

## Pop Music Indeed Aids Teachers to Teach English to English Foreign Language Students

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**Abstract:** *The use of music in foreign language learning is quite powerful because it helps to reduce the affective filter in students. Therefore, music indeed aids in the acquisition of languages. In terms of education, not all teachers use music in the classrooms for different reasons such as the time, the curriculum, or the deficiency of adequate technology. This research project aimed to determine the influence of American pop music to foster English language acquisition in the first and second international baccalaureate (IB) students at Angel Polibio Chaves School from Guaranda city. This research needed a survey, a pre and a posttest. The survey helped to confirm that students like to learn English by means of pop music. Both the pre and posttest were helpful to measure how much students could improve their English language. For the treatment, it was assigned two groups the experimental and control group, and only the experimental received an intervention based on ten American pop songs. These students worked with attractive worksheets to reinforce the language by emphasizing the before, during and after the song activities. The study used a quali-quantitative research design along with the quasi-experimental Based on the final outcomes, the recommendation for this research was to design a handbook proposal that helps learners in the acquisition of English and currently it is available for teachers and students in the school.*

**Keywords:** American Pop Music, English Language Acquisition, Listening Activities, Lyrics, Pop Songs

### Introduction

In the globalized world English is very necessary in many fields of the human lives because it is needed in business, websites, social media, technology, travelling, education, and it is especially important because English is a tool of communication. This, as a foreign language should be taught in a manner that lasts for the whole life. The task of the teachers is pretty challenging when thinking about the acquisition of the language.

The use of music in English as a foreign language classes is very indispensable since it allows learners to be involved in the language in a natural way. Many researchers highlight the importance of music in learning a foreign language. Even the neuro linguistic approach points out the fact that music helps to learn a language in a durable way. Therefore, music and language need to be linked since the brain is capable to retain better by means of songs. That is why, songs are very essential when learning a foreign language in order to obtain better results. Unquestionably, the teachers have to use the genre that students like so that learning can be more easy and

Based on the previously stated, this current research aimed to give special emphasis to the use of songs in foreign language learners. Pop music is one of the most preferred genre by teenagers, so, why do not using it to teach English? The fact that pop music helps students in the acquisition of English as a foreign language was tested in the international baccalaureate students in Angel Polibio Chaves School from Guaranda city.

## Methodology

This research was driven with the qualitative and quantitative method since there was a relation between the researcher and the object of study with the population. The reasons to use the two methods were the following: qualitative because it dealt with a social problematic in the school reality that needed to be observed. The data obtained was described which meant that this research also required a descriptive examination. Basically, the qualitative research was exploratory which facilitated the researcher to have some insights and explain reasons regarding the stated problem and especially motivated to have ideas. This kind of research is commonly used in studies and it may have some semi-structured techniques with methods such as group discussions, interviews, or observations (DeFranzo, 2011).

Besides the qualitative method, this study was also quantitative, principally because the data obtained exclusively to the purpose of research was carefully analyzed through numerical and mathematical statistics and also tabulated according to the information gotten from the survey. In fact, the researcher eventually answered to the question which appeared at the beginning of this research. Instead, the quantitative research was mainly used to quantify the examined data by showing numerical by means of statistics analysis. Thanks to this type of research, it was easy to quantify behaviors, opinions, attitudes, among other variables by identifying the results after the corresponding collection of data from the whole population. The way to collect the data in terms of a survey, after that it was applied a pretest and finally a post test (DeFranzo, 2011).

In addition to the two mentioned approaches, this study worked with a logical hypothesis because it dealt with a well-known situation in education and especially in the school where it was directed. Additionally, the hypothesis that the researcher had at the beginning was confirmed at the end since music indeed helps to improve the acquisition of the English language. Therefore, after the established study, it was essential an internal analysis of the results obtained in order to know the current situation of English acquiring in the school. Explicitly, this study let both the teachers as well as students know the final outcome in regard to this current research.

Furthermore, this study actually allowed proof that the hypothesis with the advantage that the researcher was in daily communication with the population of this research, who are the students and the teachers. According to the data obtained from the survey and other tools of investigation, the researcher could address some conclusions based on the processed information and also was also capable to give some recommendations to the problem that was researched in the current study.

## Student Survey Results:

### Analysis of Results and Data Interpretation

#### 1. What do you think is the best way to acquire English?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	Fr	PORCENTAJE
by listening to music	15	0,60	60%
by reading books	3	0,12	12%
by watching a movie	1	0,04	4%
by the teacher explanation	2	0,08	8%
by memorizing vocabulary	4	0,16	16%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1: Best way to acquire English

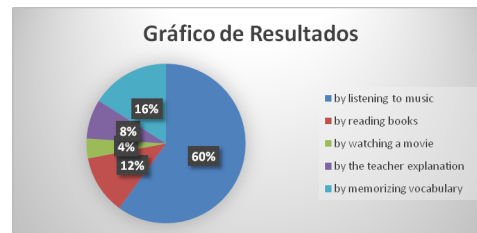


Figure 1

**Analysis and interpretation:** Out of 25 students in total, 60% said that the best way to acquire English is by means of listening to music, 12 of them considered that reading books is a good way to acquire English, 4% said by watching a movie, 8% said through the teacher explanation and 16% of them believed that they acquire English by memorizing vocabulary. Based on this results, it was easy to mention that the majority of students considerer that the best way to acquire English is by listening to music. Needless to say, listening to music can really help students to improve their level of English.

## 2. How often do you listen to English music?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Always	8	0,32	32%
Almost always	3	0,12	12%
Sometimes	13	0,52	52%
Never	1	0,04	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2: Frequency of listening English music

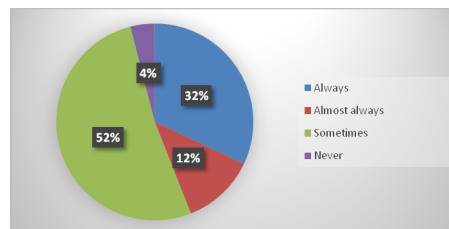


Figure 2

**Analysis and interpretation:** The results undoubtedly display that students always listen to music in a 32%, 12% of students said almost always, 52% of them addressed sometimes and a 4% of students said that they never listen to English music. Then, the 52% of students sometimes listen to English music which means that they like to listen to English music, even though they find it difficult to understand the lyrics. Unlike the previous questions, where is evident that students like to listen to music, the researcher aims to increase the number of English songs that students listen.

## 3. How often does your teacher use English music in class?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	Fr	PORCENTAJE
Always	0	0	0%
Almost always	0	0	0%

Sometimes	8	0,32	32%
Never	17	0,68	68%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3: Frequency of English songs in the class room**



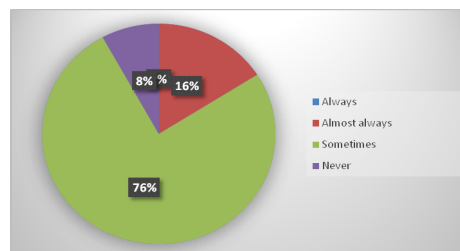
**Figure 3**

**Analysis and interpretation:** Based upon these results, 32% of students stated that the teachers sometimes use songs in the classroom, while the majority of students being the 68% agreed that sings are never used in the English lessons. This fact was actually very worrying because it makes to realize this truth about the absence of songs in the classroom. Therefore, they should really use songs in the classroom because this is a relevant way that students find interesting for learning English. From now on, the suggestion for teachers in general is that they should indeed use English songs in the classroom.

#### 4. When I listen to English music I understand it?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	Fr	PORCENTAJE
Always	0	0	0%
Almost always	4	0,16	16%
Sometimes	19	0,76	76%
Never	2	0,08	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4: Understanding of English music**



**Figure 4**

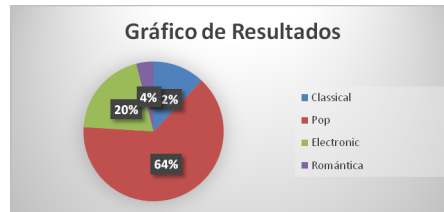
**Analysis and interpretation:** Regarding the understanding of English music 16% of the students considered that they almost always understand the lyrics, while the 76% of them said that sometimes they do. The 8% of them stated that they never understand the English music. Pointing to the highest percentage which directs to the sometimes option is a positive aspect because the goal of this research is to make them improve their listening skill by means of music and they really underrated the songs.

#### 5. What kind of English music do you like?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
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Classical	3	0,12	12%
Pop	16	0,64	64%
Electronic	5	0,20	20%
Romantic	1	0,04	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 5: Kind of music students like to listen**



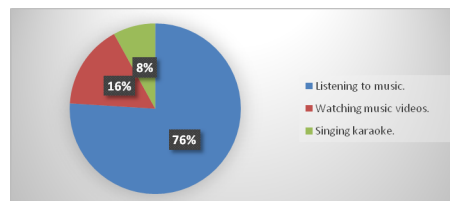
**Figure 5**

**Analysis and interpretation:** The results revealed in this question make the researcher very blissful since the majority of the students showed a great interest and pleasantness for pop music with a 64% which is the highest percentage. Whereas the 12% tend to like the classical music, the 20% go for the electronic music and the 4% for the romantic music. This outcome confirmed the researcher's assumption at the beginning of the research because most of the time students listen to this genre.

#### 6. Do you enjoy...?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Listening to music?	19	0,76	76%
Watching music videos?	4	0,16	16%
Singing karaoke?	2	0,08	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6: Preference to learn English**



**Figure 6**

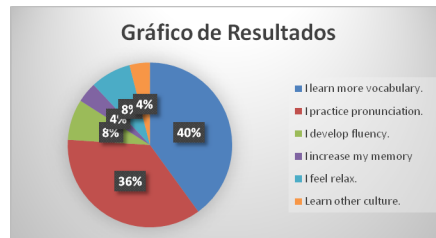
**Analysis and interpretation:** By identifying this inquest, the results showed that 76% of the students enjoy listening to music, while the 16% prefer watching videos and just an 8% opt for singing karaoke. As a matter of fact students certainly enjoy listening to music which means that they can truly increase their level of English by listening to songs especially the ones they like to listen.

#### 7. What are the benefits to use music to learn English?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
I learn more vocabulary.	10	0,40	40%
I practice pronunciation.	9	0,36	36%
I develop fluency.	2	0,08	8%

I increase my memory	1	0,04	4%
I feel relax.	2	0,08	8%
Learn other culture.	1	0,04	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 7: Benefits to use music to learn English**



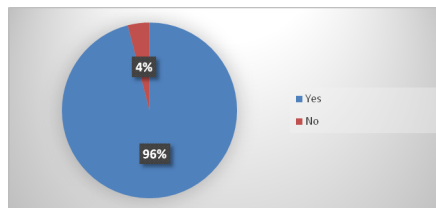
**Figure 7**

**Analysis and interpretation:** This data displayed specifies that 40% of students considered that they can learn more vocabulary when listening to English music, 36% of them stated that they can practice pronunciation, the 8% of them reflected that English music helps them to develop fluency. The other 8% revealed that that feel relax, while the 4% of students considered that English music helps to increase their memory and the other 4% think that they can learn another culture. Undoubtedly, listening to English music really meets the learner's expectations about learning English language by means music.

#### 8. Do you think music would help you to learn English easier?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Yes	24	0,96	96%
No	1	0,04	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8: Music helps to learn English**



**Figure 8**

**Analysis and interpretation:** The outcomes revealed above obviously demonstrated that music indeed supports students to learn English, that is why the 96% of students said yes, just the 4% of them did not agree with this statement by answering no. This is a strong and helpful part in teaching since music can be used to teach English. In fact, music is now considered a pedagogic strategy to use in the classroom.

#### 9. Would you like to learn English by pop music?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Yes	22	0,88	88%
No	3	0,12	12%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 9: Learning English using pop music**





**Figure 9**

**Analysis and interpretation:** Based on this data, 88% of the students pointed out that they would like to learn English by listening to pop music, whereas the 12% of them said no. Needless to say, students are likely to learn and increase their level of English by listening to pop music. Then, the teachers must provide a variety of activities using pop music. However, it is necessary to point out that the teachers should be very careful when choosing the write songs which need to have a purpose of study.

#### 10. What things would you like to learn in an English song?

ALTERNATIVA	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Expressions.	7	0,28	28%
Grammar	3	0,12	12%
Cultural facts	1	0,04	4%
Authors' bibliography	0	0	0%
Message of song	14	0,56	56%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 10: Topics to learn in English songs**



**Figure 10**

**Analysis and interpretation:** According to this data, 28% of the students considered that they can learn expressions when learning to English songs, 12% of them said that they can learn grammar, the 4% of them stated that they can learn cultural facts, they majority of them meaning the 56% reflected that they can learn the message of the song. In general, it is said that English songs essentially aid to learn different aspects of the language such as grammar, vocabulary, expressions and the message of the song.

#### Teacher Survey Results:

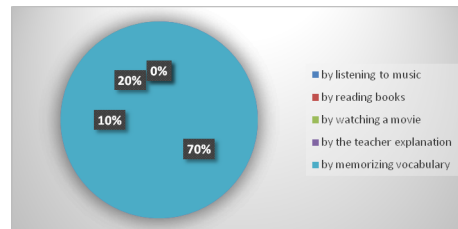
##### Analysis of Results and Data Interpretation

#### 1. What do you think is the best way to motivate students to learn English?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	fr	PORCENTAJE
by listening to music	7	0,7	70%
by reading books	1	0,1	10%
by watching a movie	2	0,2	20%
by the teacher explanation	0	0	0

By memorizing vocabulary	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 11: Best way to motivate students**



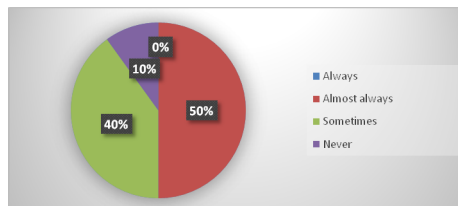
**Figure 11**

**Analysis and interpretation:** Indisputably 70% of the teachers agree that the best way to motivate students to learn English is by means of music. Just the 10% which means one teacher considers that reading books can motivate students. The 20% of teachers reveals that matching a movie can be a good motivator for teaching English to students. By the previously mentioned it is certain to mention that teachers know that listening to English songs undeniably benefit the learning of English. That is why it is necessary to suggest teachers to always use song at least one in a quimester.

## 2. How often do you use English music in your class?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Always	0		0
Almost always	5	0,5	50%
Sometimes	4	0,4	40%
Never	1	0,1	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 12: Frequency of using English songs in the class**



**Figure 12**

**Analysis and interpretation:** It was surprising to find out these results since they are the opposite to what students said. According to the data, 50% of teachers use English songs in the classroom almost always. 40% of them said that sometimes and just the 10% of them said that they never use songs in the classroom. It makes the researcher think that teachers actually know the importance of using songs in the class room; however, they did not want to reveal the current situation of the lack of time to prepare lesson plans based on songs. In the same question, the students answered mostly that the teachers do not use songs in the class that is why this questions was kind of controversial.

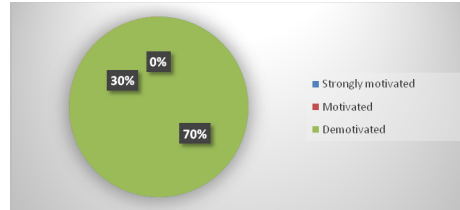
## 3. How motivated do students feel when they listen to English songs?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	Fr	PORCENTAJE
Strongly motivated	7	0,7	70%
Motivated	3	0,3	30%
Demotivated	0	0	0%



TOTAL	10	1,00	100%
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**Table 13: Motivation when students listen to English songs**



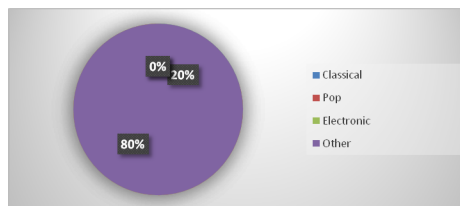
**Figure 13**

**Analysis and interpretation:** Referring to the motivation, teachers did agree that students feel strongly motivated when using music in the class room; it was reflected with a 70%. The 30% of teachers answered the option motivated. Therefore, this is extremely important to consider when teaching a foreign language which becomes an easy and funny task by means of music.

#### 4. What kind of English music do you think students like?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	fr	PORCENTAJE
Classical	2	2,0	20%
Pop	8	8,0	80%
Electronic	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 14: Kind of music students like**



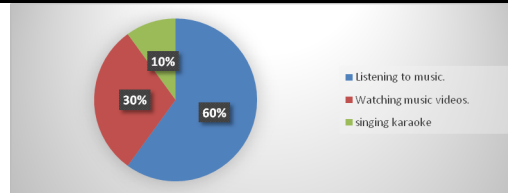
**Figure 14**

**Analysis and interpretation:** From the options provided in the survey, teachers consider that students are more likely to like pop music; it was reflected with an 80%. The 20% of teachers considered that students like classical music. It also called the attention of the researcher because classical music should be taken into account in teaching a foreign language. Due to the fact that classical music help to improve the memory and concentration, teachers need to play this kind of music when students are reading because it is say that classical music improved their comprehension. Then, teachers need to try this option to.

#### 5. Do your students enjoy?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Listening to music.	6	0,6	60%
Watching music videos.	3	0,3	30%
singing karaoke	1	0,1	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 15: What students enjoy**



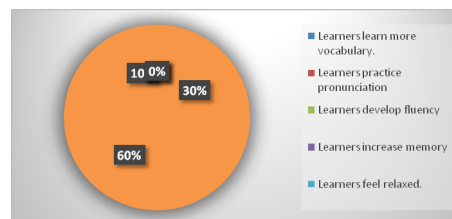
**Figure 15**

**Analysis and interpretation:** Denoting what students enjoy the most, listening to music is the first mentioned option with a 60% of answers. Almost similar to the previous option, the second one about watching to musical videos got also a good percentage reflecting in a 30%. The option singing karaoke had a 10% of answers. It means that music is very powerful when it comes to learning a language. Hence, the two first options for mentioning the three ones must be considered when using music in the classroom because they match one another. That is why in the current study, the three of them were linked.

#### 6. What are the benefits to use music in class?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Learners learn more vocabulary.	3	0,3	30%
Learners practice pronunciation	6	0,6	60%
Learners develop fluency	1	0,1	10%
Learners increase memory	0	0	0
Learners feel relaxed.	0	0	0
Learners know other culture.	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 16: Benefits to use music in class**



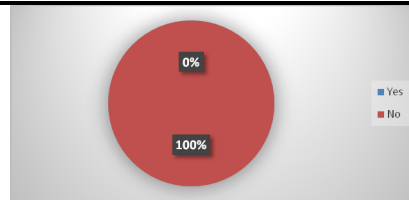
**Figure 16**

**Analysis and interpretation:** It is important to know the benefits of using music, so the 30% of teachers considered that music benefits students by learning more vocabulary. Though, the 60% of them highlighted that music helps to improve and practice pronunciation. Only the 10% of teachers measured that is helps to develop fluency. Once again, the benefits of using music in the classroom are very high because whether or not students will eventually learn something with the songs.

#### 7. Do you think music would help students to learn English easier?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Yes	10	1,00	100%
No	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 17: music helps to learn English**



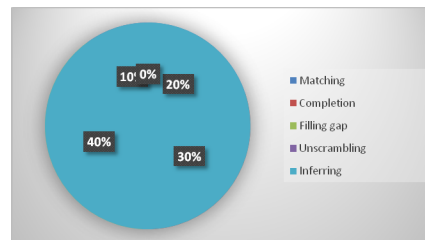
**Figure 17**

**Analysis and interpretation:** Once analyzed the previous questions, it was assumable that teachers will consider that music would help students to learn English. Then, the 100% of teachers manifested that absolutely music indeed helps to learn English easier.

#### 8. What kind of activities do you use with songs?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Matching	2	0,2	20%
Completion	3	0.3	30%
Filling gap	4	0.4	40%
Unscrambling	1	0,1	10%
Inferring	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 18: Activities with songs**



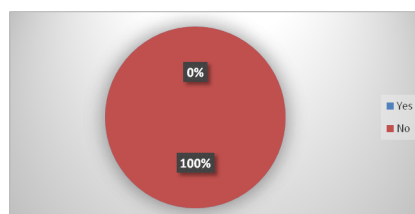
**Figure 18**

**Analysis and interpretation:** The kind of activities that are developed with songs are very important, that is why 20% of teachers work basically with matching activities. The 30% of them worked mainly with completion. The 40% work with filling gap activity and the 10% said that they use unscrambling activity with songs. In the developing of the study, the researcher pointed that filling gap is the common and most popular activity with songs and this statement was conformed here in this question because the majority of teachers focus on filling gaps activity.

#### 9. Do you think students could learn more English by pop music?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Yes	10	0,1	100%
No	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 19: Learning English by pop music**



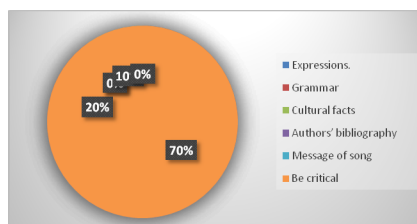
**Figure 19**

**Analysis and interpretation:** As it can be noticed, the positive attitude from teachers towards pop music is very clear. Then, the 100% of them think do think that students are capable to learn more English by means of pop music.

#### 10. What things could you work with an English song?

OPTIONS	FRECUENCIA	fr.	PORCENTAJE
Expressions	7	0,7	70%
Grammar	2	0,2	20%
Cultural facts	0	0	0
Authors' bibliography	0	0	0
Message of song	1	0,1	10%
Be critical	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 20: 1Aspects to workwith English songs**



**Figure 20**

**Analysis and interpretation:** The teachers have different perceptions about the aspects to work with songs. However, 70% of teachers revealed that they can teach expression by means of music. 20% of them said that they can teach grammar and 10% considered that they can reflect on the message of the song.

#### Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

This research worked with the students who are part of the Diploma Program known as the international baccalaureate. It is a two year program then, the first international baccalaureate was the experimental group with 13 students and the second international baccalaureate was the control group with 12 students. The first group of students is in the B1.1 and the students in the second baccalaureate in the B1.2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for the languages. They were given the Preliminary English Test (PET) for checking the listening activities.

#### Conclusions

Once analyzed the gathered data, it is important to address the following conclusions:

- The listening skill is not effectively being developed in the school since the majority of English teachers do not frequently use songs in the classroom. Even though, they know the importance of the use of songs in order to foster the process of learning a foreign language. This is mainly due to the curriculum which emphasizes on content rather than learning and the lack of appropriate technology.
- The students indeed like learning English by means of songs, and yet, the majority of them do not understand the lyrics and message of the song. They definitely like the rhythm and most of the time they feel anxious for not understanding what the lyrics says and being capable to sing it. Therefore, the most suitable listening activities were researched for helping them to understand

the songs. By using songs, students can indeed learn any aspect of the English language and eventually they can use the language for communicating.

- Once the listening activities based on American pop music were assessed, it is easy to conclude that music actually helps to increase the level of English in the students. It is important to highlight that the material to be used with songs must be likable for learners so they enjoy doing the song activities. In this case, the application of worksheets providing students a variety of activities, not just the common gap fill was really motivated to the pupils.
- American pop music indeed influences the English language acquisition since the students demonstrated that they increase their knowledge of English such as vocabulary, grammar, idioms, colloquial expressions, etc. Then, music, especially students' favorite songs must be used in the classroom for helping them to acquire English
- The low level of English in the students in the baccalaureate level remains low students who opt for the International Baccalaureate program. Therefore, a method that suits their taste such as the music needs to be used frequently in order to help them acquire the English language. The majority of students demonstrated that they like to learn English through songs, henceforth, a didactic resource is proposed to boost the level of English in the students.

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