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**ABSTRACT** 

Teaching English as a Foreign Language is a fundamental aspect in

education. In order to acquire this important language, we need to master the

four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening is, however, one of

the most important skills to develop when learning a language, since in our daily

life, we listen more than what we write, read or speak. We should thus start

developing the listening skill in our students intensively.

Songs are effective tools to develop the listening skill. Therefore, teachers

have to consider songs as a highly motivating teaching resource, since they

have the power of enriching and activating our English language classes.

Students, especially teenagers, enjoy learning English by means of songs

because they are catchy, authentic and make learning easier.

The use of songs in EFL classrooms will help students to develop their

listening skill, and thus to enhance their communicative abilities. The songs and

activities proposed in this monograph can be adapted if teacher requires to do

so, or they can be used exactly the way they have been presented.

**KEY WORDS:** 

Listening skill songs teenagers EFL classroom

**AUTORAS:** 

Magaly Samaniego Mayra Zúñiga

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## TEMA:

"Using Songs to Develop the Listening Skill at an Intermediate Level, in an EFL Classroom"

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## **AUTHORSHIP**

# ALL THE CONTENT OF THIS MONOGRAPH IS THE EXCLUSIVE RESPONSIBILITY OF ITS AUTHORS

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I want to dedicate this monograph to my Lord God, who has given me faith, health and hope to finish this work. To my dear parents, Manuel and Maria, who have given me all their love and support to finish my career. To my husband, Alexander, and my daughter, Helen, for their patience, love and comprehension.

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This monograph is dedicated to God who has given me life and strength to do this work. Also, this work is dedicated to my best friend, my dad, who always supported me with his wise advice and his patience. To my daughter, Tiffany, and my family, who with their words of encouragement, motivated me in my career. Finally, I want to thank my friend, Magaly, who supported and understood me.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Listening is a fundamental part of language acquisition, since it allows learners to be able to discriminate sounds, thus leading them to be effective listeners. Although most people, even teachers, give great importance to speaking, since they believe that this skill is the most accurate when a person wants to communicate, listening is, in truth, as important as speaking, and it should be practiced in and out the classroom in an effective way.

One effective and attractive way to teach our students to develop their listening skill is by means of using songs in the classroom. Songs help teachers to create a fun and relaxing environment to work with their students, to break the daily routine, and to make the English learning easier. Moreover, songs are a great tool for teaching, since in one single song we can find a large number of grammar structures, useful expressions, social issues, etc, which students, especially teenagers, can deal with in a real and authentic context.

This research work "Using Songs to Develop the Listening Skill at an intermediate level, in an EFL classroom", is divided into three chapters. The first chapter contains important information about the Listening skill, the process and the importance for the acquisition of English as a foreign language, and what kinds of listening activities we can do in the classroom. In the second chapter, there are some explanations about songs, their importance, and their role in an EFL class. Also, this chapter mentions how to use songs appropriately, and the reasons to introduce them in an EFL classroom.

In the third chapter, there are some activities designed to develop the listening skill, in which we want to emphasize that the use of songs in the classroom is an excellent tool that teachers must incorporate in the English teaching-learning process.

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#### **CHAPTER I**

#### THE LISTENING SKILL

### 1.1 What is listening?

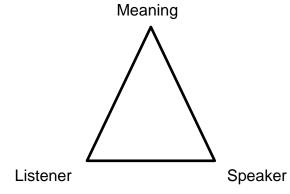
According to the International Listening Association (www.listen.org), listening is the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages. Likewise, Michael Purdy, in his book Listening in everyday life: a personal and professional approach (1997), offers a slightly expanded definition that includes memory: "Listening is the active and dynamic process of attending, perceiving, interpreting, remembering, and responding to the expressed (verbal and nonverbal) needs, concerns, and information offered by other human beings."

As listening has become an important and essential part in our communication with others and one of the most important skills because of its great impact on learning, we consider this skill as the most important in order to acquire a foreign language, since the purpose of listening is not only hearing words, but it is an active process where students receive information, understand it, and respond to it. Therefore, it is necessary to understand that,

"The act of listening requires not just hearing but also thinking; it as well requires a good deal of interest and information that both speaker and listener must have in common. Speaking and listening entail three components: the speaker, the listener, and the meaning to be shared; speaker, listener, and meaning from a unique triangle" (King 177).

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Source: Magaly Samaniego and Mayra Zuniga.

In order to have a good communication, we have to consider that the speaker is as important as the listener, and both have the same level of language knowledge to understand and share information, and interact with others.

Michael Purdy and Deborah Borisoff, in their book *Listening in everyday life:* a personal and professional approach (1997), report that there are seven components of effective listening:

- Want to listen
- Focus your attention
- Be aware (perceptive) as you listen
- Keep in mind that the listening process involves interpretation (including both verbal and nonverbal cues)
- Consciously work to remember what you hear
- Make a habit of responding with feedback
- Care about the relationships as you listen (8-9).

Regarding to components, it is important that the listener has the desire to listen first, and then he/she starts focusing his/her attention in what the speaker says in order to have a good perception of the meaning. This means that the

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listener is able to interpret and understand the message and the context, and in this way the listener starts working on what she/he has already heard. Also, the listener has to have an open mind in order to receive other people's interpretations in a good way.

Listening is one of the most important language skills through which all people acquire a basis for their education, their information, and their ideas. For that reason, it is very important to teach our students to listen effectively and critically. Speaking and listening are active skills, and sometimes listening could be more difficult.

In her research work, *The use of music in teaching English* (2007), Veronica Rosová, cites John McDowell and Christopher Hart who say that "listening is a complex skill which operates at various levels. It is a skill which involves a series of different strategies and micro-skills that we use at different times for different purposes." They describe these strategies and micro-skills as follows.

- When we listen, we use information we already have about the topic being spoken about. The more we know, the less intensively we have to listen to.
- We use the information we already have about the topic, and about how the language works, to anticipate and predict what is coming.
- We normally listen selectively rather than listening to every word. We listen for key words and expressions that give us clues to meaning and not to every single word as many learners tend to do.
- As we listen for and select information, we store it in short-term memory, so that we can reinterpret it in the light of what is to come. We then store it in long-term memory, in the form of messages, rather than in actual words (23).

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We have experienced that songs are a good example for this point, since most of our students enjoy learning through music. In many cases, teacher can introduce songs that students already know in order to reinforce grammatical structures, vocabulary, pronunciation or whatever that need being reviewed again. As many songs result very attractive for us, it's easy to keep them in our mind and remember them for a long time or even forever.

# 1.2 The listening process

According to Professor John Field, in his article on listening, *The changing face of listening* (2002), the listening process can be divided into three stages:

- 1) Pre-listening (purpose must be given at this stage)
- 2) During listening
- 3) Post-listening (speaking) (qtd. in Richards & Renadya 242)

# 1.2.1 Pre-listening

In the research work, *Listening Activities*, the authors Ash Pekin, Janset Müge Altay and Didem Baytan point out that in the pre-listening phase, students build their background knowledge before listening. Also, teachers need to understand that all students have different backgrounds, beliefs, attitudes, and biases, so all these factors could interfere in their comprehension. Before listening, students need assistance to activate what they already know about a topic. Pre-listening activities are required to establish what is already known about the topic, to build necessary background, and to set purposes for listening (5).

They also report that there are several strategies that students and their teachers can use to prepare for listening:

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- Activate existing knowledge. It encourages students to talk about what they know.
- 2) Build prior knowledge: Teachers can provide the appropriate background information, including information about the topic, the purpose, and the concepts and vocabulary of the presentation.
- 3) Review standards for listening: The teacher can give some tips to stress the importance of the audience's role in a listening situation.
- 4) Establish purpose: Students have to be encouraged to set which is their purpose for listening.
- 5) Use a listening guide: A listening guide can include an overview of the presentation, its main ideas, and some questions about the presentation (7).

Therefore, we consider that introducing listening activities becomes a fundamental tool in an EFL classroom, since the teacher has to engage his/her students in a pre-listening activity. At this point, the teacher establishes a purpose for the listening activity and students are encouraged to discuss and think about the topic they already know. Moreover, by means of this activity, the teacher provides his/her students the necessary background so that all students have the same knowledge and are able to understand the topic.

# 1.2.2 During listening

According to Charles Temple & Jean Wallace Gillet, in their book *Language Arts: Learning processes and teaching practices* (1989), there are several things students can be encouraged to do during listening:

"They can run a mental commentary on it; they can doubt it, talk back to it, or extend it. They can rehearse it in order to remember it; that is, they repeat interesting points back to themselves. They can formulate questions to ask the speaker ... jot down key words or key phrases ... They can wonder if what they

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are listening to is true, or whether the speaker is revealing personal feelings rather than objective assessments" (55).

It means that the students are able to do many exercises while listening. The teacher has to get students involved in all of these exercises in an effective way. During this stage, it is important that the teacher does the listening task itself, and this task should involve the listener in getting information and doing something with it immediately. In the same way, Ash Pekin, Janset Müge Altay and Didem Baytan, in their research work *Listening Activities*, point out that the effective listeners are able to do the following:

- Connect: make connections with people, places, situations, and ideas they know.
- ❖ Find meaning: determine what the speaker is saying about people, places, and ideas.
- Question: pay attention to those words and ideas that are unclear.
- ❖ Make and confirm predictions: try to determine what will be said next.
- Make inferences: determine speaker's intent by "listening between the lines"; infer what the speaker does not actually say.
- ❖ Reflect and evaluate: respond to what has been heard and pass judgement (8).

A good idea to help students while listening is to encourage them to use their imagination with some aids that the teacher can use in and out the classroom, such us pictures, images, details, real objects and descriptive words, so students are able to remember what they hear.

This means that we, teachers, encourage our students to be open, so that they can interpret and understand messages. We want them to be especially ready to receive them with a good attitude, since listening is becoming a global

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skill, inasmuch as in one way or another we can develop the listening skill unconsciously through listening to our parents, friends, teachers, songs, etc.

#### 1.2.3 Post Listening

According to Paul Davies and Eric Pearse, in their book *Success in English teaching* (2000), the post-listening stage is to help the learners connect what they have heard with their own ideas and experiences, just as we often do in real life. It also allows them to move easily from listening to another language skill (78).

In this last stage, students need to be engaged in a post listening activity. It means that the students have to act on what they have already heard and to extend their thinking. Through post-listening, students can develop language activities such as participating in role plays, discussing a topic, giving their own ideas, etc. Therefore, teachers should encourage students to practice such activities in and out the classroom.

In the research work, *Listening Activities*, the authors Ash Pekin, Janset Müge Altay and Didem Baytan cite Julius Hook and William Evans who give many examples of well-planned post listening activities:

- ✓ They suggest that the post-mortem is a very useful device. Students should talk about what the speaker said, question statements of opinion, amplify certain remarks, and identify parallel incidents from life and literature.
- ✓ Students can review their notes, and share or add information about what they can't remember.
- ✓ Students can integrate listening with the other language skills.
- ✓ Students are able to practice out of the class (15).

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# 1.3 The Characteristics of Listening

According to Professor Mac Yin Mee, in her research work *Teaching Listening-An overview*, cites Brubridge who listed six characteristics of listening and their implications for teaching listening.

- Spoken language is different from written language. Spoken language is not organized, does not consist of complete sentences and is full of interruptions, hesitations and repetition and does not necessarily contain a lot of information. Hence students should be exposed to authentic speech instead of artificial dialogue or written speech which is read.
- ➤ The listener is usually helped by visual information which facilitates understanding. We can see the speaker and his expressions. Therefore, a lot of visuals (slides, maps. photographs etc) should be used or native speakers could be invited to class.
- Listeners would have "expectations" about how a conversation might go, what they are going to hear and what their interlocutor is going to say. The implication is that there should be pre-listening activities to prepare students for what they will hear.
- ➤ Listeners have contextual knowledge about the speaker and the situation. Thus, pre-listening activities should ensure that students are privy to contextual knowledge.
- People listen for a purpose and they have a specific reason for listening. Hence it is vital that students are asked to listen for something during their while-listening exercises.
- Often spoken language is simply for social interaction and not for exchange of ideas or information. Therefore students should not be asked to listen for facts all the time. Students should be encouraged to listen for gestures, attitudes and feelings too.

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It means that listening must not be taught as a simple skill but there must be a purpose to do it, and it is the teacher who should encourage students to establish what their purpose of listening is. On the other hand, we, teachers, should not only use a CD and a recording to practice listening, but also we should use visual aids, pictures, realia, etc., so that the students are able to interpret and understand the message and the content of what they are listening, and of course, students have to be motivated and engaged in pre, during and post listening with the only purpose of using the language out of the classroom.

# 1.4 Types of Listening

Mac Yin Mee, a professor at the University of Malaya, in her research work *Teaching Listening - An Overview,* cites Allen, R.V. (1976) who categorizes the types of listening as:

- 1. Simple listening hearing sounds without any particular meaning to the sounds.
- 2. Discriminative listening listening to hear and identify the likenesses and differences in sounds.
- 3. Listening for information.
- 4. Listening to organize ideas.
- 5. Listening for main points.
- 6. Listening for varied points of view.
- 7. Critical listening.
- 8. Creative listening.

According to the purpose and what teachers want to achieve in their classes, these types of listening can be applied. For instance, teacher can work with a song about the parts of the body, and when students listen to this song, they have to recognize what parts of the body the song mentions. In this song

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students will work with listening for information. Also, Mac Yin Mee, a professor of the University of Malaya in her research work cites Burns. and Lowe. (1966), who state three types of listening:

- Appreciational: (enjoying the development of a story; listening for pleasing rhythm; reacting to the mood set by the author);
- ii. Informational listening for the answer to a specific question; listening to follow directions; following sequence; listening for main ideas);
- iii. Critical (discriminating between fact and opinion; detecting prejudice and bias; sensing the speaker's purpose.

With these types of listening, teachers can choose which is better to develop in their class, depending on the students' needs. If the teacher chooses appreciational type, students will work with a pleasant listening where they will be able to identify what the author expresses. In the informational listening students will work with specific information such as information questions, listening for central ideas, etc. Finally, with critical listening, students will be able to express their own opinions.

Finally, Michael Rost, in his book, *Listening Action* (1991), defines listening "in terms of the necessary components", and states that listening consists of the following:

- discriminating between sounds
- recognizing words
- identifying grammatical groupings of words
- identifying 'pragmatic units' expressions and sets of utterances which function as whole units to create meaning
- connecting linguistic cues to paralinguistic cues (intonation, stress) and to non-linguistic cues (gestures) in order to construct meaning.

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• using background knowledge and context to predict and then to confirm meaning

recalling important words and ideas (4).

And he adds that "successful listening involves an integration of these components skills".

We as teachers have to realize that all of these components are important; we have to work with them in order to create an effective students' learning process. We think that they are essential in the listening activities because all of them represent an important part of the listening process.

# 1.5 The importance of Listening for the acquisition of a Foreign Language

We consider listening is an important and fundamental part in the process of acquiring a language, since we spend much time listening than speaking, reading or writing. Listening must be developed efficiently in order to be able to master the English language.

According to Professors, Jan Hulstijn and Vincent van Heuven, in their research work, *Developing second-language listening comprehension: Effects of training lower-order skills versus higher-order strategy* (2003), cite Michael Rost, who points out that:

"One learns to understand and speak a language primarily by hearing and imitating native speakers" (15). Thus we think that listening is an important skill in language acquisition, because the first words that we say are the first that we hear. However, when we learn a foreign language, the first thing that we do is to

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study the grammar and syntax, but if we only know the grammar and syntax by itself, it does not mean that we are already able to master the language.

Learning a foreign language requires listening to it, for example, if a nonnative English speaker wants to learn English as a foreign language, he/she will need to listen to that language in order to understand its distinctions. Also, by listening and understanding spoken language, a non-native speaker can increase confidence.

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are also important; however, listening remains the primary form of contact with a language. By listening we are able to understand the finesses about the language that apparently are not by reading or by just studying grammar.

In addition, we can say that listening is very important because it is the most common communicative activity in daily life: "we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read, and five times more than we write." (Morley 82)

The Listening skill is vital for learners of a foreign language because through it they receive information about vocabulary, grammar, word order, and pronunciation, as well as the stress patterns of words, phrases and sentences. Through listening the learner may also register and retain words and phrases that were said by a native speaker or a teacher, and so they know to be acceptable for their own use later on.

Jeremy Harmer describes three main reasons why it is also important to teach students listen to spoken English. "One of the main reasons for getting students to listen to spoken English is to let them hear different varieties and accents – rather than just the voice of their teacher with its own idiosyncrasies.

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In today's world, they need to be exposed not only to one variety of English (British English, for example) but also to varieties such as American English, Australian English, Caribbean English, Indian English or West African English" (97).

# 1.6 The advantages of Listening

EFL students can get a variety of benefits from listening exercises. They can listen to improve their English pronunciation, reading and vocabulary. They can also listen to improve their comprehension of spoken English.

According to the website www.myvccs.org, the advantages of listening are the following:

- Listening is a powerful form of acknowledgement
- Listening creates acceptance
- Listening is the foundation of understanding: it provides a basis for understanding another person, because it encourages the listener to avoid assumptions and find the meaning the speaker is trying to convey.
- Listening encourages openness: Listening demonstrates interest in the speaker and what the speaker has to say.
- Listening builds stronger relationships: Listening creates a desire for cooperation, which makes people feel accepted and understood.
- Listening promotes being heard: People will be more willing to listen to you if you listen to them.
- Listening leads to learning: Listening requires openness to other opinions and ideas, which often encourage personal growth and learning.

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Regarding the advantages of listening, we agree that teachers have to create a good environment, where students feel comfortable and can improve their listening skill.

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#### **CHAPTER II**

#### SONGS

Without a doubt, songs are an essential part of our lives, especially for teenagers who enjoy learning English as a Foreign Language through songs. We, teachers, should choose the right songs in order to create a fun environment for those who are learning the language.

According to Lidia Scaldaferri, a consultant for Pearson Longman, in her article *Using songs in class* (2011), songs are fun and effective tools for teaching and reviewing grammar, vocabulary (including idioms and useful expressions), pronunciation, culture, and social issues. They can also be used to improve listening and reading comprehension, or for purposes other than teaching English. For example, depending on your objective at a given time, you can use songs – or music -- to get your students in the mood for class, that is, get them settled if they are restless, bored, or uninterested (1).

It is important to mention that when we, teachers, want to use songs in an EFL class, students must like these songs, which in addition, must be chosen according to their level of knowledge of the English language. The use of songs in the classroom can become a good teaching method to develop the listening skill, and it can also be a useful tool to learn and improve intonation.

Enfoques Educativos magazine, in its article El uso de la música en la clase de Inglés (2008), by Maria Isabel Merino, states that "a song is a very helpful tool in an English class because in the few lines and lyrics that a song has, there are a large number of grammar structures and speech acts, which can be studied and analyzed by the teacher and almost unconsciously learned by students" (103-104). At this point, we can say that we have introduced new

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topics by means of songs and we have seen how motivated and engaged they are for students, especially for teenagers who love songs. Through songs, students have shown a great interest for learning something new and also because they are going to learn the lyrics of their favorite songs.

In the website *EzineArticles.com*, Professor Larry M. Lynch states that "language teachers can and should use songs as part of their classroom teaching repertoire. Songs contain authentic language, are easily obtainable, provide vocabulary, grammar and cultural aspects, and are fun for the students." They can provide valuable speaking, listening and language practice in and out the classroom. We agree that songs are helpful resources to be applied in an EFL classroom, because they enrich the learning process, and create a pleasant and relaxing atmosphere. Students can therefore learn in a different way and work on their listening skill. In addition, using songs in the classroom help teachers to be creative and make their English classes fun.

# 2.1 Introducing songs into the EFL classroom

It is important that teachers incorporate into their lesson planning some songs to motivate their students to learn a foreign language in a fun and relaxing way. Sometimes the best textbook ends up being monotonous and songs are one of the best ways to give variety to the class.

Another reason is that songs can be played to set a mood in the classroom, that is, if the students are very excited or energized, the teacher can play soothing songs, or if they are bored and uninterested, a more upbeat genre of music can be played to increase their energy.

Moreover, songs are a great tool to improve pronunciation because they make our students show greater interest for understanding what their favorite

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singers or bands say. Students tend to imitate accent, rhythm and intonation, improving their learning.

According to Veronica Rosavá, in her research work, *The use of music in teaching English* (2007), cites the authors Mario Papa and Giuliano Lantorno who give a brief explanation about introducing songs into the classroom.

Recent researches in the field of foreign language teaching have pointed out that students' motivation and interest are among the most important factors for the learning of a foreign language. There are several means to improve the teaching effectiveness and to raise the interest and motivation of the students. Recorded tapes, filmstrips, sound films, songs, comics, newspapers and magazines are all familiar to teachers and students and they have proved to be, in most cases, very effective because they are strongly related to everyday life (7).

Definitely we agree that students' motivation and interest are important and essential factors for the English learning. We, teachers, can help our students to understand and like English, not only by means of a textbook, but also using other helpful resources such us images, pictures, puppets, real objects, gestures and mimes, songs, karaoke, etc. The purpose is to make our students not to forget what they learn every day. Thus they will be able to use the language out the classroom.

# 2.2 Songs as a Teaching Resource

David Nunan, in his book, *El Diseño de Tareas Para la Clase Comunicativa* (1996), states that communicative activities should accomplish the following requirements:

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- Derive input material from authentic sources.
- Introduce students to problem-solving activities.
- Incorporate tasks related to students' real communication needs.
- Integrate the four macro skills.
- Introduce students to the creative use of language. (133)

Songs provide opportunities to carry out all these requirements. Since they are authentic sources, in which students deal with real language, songs can integrate the four macro skills, and therefore teachers can create communicative activities that contribute to the English teaching - learning process.

### 2.2.1 Linguistic activities

According to Professor Maria Teresa Silva, in her research work, *El Uso de Canciones de Música Popular no Sexistas como Recurso Didáctico* (1996), cites Daniel Madrid et al.(1990), who say that there are some linguistic activities that can be carried out with songs. These are the following:

- Phonics Activities: students can distinguish segmental and suprasegmental phonemes, and also compare English and Spanish vowel phonemes.
- 2. Grammatical Activities: students work with "filling gaps" and "tidying up" activities.
- 3. Semantic activities: students can search for synonyms, analyzing semantic fields.
- 4. Translation activities: direct translation of songs. (113)

Moreover, other kinds of activities can be done in an EFL class by means of images, pictures, photographs, etc. The teacher can ask students to predict what may be the subject of the song, to reflect on the content or make an outline

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of the story about the song. As a result, there will be several interpretations of the same song, and students can make comparisons about their interpretations.

Another kind of motivating activities is the use of audio-visual resources, since by means of these resources our students can listen in order to repeat words, phrases, dialogues; to understand different grammatical structures, dialects, useful expressions, etc., and to learn a language. For example, when a teacher wants to present a video clip in the classroom, it is a good idea that first he/she plays the audio without the images in order to not distract the students' attention and later the video can be already presented.

Through songs, students will be able to learn not only the English language, but some cultural aspects because learning a language also leads to know another culture with different values. In this way, they will develop a socio-cultural competence.

# 2.3 The Importance and the Role of Songs in Language Teaching

Undoubtedly, songs have a important place in the classroom, since they have the power of creating a friendly and co-operative atmosphere, so important for language learning. As it is known, songs are part of our lives, and teachers can use them to illustrate topics and themes, to present new vocabulary, to open and close their lessons, add variety, etc.

One of the immediate benefits that songs offer is motivation because the addition of songs as a teaching method is to catch students' attention and produce a more engaged learner. Although music and songs have the advantage to motivate students in the learning process and create an atmosphere of interest in the English learning, it does not mean that we,

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teachers, must use songs in everyday classes, since students could get bored. The matter here is not to abuse of songs but apply them when necessary.

Another benefit is that songs may be attractive and re-usable. Although other recording materials can be useful in an English class, there is no doubt that songs are fun and catchy for most EFL students. Songs will always be available for our students and they will be happy to listen to them as many times as they want. For example, if a teacher introduces a new structure by means of a dialogue, it may become a little boring for students if the dialogue is repeated for a second time, but songs can be reused as necessary.

We have to consider that if we use songs in English classes, we can also teach teens, young adults and adults to appreciate other cultures. For instance, adult learners can obtain a rich mine of information about human relations, ethics, customs, history, humor, and cultural differences.

According to Hans (www.hltmag.co.uk), through songs learners have the opportunity to listen to pronunciation in a wide range of varieties of the language. Songs will help learners become familiar with word stress and intonation, and the rhythm with which words are spoken or sung also helps memorization. Songs usually have words repeated over and over again, and the repetition of words helps students get familiar with the sounds they hear; and thus they can pronounce them more accurately

# 2.4 What can we do with a song in the classroom?

We, teachers, can do many activities by using songs in the classroom, and not only the popular activity called "fill in the blanks". The following selected list of Tim Murphey, taken from his book *Music & Song* (1990), gives us a

**AUTORAS:** 

convinced answer. These are some of the activities that teachers can do by using songs:

- 1. Listen
- 2. Sing, whistle, tap, and snap fingers while listening
- 3. Sing without listening to any recording
- 4. Talk about the music
- 5. Talk about the lyrics
- 6. Talk about the singer or group
- 7. Set or change an atmosphere or mood, as 'background furnishing'
- 8. Use songs and music to make a social environment.
- 9. Write songs
- 10. Perform songs
- 11. Write articles
- 12. Study grammar
- 13. Practice selective listening comprehension
- 14. Write dialogues using the words of a song
- 15. Use video clips in many ways
- 16. Do role-plays (as people in the song)
- 17. Use music for background to other activities
- 18. Integrate songs into project work
- 19. Practice pronunciation, intonation, and stress
- 20. Break the routine
- 21. Do choral repetition
- 22. Teach vocabulary
- 23. Teach culture
- 24. Learn about your students and from your students, letting them choose and explain their music
- 25. Have fun (9-10).

#### **AUTORAS:**



If we pay attention to the activities exposed above, we are able to realize that all of them help students to develop the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

Also, it is very important that teachers start taking songs seriously, because some of them introduce songs without a prior lesson planning. In regard to it, Tim Murphey states that music and songs can be useful, and sometimes more than, conventional classroom materials.

Music and songs can be used to:

- break the ice in a class where students don't know each other
- present a new theme or topic (Christmas/ feelings /colors)
- teach new vocabulary
- listen for specific details and main ideas
- Improve memory
- teach pronunciation and intonation
- teach reading comprehension
- teach songs and rhymes about difficult grammar and spelling rules
- discuss different topics

AUTORAS:



#### **CHAPTER III**

#### **SONGS AND ACTIVITIES**

This chapter contains songs and activities, which teachers can apply in order to help their students develop their listening skill, since they will have to listen to the songs for many purposes, such as listening for information, for creative listening, listening for discrimination, etc.

For each activity, teacher gives her/his students a worksheet where they will have to work alone, in pairs, or in groups, according to the established activity and purpose. Although our research work is based on developing the listening skill, students will be able to develop other skills, too.

# 3.1 Songs and activities to use in an EFL classroom

# 3.1.1 Activity 1: Love Story

**SONG TITLE:** Love Story by Taylor Swift

**LEVEL:** Intermediate (15-18)

**ACTIVITY:** Turn the song into an e-mail/love letter

**INSTRUCTIONS:** 

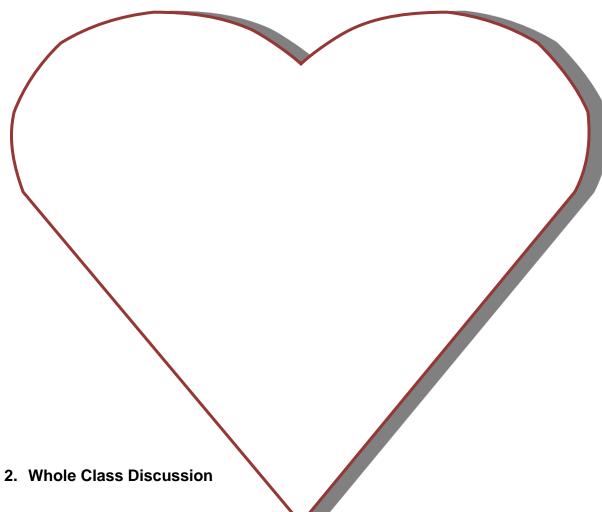
- 1. Teacher plays a song and asks students to work in groups.
- 2. The teacher divides the class into all-boy and all-girl groups.
- 3. The girls rewrite the song into a letter or e-mail addressed to the boys.
- 4. The boys write their response.
- 5. Teacher encourages a girl and a boy to sing or read out loud their messages.

#### **AUTORAS:**



6. Students work in pairs to answer some questions about the song.

1. Write your love letter inside the heart.



- What love story is Taylor Swift singing about? 1.
- 2. What character is the singer pretending to be?
- 3. Why aren't the characters able to be together?
- 4. What does the singer ask for to her Romeo?
- 5. What would you do if you were Juliet?
  - 3.1.2 Activity 2: One of us

## **AUTORAS:**



SONG TITLE: One of us by Joan Osborne

LEVEL: Intermediate (15 to 18)

**ACTIVITY:** Find the words

**GRAMMAR STRUCTURE:** Second conditional

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Teacher tells students that they will play Bingo with the lyrics.

- 2. Teacher provides a list of words from the song
- 3. Students write down these words on a Bingo card.
- 4. Students choose the order of the given words.
- 5. Students listen for the words on the card and cross them out.
- 6. The first student to cross out a line of words wins.



# ONE OF US WORKSHEET

# 1. Listen to the song and cross out the words you listen to

В	I	N	G	0
		0 0		

doubt	birds	golden	sea
before	lead	beyond	star
know	kiss	Never	again
soon	meet	sailing	happy
somewhere	lover	Near	waiting
Shore	heart	Ме	ships

#### 2. CLASS DISCUSSION

Questions taken from the song

If God had a name what would it be?

What would you ask God if you had just one question?

If God had a face what would it look like?

#### **AUTORAS:**

# 3.1.3 Activity 3: Zombie

**SONG TITLE:** Zombie by The Cranberries

**LEVEL:** Intermediate (15 to 18)

#### **ACTIVITIES**

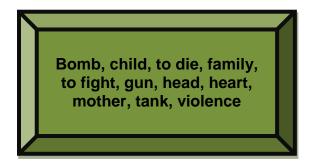
#### 1. PRE-LISTENING ACTIVITIES

**Discussion:** Teacher asks students the following questions.

- a) Do you know The Cranberries?
- b) Where do they come from?
- c) Do you know what happened in 1916?
- d) Do you know about the problems that Ireland was facing at this time?

# Vocabulary:

1. Teacher writes the following words on the board.



**AUTORAS:** 

2. Ask students to categorize the words, dividing them into three groups.

BODY	PEOPLE	WAR

3. Teacher asks students to provide their own definition of the word "zombie".

# 2. DURING LISTENING

**AUTORAS:**Magaly Samaniego
Mayra Zúñiga



# 20MBIE WORKSHEET

a. Fill in the blanks using the words from the box.

Bomb, child, to die, family, to fight, gun, head, heart, mother, tank, violence

Another	_ hangs lowly,	
is slow	y taken.	
And the	_ caused such silence	
Who are we mistake	n?	
But you see it's not r	ne,	
It's not my		
In your	, in your	
They are		
With their	and their	_
And their	and their	-
In your	, in your	
They are crying		
In your	, in your	
Zombie, Zombie, Zo	mbie	
What's in your	, in your	
Zombie, Zombie, Zo	mbie	
Another	's breaking	_ is taking over
When the	causes silence	
<b>AUTORAS:</b> Magaly Samaniego Mayra Zúñiga		

We must be mistaken		
It's the same old theme since 1916		
In your, in your		
They're still		
With their and their		
And their and their		
In your, in your		
They are		
In your, in your		
Zombie, Zombie		
What's in your, in your		
Zombie, Zombie		

# 3. POST-LISTENING ACTIVITY

- a. Teacher will ask students some questions based on the song
- 1. Which is the exact meaning of the word *Zombie* in the song?
- 2. What is the message of the song?
- 3. When do you think we behave like zombies?
- 4. Have you ever heard of an event like that in your country?



3.1.4 Lemon Tree: Activity 4

**SONG TITLE:** Lemon Tree by Fool's Garden

**LEVEL:** Intermediate (15 to 18)

**ACTIVITY:** Fill in the blanks

**GRAMMAR POINT: Prepositions** 

# **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. The teacher tells students that they are about to listen to a song

- 2. Students are asked to fill in the blanks with the right preposition
- 3. Teacher hands out worksheets, which contain several pictures
- 4. Students are then asked to look at the pictures and write some sentences based on the song



# LEMON TREE WORKSHEETS

# A. Listen to the song and fill in the gaps with the correct preposition

around - of - up - out - inside - on - for - into - in
'm sitting here a boring room
t's just another rainy Sunday afternoon
'm wasting my time; I've got nothing to do
'm hanging, I'm waiting you
But nothing ever happens, and I wonder
'm driving in my car
'm driving too fast, I'm driving too far
'd like to change my point view
feel so lonely I'm waiting for you
But nothing ever happens, and I wonder
wonder how, I wonder why
Yesterday you told me 'bout the blue blue sky
And all that I can see is just a yellow lemon-tree
'm turning my head and down
'm turning turning turning turning around
And all that I can see is just another lamon tree
And all that I can see is just another lemon-tree
'm sitting here, I miss the power
'd like to go taking a shower
But there's a heavy cloud my head
feel so tired put myself bed
AUTOD AO





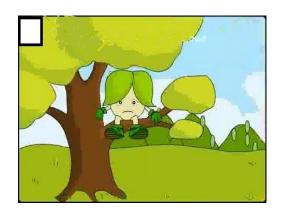
#### **AUTORAS:**

Well, nothing ever happens, and I wonder

Isolation - is not good for me Isolation - I don't want to sit \_\_\_\_\_ the lemon-tree

I'm steppin' around in a desert of joy baby anyhow I'll get another toy And every thing will happen, and you'll wonder I wonder how I wonder...

- B. Look at the pictures below. Then write your own sentences based on the song
- C. Then put the story in order





**AUTORAS:** Magaly Samaniego

Mayra Zúñiga



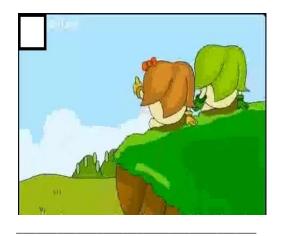


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\_\_\_\_\_











# 3.1.5 Activity 5: Sunday with a flu

SONG TITLE: Sunday with a flu by Yodelice

**LEVEL:** Intermediate (15 to 18)

**ACTIVITY:** Fill in the blanks

# **INSTRUCTIONS:**

 Teacher hands out worksheets, which contain some phrases from a song.

2. Students are asked to write down the missing words in the phrase.

3. Next to each phrase, students will find a picture, which they will use to guess what the missing word is



# SUNDAY WITH A FLU WORKSHEET

Sunday with a		
Closed my	, forgot my	<b>\( \sigma</b>
Missed my in	the pouring	O
It's been the usual	with a	
And I just can't get over you		
Burnt my	and lost your	012
Cut my, spi	illed my	
It's been the usual S	with a	
And I just can't get over you		
I put your in	my	The second

# **AUTORAS:**

What if I don't get over you? Had a chat and left my \_ and walked my It's been the usual \_ And I just can't get over you What if I don't get over you? Called a Asked for help and got some kelp It's been the usual Sunday with a And I just can't get over you

# 3.1.6 Activity 6: You are Beautiful

**SONG TITLE:** You're Beautiful by Black James Blunt

LEVEL: Intermediate (15 to 18)

# AUTORAS: Magaly Sama



**ACTIVITY:** Listening Comprehension

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. Teacher asks students to work in groups of three people
- 2. Teacher plays the song
- 3. Each group has to choose one phrase from the song and write it down
- 4. Then they have to draw a picture according to the phrase they chose.
- 5. Students are then asked to show their drawings to the whole class.
- 6. Students first describe the pictures, and then create their own story based on the pictures presented.

# For example:

One of the groups chooses, for example, the following phrase: THERE MUST BE AN ANGEL WITH A SMILE ON HER FACE, so students have to draw, for instance, a happy angel



Another group chose the following phrase: SHE WAS WITH ANOTHER MAN, so they have to draw something related with the phase.



# 3.2.7 Activity 7: Godbye my lover

**SONG TITLE:** Goodbye My Lover by James Blunt

**LEVEL:** Intermediate (15 to 18)

**AUTORAS:** 

**ACTIVITY:** Put the story in order

# **INSTRUCTIONS:**

- 1. In this activity students work in pairs.
- 2. Teacher will give them a copy only with few lines of the song, and in a bag where there are short pieces of paper with the rest of the lines of the song.
- 3. Then teacher plays the song and students have to put in order the song.
- 4. The group that finishes first will be the winner.

And as you move on, remember me,
□ <b></b>
And I love you, I swear that's true.
And I still hold your hand in mine.
□
And I will bare my soul in time,
□
And love is blind and that I knew when,
□
Cause I saw the end before we'd begun,
□
Did I disappoint you or let you down?

AUTORAS:



Goodbye my friend.
Goodbye my friend.
Goodbye my friend.
Goodbye my lover.
Goodbye my lover.
Goodbye my lover.
I am a dreamer but when I wake,
I am here for you if you'd only care.
I cannot live without you.
□ <b></b>
I know you well, I know your smell.

I know your fears and you know mine.



I'd be the father of your child.
I'd spend a lifetime with you.
I'm so hollow, baby, I'm so hollow.
I'm so, I'm so, I'm so hollow
□
In mine when I'm asleep.
□
It may be over but it won't stop there,
□
I've been addicted to you.
□
've kissed your lips and held your head.
I've seen you cry, I've seen you smile.
I've watched you sleeping for a while.

My heart was blinded by you.

Remember us and all we used to be
Shared your dreams and shared your bed.
Should I be feeling guilty or let the judges frown?
So I took what's mine by eternal right.
□ <b></b>
Took your soul out into the night.
□ <b></b>
We've had our doubts but now we're fine,
□ <b></b>
When I'm kneeling at your feet.
Yes I saw you were blinded and I knew I had won.
□ <b></b>
You can't break my spirit - it's my dreams you take.
□ <b></b>
You changed my life and all my goals.

You have been the one for me.



You have been the one for me.
You have been the one for me.
You have been the one.
You have been the one.
You have been the one.
You touched my heart you touched my soul.
□



# 3.1.7 Activity 8: Father and son

**SONG TITLE:** Father and Son by Cat Stevens

**LEVEL:** Intermediate (15 to 18)

**ACTIVITY:** Listening for critical thinking

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. Teacher gives each student a copy of the lyrics of the song.
- 2. Then teacher plays the song and students are asked to sing
- 3. Half of the class may sing the father's verses, and the other half the son's verses
- 4. After that, teacher encourages students to discuss about the problems or conflicts among parents, children, adults, and teenagers.

# WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSION:

What is the message of the song?

What does the song describe?

Do you think your parents don't understand you?

Which, in your opinion, are the main reasons for family arguments?

5. Students are asked to write a short composition based on the following question: How can you keep a good relationship with your parents?

**AUTORAS:** 



# CONCLUSION

Listening is a fundamental skill that our students need to develop, since it allows them to get involved in their own learning process actively. When learning English as a foreign language, students need to listen as much as possible in order to get familiar with the sounds of the language. As listening is the first stage in this process of acquiring a language, it provides a basis for the acquisition of other language skills.

In the EFL classroom, it is important to use tools which help our students become effective listeners. Songs, as stated in this research work, are those tools which contribute to develop the listening skill, making our students effective listeners. Songs are therefore fundamental in the English learning process.

The main purpose of this monograph is to state the importance of listening skill and to provide teachers examples of listening activities based on songs. The activities presented in chapter three have been designed to help students develop listening skill through authentic language and content. The use of these songs in the EFL classroom is intended to make English classes fun and interactive.

AUTORAS:



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# **TEACHER'S MATERIAL**



# Song #1

# "Love Story"

We were both young when I first saw you.
I close my eyes and the flashback starts
I'm standing there on a balcony in summer air.
See the lights; see the party, the ball gowns.
See you make your way through the crowd and say, "Hello,"
Little did I know...

That you were Romeo, you were throwing pebbles,
And my daddy said, "Stay away from Juliet"

And I was crying on the staircase
Begging you, "Please don't go"

And I said...

Romeo, take me somewhere we can be alone.

I'll be waiting; all that's left to do is run.

You'll be the prince and I'll be the princess,

It's a love story, baby, just say, "Yes".

So I sneak out to the garden to see you.

We keep quiet 'cause we're dead if they knew
so close your eyes... escape this town for a little while.

'cause you were Romeo – I was a scarlet letter,
And my daddy said, "Stay away from Juliet"
But you were everything to me,
I was begging you, "Please don't go"

**AUTORAS:** 



#### And I said...

Romeo, take me somewhere we can be alone.
I'll be waiting; all that's left to do is run.
You'll be the prince and I'll be the princess.
It's a love story, baby, just say, "Yes".

Romeo, save me, they're trying to tell me how to feel.

This love is difficult but it's real.

Don't be afraid, we'll make it out of this mess.

It's a love story, baby, just say, "Yes".

I got tired of waiting

Wondering if you were ever coming around.

My faith in you was fading

when I met you on the outskirts of town.

And I said...

Romeo, save me, I've been feeling so alone.

I keep waiting for you but you never come.

Is this in my head? I don't know what to think.

He knelt to the ground and pulled out a ring and said...

Marry me, Juliet; you'll never have to be alone.

I love you, and that's all I really know.

I talked to your dad – go pick out a white dress it's a love story, baby, just say, "Yes".

Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.



# 'cause we were both young when I first saw you Song # 2

#### "ONE OF US"

If God had a name what would it be?

And would you call it to His face?

If you were faced with Him in all His glory
what would you ask if you had just one question?

And yeah, yeah God is great Yeah, yeah God is good Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

What if God was one of us?

Just a slob like one of us

Just a stranger on the bus

trying to make His way home

If God had a face what would it look like?

And would you want to see?

If seeing meant that you would have to believe
In things like Heaven and in Jesus and the Saints

And all the Prophets

And yeah, yeah God is great Yeah, yeah God is good Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah What if God was one of us? Just a slob like one of us

AUTORAS:



Just a stranger on the bus

Trying to make His way home

Tryin' to make His way home

Back up to Heaven all alone

Nobody callin' on the phone

'Cept for the Pope maybe in Rome

Yeah, yeah God is great Yeah, yeah God is good Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

What if God was one of us?

Just a slob like one of us

Just a stranger on the bus

Trying to make His way home

Just tryin' to make His way home

Like a holy rolling stone

Back up to Heaven all alone

Just tryin' to make His way home

# **Song # 3**

# Zombie by The Cranberries

Another head hangs lowly,
Child is slowly taken.
And the violence caused such silence
Who are we mistaken?

AUTORAS:

But you see it's not me, It's not my family In your head, in your head They are fighting With their tanks and their bombs And their bombs and their guns In your head, in your head They are crying In your head, in your head Zombie, Zombie, Zombie What's in your head, in your head Zombie, Zombie, Zombie Another mother's breaking heart is taking over When the violence causes silence We must be mistaken It's the same old theme since 1916 In your head, in your head They're still fighting With their tanks and their bombs And their bombs and their guns In your head, in your head They are dying In your head, in your head Zombie, Zombie, Zombie What's in your head, in your head Zombie, Zombie, Zombie

#### **Band information**

The Irish rock band The Cranberries was very successful in the 1990's. "Zombie", their best-known song, was released in 1994 on the album "No Need to Argue", and won "Best Song" at the 1995 MTV Awards. About the political-religious conflict in Northern Ireland, it was written in memory of Jonathan Ball, aged 3, and Tim Parry, aged 12, killed in an IRA bombing in Warrington in 1993. It refers to the 1916 Easter Rising when Irish nationalists occupied Dublin's G.P.O. (post office) as a protest against British occupation, proclaiming an Independent Irish Republic. The Rising was crushed by the British who executed its leaders. "The Troubles" were a feature of 20th Century Ireland, but in May 2007 there was hope for a peaceful future, when a new Assembly with representatives from both sides of the divide began governing Northern Ireland

# Song # 4

#### **LEMON TREE**

I'm sitting here in a boring room it's just another rainy
Sunday afternoon I'm wasting my time I got nothing to do
I'm hanging around I'm waiting for you
But nothing ever happens- and I wonder

I'm driving around in my car I'm driving too fast
I'm driving too far I'd like to change my point of view
I feel so lonely I'm waiting for you
But nothing ever happens- and I wonder

I wonder how I wonder why yesterday you told me
'bout the blue sky and all that I can see is just a yellow lemon-tree
I'm turning my head up and down

**AUTORAS:** 



I'm turning turning turning turning around And all that I can see is just another lemon-tree

I'm sitting here I miss the power I'd like to go out taking a shower but there's a heavy cloud inside my head I feel so tired put myself into bed where nothing ever happens- and I wonder

Isolation - is not good for me
Isolation - I don't want to sit on a lemon-tree
I'm steppin' around in a desert of joy Baby anyhow I'll get another toy and
everything will happen-and you'll wonder

I wonder how I wonder why yesterday you told me
'bout the blue sky and all tall that I can see is just a yellow lemon-tree
I'm turning my head up and down
I'm turning turning turning turning around
And all that I can see is just another lemon-tree

# Song #5

# Sunday with a flu by Yodelice

Closed my door, forgot my key
Missed my bus in the pouring rain
It's been the usual Sunday with a flu
And I just can't get over you
Burnt my toast and lost your number
Cut my finger, spilled my beer
It's been the usual Sunday with a flu

**AUTORAS:** 

And I just can't get over you I put your stockings in my purple boots What if I don't get over you? Had a chat and left my hat Ate my dog and walked my cat It's been the usual Sunday with a flu And I just can't get over you I put your stockings in my purple boots What if I don't get over you? I put your stockings in my purple boots What if I don't get over you? Called a cabbage threw the garbage Asked for help and got some kelp It's been the usual Sunday with a flu And I just can't get over you I put your stockings in my purple boots What if I don't get over you?

# Song #6

# YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL BY BLACK JAMES BLUNT

My life is brilliant.

My love is pure.

I saw an angel.

Of that I'm sure.

She smiled at me on the subway.

She was with another man.



But I won't lose no sleep on that, 'Cause I've got a plan.

You're beautiful. You're beautiful.
You're beautiful, it's true.
I saw your face in a crowded place,
And I don't know what to do,
'Cause I'll never be with you.

Yeah, she caught my eye,

As we walked on by.

She could see from my face that I was,

Fucking high,

And I don't think that I'll see her again,

But we shared a moment that will last till the end.

You're beautiful. You're beautiful.
You're beautiful, it's true.
I saw your face in a crowded place,
And I don't know what to do,
'Cause I'll never be with you.
You're beautiful. You're beautiful.
You're beautiful, it's true.
There must be an angel with a smile on her face,
When she thought up that I should be with you.
But it's time to face the truth,
I will never be with you



# **Song #7**

#### **GOODBYE MY LOVER BY JAMES BLUNT**

Did I disappoint you or let you down?

Should I be feeling guilty or let the judges frown?

'Cause I saw the end before we'd begun,

Yes I saw you were blinded and I knew I had won.

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So I took what's mine by eternal right.

Took your soul out into the night.

It may be over but it won't stop there,
I am here for you if you'd only care.

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You touched my heart you touched my soul.

You changed my life and all my goals.

And love is blind and that I knew when,

My heart was blinded by you.

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I've kissed your lips and held your head.

Shared your dreams and shared your bed.

I know you well, I know your smell.

I've been addicted to you.

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Goodbye my lover.

Goodbye my friend.

You have been the one.

You have been the one for me.

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I am a dreamer but when I wake,
You can't break my spirit - it's my dreams you take.
And as you move on, remember me,
Remember us and all we used to be

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I've seen you cry, I've seen you smile.
I've watched you sleeping for a while.
I'd be the father of your child.
I'd spend a lifetime with you.

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I know your fears and you know mine.

We've had our doubts but now we're fine,

And I love you, I swear that's true.

I cannot live without you.

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Goodbye my lover.

Goodbye my friend.

You have been the one.

You have been the one for me.



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And I still hold your hand in mine.
In mine when I'm asleep.
And I will bare my soul in time,
When I'm kneeling at your feet.

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Goodbye my lover.

Goodbye my friend.

You have been the one.

You have been the one for me.

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I'm so hollow, baby, I'm so hollow.
I'm so, I'm so, I'm so hollow

# Song #8

# **Father and Son by Cat Stevens**

#### Father:

It's not time to make a change,
Just relax, take it easy.
You're still young, that's your fault,
There's so much you have to know.
Find a girl, settle down,
If you want you can marry.
Look at me, I am old, but I'm happy.

### **AUTORAS:**

I was once like you are now, and I know that it's not easy, To be calm when you've found something going on. But take your time, think a lot, Why, think of everything you've got. For you will still be here tomorrow, but your dreams may not.

#### Son:

How can I try to explain, when I do he turns away again. It's always been the same, same old story. From the moment I could talk I was ordered to listen. Now there's a way and I know that I have to go away. I know I have to go.

#### Father:

It's not time to make a change, Just sit down, take it slowly. You're still young, that's your fault, There's so much you have to go through. Find a girl, settle down, if you want you can marry. Look at me, I am old, but I'm happy.

#### Son:

All the times that I cried, keeping all the things I knew inside, It's hard, but it's harder to ignore it. If they were right, I'd agree, but it's them you know not me. Now there's a way and I know that I have to go away. I know I have to go.

**AUTORAS:** Magaly Samaniego