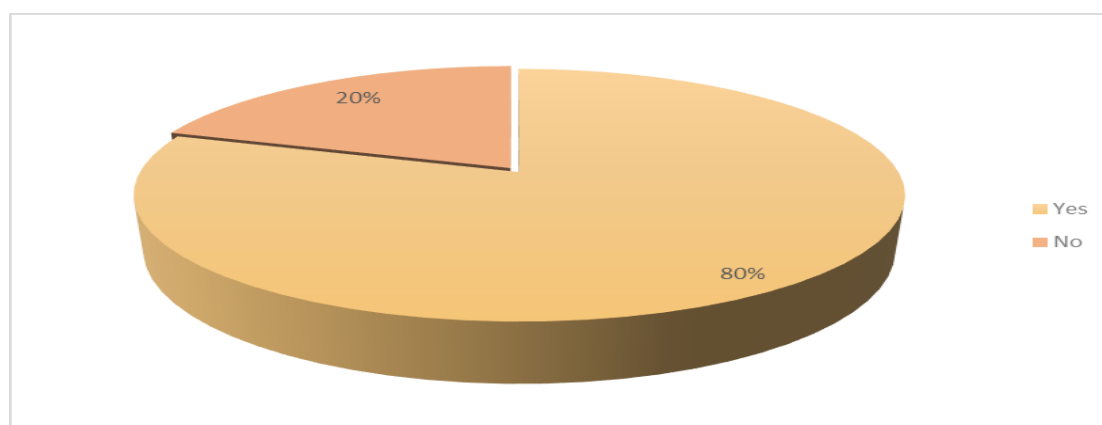


Table 6 presents teachers' responses concerning the impact of songs on facilitating English learning for young learners. The results indicate that 16 teachers (80%) believe that songs make learning easier, while 4 teachers (20%) do not share this view.

These findings show that the majority of teachers perceive songs as an effective pedagogical tool for supporting English learning among young learners. Songs can enhance pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and listening skills, while also making the learning process more enjoyable.

Question n°8: If you use songs in class, what criteria do you use to choose them?

The teachers' responses reveal that the selection of songs is guided by several key criteria to ensure they effectively support learning for primary school learners:

- 1) **Simplicity of Lyrics and Vocabulary:** Most teachers emphasized choosing songs with simple, clear, and repetitive lyrics to make them understandable and memorable for young learners. Examples include "Simple lyrics," "Easy vocabulary," and "Simple melody, simple lyrics."
- 2) **Relevance to Lesson Content:** Songs are often selected to align with the topic or learning objectives, such as numbers, colors, greetings, or target vocabulary. This ensures that musical activities reinforce lesson content rather than distract from it.
- 3) **Age-Appropriateness and Engagement:** Teachers highlighted the importance of songs being suitable for the learners' age and developmental level, fun, and interesting, to maintain motivation and participation.
- 4) **Pedagogical Function:** Some teachers prefer songs with repetition or rhythm to aid memory and pronunciation. A few also mentioned using 'a cappella' versions or simple arrangements to minimize distraction and focus learners' attention on words.
- 5) **Duration and Accessibility:** Short, concise songs are preferred to ensure learners can follow, understand, and enjoy the activity without losing focus.

Overall, these criteria show that teachers carefully select songs to maximize educational value, motivation, and participation, ensuring that music is an effective tool for vocabulary and pronunciation learning in primary English classrooms.

Question n°9: What difficulties do you face when using music with primary school learners?

The teachers' responses indicate that while music is a valuable tool for engagement and learning, it also presents several challenges in primary classrooms:

- 1) **Excessive Noise and Excitement:** The most frequently mentioned difficulty is that pupils often become too noisy, excited, or overly active during musical activities. Examples include "Too much noise," "Sometimes they get too motivated and they move and sing aloud," and "Learners tend to focus on the melody instead of the lyrics." This can make it challenging to maintain classroom control and refocus learners on lesson content.
- 2) **Distraction from Learning Objectives:** Some teachers noted that learners may focus on the melody or fun aspects of songs rather than the intended vocabulary or pronunciation practice, which can reduce the educational effectiveness of the activity.
- 3) **Language Comprehension Challenges:** A few teachers highlighted that pupils may struggle with new words, mispronunciations, or understanding the meaning of lyrics, especially if songs are too fast or complex.
- 4) **Shyness or Laughter:** In some cases, learners' shyness or tendency to laugh during singing can make participation inconsistent, particularly for students who are reluctant to sing aloud.
- 5) **Pronunciation Difficulties:** Certain sounds or words in songs may be difficult for young learners to pronounce correctly, requiring additional guidance.

Overall, while music promotes engagement and motivation, teachers need to carefully manage classroom dynamics, choose age-appropriate and level-appropriate songs, and provide clear guidance to overcome these challenges. Effective use of music requires balancing fun and educational objectives.

Question n°10: How often do your pupils participate in English activities when music is used?

Table 7:

The Use of Music and Pupils' Engagement in English Activities.

Frequency of Pupils' Participation in English Activities with Music	Number	Percentage

Never	0	0%
Rarely	2	10%
Sometimes	5	25%
Often	13	65%

Figure 8

The use of Music and Pupils' Engagement in English Activities.

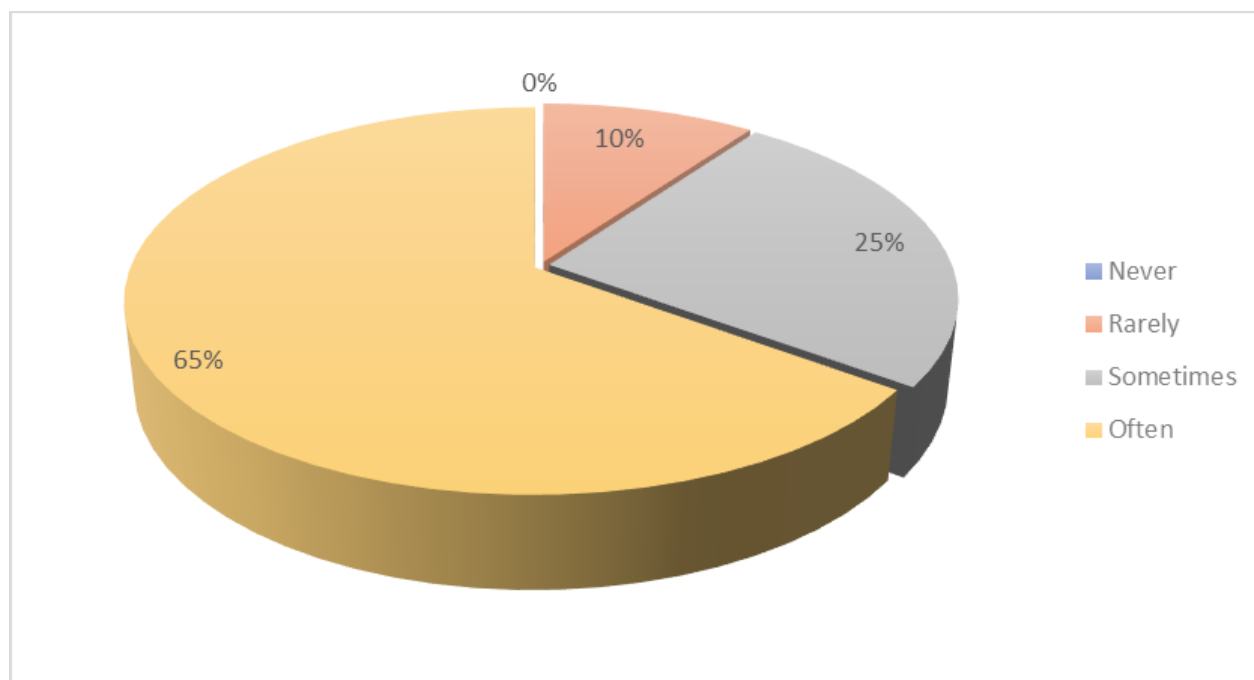


Table 7 shows the frequency of pupils' participation in English activities that involve music. The results reveal that 13 teachers (65%) reported that pupils often participate, 5 teachers (25%) indicated that participation occurs sometimes, and 2 teachers (10%) observed rare participation. No teacher reported that pupils never participate (0%).

These findings suggest that music positively influences pupil engagement in English activities, with the majority of learners participating regularly. While most pupils respond actively, the variation in participation levels (rarely or sometimes) may reflect differences in individual learner motivation, interest, or familiarity with musical activities in the classroom.

Question n°11: In your opinion, what is the best way to use music to improve young learners' engagement in EFL classes?

The teachers' responses reveal a variety of strategies and perspectives on effectively using music in primary EFL classrooms:

- 1) **Integration with Activities:** Many teachers suggested combining music with interactive activities, such as singing, moving, acting out words, gestures, repetition, or rhythm-based games. These approaches help learners stay active, remember vocabulary, and enjoy the lesson. Examples include “combine songs with activities,” “using puppets,” and “singing, moving, or acting out words.”
- 2) **Song Selection:** Teachers emphasized the importance of choosing songs that are simple, age-appropriate, and aligned with lesson content. Key criteria include target vocabulary, simple lyrics, and easy-to-follow melodies to facilitate learning and memorization.
- 3) **Timing and Classroom Management:** Some teachers highlighted when to use music during the lesson to maximize engagement and control. Many prefer music as a warm-up or at the end of the session to motivate learners or reinforce vocabulary, while noting that using music at the very start can sometimes make students too noisy.
- 4) **Use of Audio-Visual Resources:** A few teachers recommended audio-visual music, integrating visuals or multimedia to enhance understanding and engagement.
- 5) **Learner-Centered Approaches:** Some responses suggested allowing learner choice in music selection to increase motivation and participation.
- 6) **Cautions:** A small number of teachers expressed concerns that music could be distracting or reduce the perceived seriousness of English lessons if not carefully managed.

The consensus is that music is most effective when it is simple, purposeful, interactive, and connected to lesson objectives. Teachers see it as a tool to enhance participation, motivation, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and listening skills, provided classroom management and song selection are carefully considered.

Question n°12: Do you consider music in primary EFL teaching?

Table 8

Teachers' Views on Using Music in Primary EFL Lessons.

Consideration of Music in Primary EFL Teaching	Number	Percentage
Very useful	10	50%
Useful	9	45%
Not useful	1	5%

Figure 9

Teachers' Views on Using Music in Primary EFL Lessons.

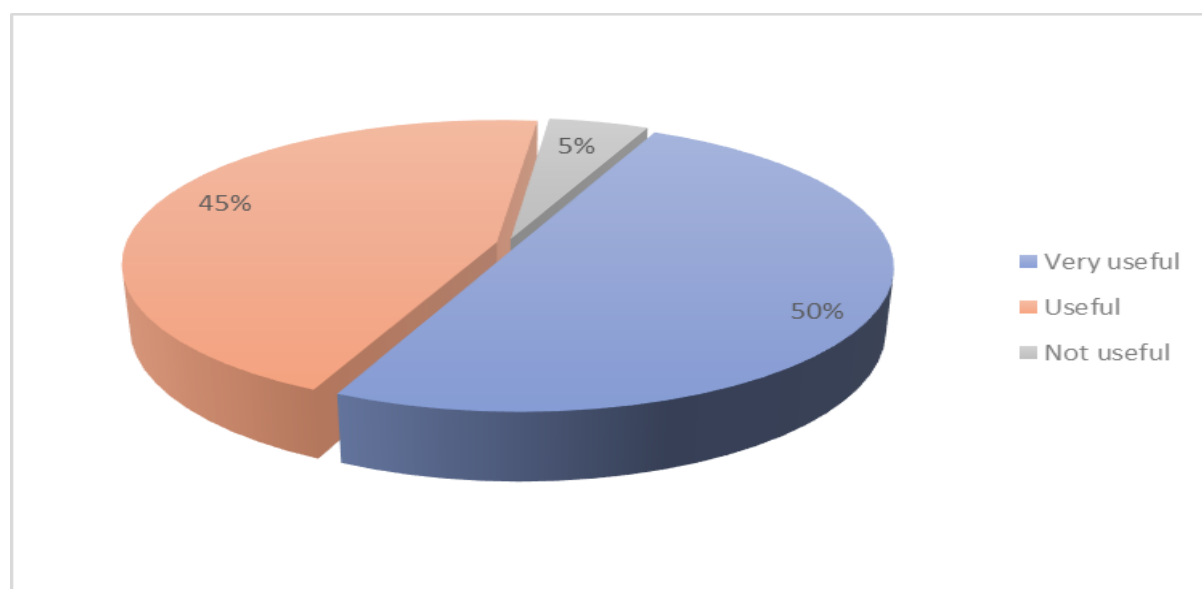


Table 8 presents teachers' opinions on the usefulness of music in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to primary school learners. The results show that 10 teachers (50%) consider music very useful, 9 teachers (45%) find it useful, and 1 teacher (5%) perceives it as not useful.

These findings indicate that the majority of teachers (95%) recognize the value of music in primary EFL teaching, highlighting its importance as a tool to enhance learning, motivation, and classroom engagement. The small minority who consider it not useful may reflect individual differences in teaching style, experience, or the perceived effectiveness of music in achieving learning objectives.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodological framework of the study, including the research approach and method, the research problem, and the population and sample. It has also described the data gathering tools, the classroom context, and the teaching material used.

Overall, this design provides a clear and reliable basis for analyzing and interpreting the results presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Five:
Findings and Discussion

5.1 Findings and Discussion

The experiment using the audio song “Toy Song – What’s in the Box?” as an interventional case study revealed that music positively influenced learner engagement in the third-grade EFL class. Most students actively listened, repeated key vocabulary, and participated by guessing the objects mentioned, showing higher attention and motivation compared to traditional lessons. They exhibited enjoyment through smiles, laughter, and requests to repeat the song, indicating that music can create a stimulating and motivating learning environment. Additionally, the repetitive rhythm and vocabulary of the song facilitated listening comprehension and word retention, even without visual support. These results align with previous studies highlighting music’s role in enhancing attention, participation, and language acquisition in young learners (Murphey, 1992; Gordon, 2010). However, a few students remained less attentive, suggesting that musical activities may need to be combined with other interactive strategies to fully engage all learners.

Based on the responses collected from the twenty teachers, several key findings emerge regarding the use of music in English lessons with primary school learners. All participants reported using music in their classes, reflecting a universal recognition of its value as a classroom tool. Most teachers (80%) perceive music as a motivational instrument that enhances learners’ engagement, supporting the idea that music contributes to a more dynamic and enjoyable learning environment. This aligns with previous research indicating that music can increase students’ attention, reduce anxiety, and foster participation, particularly among younger learners (Kang et al., 2021; Murphey, 1992). Teachers’ qualitative responses further highlight that music not only motivates but also supports pedagogical goals. Songs were reported to aid vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and listening skills, consistent with studies suggesting that musical activities facilitate language retention and oral proficiency (Ho & Fung, 2019; Paquette & Rieg, 2008). However, some teachers emphasized that the effectiveness of songs depends on their simplicity and appropriateness for the learners’ level, suggesting that careful selection is necessary to maximize learning outcomes. This observation resonates with findings by Mora and Araya (2020), who noted that age-appropriate and contextually relevant songs yield better language learning results.

Regarding the timing of music integration, the majority of teachers use music as a warm-up activity at the beginning of lessons, aiming to capture attention and set a positive tone. A smaller portion uses music at the end of the lesson, likely to consolidate learning or provide relaxation. The absence of continuous music use during lessons indicates that teachers prefer

structured, purposeful integration rather than constant background music, which corresponds with previous studies showing that strategic placement of musical activities enhances focus and prevents overstimulation (Murphey, 1992; Kang et al., 2021). A minor discrepancy in reporting—one teacher indicating non-use of music despite the overall consensus—can be attributed to differences in interpretation or reporting oversight. Nevertheless, the overall pattern demonstrates that music is widely valued for both motivational and instructional purposes in primary EFL classrooms. In comparison with existing literature, these findings confirm that music serves as an effective tool to increase engagement, support language acquisition, and create a positive classroom atmosphere for young learners.

The findings from the teachers' responses provide a comprehensive picture of how music is used and perceived in primary EFL classrooms. A significant majority of teachers (80%) believe that songs facilitate English learning, supporting pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and listening skills, while also enhancing learner enjoyment. This aligns with prior research indicating that music can serve as both a motivational and pedagogical tool, promoting engagement and language retention among young learners (Paquette & Rieg, 2008; Ho & Fung, 2019). Teachers reported several key criteria for selecting songs, including simplicity of lyrics, relevance to lesson content, age-appropriateness, pedagogical function, and duration. These criteria reflect an intentional approach to maximizing learning outcomes while maintaining motivation, echoing findings from Mora and Araya (2020) that age-appropriate and contextually relevant songs yield better language acquisition. Despite its benefits, teachers noted challenges in using music, such as excessive noise, distraction from learning objectives, language comprehension difficulties, and variable participation due to shyness or laughter. These obstacles indicate that effective integration of music requires careful classroom management and deliberate song selection, which is consistent with Murphey's (1992) observation that strategic use of music enhances learning while minimizing potential disruptions. The frequency of pupil participation reported by teachers further confirms music's positive impact: 65% observed frequent engagement, with no reports of total non-participation. This supports the role of music as an active engagement tool, consistent with studies emphasizing music's motivational effects in EFL contexts (Kang et al., 2021). Teachers highlighted strategies to optimize music use, including combining songs with interactive activities, integrating audio-visual resources, timing musical activities strategically, and applying learner-centered approaches. These approaches reinforce the notion that music is

most effective when connected to lesson objectives and designed to encourage active participation.

Overall, 95% of teachers recognize music as a useful or very useful tool in teaching English to primary learners. This widespread endorsement underscores its pedagogical and motivational value. Variability in perceptions and challenges noted by a small minority may relate to differences in teaching style, experience, or classroom context, but overall, these findings corroborate prior research emphasizing the benefits of music for engagement, language learning, and classroom atmosphere.

5.2. Recommendations:

Based on the experimental findings and teachers' responses, it is recommended that music be thoughtfully and systematically integrated into primary EFL classrooms to enhance learners' motivation and improve learning outcomes. Songs should be carefully selected to ensure they are age-appropriate, linguistically simple, and closely aligned with lesson objectives, particularly for supporting vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation practice, and listening comprehension.

Music is most effective when used strategically within the lesson structure, such as at the beginning as a warm-up activity to activate prior knowledge, or at the end as a reinforcement tool to consolidate learning. Its effectiveness can be further enhanced when combined with interactive and learner-centered techniques such as gestures, role-plays, movement, and repetition activities, which help increase participation and sustain engagement.

In addition, teachers should carefully manage classroom dynamics to reduce potential challenges such as noise and distraction, while also ensuring that all learners are involved, including shy or less attentive students, by providing alternative forms of participation. The use of audiovisual support can also strengthen comprehension and maintain attention. Allowing learners to contribute to song selection may further increase motivation and ownership of learning.

Finally, music should not be used in isolation but integrated alongside other pedagogical strategies to ensure balanced instruction and to maximize its educational impact on all learners.

General Conclusion

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In primary school, learning is not simply about memorizing words or rules; it is about creating meaningful experiences that help children engage with language and develop essential communication skills. Young learners benefit most when lessons are interactive, enjoyable, and connected to their interests, as this encourages them to participate, listen actively, and absorb language naturally. Activities that combine rhythm, repetition, and play, such as songs, not only support listening comprehension but also strengthen speaking, vocabulary acquisition, and pronunciation. By fostering motivation and enjoyment, these experiences help children build confidence, focus, and a positive attitude toward learning, which are essential for their overall language development.

The present study demonstrates the effectiveness of music as a pedagogical tool in primary EFL classrooms. The classroom experiment with the song “Toy Song – What’s in the Box?” revealed that students were highly engaged, repeated target vocabulary, and actively participated in guessing activities, showing greater attention and motivation compared to traditional lessons. Teachers’ responses further confirmed these observations, indicating that music is widely used in lessons, primarily as a warm-up or closing activity, and that it helps enhance pronunciation, vocabulary, and listening skills. Most teachers reported selecting songs based on simplicity, age-appropriateness, and relevance to lesson content, ensuring that musical activities are both educational and enjoyable. While some challenges, such as classroom noise or variable attention levels, were noted, the study shows that with careful planning and classroom management, music can effectively motivate students, support language acquisition, and create a positive and dynamic learning environment.

Overall, these findings underscore the value of integrating music into early language education as a versatile and impactful tool for fostering engagement, learning, and enjoyment in young learners.

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Appendices

Appendix A



TOY SONG - WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

[TOY SONG - WHAT'S IN THE BOX?](https://youtu.be/K5cYTsn-G6o)

[https://youtu.be/K5cYTsn-G6o.](https://youtu.be/K5cYTsn-G6o)

Appendix B

Questionnaire

Topic: Music as a motivational tool: investigating its impact on learner engagement in EFL classrooms

General Information

Name of the school:

.....

Years of teaching experience:

.....

Dear teachers,

You are invited to participate in this questionnaire to help evaluate the use of music as a motivational tool in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class at the primary school level. Your answers will help us understand how music influences learner engagement and improve teaching practices. The questionnaire will take only a few minutes, and your information will remain confidential.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Kind regards.

Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Do you use music in your English lessons with primary school learners?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you think music helps motivate primary school learners during English learning?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Does music help young learners participate more in classroom activities?

.....

In your opinion, does using songs help primary school learners learn English vocabulary or pronunciation?

.....

When do you prefer to use music in your lesson?

- ☐ At the beginning of the lesson (warm-up activity)
- ☐ During the lesson
- ☐ At the end of the lesson
- ☐ I do not use music

Do you think using songs makes learning English easier for young learners?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If you use songs in class, what criteria do you use to choose them?

.....

What difficulties do you face when using music with primary school learners?

.....

How often do your pupils participate in English activities when music is used?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often

In your opinion, what is the best way to use music to improve young learners' engagement in EFL classes?

.....
.....
.....

Do you consider music in primary EFL teaching:

- ☐ Very useful
- ☐ Useful
- ☐ Not useful