



# USING SONGS IN TEACHING LISTENING AND SPEAKING: A CASE STUDY

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this case study was to explore, understand, and observe the experiences of English teachers who used songs as a pedagogical tool in teaching listening and speaking. By delving into the challenges these educators faced, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved in integrating songs into listening instruction. In this study, three (3) qualified teacher participants should possess relevant experience and expertise directly related to the case under study. This typically includes a background in teaching the subject or grade level being investigated, as well as practical experience within the educational setting of interest. The design and procedure in this study is qualitative case study which begins with selecting a specific case that aligns with the research objectives, whether it involves an individual, group, organization, event, or process. This case study explored the use of songs as a pedagogical tool in teaching listening and speaking, focusing on three key areas: the application of songs in the classroom, learner engagement and willingness to learn, and the impact of songs in developing language skills through digital tools. The study highlighted how songs facilitated language learning by enhancing student engagement, fostering a positive learning environment, and supporting skill development through the integration of digital tools. Insights from the study offered practical recommendations for effectively incorporating songs into language teaching.*

**KEYWORDS-** Teaching, Listening, Speaking, Songs, Using

## INTRODUCTION

The field of psycholinguistics reports on a noticeable relationship between the spheres of music and language during brain development that can begin even before the age of two. The brain can understand and then organize the rhythm and syntax of music and language in similar ways. Within the context of L2 learning, music stimulates thinking and helps improve skills such as verbal memory and auditory memory. Honoring cultural diversity and developing a sense of acceptance in the classroom are necessary in language teaching. There are many modes of human vocal expression, and focusing on several of these modes in the curriculum gives learners the chance to understand different types of cultural expression. As mentioned above, music is universally loved, and it provides pleasure and inspiration to listeners.

Language is an expression that contains the intention to convey something to others. Something intended by the speaker can be understood and understood by the listener or interlocutor through the language expressed. The languages used are simple, clear, solid and simple languages. According to (Bagus, 2021; Emilia, 2022; Brown, 2021) language is any communication and identified phonetic symbol used by members of social groups working together. According to another viewpoint, language is a symbol of meaningful and articulate sound (produced by speech instruments) that is arbitrary and conventional. used by groups of people as a communication tool to evoke emotions and thoughts.

In the United States of America language is a media of communication for everyone to express their goals and objectives, every nation has its own language. Therefore, a person may not be able to interact with the other party if both parties do not understand each other's language. Brand (2019) posited that the main function of language is as a communication function. It claims that language's primary role is to facilitate social communication. Language, according to sociolinguistics, is a social behavior that is employed in social communication. In addition, the main function of language is as a learning method in the scope of the language itself. In addition to the above functions, language also functions as the identity of a tribe or nation because of its uniqueness. This is because the language is different for each tribe and country.

Likewise, in Indonesia songs are a very good 'tool' to help students learn English, more specifically it is believed to be able to motivate students during English learning. It can also be said that songs are an important part of learning English because songs make students more sensitive to sounds, learning a language is simply a matter of memorizing many types of significant sounds. Songs can also help to make a session more engaging and livelier. When a student likes a song taught by his teacher, they are happy and enthusiastic about doing it. And that's when they are indirectly learning something (Srinivas, 2019).



There are numerous benefits of employing songs as a learning resource, according to Brewster et al (2002). First, the song is a linguistic resource. In this case, the song is a media for introducing a new language, as well as a medium for strengthening grammar and vocabulary. Songs also present a language that students already know in a new and fun way. Songs also allow for natural and fun repetition of language. Songs can be used to develop all language skills in a comprehensive way, including improving student pronunciation.

Second, the song is an affective/psychological resource. Besides being fun, songs are also able to motivate students as well as foster a positive attitude towards English. The song is neither scary nor threatening to the students (Richards and Burns, 2022). Even songs can help increase students' self-confidence. As proof that they have mastered something in English, students can proudly sing English songs in front of a crowd.

Third, the song is a cognitive resource. Songs help improve memory, concentration and coordination. Students become more sensitive to rhyme as a tool to interpret meaning. Fourth, songs can also be a culture resource and a social resource. Brewster (2022) also revealed that songs provide tremendous benefits for learning pronunciation. Some important pronunciation features such as stress and rhythm as well as intonation can be trained naturally through songs.

In the book "The Art of Listening", by Al-Smadi (2020) in India invites readers to understand the true meaning of Listening. In English, there is a choice of three words to define listening. These three words have different levels. The lowest level is Hearing, which is when we hear a sound accidentally somewhere with a certain radius of the closest distance. For example, if we are indoors, we can hear the sound of cars passing by, but we are not focused on the sound. The second is Overhearing, which is when we overhear something that turns out to have important content to listen to. For example, while in the library, we hear an announcement that the library will be temporarily closed due to repairs. Suddenly our brains and ears respond to the announcement but do not look and see the announcer. The highest level, namely Listening, is that people from the beginning want to listen to what the other person is talking about (Berg, 2019; Kumar, 2021; Isnaini, 2021) then he will arrange himself in such a way as to be able to understand what the other person can say.

In the National Capital Region, Philippines, listening and speaking are included in the four skills: speaking, writing and reading. The skill to hear is also an ability that can be considered difficult compared to other skills. That's because the skill to hear requires a high concentration and level of focus to hear what we hear. Moreover, English has several vocabularies that have the same way of reading as other words. Like "“here”" which means to hear and "here" which means here, the word "then" which means then and the word "than" which means than. The meanings of these four terms are the same, however they have various readings (Kumar, et al., 2022).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Listening is an important medium of information gathering in our life. In addition, listening is the language activity that is used most frequently. As said by Cahyono & Widiati (2019) a new-born baby will first listen to the voices and sounds in his or her environment in order to internalize linguistic input, before he or she speaks and learns to read and write. It has been estimated by Wolvin (2019) that people listen for as much as 55% of their day. The primacy of listening is not just a matter of time on the task. Moreover, Brown (2022) affirms that people do listening than speaking. Hsu (2023) mentions that listening is an important capability of social interactions, and it has been found that people receive new messages more efficiently via listening than reading. From four aspect of skill (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), listening is naturally considered as the primary skill in the acquisition of the native (first) language.

The nature of listening in teaching encompasses various dimensions that are essential for effective language instruction. Listening, as a fundamental skill, plays a crucial role in the learning process and impacts how students acquire and use language. Listening is a fundamental and dynamic aspect of language learning and communication, integral to the development of other language skills such as speaking, reading, and writing. It is an active process that involves focusing attention, processing auditory information, and interpreting meaning based on context and content (Harmer, 2020).

Unlike passive reception, effective listening requires learners to engage actively by concentrating on the speaker, understanding vocabulary and grammatical structures, and responding appropriately. This skill evolves progressively, beginning with the comprehension of simple speech and advancing to more complex and nuanced language use. Context and cultural understanding are crucial, as the meaning of spoken language can vary greatly depending on situational cues, accents, and cultural references. Listening facilitates effective communication by enabling students to understand and engage in conversations, contribute meaningfully to discussions, and provide relevant feedback (Fonseca-Mora, et al, 2021).

Additionally, listening aids in comprehension and learning, allowing students to absorb and interpret information from various sources, including lectures, multimedia, and real-life interactions. It also plays a significant role in motivation and engagement, as incorporating diverse and engaging listening materials can enhance students' interest and investment (Harris, 2018). Understanding the nature of listening helps educators design effective instructional strategies that support the development of this essential skill. Learners must be empowered with listening skills for them to become an effective communicator.



The nature of speaking is inherently interactive and dynamic, involving a complex interplay of cognitive, physical, and social processes. At its core, speaking is a means of verbal communication that requires the coordination of various elements such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and intonation. It is not only about producing sounds but also about effectively conveying ideas and emotions to others. Speaking is influenced by the context in which it occurs, including the speaker's purpose, the audience's expectations, and the social norms governing the interaction. It demands real-time processing, as speakers must rapidly retrieve and organize their thoughts, articulate them clearly, and adjust their language based on feedback from listeners (Gupta, et al, 2018).

Additionally, speaking is shaped by cultural and individual factors, which affect how messages are framed and interpreted. This makes it a highly adaptive skill that evolves with experience and practice, reflecting both personal identity and social dynamics. Overall, the nature of speaking encompasses both the mechanical aspects of producing speech and the nuanced, interactive components of effective communication (Sase, 2022).

### Research Questions

Teaching listening and speaking skills to students is not an easy task, especially for those who do not usually get much exposure to the English language. When researching the use of songs in teaching English, especially for listening and speaking skills. Here are some research questions that could guide this study:

1. What are the lived experiences of teachers that highlight the effectiveness and impact of teaching listening?
2. How do teachers apply pedagogical approaches to motivate learners through listening activities?
3. What insights can be drawn from using songs in teaching listening and speaking to enhance pedagogical strategies in English instruction?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The design and procedure in this case study began with selecting a specific case that aligned with the research objectives, whether it involved an individual, group, organization, event, or process. Researchers then developed a detailed case study protocol that outlined the research questions, objectives, and the boundaries of the case, including its time frame and context. This protocol also specified the data collection methods, which included interviews, observations, document analysis, and surveys, depending on the nature of the case and research goals.

During the procedure phase, data was systematically gathered using the chosen methods, with a focus on capturing rich, detailed information from multiple sources to ensure a comprehensive understanding. The data collection process was conducted ethically, with attention to obtaining informed consent and maintaining confidentiality.

As data was collected, it was organized and analyzed according to the case study protocol, employing techniques such as coding, theme identification, and pattern recognition. The findings were then interpreted in relation to the research questions and theoretical frameworks, leading to insights that were contextualized within the specifics of the case. This structured approach ensured that the case study was methodologically sound, providing valuable, in-depth insights into the phenomenon under investigation. In case study research, the design and procedure were critical to ensure a structured and thorough examination of the case. To avoid bias, a proper step was followed by the researcher in order to obtain useful data (Field, 2018).

### Research Participants

In case study research involving teacher participants, it was essential to establish specific qualifications to ensure that the data collected was both relevant and insightful. In this study, three (3) qualified teacher participants possessed relevant experience and expertise directly related to the case under study. This typically included a background in teaching the subject or grade level being investigated, as well as practical experience within the educational setting of interest. Their qualifications also encompassed advanced degrees or specialized training in areas pertinent to the research focus, such as curriculum development, instructional strategies, or educational psychology.

In addition, participants were all Junior High School teachers in selected public schools in Davao City. They had handled Grade 7 students for almost five years. They demonstrated willingness to engage in the research process, including providing candid feedback and reflecting on their practices.

### Research Instrument

In case study research, the research instrument is a tool or set of tools used to systematically collect and analyze data about the specific case under investigation. This instrument can take various forms, including structured interviews, surveys, observation protocols, and document review checklists. Each instrument is designed to gather detailed and relevant information pertinent to the research questions and objectives. For instance, structured interviews may include a predefined set of questions aimed at eliciting in-depth responses from participants, while observation protocols guide the systematic recording of behaviors or events within the case context (Yegidis, et al, 2018).

Document review checklists help in systematically analyzing existing records, reports, or archival materials related to the case. The choice of research instrument(s) should align with the case study's goals and ensure that the data



collected is rich, relevant, and reliable. The effectiveness of the research instrument is contingent upon its ability to capture comprehensive and accurate data that facilitates a nuanced understanding of the case, thereby contributing valuable insights and findings. In case study research, the research instrument was a tool or set of tools used to systematically collect and analyze data about the specific case under investigation. This instrument took various forms, including structured interviews, surveys, observation protocols, and document review checklists. Each instrument was designed to gather detailed and relevant information pertinent to the research questions and objectives. For instance, structured interviews included a predefined set of questions aimed at eliciting in-depth responses from participants, while observation protocols guided the systematic recording of behaviors or events within the case context (Yegidis, et al., 2018).

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### **Data Analysis**

Analyzing data in case study research involved a systematic approach to uncovering patterns, themes, and insights from the collected information. The process began with organizing and preparing the data, which included transcribing interviews, coding observations, and collating documents. I then engaged in data coding, where I identified and labeled key segments of data according to themes or categories relevant to the research questions. This initial coding was followed by thematic analysis, in which I grouped similar codes into broader themes and patterns, providing a coherent structure to the findings.

I continuously compared data across different sources to ensure that interpretations were consistent and comprehensive. This involved triangulating data from interviews, observations, and documents to validate findings and enhance the reliability of the analysis. Throughout the process, I interpreted the data within the context of the case, relating findings to existing theories and literature. This interpretive phase aimed to provide a deep understanding of the case and answer the research questions. Finally, the analyzed data was synthesized into a detailed narrative or report that highlighted key insights, supported conclusions, and discussed implications for theory and practice. By rigorously analyzing data, I ensured that the case study offered valuable and well-supported contributions to the field (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter discussed the implications and future directions of the study, emphasizing the need to address the immediate concerns and applications of the research findings. The implications were highlighted based on the urgency of the study's results, pointing out how the findings could be applied in real-world contexts or educational practices right away. For example, if the study showed that using songs in language teaching significantly enhanced listening and speaking skills, the implications suggested the immediate adoption of this approach in classrooms.

On the other hand, the future directions section offered guidance to researchers on potential areas for further investigation, such as exploring the long-term impact of using songs on language retention or investigating specific genres of music. By providing these directions, the researcher could build on current knowledge and explore new questions, ensuring the research field evolved with continued exploration and application.

### **Implications**

The result of the study offers significant implications when considered through the frameworks of Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory and Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis. Gardner's theory suggests that individuals have different types of intelligences, which include linguistic, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, logical-mathematical, and naturalistic intelligences. Songs, as a form of multisensory learning, engage a variety of these intelligences, creating a more holistic language learning experience. In particular, songs provide a direct link to musical intelligence, allowing students to engage with the rhythm, melody, and sound patterns of language, helping them connect more deeply to the spoken word.

Through musical intelligence, learners benefit from the natural rhythm and cadence that songs offer. This exposure to rhythmic patterns can improve students' listening comprehension, as they tune in to intonations and stress patterns, essential components of fluent language use. Additionally, linguistic intelligence is fostered as students learn new vocabulary, phrases, and grammatical structures within the context of song lyrics. By engaging with songs, learners are able to experience language in a dynamic, authentic manner, beyond the static nature of textbook sentences, which often lack the emotional and cultural context that music provides.

Gardner's theory also suggests that students possess interpersonal intelligence, the ability to relate to and understand others. Songs, when used in group activities, create opportunities for social interaction. For instance, students can sing together or discuss the meanings and cultural implications of the lyrics, fostering collaboration and deeper engagement with the language. These group dynamics help learners practice speaking and listening in a social context, where they can negotiate meaning, ask questions, and learn from one another. By involving interpersonal communication, songs promote collaborative learning and communication skills.





In addition to interpersonal intelligence, songs also engage intrapersonal intelligence, allowing students to connect with their own feelings and experiences through the emotional content of the music. When students listen to or sing songs that resonate with them emotionally, they are more likely to internalize the vocabulary and language structures used in the song. Emotional engagement enhances memory retention, as learners are more likely to remember words and phrases that evoke strong feelings or are linked to personal experiences. This emotional connection to the language is crucial for language retention and fluency.

In parallel, Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis offers further insight into the benefits of using songs in language teaching. Krashen suggests that language acquisition is most effective when learners' emotional barriers are low, meaning they feel comfortable, motivated, and relaxed. Songs, with their familiar melodies and rhythms, naturally create a relaxed and enjoyable environment for learners. When students are engaged with music, they are less likely to experience anxiety or stress about making mistakes, which can often raise the affective filter and hinder language acquisition. In this sense, songs provide a fun and low-pressure medium for students to practice listening and speaking.

The enjoyment that songs bring also plays a key role in motivation, another factor highlighted by Krashen in the Affective Filter Hypothesis. When students enjoy the process of learning, they are more likely to engage actively and take risks in their language practice. Songs offer an opportunity for learners to interact with language in a playful and creative way, which boosts their intrinsic motivation. This increased motivation lowers the affective filter, allowing students to be more receptive to new language input, thus facilitating language acquisition.

Furthermore, songs can offer immediate feedback, another critical factor in reducing the affective filter. When students sing along or listen to songs, they can hear the correct pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation of the language. This feedback, especially when combined with the repetition of lyrics, allows learners to self-correct and refine their language skills without fear of judgment. Teachers can also provide personalized feedback during or after song-based activities, helping students pinpoint specific areas for improvement in a non-threatening environment.

Another important aspect of using songs in language learning is their ability to expose students to cultural contexts that are integral to understanding the language. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis emphasizes the importance of learners' emotional connection to the material, and songs often provide insight into the cultural and social contexts in which the language is used. Whether through folk songs that reflect traditional values or contemporary pop music that conveys modern-day issues, learners can better understand the language in its cultural context. This exposure deepens their comprehension and enhances their ability to use the language appropriately in different settings.

Additionally, songs often feature colloquialisms, idioms, and slang, which are critical for understanding the informal and conversational aspects of a language. These features are typically absent from textbooks, but through songs, learners can acquire a more natural and authentic grasp of language. Songs can also expose students to a variety of regional accents and dialects, offering a broader understanding of how language differs across various communities. This exposure helps students become more adaptable listeners, capable of understanding different forms of the language in various contexts.

In conclusion, the study of using songs in teaching listening and speaking has profound implications in relation to both Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory and Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis. Songs engage multiple intelligences, such as musical, linguistic, and interpersonal, to create a rich and diverse learning environment. Additionally, songs lower the affective filter by creating a fun, emotionally engaging, and non-threatening space for learners to practice language. Through this combination of emotional, social, and intellectual engagement, songs provide an effective and enjoyable method for enhancing language acquisition, ultimately fostering both linguistic and cultural fluency.

### **Future Directions**

Based on the results of the study of using songs in teaching listening and speaking could focus on exploring the long-term effects of this approach on language retention and fluency. While many studies have highlighted the immediate benefits of song-based learning, further research is needed to examine how consistent use of songs over an extended period influences learners' ability to retain vocabulary, improve pronunciation, and develop overall speaking proficiency. Longitudinal studies could provide insights into whether songs help reinforce language skills beyond the classroom, particularly in real-world communication scenarios, and if the benefits remain as students advance to higher levels of language proficiency.

Another promising direction is to investigate the impact of different musical genres and cultural contexts on language acquisition. Songs come in a wide variety of styles, from classical to hip-hop, and each genre presents its own unique linguistic and cultural features. Future studies could explore whether certain genres are more effective in enhancing specific language skills, such as listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, or pronunciation. Additionally, it would be valuable to study how culturally specific songs such as traditional folk music or contemporary songs in regional dialects help students understand cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and social norms that are integral to language use in different communities.



Exploring the role of technology in enhancing song-based language learning could also be a key area for future research. Digital platforms, such as music streaming services or educational apps, offer opportunities for interactive and personalized song-based learning experiences. Future studies could investigate how technology can be used to provide instant feedback on pronunciation, track progress, and tailor song selections to individual learners' needs. Researchers could also explore how combining songs with other digital tools such as lyric analysis software or voice recognition technology can further enhance students' listening and speaking skills.

Noteworthy, the impact of incorporating songs in various educational contexts such as virtual classrooms or mixed-language environments warrants further exploration. With the increasing prevalence of online learning, it is important to examine how songs can be used effectively in digital or hybrid teaching models. Researchers could explore how virtual platforms facilitate song-based learning and if they offer a unique set of benefits or challenges in comparison to traditional face-to-face settings. Additionally, future studies could look into how songs can bridge language learning gaps in multilingual classrooms, promoting cross-cultural communication and collaboration among students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

For school administrators, one future direction of using songs in teaching listening and speaking is to consider integrating this approach more systematically into the curriculum. Given the positive impact songs have on engagement, pronunciation, vocabulary retention, and cultural understanding, administrators could explore partnerships with language departments to develop song-based lesson plans and resources. Furthermore, administrators could support professional development programs that train teachers in effectively incorporating music into language instruction. This could include workshops on selecting appropriate songs, using them to teach specific language skills, and assessing their impact on student progress. Integrating song-based learning into the curriculum not only promotes a more engaging and inclusive environment but also helps to diversify teaching methods and cater to different learning styles.

For future researchers, a promising direction is to conduct longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects of song-based language learning on listening and speaking skills. While current research has demonstrated the short-term benefits of songs, more data is needed to determine whether these benefits are sustained over time and how they contribute to advanced language proficiency. Researchers could also focus on exploring the most effective genres and types of music for different language levels and specific language skills. For example, examining whether pop songs improve vocabulary retention better than classical music or if certain types of songs enhance listening comprehension more than others would provide valuable insights for educators.

Additionally, future studies could investigate how the use of songs in language learning interacts with modern technologies. With the growth of digital learning tools, researchers could explore how music streaming platforms, educational apps, or voice recognition technology can be used to enhance the effectiveness of song-based learning. Studies could assess how interactive platforms that provide instant feedback or allow students to manipulate song lyrics for analysis can improve learners' speaking and listening abilities. This could also include research on how such digital tools may help overcome barriers related to access to native-speaking teachers or cultural resources in language learning.

Finally, researchers could explore the application of song-based teaching methods in diverse educational contexts, particularly in multilingual or virtual classrooms. As schools continue to adopt hybrid or remote learning environments, it would be important to assess the effectiveness of songs in online or blended classrooms, where engagement can sometimes be a challenge. Furthermore, in multilingual classrooms, songs could serve as an inclusive tool for bridging cultural and linguistic differences, providing opportunities for students from various backgrounds to learn language in a shared, enjoyable context. Research into these areas could provide valuable strategies for schools to adapt song-based language learning to a variety of educational settings.

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