Methods Of Developing Efl Learners' Pronunciation, Fluency, And Speech Activity Through Music And Songs

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Abstract: This article analyzes the advantages of using music and songs in the process of developing EFL learners' pronunciation, fluency, and speech activity, as well as the effects of music and its elements on learners' consciousness. The author of the article has attempted to rely on the research of many scholars and her own scientific investigations while covering these issues.

Keywords: Music, songs, rhythmic movements, pronunciation, speech activity.

Introduction: In the process of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), accurate pronunciation, speech fluency, and verbal activity constitute essential components of effective language acquisition. For learners to communicate fluently and accurately in English, it is crucial to develop correct pronunciation, natural fluency, and the ability to engage actively in speech. Along with the traditional teaching methods, the incorporation of non-traditional approaches such as the use of music, songs, and rhythmic movements serves as an effective means of enhancing language skills and increasing learners' motivation. Most research findings indicate that music, songs, and rhythmic activities contribute positively to foreign language learning due to their elements of repetition, rhythm, intonation, and phonetics. Through the integration of these components of music therapy namely songs, music, and rhythmic movements - learners can more easily memorize new words and expressions, while simultaneously improving their pronunciation and fluency. Therefore, this article examines the methods of developing EFL learners' pronunciation, fluency, and speech activity through music therapy, and discusses its practical application in the language learning process.

METHODS

There has been ongoing investigations on the significance of music and songs in language learning for ages. One of the key aspects linking language and music lies in their shared rhythmic and melodic characteristics. Numerous studies have demonstrated that music and songs are effective tools for enhancing pronunciation, fluency, and speech activity among EFL learners. Among the prominent researchers in this field, T. Murphey emphasized that incorporating music and songs into language learning increases both motivation and memory retention. According to his findings, songs introduce an engaging and innovative approach to language instruction. They help learners develop interest in speaking, while simultaneously facilitating the acquisition of natural rhythm, stress, and intonation patterns of the target language (Murphey, 1992). He also highlighted that songs enhance listening comprehension and pronunciation through repeated exposure to authentic intonation and phonetic structures. Similarly, F. Medley and S. Horne (1989) found that songs play a vital role in improving speech fluency. Their research showed that musical repetition enables students to pronounce words more clearly and connect them smoothly in speech, thereby fostering continuous and accurate verbal production. J. B. Gilbert (1994) analyzed the phonetic influence of music in teaching English pronunciation. He argued that pronunciation learning is largely dependent on the understanding and practical application of phonetic concepts, and that songs significantly contribute to improving pronunciation. The repetitive phrases and rhythmic structures found in songs help learners produce sounds more naturally and accurately, while rhythm and stress patterns make pronunciation more authentic and spontaneous. In a similar way, Lems

(2005) underlined the importance of music in enhancing speaking and listening skills in English learning. She asserted that music supports the natural process of acquiring language by reinforcing repetition and auditory memory, which accelerate the development of oral skills. Among Uzbek researchers, Abdullayeva (2008) emphasized that music and songs substantially aid in improving English pronunciation. Likewise, Toshpulatov (2001), through his research conducted in Uzbekistan, demonstrated the positive impact of musical tools on pronunciation development. Hasanova (2020) also highlighted in her study that songs are powerful instruments for increasing students' speech activity and engagement during lessons. She noted that music can effectively enhance motivation and stimulate learners' communicative participation in the classroom. In addition, these studies indicate that the integration of music and songs in EFL instruction not only strengthens linguistic competencies but also fosters learners' positive attitudes toward language learning. However, from a methodological perspective, there remains a need for well-defined approaches to accurately assess the effectiveness of music-based tools in classroom practice. Music and songs serve as valuable tools in improving EFL learners' pronunciation, enhancing fluency, stimulating speech activity, and increasing motivation and engagement. Each of these aspects plays a crucial role in the language learning process and will be discussed in detail below.

I. Improving Pronunciation

The intonation, stress patterns, and sounds present in songs significantly contribute to the development of learners' pronunciation skills. Through repeated singing and imitation, learners practice target sounds multiple times, striving to reproduce the song as naturally as possible. The influence of music and songs on pronunciation largely depends on their phonetic and rhythmic components. The stress, intonation, and repetition of sounds within songs help learners gain a deeper understanding of the phonetic features of English. Several techniques can be effectively used to improve pronunciation through songs:

Observing rhythm and stress: Learners enhance their pronunciation by incorporating the stress and rhythm patterns from songs into their own speech.

Practicing accurate articulation: Special exercises are designed to help students repeat and master complex sounds that appear in the lyrics.

Repetitive listening and singing: Listening to a song multiple times and singing along enables learners to produce speech more naturally and clearly.

II. Enhancing Speech Fluency

Due to the song lyrics are rhythmic and repetitive, they help learners develop the ability to speak smoothly and continuously. Speech fluency refers to the capacity to produce words clearly and rapidly without interruptions. The rhythmic nature of songs supports this process by promoting a steady flow of speech. Repetition and rhythm teach learners how to connect words seamlessly, making their spoken language more natural and spontaneous.

III. Stimulating Speech Activity

Participating in singing activities encourages learners to become more active in communication and provides them with opportunities for self-expression. Speech activity can be defined as a learner's readiness to speak independently, share opinions, and participate in dialogues or discussions. Through songs, learners become more confident and expressive, as music reduces anxiety and fosters a positive learning environment. As Murphey (1992) emphasizes, music does not intimidate learners; rather, it motivates them to communicate and engage more freely. Overall, the integration of music and songs in EFL instruction not only develops linguistic competence but also creates an enjoyable and psychologically supportive atmosphere that enhances students' motivation, participation, and communicative performance.

IV. Increasing Motivation and Interest

Music makes the learning process more engaging and interactive, thereby strengthening learners' motivation and enthusiasm for studying a foreign language.

The use of music and songs in language teaching can be implemented through several practical techniques:

1) Learning and Repetition of Song Lyrics

Students read and analyze song lyrics together during the lesson and then perform pronunciation and repetition exercises. This activity helps learners internalize correct pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation patterns.

2) Singing Along with Songs

Learners listen to a selected song and sing along with it. This technique effectively improves rhythm, stress, and intonation, while also promoting a sense of confidence and enjoyment in language practice.

3) Speaking Activities

Conducting discussions and question–answer sessions based on the theme of the song helps increase students' verbal activity. Learners are encouraged to use new words and expressions from the lyrics in spontaneous speech, which supports active communication.

4) Creative Tasks

Students enhance their speaking skills by engaging in creative activities such as writing their own song lyrics or performing short role plays based on familiar songs. These tasks stimulate imagination, encourage self-expression, and reinforce language fluency.

This study explored the effectiveness of using music and songs to develop pronunciation, fluency, and speech activity among EFL learners.

Research Design and Methods

The study involved 30 EFL learners aged 10–11 who were middle school students studying English as a foreign language.

Research Methods:

Experimental Lessons: An eight-week instructional program was implemented, where songs and musical activities were integrated to enhance pronunciation and fluency.

Pre-Test and Post-Test: Students' pronunciation and fluency levels were measured before and after the intervention using specific language performance tests.

Observation: Learners' speech activity and engagement with musical materials were observed throughout the lessons.

Questionnaires: Students' attitudes toward music-based learning and their motivation levels were gathered through structured surveys.

Data Analysis: The test results were analyzed quantitatively to determine measurable changes in learners' speaking abilities. Observation and questionnaire data were examined qualitatively to evaluate students' responses and to assess the overall impact of music and songs on the language learning process. The findings from these analyses provided valuable insights into how musical elements can effectively enhance linguistic development, increase learner motivation, and create a more dynamic and enjoyable EFL learning environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed significant improvements in the pronunciation, fluency, and speech activity of the students in the experimental group. A comparison of the pre-test and post-test results showed that pronunciation accuracy increased by an average of 15%, while speech fluency improved by approximately 20%. These outcomes confirm that the regular use of music and songs in the language learning process can be highly effective in enhancing learners' oral performance. According to the questionnaire results, 85% of students reported that the inclusion of music and songs made the lessons more engaging and contributed positively to their pronunciation development. Observational data also indicated that students became more active participants in classroom interactions and demonstrated greater self-confidence during speaking activities.

The table below presents the average scores of students' pre-test and post-test results:

Indicator	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Improvement
Pronunciation Accuracy	65	80	15
Speech Fluency	60	80	20
Interest	60	85	15
Self-Confidence	55	85	25

The results clearly demonstrate that incorporating music and songs into EFL instruction effectively supports the development of pronunciation and speaking skills. These findings are consistent with the studies of T. Murphey, F. Medley and S. Horne, and K. Lems, who also highlighted the positive role of musical elements in language acquisition.

The observed improvement in pronunciation can be attributed to the rhythmic and stress-based structure of music, which helps learners internalize the phonetic features of English sounds more accurately. The increase in fluency is explained by the repetitive and rhythmic nature of songs, which train students to produce words smoothly, in proper rhythm, and without hesitation. The enhancement of speech activity was achieved by encouraging students' participation in classroom discussions and motivating them to express their ideas freely. Music created a supportive and anxiety-free learning environment that fostered confidence and active engagement. However, it is important to note that the effectiveness of music-based learning may vary among students, as individual learning styles and abilities differ. Therefore, teachers should adapt these techniques according to learners' individual needs and provide differentiated instruction when necessary. For future practice, it is recommended

to integrate interactive technologies and develop personalized learning materials to further enhance the effectiveness of music and songs in EFL teaching. Such innovations can make language learning more dynamic, enjoyable, and tailored to each learner's unique linguistic development.

CONCLUSION

This study confirmed the effectiveness of using music and songs to develop EFL learners' pronunciation, speech fluency, and verbal activity. The findings demonstrated that music and songs not only make the language learning process more engaging and interactive but also serve as an important tool for improving pronunciation accuracy and speech fluency. Significant improvement in pronunciation and speaking skills was observed among students in the experimental group. Moreover, learners showed increased speech activity and higher interest in lessons, which in turn enhanced their motivation to learn the language. Based on the results, it is recommended to integrate music and songs more widely into EFL lessons, create didactic materials tailored to learners' individual needs, and apply interactive technologies. These methods make the language learning process more effective and enjoyable while facilitating faster and higher-quality development of students' language skills.

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