

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel

Faculty of Letters and Languages and Social Sciences

Department of English

**Investigating Students' and Teachers' Attitudes towards
the Effectiveness of Using Songs in Enhancing Students'
Listening Ability**

**A case Study of second year LMD students, Mila
University Centre**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Master Degree in Language Sciences.**

**Submitted by:
Benziane Sakina
Daffri Roqiya**

**Supervisor:
Ziad Khaled**

Examiner: Bennacer

Academic Year: 2013

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Dedication

We dedicate our modest work:

To our mothers and fathers, source of happiness and success in life,

To our sisters and brothers for their unconditional support,

To our friends: HAMZA, HOUSSEM, SOUHIL and RADJA, whom we shared the university life with its lights and shadows,

To our teachers,

To all those who love us.

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Abstract

The present dissertation attempts to shed light on both teachers' and, more importantly, students' beliefs and attitudes towards the effectiveness of using songs in enhancing their listening ability. English songs are often used as audio materials that help learners to gain mastery over the listening competency which is heavily relied on as determinant factor in language learning success. This study is carried out through a qualitative methodology which relies on both the questionnaire and the interview as data collection tools. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of second (2nd) year LMD students at the department of English in Mila University Centre. As far as the interview is concerned, it was held with three oral expression teachers at the same department. The results of both the questionnaire and the interview seem to corroborate the hypothesis in the sense that both students and teachers hold positive attitudes towards the usefulness and feasibility of listening to songs in fostering foreign language (FL) students' listening abilities. At such, the hypothesis set at the outset of the study turns out to be confirmed.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second language

SL: Second language

BAC: Baccalaureate

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General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

During the last few decades, English has become a very important tool in order to succeed professionally in society. It has become an international language and its importance has pushed many people, whose first language is not English, to learn it as early as possible. For this reason, language researchers and teachers are constantly looking for better strategies and ways to improve teaching this subject matter.

Language is a system of communication through which people can exchange ideas and meanings. This system cannot be fully developed unless the four skills (namely; listening, reading, speaking and writing) are largely mastered. Listening, however, is often considered as the most frequently used skill in adult life; followed by speaking, reading and writing. In fact, it is a vital need whose impact cannot be ignored. It plays a significant role in daily communication; though, it often seems to be a difficult skill for foreign language students to master.

As far as the Algerian context is concerned, students of English as a foreign language (EFL) feel hard to improve their listening proficiency when studying English and listening to native speakers is often challenging. It is not effortless as it is the case with their mother tongue.

2. Aim of the Study

Learning English as a foreign language generally entails the exposure of learners to the four skills that are listening, speaking, reading and writing. The amount of exposure to any of these skills varies according to the objectives set for the teaching procedures, and priorities.

If an instructional process targets the development of the listening skill, specific techniques and Procedures need to be cared for. A very common practice is resorting to songs as audio materials that seem to have the power to foster FL students' listening competency.

This dissertation, therefore, aims at investigating teachers' and, more importantly, FL students' attitudes and beliefs towards the effectiveness of using songs in enhancing the listening ability.

3. Hypothesis

In the attempt to investigate the problem of this research, it can be hypothesized that:

Students as well as teachers conceive English songs as a listening material that prompts the improvement of learners' listening abilities.

4. Means of Research

For the sake of testing the hypothesis and obtaining the information required from the subjects and meeting the objective of the study, students' questionnaire as well as teachers' interview have been chosen as tools for gathering data. This questionnaire will be

submitted to second year LMD students of English in Mila university centre and the interview will be held with their teachers of oral expression. Coupling the two instruments together, the research seeks to verify the hypothesis relying on a somewhat sound ground.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

The present research will be basically divided into two main parts. A theoretical part which includes two chapters about the review of the related literature, and a practical part (field work of the study) which consists of one chapter about the analysis of the results obtained from teachers' interview and learners' questionnaire.

Chapter one outlines some of the theoretical issues related to the listening skills. It also deals with the main difference encountered between listening and hearing. In addition to that, it will look at some types and kinds of listening, followed by certain strategies which are often used to explain the process of listening.

Chapter two focuses on the different definitions of the term songs with accordance to its influence, features and functions in EFL/ESL classrooms, as well as its use as a motivating means in enhancing the listening skill.

Chapter three, however, is conducted with two main perspectives. The first one deals with the analysis of the compiled data obtained from a questionnaire filled in by second year LMD students, and the second is related to the analysis of teachers' interview. Further, the analysis will be followed by discussing the results. Finally, it will end up with some pedagogical implications and recommendations followed by a mention of some of the research limitations.

CHAPTER ONE

The Listening Skill

Introduction

1.1 Definition of listening Skills

1.2 Listening versus hearing

1.3 Types of Listening

1.3.1 Extensive listening

1.3.2 Intensive listening

1.4 Listening Processes

1.4.1 Bottom- up process

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1.6.4 Critical listening

1.6.5 Discriminative listening

Conclusion

Chapter One: The Listening Skill

Introduction

Listening plays a significant role in daily communication and educational settings. Many researchers show that the listening skill is the most frequently used skill among other skills like reading, writing and speaking .In fact , it is important not only for lifelong learning but also for adequate functioning in society.

Listening skills are essential for learning since they enable students to acquire insights and information (syntactic, grammatical), and to achieve success in communicating with others. Unfortunately, it is the one that has historically been the most neglected and misrepresented in second and foreign language classrooms, and hence becomes the skill which has been the least well taught. Nunan (2002) calls it “the Cinderella skill” (p.238) because of its importance and need in foreign language acquisition. Listening is a vital process whose impact cannot be ignored; this skill is the bases of all the skills because if the learner cannot listen, S/ he cannot acquire any aspect of the language.

1.1 Definition of Listening

Listening is one of the fundamental and crucial language skills in the development of second language competence. Actually, there is a variety of definitions of listening which present different views of scholars towards the concept. The word listening may have different meanings for different people. It is defined by Underwood (1989) as: “the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear” (p. 1). In fact, the term listening can be simply defined as the ability of the learner to understand the language spoken by native speakers (Mendelssohn, 1994, p. 977).

In the past, listening failed to get enough attention of many researchers. Within this respect, Kline(April, 1996) states that: “listening is the neglected communication skill, While all of us have had instruction in reading, writing, and speaking, few have had any formal instruction in listening” (p.1). Now, with the growing interest in communication and the difficulties encountered by learners while communicating, listening is receiving a growing attention in FL settings.

Speaking is a subsequent behavior to listening. For Newton (2009): “listening is the natural precursor to speaking” (p.37) .In other words, listening enables the listener to receive information and ideas in a form of an input and to acquire new vocabulary which helps in speaking (output). So, in natural settings, while a child is acquiring the language, listening usually takes place before speaking. In short, the importance of listening in language learning is undeniable. It seems that it is the most communicative and practical skill and needs to be developed as much as possible.

1.2 Listening versus Hearing

Listening is an active and complex process. Many people use the term listening and hearing as if they are synonymous, but in reality, they are not. Wood (2009) differentiates between the two terms as:

“hearing is a physiological activity that occurs when sound waves hit our eardrums. Hearing is passive; we don’t have to invest any energy to hear. Listening, on the other hand, is an active process that requires energy. Listening involves more than just hearing or receiving messages through sight” (p.79).

In other words, listening differs from hearing in the sense that the latter is an effortless, passive activity in which people just perceive the sounds, while the former is an

active act that requires conscious efforts, concentration and interest for the sake of understanding whatever they are listening to.

According to Machado (2012, p.223) hearing and listening are quite different. Hearing is a process involving nerves and muscles that reach adult efficiency by age four to five. Listening is learned behavior, a mental process that is concerned with hearing, attending, understanding, remembering and discriminating. Listening can be improved with practice and it can be described as passive, receptive skill, but it involves active thinking and interpretation.

1.3 Types of Listening

In order for students to improve their listening skills and gain as much input as possible, they need a combination of both extensive and intensive listening skills.

1.3.1 Intensive Listening

Intensive listening requires paying more attention to the meaning of each discourse and, ultimately, to understand every sentence and word. Generally, intensive listening requires students to listen to a text several times, or divide the text into paragraphs and sentences to understand each one; or by doing dictation word by word (Harmer, 2001, p.229). The goal for students is to understand every sentence.

1.3.2 Extensive Listening

Alternatively, extensive listening does not require students to understand every sentence and every word; instead, students are encouraged to grasp the general meaning of the

passage. The key point of listening here is to understand the content. According to Harmer (2001):

“extensive listening will usually take place outside classroom, in the student’ home, car, or on personal stereos as they travel from one place to another. The motivational power of such an activity increases dramatically when students make their own choices about what they are going to listen to” (p.228).

The purpose of intensive listening is to build basic listening skills while that of extensive listening is to strengthen and enlarge effectiveness of listening in order to improve overall listening ability.

1.4 Listening Processes

A variety of insights into listening processes have been developed in the past fifteen years, and there are two main points on which most teachers and researchers continue to agree. The first is that listening is an active rather than passive process and the second is that listening consists of both bottoms-up and top-down processes.

1.4.1 Bottom-up Processes

In this process, the listener can recognize the main idea and the details of any audio material. Wilson (2008) claims that “the bottom-up model emphasizes the decoding of the smallest units-phonemes and syllables-to lead us towards meaning. The approach is based on discrete units of language in the text” (p.15).Indeed, the bottom-up approach has to do with the information coming from the message itself. The listener relies on components of language in the message like the combination of sounds, words, and grammar that help the listener to create meaning. Bottom-up processing as it is viewed by Richards (2008) is using

the incoming input for understanding the message and comprehension is seen as a process of decoding (p.4).

1.4.2 Top-down Processes

The listener can recognize the language utterances, and sounds using his or her own background knowledge to predict the content. This model is based, at least in part, on the listener; comprehension, however, depends on what already happens in the mind before the listening begins (Wilson, 2008, p.15). Top-down model helps the listener activate a set of expectations, interpret what is heard and anticipate what will come next. Students need to be aware that both of these processes affect their listening comprehension, and they need to be given opportunities for practise employing both of them.

1.5 Strategies of Listening Skills

Listening strategies are techniques or activities that contribute directly to the comprehension and recall of listening input. Indeed, the ability to use these strategies effectively is particularly significant in language learning.

1.5.1 Listening for Specific Information

According to (Mewald et al, 2007) “Listening for specific information includes the recall of important details. For example, if we have asked for instructions on how to get somewhere, we have to listen more carefully in order to understand the information we have inquired about (p.9). In other words, the listener will ignore less important information and focus just on the essentials since it is not necessary to understand every word to get the specific information required.

1.5.2 Listening for Gist

Listening for a gist is the situation where the focus is on overall meaning not specific details. Here, the learner tries to understand what is happening even if s/he cannot understand every phrase or sentence. The learner is trying to pick up key words, intonation, and other clues so as to guess the meaning (Pachler & Field, 2002, p.107). So, the purpose behind listening for gist is to understand the main idea of the text.

1.6 Kinds of Listening

1.6.1 Appreciative Listening

Appreciative listening as it is proposed by Kline (April 1996) includes “listening to music for enjoyment, to speakers because you like their style, to your choices in theatre, television, radio, or film. It is the response of the listener, not the source of the message that defines appreciative listening” (p.34). Appreciative listening is also known as enjoyment listening in the sense that listeners continue listening to songs, stories, jokes, anecdotes and radios because they enjoy them. In appreciative listening, we seek certain information which helps meet our needs and goals.

1.6.2 Therapeutic Listening

Therapeutic listening is also called ‘empathic listening’. It is the situation where the therapeutic listener provides a supportive communication climate which allows a troubled person to feel free to talk through a problem (Wolvin, 2009, p. 8). Therapeutic listening involves listening with a purpose and attempting to understand other people. This kind of listening leads the listener not only to understand the physical message but also to peep into the listener’s state of mind, feelings and emotions.

1.6.3 Comprehensive Listening

Comprehensive listening requires listening for the sake of understanding the message of a speaker. It is the root to cover from the discrimination of the stimulus to an understanding of the message. Listeners listen to conferences, lectures, reports ..., for the sake of understanding the message or comprehending the information presented. Much of the educational process is based on this approach since learners are supposed to listen carefully to understand and retain vast amount of information (Wolvin, 2009, p.7:8). Listening for comprehension requires full understanding of the message. But the problem with it can come in the form of 'understanding'. Depending on some factors (individual and social), students can end up understanding the same message in different ways.

1.6.4 Critical Listening

Critical listening can be defined as evaluating everything you hear for the sake of making decisions. Wolvin (2009) stresses that: "unlike therapeutic listening, critical listening requires that a listener evaluates /judges what is being said. Once the critical listener has discriminated and comprehended the message, it is necessary then to form judgments about the message in order to accept or reject the persuasive appeals" (p. 8).

According to Kline (1996); "The ability to listen critically is essential in a democracy, in the job, in the community, at service clubs, in places of worship, in the family--there is practically no place you can go where critical listening is unimportant "(p. 38). People with preference to evaluate while listening tend to look for the facts that support a speaker's comments; they do not accept something just because expert says it.

1.6.5 Discriminative Listening

As the name itself suggests, in discriminative listening, the listener differentiates between the different sounds that have been identified in order to draw valid conclusions and act appropriately in response (Wood, 2009, p. 97). Discriminative listening is the most important type of listening. Wolvin (2009) sees that “discriminative listening requires careful concentrations on, and sensitivity to, the various stimuli to differentiate between/among them accurately. Effective discriminative listening demands sensitivity to the verbal and non verbal cues offered by the communicator and a concerted effort to identify auditory and the visual messages” (P.7). The objective of discriminative listening is to distinguish between sounds and visual stimuli. This objective does not take into account the meaning; instead the focus is largely on sounds; for example, distinguishing the gender of the speaker or the number of the speakers.

Conclusion

Summing this chapter up, acquiring the listening skill is quite important for both learning and communicative purposes. In this chapter, an over view about the listening skills have been done, seeking to highlight the complexity of this process and to see why listening was neglected in the past and how it regains its importance in EFL classrooms. Researchers stress the main differences between listening and hearing, and provide certain strategies and processes that should be followed throughout the listening process. Besides, certain approaches to listening have been identified to see the responses of the listener in different situations.

Chapter Two

Songs in Language Teaching

Introduction

2.1 Definition of songs

2.2 The benefits of using songs in foreign language teaching

2.2.1. The affective aspect

2.2.2. The cognitive aspect

2.2.3. The linguistic aspect

2.3 The influence of songs in foreign language classes

2.4 The features of English songs

2.5 Songs in EFL/ESL classes

2.6 The functions of English songs in ESL classrooms

2.7 Learning, motivation and English songs

2.8 The principles for selecting songs

2.9 Advantages of using songs in the English classes

Conclusion

Chapter Two: Songs in language teaching

Introduction

Researchers have proven that the listening skill is the most significantly used skill, and is considered as the most important outcome in language teaching. With the development of new educational tools in foreign language teaching, students' progress starts growing up and the efforts to adapt these techniques in classroom environment has become of greater importance (Keskin, 2011, p.378). Teachers must provide a positive atmosphere favorable to language learning. Due to that, choosing materials and activities that are more motivating and interesting for students, promotes and increases language learning. In fact, songs are regarded as one of the best audio materials that most students tend to use to develop the listening ability. They are considered as a motivational means that brings curiosity and attentiveness in EFL classrooms.

2.1 Definition of Songs

Songs are materials that are often used in SL and FL classrooms to help students to gain mastery over the listening competency. The term in fact has been defined by many theorists like Griffiee (1995) who states that "songs refer to piece of music that have words, especially popular songs such as those one hears on the radio" (p.3). Many studies have shown that language is easier to express in songs than in speech. Murphey (1992) clarifies what is mentioned before as "it seems easier to sing language than to speak it" (p.6). In the same vein, Dakin states that "for most learners, singing or reciting a rhyme is much easier than talking" (p.5).

Ashmore (2011), on the other hand, suggests that: “Songs are a ready source of authentic language. They can be exploited in countless ways to practise any of the language skills, and students enjoy learning through them”. So, songs are excellent means through which students have fun and at the same time acquire the language.

2.2 The Benefits of Using Songs in Foreign Language Teaching

In language teaching, the benefits of using songs in class have many advantages that can be grouped as: the affective, the cognitive and the linguistic aspects.

2.2.1 The Affective Aspect

Affective reasons are closely connected with Krashen’s ‘Affective Filter Hypotheses’. Basically, it provides an explanation for why some learners learn and others do not. Most teachers would agree that students need to develop a positive attitude to learning. Krashen (1983) claims that “for effective learning, the affective filter must be weak. A weak affective filter means that a positive attitude to learning is present” (p.45). For affective reasons, songs play a joyful role which brings entertainment to the atmosphere and make the affective filter low. Lo and Li (1998) note that songs provide a break from classroom routine, and that learning English through songs develops a non-threatening classroom atmosphere in which the four language skills can be enhanced.(p.21)

2.2.2 The Cognitive Aspect

The main cognitive reason for using songs in the class is developing automaticity. Schoepp (2011) pinpoints that songs contribute to fluency, and the automatic use of meaningful language structure; they might, indeed, enhance learner’s memorization through

repetition. The term automaticity is defined by Gatbonton and Segalowitz (1988) as “a component of language fluency which involves both knowing what to say and producing language rapidly without pauses (p.473).

2.2.3 The Linguistic Aspect

In addition to building fluency, songs provide exposure to a wide variety of the authentic language and they might bring a great benefit for learners in linguistic perspective in colloquial language use (Schoepp 2011). For linguistic reasons, songs have strong and typical rhythms, which are easy for students to memorize and they enhance the effect of teaching.

Many language teachers describe the benefits of using rhymes and songs as following:

- Songs are very popular with young learners,
 - They promote positive feeling,
 - The rhythmical patterns facilitate and accelerate learning,
 - Songs are good means of developing listening, pronunciation and speaking skills,
 - Songs about typical traditions or cultural artifacts are helpful in developing students' cultural awareness and understanding,
- Songs help students to acquire sounds, words, sentences, to pronounce them confidently and to use them in other learning contexts (Kirsch 2008, p.85).

2.3 The Influence of Songs in Foreign Language Classes

Using songs as tools for teaching a foreign language has many benefits. They are able to change the monotonous mood in the class and they provide a comfortable class environment so that students can develop their skills easily (Lo and Li 1998, p.3). Besides, using songs in class environment amuses students and help them to get rid of their negative attitudes towards learning any foreign language (Saricoban & Metin 2000). In this direction,

the amusing and relaxing mood brought by using songs eases the effect of certain emotional states like anxiety, lack of self confidence in relation to the feeling of being threatened. In fact, songs help to motivate students who are encouraged to actively involve in the learning process by making use of their musical knowledge. So, songs help students to develop confidence for language learning (Sahin 2008, p.41).

2.4 The Features of English Songs

Fonseca-Mora et al (2011) define music as “rhythm, a reflection of our physiological life. Music is also melody, sequence of sounds, which is associated with our emotional life” (p.102). From universal views, songs have a great reputation. Lieb (2008) argues that English songs can easily reduce one’s pressure and create a relaxed atmosphere. Moreover, Lynch (2008) puts forth that pop songs are so popular; they have strong influences to use in teaching, they create fun for both teachers and students. Wang (2008), on the other hand, summarizes the three main features of pop songs as if they are songs that contain historical and cultural knowledge, they are highly motivating and they contain linguistic information. Likewise, Liao (2006, p.95) and Jiang (2004, p. 39) claim that English songs have beautiful melodies and the lyrics are easy to be understood and memorize. So, songs have great impact on students since most lyrics reflect their lives and emotions.

2.5 Songs in English as a Foreign Language and English as a Second Language classrooms

Generally, all students love music and like to sing songs. Based on this nature, songs have been utilized in ESL/EFL classrooms. As Read (2007) notes, the use of songs enhances children’s language learning and language acquisition. In order to instruct the second language, songs can be utilized in different ways. They are used as a part of starting and

ending lessons and to reinforce knowledge and skills (p.182). In other words, songs provide students with a discourse wherein they find tenses and grammatical structures in context as well as a wide range of vocabulary.

Lake (2003) supports the idea of using songs in ESL classrooms for various reasons. As he suggests, songs provide a fun and relaxing way to acquire, to process and to produce English (p.2). Yuliana (2003), on the other hand, claims that songs can be used to generate language skills. Since they are acquired through the ear, they can help to improve listening skills of students (p.63).i.e. songs can help students to improve their listening skills and pronunciation, therefore potentially helping them to improve their speaking skills. It is important to mention that a song is highly memorable; “it creates a state of relaxed receptivity, its rhythm corresponds with basic body rhythm, its messages touches emotional or aesthetic chords and it has some repetitive pattering which reinforce learning without loss of motivation” (Murphey, 1992, p.3). Therefore, songs are flexible and attractive source of learning materials. They help teachers to tune into students’ interest as well as they are an easily available source of teaching materials. According to Brown (2006), using songs in ESL classrooms can help students become more familiar with popular music and make them more confident in their ability to listen.

2.6 The Functions of English Songs in English as a Second Language classrooms

English songs have a great effect on listening comprehension (Qui 2006, P.74). They bring energy to the classroom; they create fun and boost students ‘confidence (Vernon 2006). English songs provide authentic materials and promote an active atmosphere. (Fonseca- Mora et al 2006, P.103) and (Qui 2006, P.75) point out another two functions of English songs in

teaching listening as to practise pronunciation and to improve the memory. So, songs have the greatest potential in ESL classrooms since they are closely related to language.

2.7 Learning, Motivation and English Songs

Songs can improve concentration, memory, and relax people who are overwhelmed or stressed. Besides, they motivate learning and make it fun. Due to its great value, students tend to use them so that to learn new vocabulary or expressions. Nambiar (1993) stresses that “songs deal with the whole realm of human emotions and students are often willing to sing a song in a foreign language even if they do not fully understand the meaning of the words” (p.336). In fact, songs are wonderful materials. They provide occasions of real language use in meaningful situations.

2.8 The principles for Selecting Songs

Of course, not all songs are suitable for students to learn since some may be difficult and some may have inappropriate themes for teachers to teach. If the teacher really loves certain song, this does not mean that students will have the same preference. Lems (2011) states that songs should be handily chosen; the lyrics should be clear, not vague and vocabulary should be suitable for the current level of the students. Lynch (2008) notes that songs should have appropriate themes like love, joy, peace, dream... that are preferred by students and song lengths should be controlled because songs that are too fast may disperse students' interest. So, teachers should select songs carefully and should be aware of their difficulty and not all pop songs are suitable for use since (rap) ones has fast tempo and unclear pronunciation. Theme is very important and before introducing the song to the students, teachers should listen to it in advance. So, listening to English songs is just one important part

in teaching listening and the most important aspect is to teach the skill and the linguistic features to learn.

2.9 Advantages of Using Songs in the English Classes

Songs are useful teaching tools; they help to create that friendly and co-operative atmosphere which is important for language learning. According to Orlova (2003), there are some advantages for working in class with songs:

- Practicing the rhythm, stress and the intonation patterns of the English language,
- Teaching vocabulary, especially in the vocabulary reinforcement stage,
- Teaching grammar. In this respect, songs favored by teachers while investigating the use of tenses,
- Teaching listening since songs can be helpful for comprehension,
- Teaching speaking, for this purpose songs and mainly their lyrics are employed as a stimulus for class discussion,
- Developing writing skills. In this direction, songs are used in a variety of ways.

Conclusion

Summing this chapter up, songs are considered as the most effective means in developing students listening skills. They are an interesting medium and they could be used to teach vocabulary. Songs in fact could be seen as a starting point for preparing comprehensive lesson plan where all the language skills would be developed in a balanced way. Grammar can be illustrated by the use of songs. So, many grammatical aspects of contemporary language can be introduced through the use of them. Songs are sources for pronunciation

practice; they can be selected to suit students' needs and interests, they can deal with various themes and they contain language appropriate for any level.

Chapter Three

Field investigation

Introduction

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Chapter Three: Field Investigation

Introduction

The present fieldwork is undertaken with two main perspectives. The first one is concerned with the collection and analysis of data about the use of songs as a technique to enhance the listening skill. Data collection is conducted through administering a questionnaire to twenty (20) second year LMD students at the department of English in Mila university center. The second perspective, on the other hand, has to do with an interview held with three (03) teachers of oral expression who teach in the same department.

1.1 Students' Questionnaire

1.1.1 Description of Students Questionnaire

For the present research, a questionnaire of seventeen (17) items has been administered to second (2nd) year LMD students at the university centre of Mila in order to explore their attitudes towards the use of songs as means to develop the listening skill. The whole questionnaire is made up of (17) items and classified under (03) sections; each focusing on a particular aspect. It involves different types of questions closed and open-ended questions. Closed items require students to answer with 'yes / no' or to tick up the right answers from a set of options and open-ended questions which require from them to give their personal opinions or back ground information.

The students' questionnaire was administered to six (6) groups of the second (2nd) year LMD students of English language, composed of one hundred ninety (190) participants as the total number of the population from which the sample has been randomly chosen. The

questionnaire was given to forty students who were selected from the total population (190), but only twenty (20) of them gave their questionnaire back.

Section One: General Information (Q1-Q2)

In this section, students were asked to indicate their sex (Q1), and their specialization in the previous years (Q2).

Section two: The Listening Skill (Q3-Q11)

This section seeks information about some aspects of the listening skill. In (Q3), students were asked to pick the most important skill that is needed to master most: listening, speaking, reading or writing, and if mastering the listening skill is very important, important, of little importance or not important at all (Q4). In (Q5), students were asked about their level in listening if it is: excellent, good, average or poor. Then in (Q6), they were asked if one or two hours listening to a foreign language are enough to build the listening skill. In the case students answer with (no), they were asked to identify the reasons which lie beyond their answers (Q7). In (Q8), students were asked to mention how often they listen to English outside university: very often, often, sometimes or never. After that, students were asked if they find difficulties while listening to native speakers (Q9) and in the case their answer is (yes), is it: always, sometimes or rarely (Q10). In the last question of this section, students were given the opportunity to speak about the type of difficulty they usually face (Q11).

Section Three: Students' Attitudes towards Listening to English Songs (Q12-Q17)

In the first question of this section, students were asked about the different ways to practise the listening skill: presentations, songs, musical videos or news. The next question is highly related to the previous one. It investigates if they frequently listen to English songs (Q13). In the case students answer with (yes), they were asked about the hours they spent

listening to English songs: one hour, two hours, three hours or four (Q14). After that, students were asked if they learn new expressions while listening to English songs (Q15) and then, they gave examples. In (Q16), students were asked whether enhancing the listening skill through songs enjoyable or not as well as if listening to English songs helps them to improve their listening abilities (Q17).

1.1.2 Analysis of the Results

Section One: General Information

Question one: Gender?

- Male
- Female

Gender	N	%
Male	3	15 %
Female	17	85 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 1: Students' Gender

As shown in table 1, the great majority of students 85% are females and only 15% represent the second category (males).

Question Two: BAC Stream

BAC Stream	N	%
Sciences	4	20 %
Foreign Languages	16	80 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 2: Students' BAC Stream

The above table reveals that 80% from the whole population were studying foreign languages and 20% were specialized in sciences.

Section Two: The Listening Skill

Question Three: Which skill would you like to master most?

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

Options	N	%
Listening	6	30 %
Speaking	11	55 %
Reading	2	10 %
Writing	1	5 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 3: the most desired language skill to be mastered

This table indicates that (6) respondents (30%) wish to master the listening skills; other (11) respondents (55%) prefer the speaking skills; while just (2) respondents (10%) wish to master the reading skills. The remaining (1) respondent (5%) wants to master the skill of writing.

Question Four: When learning the English language, do you think that mastering the listening skill is?

- Very important
- Important
- Of little importance
- Not important at all

Options	N	%
Very important	17	85 %
Important	2	10 %
Of little importance	1	5 %
Not important at all	0	0 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 4: The degree of the importance to master the listening skill

As the table above makes clear, 85% of the total population (N=20) suggest that mastering the listening skill is ‘very important’. 10% have claimed that it is ‘important’. 5% claim that it is of ‘little importance’. However, 0% opts for the ‘unimportance’ of the listening skill.

Question Five: Do you think that your level in listening is?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Poor

Options	N	%
Excellent	0	0%
Good	8	40%
Average	10	50 %
Poor	2	10 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 5: Students' level in listening skills

Students are asked about their level in listening if it is good or bad. The highest percentage of students (50%) claims that their level in listening is 'average'. Others (40%) show that they are 'good' at listening. 10% of the sample say that their level is 'poor' and none are 'excellent' at listening.

Question Six: Do you think that one or two hours listening to foreign language per week are enough for you to build the listening skill?

- Yes
- No

Options	N	%
Yes	3	15 %
No	17	85 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 6: Students' beliefs about time exposure listening to foreign language

Learners are asked if one or two hours listening to foreign language per week are enough for them to build the listening skill. Seventeen students (85%) answered negatively, while three (15%) choose a positive answer.

Question Seven: If no, could you please explain why?

70% from the whole population (N=20) argue that two hours are not enough to practice the listening skill. For students, the more they are exposed to the English language, the better their mastery of the listening skill will be.

Question Eight: How often do you listen to English outside the university?

- Very often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Never

Options	N	%
Very often	4	20 %
Often	5	25 %
Sometimes	11	55 %
Never	0	0 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 8: Frequency of Listening to English outside university

The results obtained denote that (55%) of the students ‘sometimes’ listen to English outside University, and those who said ‘very often’ are (20%) students. 25% of the students stated that they ‘often’ listen to English outside university.

Question Nine: Do you find difficulties while listening to native speakers?

- Yes
- No

Options	N	%
Yes	16	80 %
No	4	20%
Total	20	100 %

Table 9: Students’ views about difficulties while listening to native speakers

Table nine reveals that the overwhelming majority of students (80%) reported that they find difficulties while listening to native speakers. However, 20% claimed that they do not find any problems.

Question Ten: If yes, is it?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Rarely

Options	N	%
Always	2	10 %
Sometimes	12	60 %
Rarely	2	10 %

Table 10: Frequency of facing problems while listening to native speakers

60% of students who opted for a positive answer state that they ‘sometimes’ face such a kind of difficulty; however, 10% from the population state that they ‘always and rarely’ find difficulties while listening to native speakers.

Question Eleven: What type of difficulty do you find?

Students feel hard to understand every word spoken by native speakers and most difficulties encountered by 75% of students’ are due to the pronunciation, similarities between words, and the speed of the delivery constitute the main impediment.

Section Three: Students’ attitudes towards listening to English songs

Question Twelve: How do you prefer to get the listening skill practice?

- Presentations
- Songs
- Musical videos
- News

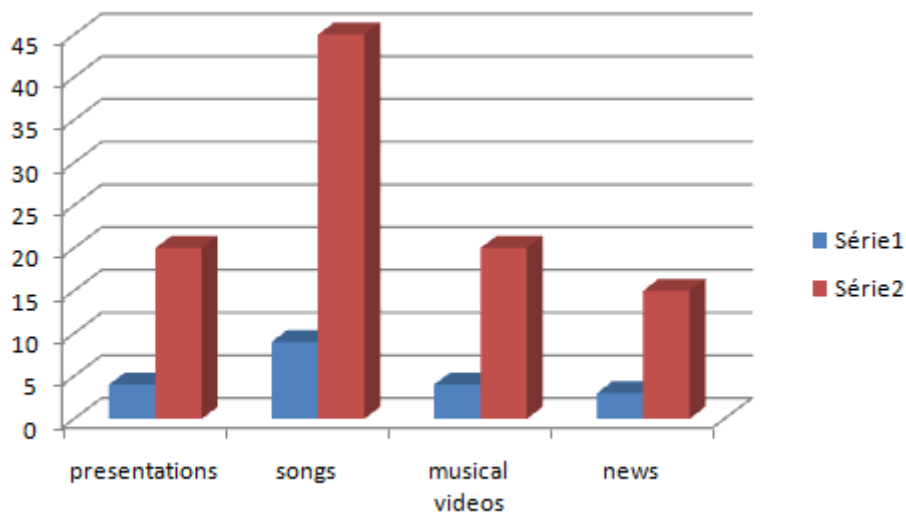


Figure 1: Students' preferable ways of practicing the listening skill

From the figure above, we see that, 45% of the total populations prefer to practice the listening skill through songs since they motivate learning and make it fun. 20% prefer to practise it through presentations and musical videos; however, only 15% practise the listening skill through news.

Question Thirteen: Do you frequently listen to English songs?

- Yes
- No

Options	N	%
Yes	17	85 %
No	3	15 %
Total	20	100 %

Table 13: The frequency of using songs

The results in table six indicate that 85% of the population frequently listens to English songs, while 15% do not.

Question Fourteen: If yes, how many hours per day do you listen to songs?

- One hour
- Two hours
- Three hours
- Four hours

Options	N	%
One hour	9	45 %
Two hours	4	20 %
Three hours	4	20 %
Four hours	0	0 %

Table 14: Time exposure to English songs

As can be noticed, (45%) say that they listen to songs ‘one hour’, while a percentage of (20%) represents those who listen for ‘two and three hours’. The remaining (15%) responses represent those who ‘never’ listen to English songs.

Question Fifteen: Are there any expressions that you have adapted from English songs and you use them in your daily life?

- Yes
- No

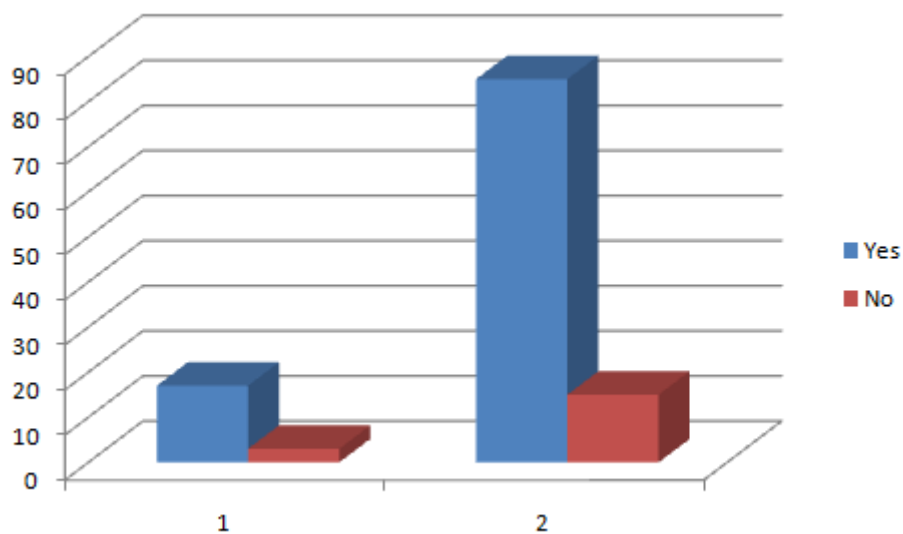


Figure 2: The benefits from using songs

According to figure two, the majority of students 85% get benefits from English songs and just 15% opt for a negative answer. These rates imply that most students believe that listening to English songs has an influential impact on their FL competency since they have adopted a variety of expressions that are used in their daily life communication.

- Can you give us examples, please?

65% from the total population gave us examples like:

- All that glitters is not gold
- You have got a heart of gold
- What comes around goes around
- I'm running out of time
- Every now and then
- Go back in your mind
- I'm burning my fire

- Alone but always happy

So, new expressions are learned by students and the reason behind this is the different examples that are mentioned above.

Question Sixteen: What do you think about enhancing the listening skill through songs? Is it:

- Enjoyable
- Not enjoyable

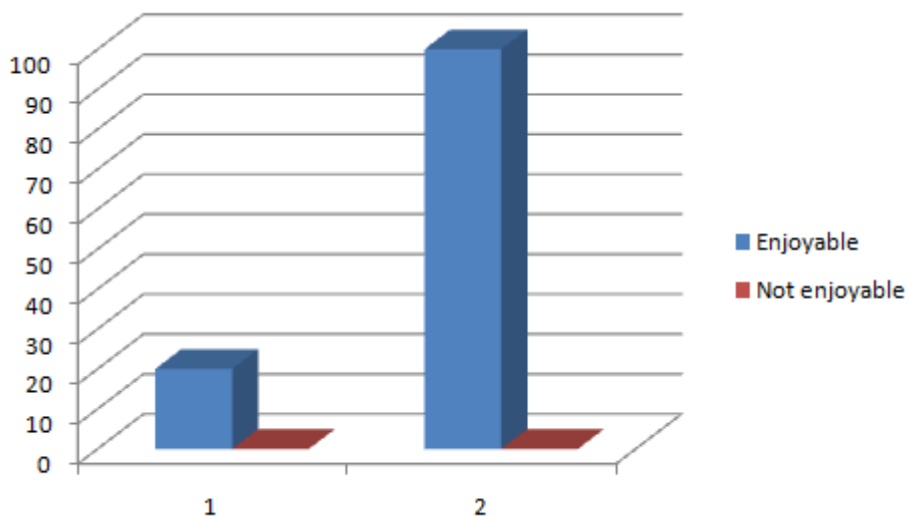


Figure 3: Students' beliefs about listening to English songs

Surprisingly, all students or the total number of students 100% who are selected randomly argue that developing the listening skill through songs is quite enjoyable, and no one of them opt for a negative answer. This means that students appreciate the use of songs within the lesson since songs are relaxing, providing variety and fun.

Question Seventeen: Do you think that listening to English songs has contributed in improving your listening skills?

- Yes
- No

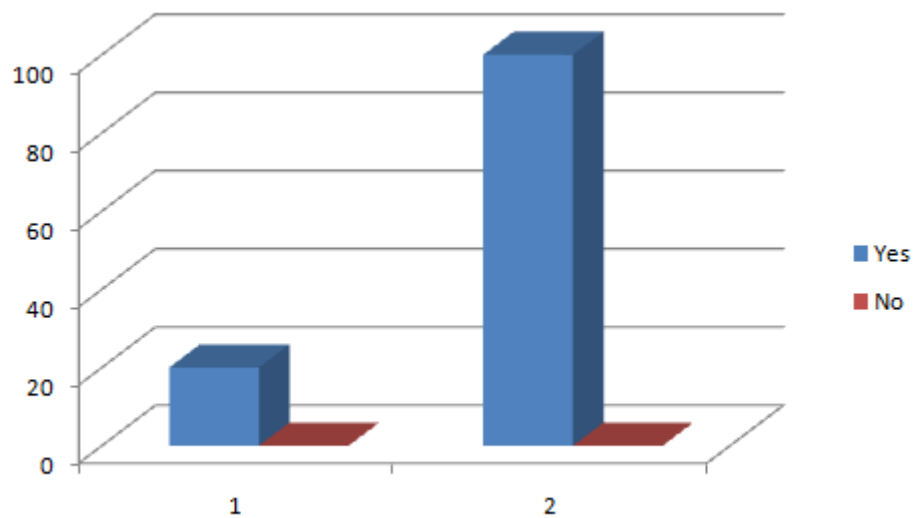


Figure 4: Students' attitudes towards the role of English songs in enhancing the listening skill

The results in the above figure reveal that the whole population (100%) agreed on the effectiveness of songs in improving the listening skill. The reason behind these responses is the fact that students start to make use of new vocabulary and expressions in their learning situations.

1.2 Teachers' Interview

1.2.1 Description of Teachers' Interview

Teachers' interview consists of three (3) open-ended questions. The latter were introduced to elicit teachers' justifications and clarifications about the use and feasibility of songs to develop the listening skill in laboratory settings. The three (3) teachers who were interviewed teach at the University of Mila.

1.2.2 Analysis of Teachers' Interview

Question One: As a teacher of oral expression, what type of means do you use in laboratory settings?

The three teachers, who were interviewed, reported that they rely most on the BBC recordings and songs are rarely used.

Question Two: To what extent do you agree with the new that songs are helpful in enhancing students' listening abilities?

For the three teachers who are interviewed, using songs is beneficial since they contribute to the development of students listening proficiency. We, as teachers, always encourage our students to check specific genres of songs like 'Rock songs' which contain rich vocabulary that cannot be found in pedagogical documents. Further, through the use of songs, students become able to spell and pronounce words correctly, and this led them to develop their oral skills (listening and speaking).

Question three: Are they practical?

Teachers' responses clarified that songs are important but not totally practical. They are used from time to time for the sake of bringing variety and creating good atmosphere in the class.

1.3 Discussion of the Results

First of all, the chosen sample in this study reveals that females (85%) are dominant over males (15%), this may be due to the fact that females are more interested to study foreign languages (80%), particularly the English language, than males (20%) who often choose to carry on scientific studies. The results of (Q3) confess that (55%) from the sample like to master the speaking skill, (30%) hope to master the listening skill, (10%) like reading skills and few of them (5%) wish to develop the writing skills; Listening and speaking, indeed, are essential for successful communication and students are supposed to listen and speak (aural skills) much more than write and read. Students' responses in (Q4) are interesting, (85%) state that mastering the listening skill is very important and this may be because students who have problems with listening skills, they cannot acquire any aspect of the language.

On the other hand, half from the whole sample (50%) in (Q5) classify their levels in listening under the average category since they lack some new means which used as a solid basis to develop the listening skills, and if students keep on using old fashioned means, this will prevent them from activating their listening proficiency. Furthermore, the results in (Q6) states that the majority (85%) from (100%) is not satisfied concerning the two hours provided to them in order to listen to a foreign language. Students', indeed, must be given enough time to activate their listening skills, and teachers are supposed to manage students' time effectively so that they have the opportunity to practise this subject matter. In (Q8), (55%) from the sample argue that they 'sometimes' listen to English outside university, (25%) 'often' tend to use it, and only (20%) state that they 'very often' use the English language. This indicates that students are motivated to learn new language which is different from their mother tongue and they keep on practicing it even outside.

Indeed, a high percentage (80%) of the students in (Q9) face numerous difficulties while listening to native speakers and this due to stress, intonation, pitch that speaker's use which

are not easy to be understood by most of the students. Moreover, students' reasons concerning these difficulties are many and one of them is that speakers speak quickly which makes students unable to catch all the words. Besides, (45%) of students in (Q12) prefer to get the listening skill practice through songs and this may be due to the fact that songs are interesting, motivating, and artists use new literary words and expressions that are absent in other fields like presentations or news.

(85%) from the sample spend their time listening to English songs, (45%) listen just one hour while the remaining ones tend to listen from two to three hours. This is because the more the student is exposed to a foreign language, the better proficient he will be. Further, (85%) from students responses in (Q15) reveals that there are some expressions that students have adopted from English songs and they use them just when they speak in English which is not always the case ; this indicates that songs are important, they pave the way for learners to be knowledgeable either in class or in daily life communication, and since students benefit from English songs, (100%) state that enhancing the listening skill through songs is enjoyable and they contribute in improving students' listening skills in both (Qs16/17).

On the whole, students show some interest to the use of songs. Their previous answers reveal that it can be successfully lead to enhance their listening skills, but this can happen only through providing enough time for practice.

1.4 Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

1.4.1 For Teachers

Leading the language teaching process to success is the main teachers' task. In order to succeed in their jobs, teachers should re-evaluate their methods and start to recognize that they have to concentrate on the listening process. They should support learning and specific language activities through the use of tools which aim at providing practice opportunities for students. Moreover, it is proved that students enjoy using songs as an affective support in improving their listening skill; so, teachers should take into account students' preferences, needs and interests when choosing the teaching tools as well as they should rely more on songs since they do not simply convey or transmit a given type of information but more importantly, they provide students with the opportunity to pronounce and spell words as native speakers do.

1.4.2 For Further Research

For the sake of getting more reliable results, it is advised to focus on more than one method of collecting data. This is what is called 'triangulation'. To be clearer, it is more beneficial to make use of a variety of research methodologies 'qualitative and quantitative research' because they reveal authentic data of a given field of investigation.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

Because of time constraints, we opt for a qualitative research which relies on a questionnaire and an interview as tools of collecting data. Although the methodology followed in this research work has proved to be successful, it has some limitations that have to be mentioned. One of the latter has to do with the generalizeability of the results. In other

words, we cannot generalize the results because the respondents did not take the questionnaires seriously and some of them did not give them back.

Conclusion

The fieldwork carried out in this chapter has sought to obtain relevant data to this research. For this purpose, two principal research means are used. The first one is a questionnaire that was filled in by 20 second year LMD students. The questions that were put to them aim at probing into their beliefs and attitudes towards mastering the listening skill as well as the efficiency of using songs to develop this subject matter. The second means is concerned with the analysis of three teachers' interview about using songs as a tool to enhance the listening skills. The findings that these two research means have yielded have confirmed the hypothesis set at the outset of the study.

General Conclusion

The present dissertation has undertaken to explore the use of songs as a means in laboratory settings, and their efficiency in enhancing students' listening ability which is an important factor to succeed in any learning situation. The first part of this dissertation attempted to provide a theoretical background about the importance of listening skills in language learning which is undeniable since it is the most communicative and practical skill that needs to be developed as much as possible by means of using new materials such as English songs. The second part consists of a field investigation that subsumes the analysis of a questionnaire submitted to twenty (20) second (2nd) year students to fill in, and an interview to their teachers (3) of oral expression in the Department of English in Mila University.

The two (2) chapters in this research compiled all the necessary information which served as a solid basis in the analysis of the results in the fieldwork. After the analysis of the research results, students as well as teachers show a great interest to the use of songs and their answers reveals that teachers encourage students to use English songs as a material to develop the listening skill. As far as the results are concerned, using songs in laboratory settings improves the listening skills in the sense that the results of this research go hand in hand with the hypothesis. Henceforth, there is a positive relationship between using songs and the listening ability.

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APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: Student Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Teacher's Interview

Appendix 1 : Student Questionnaire

Dear Student,

This questionnaire is an attempt for gathering the information needed for the accomplishment of a master dissertation. It aims at investigating the efficiency and contribution of listening to English songs in improving foreign language students listening abilities.

Your answers are very important for the validity of this research we are undertaking. As such, we hope that you will give us your full attention and interest.

Please tick (✓) the choice that corresponds to your answers. Thank you very much in advance.

Section 1: General Information

1) Gender

a. Male

b. Female

2) BAC stream?

Section 2: The Listening Skill

3) Which skill would you like to master most?

a. Listening

b. Speaking

c. Reading

d. Writing

4) When learning the English language, do you think that mastering the listening skill is?

a. Very important

b. Important

c. Of little importance

d. Not important at all

5) Do you think that your level in listening is?

a. Excellent

b. Good

c. Average

d. Poor

6) Do you think that one or two hours listening to foreign language per week are enough for you to build the listening skill?

a. Yes

b. No

7) If no, could you please explain why?

8) How often do you listen to English outside the university?

a. Very often

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Never

9) Do you find difficulties while listening to native speakers?

a. Yes

b. No

10) If yes, is it?

a. Always

b. Sometimes

c. Rarely

11) What type of difficulty do you find?

Section 3: Students' Attitudes towards Listening to English Songs

12) How do you prefer to get the listening skill practice?

a. Presentations

b. Songs

c. Musical videos

d. News

13) Do you frequently listen to English songs?

a. Yes

b. No

14) If yes, how many hours per day do you listen to songs?

a. One hour

b. Two hours

c. Three hours

d. Four hours

15) Are there any expressions that you have adopted from English songs and you use them in your daily life?

a. Yes

b. No

- Can you give us examples please?

16) What do you think about enhancing the listening skill through songs? Is it:

a. Enjoyable

b. Not enjoyable

17) Do you think that listening to English songs has contributed in improving your listening skill?

a. Yes

b. No

Thank you so much for your help

Appendix 2: Teachers' Interview

Question 1: As a teacher of oral expression, what type of means do you use in laboratory setting?

Question 2: To what extent do you agree with the new that songs are helpful in enhancing students' listening abilities?

Question 3: Are songs practical?

Résumé

La présente thèse tente de faire la lumière sur les deux enseignants et, plus important encore, les étudiants les croyances et les attitudes à l'égard de l'efficacité de l'utilisation des chansons dans l'amélioration de leur capacité d'écoute. En outre, des chansons en anglais sont utilisées comme matériaux ou des moyens qui aident les apprenants à acquérir la maîtrise de la compétence d'écoute qui est fortement invoquée comme facteur déterminant dans la réussite de l'apprentissage de la langue. Cette étude est réalisée à travers une méthodologie qualitative qui repose à la fois sur le questionnaire et l'entretien des outils de données. Le questionnaire a été distribué à l'échantillon de deuxième (2^{ième}) année LMD étudiants au Centre Universitaire de Mila, Département d'Anglais. En ce qui concerne l'entretien est concerné, il a été jugé avec trois professeurs d'expression orale dans le même département. Les résultats à la fois du questionnaire et l'entretien semblent corroborer les uns les autres dans le sens où les étudiants et les enseignants ont des attitudes positives à l'égard de l'utilité et la faisabilité d'écouter des chansons en favorisant langue étrangère (LE). A ce titre, l'hypothèse fixé au début de l'étude se révèle être confirmée.

ملخص

هذه الأطروحة هي محاولة لتسليط الضوء على معتقدات و مواقف كل من المعلمين و الأهم الطلاب تجاه فعالية استخدام الأغاني في تعزيز قدرتهم على الاستماع و علاوة على ذلك، يتم استخدام الأغاني الانجليزية و المواد أو الوسائل التي تساعد المتعلمين على اكتساب و إتقان كفاءة الاستماع كعامل حاسم في نجاح تعلم اللغة. و أجريت هذه الدراسة من خلال منهجية النوعية التي تعتمد على الاستبيان و المقابلة كأدوات لجمع البيانات. تم توزيع الاستبيان على عينة من طلاب السنة الثانية في قسم اللغة الانجليزية بالمركز الجامعي لميلة. كما عقدت مقابلة مع ثلاثة مدرسين للتعبير الشفوي في نفس القسم. كانت نتائج كل من الاستبيان و المقابلة متوافقة مع بعضها البعض، بمعنى أن وجهات نظر كل من الطلاب و الأساتذة كانت ايجابية اتجاه فائدة و جدوى الاستماع إلى الأغاني في تعزيز قدرات الاستماع لطلاب اللغة الأجنبية. و في هذا النحو، فقد أكدت الفرضية التي وضعت في بداية هذه الدراسة.