

2016-04-30

# USING MUSIC IN THE ADULT EFL SPEAKING CLASSROOM

Ridwana, Kanita

---

<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11948/1456>

*Downloaded from <http://dspace.library.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd>, Copyright Daffodil International University Library*

## USING MUSIC IN THE ADULT EFL SPEAKING CLASSROOM

**Kanita Ridwana\***

***Abstract:** Music can play an important role in adult EFL classrooms and help adult learners improve their learning process. Adult learners are generally found to be slower learners than regular tertiary EFL learners, especially in a speaking class. Adults have already gathered lots of experience from life which helps them to maintain a "dignity" in the classroom. In speaking classrooms, they are sometimes afraid of losing that "dignity" in public and remain confined within themselves which results in a lack of participation. Even though adult learners are mature, experienced, and have a specific goal for language learning (i.e., better job opportunity, salary, increment, promotion, obtaining better communication skills, etc.), they could be better benefited and learn more effectively if teachers use music in their language lessons. Adult learners possess some characteristics which differentiate them from young generation EFL learners and these factors affect their process of learning a new language. A large number of adult learners are engaged in professions where obtaining fluency in their second language plays an important role. In addition, they have financial and personal responsibilities. So when they come to the class, they are stressed by professional deadlines, work-pressure, financial burdens, family responsibilities, personal problems, tension, and anxiety. By allowing fun and music in class, a teacher can have an excellent opportunity to teach with authentic English materials which help to create a strong footing. Moreover, it helps adult learners to relax by forgetting outside stresses, entertaining them, and motivating them to participate freely. Those who are usually introverted in nature become social and open when they hear songs. Music can be used as a useful tool of learning because most people can remember the words of the songs regardless of the language. Songs also provide the opportunity to improve learners' listening comprehension and colloquial vocabulary. Besides, adult ears may be challenged by pronunciation, rhythms, and intonations in the music. So the selection of music should be done accordingly. Above all, songs provide a congenial atmosphere for adults so they would less inhibited and more willing to participate. But at the same time there are some negative sides to using music. Teachers may fear that their musical work may create a disturbance for neighboring classes or it may not help the regular syllabus. But we cannot deny that a large number of adult learners who had a*

---

\* Senior Lecturer, Department of English, Stamford University Bangladesh

*depressing experience in speaking foreign languages in their academic life may gain an entertaining, encouraging, and enthusiastic learning experience which will result in successful learning outcomes. In order to do so, teachers can introduce music in their classrooms to get a successful learning outcome and motivate adult EFL learners to attain their goals.*

**Keywords:** *Adult learner, EFL learner, music as a tool*

### **Introduction**

*“Music is the universal language of mankind”*

*—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

Is there anything more rewarding for a teacher than to see his students smiling and laughing while they learn? The same point can be applicable for students as well. Students, who are taught and learn in a fun and creative way, enjoy their lessons and love coming to class. Thus, using music in the classroom is a great way for teachers to achieve success with second language learners. Oliver Wendall Holmes (2003) says that music is “to the soul what water is to the body” (p.250). Music can create a positive and pleasant learning environment in today’s diverse adult EFL classroom. It helps to promote variety and fun in learning instead of attending a boring traditional language class. This article investigates the benefits of introducing music in the adult EFL classroom. There are some people who may not like art, dancing, reading books, or watching movies but most people like listening to one kind of music or another. People like different kinds of music. So, teachers can use different types of music for their lessons keeping the benefit to their students and students’ personal choices in mind. Studies have shown that music has many benefits, including improvement of concentration and memory. “Music stabilizes mental, physical and emotional rhythms to attain a state of deep concentration and focus in which large amounts of content information can be processed and learned,” says Chris Brewer (1995) in “Music and Learning.” Besides, it helps to bring a sense of community to a group, helps to motivate learning, relaxes people who are overwhelmed or stressed, incorporating fun and enjoyment in the classroom, and finally helps people absorb material easily without much stress and difficulty. Music also helps to familiarize students with the culture of the target language. It increases vocabulary which leads to improved speaking as well as listening skills. A common problem for EFL teachers is how to deal with a passive class where students are irresponsive and avoid interaction. Music can be a useful tool in the adult EFL classroom to create an appropriate learning environment, to motivate adult learners to speak confidently in front of an audience, to improve

their listening power, and to help them increase their vocabulary. Songs are a useful tool for adult EFL classroom because most people can remember the words of songs without much difficulty and effort.

Outside the classroom, speaking is used twice as much as reading and writing (Rivers, 1981). Listening is also no less important than speaking as it is used twice as often as speaking. Inside the classroom too, speaking and listening are considered as the most often used skills (Brown, 1994). Both teachers and learners have recognized these skills as critical for functioning in an English language context. These skills are also logical instructional starting points when learners have low literacy levels in English or limited formal education. These shortcomings are commonly found in adult learners. That is why improving speaking skills is very important to adult learners for practical reasons. Oral language is an interactive and social process, and using songs is a natural way to experience rich language in a pleasurable way (Woodall & Ziembrosk, 2004). Music can provide fun and enjoyment to adult learners and motivate them to be confident speakers. Singing can build students' confidence by allowing them to enjoy a degree of fluency in English before they have achieved it in speaking. Neurologists have found that language learning and music learning occur in the same area of the brain and there appears to be a parallel in how musical and linguistics syntax are processed (Maess & Kowlsch, 2001). Here, adult learners have the opportunity to listen to pronunciation in a wide range of varieties of the language. As adults are encouraged by tunes, rhymes of the song, they can remember the difficult words very easily and can use it later in their speech or in writing. So songs can easily provide an excellent opportunity for adult students to improve their listening skills which lead them to be better speakers in the future.

Eken (1996, p.46) says that songs can be used to:

- Present a topic, a language point or lexis
- Practice a language point or lexis
- Focus on common errors of the learners in a more direct way
- Encourage extensive and intensive listening skill
- Stimulate attitude and feelings
- Encourage creativity and use of imaginative power
- Provide a relaxed classroom atmosphere
- Bring variety and fun to learning

Lo and Li (1998) offer similar suggestions. They say that songs provide a break from classroom routine and learning. Songs can help to develop a non-threatening classroom atmosphere in which language skills can be enhanced.

### **Who are the adult learners?**

Adult learners are categorized as non-traditional students and they are different from regular students. The National Center for Education Statistics defines adult learners as meeting at least one of the following seven criteria:

- Delay in enrollment in study
- Have a part time job for at least part of their academic session
- Have a full time job
- Considered financially independent
- Have dependent family members
- Single parent
- Do not have a high school diploma

### **Characteristics of Adult Learners**

Adult learners have some characteristics that set them apart from ‘traditional’ students or learners. All adult learners have come to courses with a variety and range of experiences, both in terms of their working life and educational backgrounds. This impacts how and why they participate in learning. While each student has his individual learning needs, there are some characteristics that are common to adult learners: adult learners are responsible, competent and dignified persons as learners (Bernat, 2004). When adult learners participate in classroom conversation or activities, there is a chance that they might make a mistake. This situation needs to be handled effectively. Appropriate steps should be taken to protect adult learners’ dignity and exercise their tolerance.

Adult students have accumulated life experiences. They come to courses with experiences and knowledge in diverse areas. They tend to favor practical learning activities that enable them to draw on their own prior skills and knowledge. Adult learners are realistic and have insights about what is likely to work and what is not. They are readily able to relate new facts to past experiences and enjoy having their own talents and knowledge explored in a teaching situation.

Different adults have different learning styles. They learn at various rates and in different ways according to their intellectual ability, educational level,

personality, and cognitive learning styles. They have their own methodologies and strategies. These differences should be recognized. Teaching strategies must anticipate and accommodate these differing comprehension rates. It is important to identify learners' attitudes and beliefs about second language acquisition through classroom based inquiry. The lack of understanding of EFL learners' preconceived beliefs about how languages are learned can create negative pedagogical implications.

Adult learners are independent and they can take the responsibility of their own learning (Bernat, 2004). They learn best in a democratic, participatory and collaborative learning environment. As a result, they feel encouraged if they are allowed to share their own thought and also work independently by utilizing their merit. Adult learners are intrinsically motivated (Bernat, 2004). Learners increase their efforts when they are motivated by a need, an interest, or a desire to learn. They are motivated by the relevance of the material to be addressed to them and learn better when the material is related to their own needs and interests. For learners to be fully engaged in learning, their attention must be completely focused on the material presented. In fact, motivated adult learners produce better results in their educational life.

Adult learners are goal oriented/relevancy oriented. Adults usually join EFL classes for specific reasons. They have needs that are concrete and immediate such as getting better employment opportunities, promotion, increment, higher salary, etc. They need to know why they are learning something. They can be impatient with long discussions on theory and like to see theory applied to practical problems. They are task- or problem-centered rather than subject-centered. These needs of EFL adult learners should be fulfilled by showing them various paths or giving them appropriate guidelines.

Adult learners filter information in their learning process. They pay attention to that information that is relevant, interesting, and stimulating to them. They are less tolerant of work that does not have immediate and direct application to their own objectives. EFL teachers need to understand that relevant and problem based learning exercises are interesting to adult learners as they will provide opportunity for practical application of materials/theories covered will get their attention and make their learning successful.

Sometimes the adult learners feel deprived when their normal means of communication is restricted (Allwright and Bailey, 1991). Restricting the use of first language in the classroom, according to Allwright and Bailey (1991), diminishes learners as human beings. Attempting to restrict first language has both

advantages and disadvantages. Teachers of adult learners need to decide beforehand up to what extent they will allow the use of first language.

Adult learners are sometimes tired when they attend classes. A lot of students continue classes in spite of work pressure and family responsibility. As a result, they appreciate varied teaching methods that add interest and a sense of liveliness to the class. Adult learners need to consideration for practical logistical issues including child- and/or elder-care, careers, social commitments, time, money, schedules, and transportation.

Adults frequently worry about being the oldest person in their class and are concerned about the impact this may have on their ability to participate with younger students. Creating an environment where all participants feel they can make valuable contributions may work to allay such concerns.

Adult learners may have insufficient confidence. Students may come to class with varying levels of confidence. Some of the students may have had poor prior experiences of education leading to feelings of inadequacy and fear of study and failure. EFL teachers should pay proper attention regarding this matter.

### **Research in this area**

Adult learners in South Africa benefited in language learning while using music in an English course (Puhl, 1989). Some educators get benefit when they use instrumental music as a relaxation and warm up tool, and also when they use it for inspiration for writing activity and background for some activity (Eken, 1996). One study result showed that after listening to Mozart, the college students demonstrated improved short-term spatial reasoning ability (Rauscher, Shaw, & Ky, 1993). Educator Tim Murphey found that lyrics have several features that help second-language learners. For example, they contain short, common words, many personal pronouns, and conversational language. They are also sung at a slower rate with more pauses, and there is repetition of structure and vocabulary (Murphey, 1992). Another benefit of pop song lyrics is that they have many different interpretations and their meanings are fluid (Moi, 1994). Castellanos-Bell (2002) stated that research regarding use of music in EFL classrooms is still in its initial stages and he also stated that more qualitative and quantitative data are needed in this field. Medina (2000) also mentioned the requirement of future research when using music in EFL classrooms. She stated that although the effects of music on role memorization are well documented, there is a shortage of empirical evidence that support the use of music in second language acquisition (Medina, 2002).

### **Reasons for Using Songs in the EFL Classroom**

In the field of adult learning, songs have become an integral part of our language experience. It plays a vital role in the enhancement of adult learners' knowledge. There are three theoretical rationales for using songs in the classroom which are briefly described below:

#### **A. Affective reasons**

Rod Ellis (1985) suggests the research which indicates "learners frequently experience 'language anxiety', a type of situation-specific anxiety associated with attempts to learn an L2 and communicate in it (p.480)". Stephen Krashan's Affective Filter Hypothesis is one of the five proposed hypotheses which explain interestingly how the affective factors relate to the language learning process. It explains why some learners learn effectively while others do not. Rod Ellis (1985) found the following:

The filter controls how much input the learner comes into contact with and how much input is converted into intake. It is 'affective' because factors which determine its strength have to do with the learner's motivation, self-confidence, or anxiety state. Learners with low anxiety have low filters and so obtain and let in plenty of input. Learners with low motivation, little self-confidence, and high anxiety have high filters and so receive little input and allow even less in (p.263).

Krashan (1983) explains that for better learning affective filter of the learner must be weak during the learning period. Krashan states that the most favorable learning occurs in a setting of low anxiety, self-confidence and high motivation. The hypothesis states "acquires with a low affective filter seek and receive more input, interact with confidence, and are more receptive to the input they receive" (Richards & Rodgers, 2008:183). Teachers have recognized the need for their students to maintain a positive attitude while learning a foreign language. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) state that "When anxiety does arise relating to the use of the L2, it seems to be restricted mainly to speaking and listening, reflecting learners' apprehension at having to communicate spontaneously in the L2 . . . . Learners can also experience anxiety as a result of fear of experience of 'losing oneself' in the target culture" (as cited in Rod Ellis.1985:480). Speaking and listening are the skills mostly affected by the affective states. If the filter is strong, the learner will not seek language input and will not be open up for language acquisition. The practical application of the Affective Filter Hypothesis is that teachers must provide a positive atmosphere to motivate adult learners to

speak freely in the EFL classroom. Songs are one of the effective methods for creating a proper relaxed environment for speaking. It removes the anxiety and stress of adult learners motivates them without fear of losing their “dignity” by making mistakes in front of the public. Finally weakens their affective filter of the adult learners and helps producing better foreign language learning.

### **B. Cognitive reasons**

Cognitive research investigates the anatomic structure of brain and its neural functions which suggests that there are important connections between music and language:

Like language, music is a human universal involving perceptually discrete elements organized into hierarchically structured sequences. Music and language can thus serve as foils for each other in the study of brain mechanism . . . (Patel, 2003: 674).

According to Bialystok's (1978) theory of second language learning, there is an interface between learners' explicit and implicit knowledge. Learners' implicit knowledge is developed through exposure to communicative language use and is facilitated by the strategy of 'functional practicing'. 'Functional practicing' is attempts by the learner to maximize exposure to language through communication. Explicit knowledge arises when learners' focus of the language code and it is facilitated by 'formal practicing'. 'Formal practicing' involves with conscious study of the second language or attempts to automatize already learnt explicit knowledge. Automaticity is the performance of a skill without conscious control of it. Gatbonton and Segalowitz (1988) define automaticity as a "component of language fluency which involves both knowing what to say and producing language rapidly without pauses." It results from the graded process of proceduralization of L2 learning. In the area of cognitive psychology, Anderson (1992) expounds a model of skill acquisition, according to which persons use procedures to apply their declarative knowledge about subject in order to solve problems. After repeated practice, these procedures develop into production rules that the individual can use to solve the problem, without accessing long-term declarative memory. Performance speed and accuracy improve as the learner implements these production rules to the learning. DeKeyser (1997) tested the application of this model to his L2 language automaticity. He found that subjects developed increasing proficiency in performing tasks related to the morphosyntax of artificial language, Autopractan, and performed on a learning curve typical of the acquisition of non-language cognitive skills of the learners. This evidence conforms Anderson's general

model of cognitive skill acquisition, supports the idea that declarative knowledge can be transformed into procedural knowledge.

The main cognitive reason for using songs in the classroom is to develop automaticity of the adult learners. Obtaining automaticity is important for adult speaking classroom because adults are often found fumbling on sentences and are not capable of expressing their thoughts and ideas in proper way. In order to achieve automaticity in the language development process, songs help a lot. Gatbonton and Segalowitz (1988) state that we must "place students in an environment in which it is appropriate to use target utterances in a genuinely communicative fashion" (p. 473-492). The nature of songs is fairly repetitive and helps teachers to create real communicative environment so that students can be able to create their own progressive sentences promptly with much ease and enjoyment.

### **C. Linguistic Reasons**

In addition to automaticity, there exists a linguistic reason for using song in adult EFL classroom. Fonseca Mora (2000) asserts that songs have a positive outcome on the students' language acquisition and that lexical patterns stored in long-term musical memory can be retrieved with ease at a later date for mental rehearsal, memorization or during oral interaction. Wilcox (1995) studied the pronunciation of target language vocabulary in adult learners through use of music cues to aid prosodic memory. There are some songs which offer great opportunities for students to develop conversational language. For example, a song by Bruce Springsteen "My Best Was Never Good Enough" is an example of a song that presents colloquial language use. This song contains some phrases like "Every cloud has a silver lining." and "Every dog has his day." Using songs in the adult EFL classroom will help students to be familiar with real conversational language, become more fluent in English and also help them to enrich their vocabulary. Vocabulary building is very important for adult learners, because they are full of new ideas and experience but unable to express those thoughts in words because of shortage of enough vocabulary. Having music as a classroom learning tool they can happily and effectively enrich their word stock and unconsciously use these new words in their speech. This helps to remove their "language anxiety" to learn an L2 and communicate in it.

### **Strategies to use songs**

#### **A. Listening and Oral Activities**

Moriya (1988) stated the importance of using songs for Asian learners for their pronunciation practice since there are many phonic differences exist between

Asian languages and English. Songs help students to discover compacting and stretching of the stream of English speech. For example, the reduction of the auxiliary have to the sound /uv/ can be heard in the song by Toni Braxton "You've Been Wrong for So Long" (2000). Also, the change of word final t + word initial y to /ch/ can be heard in a line from the Tracy Chapman Song "All that You Have Is Your Soul" (1989), where the singer says, "Don't you eat of a bitter fruit."

In fact, Students using different languages can benefit from these lyrics. For example, they can summarize the theme of a song or they may engage in giving oral presentation about a song. Here, we can select a song by Mark Salling and Matthew Morrison's "Somewhere over the Rainbow". The rhyme and lyric of the song is attractive and understandable to general students. The students will listen to the song once and again the song will be repeated again and they will do fill in the blanks (appropriate preposition, missing word) work. In addition, some true-false activity can be introduced in which students will participate orally that which statements are right or wrong and why these statements are right or wrong according to the lyrics of the song. These language activities can be made according to the understanding level of particular EFL students. In order to engage the whole class students can write a response sheet regarding what they have enjoyed, learned new and write comments about presentation. There are many songs tell stories and these stories can be rewritten or retold to practice narrative or summarizing skills. Sometimes students can hear the first half of these types of songs and can be asked to predict what is there at the end of the song. This activity helps building their predicting ability. Finally students will enjoy the complete song and compare and contrast what they have predicted and what is really there in the song.

### **B. Reading and Writing Activities**

In order to get benefit from songs, students can be involved in writing and reading activities. One example of such writing activity might be involving them in speaking responses to songs, such as, comparing music in students' home country with music in the United States. By doing such activities they can again develop comparing and contrasting skill.

Students can also be involved in word choice activity by exercising fill in the blanks (cloze) during or after listening to a song. Moreover, words can be deleted in order to practice prepositions, nouns, key words (Griffie, 1990). An example of this might be, in the famous Enya song "Only Time" (2001), the auxiliary "can" could be omitted. ("Who can say where the road goes, where the

day flows, only time. And who can say if your love grows, as your heart chose, only time.")

Another activity might be to break the lyrics into lines as they listen to the song and engage students to organize them in the correct order. In this activity students can be grouped or they can do it individually. The song can be played several times so that the students can hear it properly. Another way to do this activity is to divide the students into several groups with sets of strips and see which group can organize the strips in the correct order first.

Dividing students in groups while doing activities can help build teamwork skills. After hearing a small song students can work in small groups and put the lyrics together. This involves reaching a decision together regarding tense, word choice, parts of speech etc. Finally students can compare what they heard and what they wrote at the end of this activity. Students can also be asked to complete writing prompt or answer a question from the point of view of the narrator or the other characters in a song. For example, the Nancy Wilson's song "Guess Who I Saw Today" (1960) is sung by a wife catching her husband's romantic lunch with another woman. The prompt of the song could require the students to respond to the accusations in writing, saying what the husband might say.

### **C. Cultural Knowledge Activities**

Knowledge of culture can be enhanced by introducing music in adult EFL classroom. Songs used in English classes can, in one way shed light on interesting musical traditions in countries and can also teach adults to appreciate other cultures. Songs can be used as a great source of history, custom, ethics and diversity. For example, hearing the recordings of freedom songs from the civil rights movement can be a strong accomplishment to watching Martin Luther King Junior's "I have a dream" speech on video. So, we can say that for adult learners music can be source of a rich mine where they get the information about human relations, ethics, customs, humor, history and regional and cultural differences. (Lems, 2001)

### **D. Vocabulary Building Activities**

In an adult EFL classroom, songs can help build new vocabulary to students. Students can write down the words unfamiliar to them and then try to find out their meaning. They can also write the synonym and antonym of those new words. Another activity might be students can be divided into two groups and one group will tell a word from the song and the other group will tell the

antonym of that word. Sometimes, songs may have idioms that might be difficult to explain, depending on the level of the students. Many a time, the expression of a phrase can be confusing to English language learners and may need to be discussed prior to listening to the song.

### **Research Methodology**

**A research work was conducted on the using music in Adult EFL Speaking classroom.**

#### **a) Participants**

All the participants in this study are private university undergraduate students who have obtained a diploma degree on a field of engineering or architecture but did not achieve their bachelor degree. The majority of them have long or short term study breaks between attainment of their diploma and undergraduate study. Private university students are chosen here because in Bangladesh adult learners are not allowed to enroll in undergraduate programs in public universities. Moreover, students of private universities are more oriented to the English Language learning environment. 60 students were randomly selected from Stamford University Bangladesh, who have either completed or are still going through their English language credit courses (i.e. speaking class). Among these 60 students, 20 students are from English Department, 20 from Electrical and Electronic Engineering, 10 from Architecture department, 5 from Film and Media, and 5 from Computer Science.

Their age range spans from 26-48 years. A majority of them (with few exceptions) are engaged in part time / full time job along with their academic study. Only a limited number of students are full time bachelor degree students. All of these students had English as a compulsory course in their Secondary and Higher Secondary levels and have completed English Composition course in tertiary level study.

#### **b) Data Collection Process**

The survey was conducted with a questionnaire consisting of 14 questions among above mentioned group of students after taking public speaking class for four months of a full trimester.

The class was conducted in a traditional way of a language class for the first two months of the trimester. In the first two months of the traditional class, the teachers provided guidelines; practical tips to the students about how to deliver speeches effectively before audience. After attending few time practices students

were asked to present a self-introductory speech and an informative speech before their classmates whereas teachers ranked their grades. In the later two months of the course, music (as a learning tool) was introduced in the classroom and the students were asked to participate on music based task (appendix-II) and they responded in a very enthusiastic way. Then, at the end of the trimester, students were given the survey questionnaire (appendix- I) in which they have to give their opinion regarding their classroom based experience.

- Question no. 1-11 were a 5 point lickert scale format which ranged from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. They are rated as follows: Strongly Disagree-1, Disagree-2, Neutral-3, Agree-4, and Strongly Agree-5. Question no.12 was a multiple choice type and question no.13 & 14 were an open ended question.
- Question no. 1 was designed to find out whether classroom environment is important for students in their speaking in or not and can music create that effective motivating environment in classroom.
- Question no. 2 was designed to find out what is the chief purpose of adult learners EFL learning-whether the adult learners are extrinsically motivated or intrinsically motivated.
- Question no. 3 was designed to find out the personal factors that makes learning difficult for adult learners.
- Question no. 4 & 5 were designed to find out whether anxiety and fear of humiliation created obstacles in adult learners natural and spontaneous speaking outcome. Is there any past negative speaking experience leaves an impact on adult learners speaking outcome?
- Question no. 6 was designed to find out whether state of anxiety really influence students' affective learning or not and can music lessen or remove that anxiety.
- Question no. 7 & 8 were designed to find out the skills which students find out to be most affected by affective states.
- Question no. 9 was designed to find out students' opinion regarding teacher's role in lowering affective filters.
- Question no. 10 was designed to find out the students' opinion of the role of music as ice-breaking tool and to develop automaticity and fluency in speaking skill.

- Question no.11 was designed to find out whether only music based activity is enough for making students fluent EFL speaker in real life.
- Question no. 11 was designed to find out whether students did participate in music based activity in language class room before or not.
- Question no.12 & 13 were designed to find out the positive and negative factors of using music based activity in classroom.

### c) Results

The survey results show that, majority of the students have participated in the music based activity for the first time ever in their life. Only a few number of students had prior experience in attending music-based work before and overall they were enthusiastic about the musical activity. Most of the participants find classroom environment to be a major factor influencing their EFL learning and they think that music can successfully improve that environment. It is also found that the main purpose of adult learners EFL learning is to get better job opportunity, promotion, increment and such practical reasons as a large number of adult learners have dependent family members. Fear of making mistakes and losing social dignity in front of classmates makes adult learners uncomfortable and anxious and that obstructs his natural ability to deliver speech in public. Sometimes negative past experience tends adult learners poor self-confidence which results in bad performance in speaking class. Music based language work lessons stress level, helps to forget outside stress and creates congenial atmosphere in the classroom. Learners also find that speaking and listening are most affected skills influenced by affective states and music based activity helps to improve that affective state of the adult learners. It also helps to develop automaticity and fluency of the learners. The role of teacher plays a very important factor in this context. At the end, the students believe that participation in music-based activity, students will be encouraged to participate enthusiastically in the activities but the main success depends on to develop their habit of listening and practice speaking in the target language outside classroom.

In analyzing the students' professional status we can see that among 60 participants 20 participants (33.33%) are full time job holders, 35 participants (58.33%) are part time job holders and only 5 participants (8.33%) are full time students. So, we can see that total 55 participants (91.66%) carry on their studies along with their academic studies. Among these 60 participants, 40 participants (66.67%) said that they are self-dependent whereas 20 participants (33.33%) said that they are financially dependent on other members of the family.

In response to Q.1 we can see that 42 participants (70%) strongly agreed, 10 participants (16.66) agreed and 8 participants (13.33%) were neutral. It supports

that most of the participants think classroom environment is really important for students' better motivation level and music as a tool really helps students to improve classroom environment.

In response to Q.2 we find that, 48 participants (80%) strongly agreed, 7 participants (11.67%) agreed and 5 participants (8.33%) disagreed with the idea. We find that promotion, increment, better salary, and better job opportunity are the most effective driving force behind most of the adult learners EFL learning. As a result, we can say that adult learners are intrinsically motivated which means that they learn for their self-development and competency. But at the same time, promotion increment, better salary structure are the driving factors behind their EFL learning which shows that they are extrinsically motivated also.

In response to Q.3 we find that 50 participants (83.33%) strongly agreed, 5 participants (8.3%) agreed and 5 participants (8.3%) disagreed with the idea. So we can see that a large number of adult learners think that their professional and personal responsibilities creates stress in classroom and hampers normal speech delivery.

In response to Q. 4 we can see that 45 participants (75%) strongly agreed, 12 participants agreed (20%) and only 3 participants (5%) remained neutral. In response to Q.5, we find that 35 participants strongly agreed, 5 participants (8.33%) agreed, 10 participants (16.67%) were neutral, whereas 10 participants (16.67%) disagreed. As a result, we can see that majority of participants feel that fear of making mistakes and losing dignity in front of public makes an impact on the successful speech delivery. A good number of participants think that their negative past classroom experience influences their present performance in class.

In response to Q. 6 we find that 45 participants (75 %) strongly agreed, 10 participants (16.67%) agreed and 5 participants (8.3%) remained neutral. So, we can find that a large no of participants believe that music based activities helps them a lot to lessen their anxiety, makes them confident and to motivate them to participate.

In response to Q.7, 45 participants (75%) strongly agreed that speaking is the most-affected skill by affective states. In response to Q.8, 35 participants (58.33%) agreed that listening is another skill highly affected by affective states. So, we can find that speaking and listening are the skills that mostly affected by anxiety states.

In response to Q. 9 we find that 48 participants (80%) strongly agreed to the idea which shows that most participants believe that the role of the teachers in making the class effective is very important.

In response to Q. 10, we find that 50 participants (83.33%) strongly agreed to the idea. That means that a large number of participants believe that music helps to develop the automaticity of speaking.

In response to Q.11, 43 participants (71.66%) strongly agreed to and 31 participants (51.66%) agreed to the idea. It means that quite a good number of participants are conscious that practicing music based task in classroom is not enough to build up effective speaking skill. Outside classroom, sufficient practice is very important for achieving goal.

In response to Q.12, 50 participants (83.33%) expressed that they never use music as a tool in classroom where as only 10 participants (16.67%) told that they rarely used music in classroom.

In answer to open ended Q.13 &14, participants came up with different responses and gave some valuable feedbacks which are given below:

48 (80%) participants were amazed to hear music in classroom as they have never thought of having music inside classroom. They discovered it as a source of entertainment and learning all together.

40 (63.33%) participants suggested that selection of the music is important for the participation of all students in the classroom activity.

35 (58.33%) Participants believed that it is mainly the credit goes to the teacher who plans how to use it effectively in classroom. The success of the story mainly lies on that ground.

#### **A few suggestions and recommendations for music selection and use it in language class**

When selecting songs for adult EFL classroom, teachers should be careful as the success of using music in classroom mainly depends on proper selection of the songs. In my classroom, I have observed that the following points to be considered carefully to achieve the full benefit of using music in adult classroom:

- Songs in the classroom should be selected carefully in order to avoid violence, sex and explicit languages. Material designs on songs should be prepared considering the need and proficiency level of the students.
- Vocabulary load should be appropriate to the proficiency level of the students. As adult learners come to the class with diverse areas of

experience and knowledge, so the same song may not be appropriate for all the same level of students. So the teacher should be careful in selecting appropriate song for the class.

- Lyrics of the song should be clear and loud enough for the students but at the same time should be taken care that it may not create disturbance for the neighboring classrooms.
- Using short, slow songs for beginning-level students and activities such as creating song, word puzzles, drawing a song, or displaying related pictures and videos with the song can be effective for students. With higher level of students fast and longer songs with less high frequency vocabulary items can be appropriate. If the students cannot understand the lyrics perfectly by listening to song, the teacher may give them a print out of the lyrics once the song has finished or may try to work with another song.
- While selecting songs for adult EFL classroom, students' choices should be the prior consideration. If the students do not like the song, they may feel bored and may not feel interested in participating song related task. Another point to be noted here that sometimes students may enjoy songs but they are reluctant to do the language task based on that song. In this situation, the teacher should ensure that all students are participating in classroom activity.
- There are some teachers as well as some students who may not like music based tasks but the number of people in this category is very low.

### **Conclusion**

We can conclude that in order to create effective learning environment in adult EFL classroom music can play a vital role. The survey conducted for this paper also supports this conclusion. Most of the participants in this survey feel that music can play an important role to lessen the anxiety and stress level of the students and motivate them to participate freely and effectively. In fact, music can help create an appropriate learning environment for adults, improve their listening power, increase their vocabulary, and can raise their confidence level to cope with their learning environment. In conclusion we can state that more research is needed in this area regarding how to create an effective learning environment by using songs those can help to improve the speaking skill of adult EFL learners.

## References

1. Allwright, D. & Bailey, K. (1991). *Focus on Learning in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Anderson, J.R. (1992). "Automaticity and the ACT theory". *American Journal of Psychology* 105 (2): 165-180. doi.10.2307/1423026. JSTOR 1423026. PMID 1621879.
3. Brown, H.D. (1994). *Teaching by principles; an interactive approach to language pedagogy*. New York, NY: *Englewood Cliffs*.
4. Brewer, Chris Boyd (1995). *Music and Learning. Seven Ways to Use Music in the Classroom*. Tequesta, Florida. Retrieved: [http://education.jhu.edu/PD/new horizons](http://education.jhu.edu/PD/new%20horizons)
5. Bernal, Eva (2004). HLT Magazine, September 04: Major Article 02; Macquarie University, Australia
6. Castellanos-Bell, C. (2002). Rhythms of the classroom. *Language Magazine*, 34.
7. DeKeyser, R.M. (1997). "Beyond explicit rule learning: Automatizing second language morphosyntax" *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 19: 195-222. doi:10.1017/s0272263197002040.
8. Eken, D. K. (1996). Ideas for using songs in the English language classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, 34(1), 46-47.
9. Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
10. Griffee, D. T. (1990). Hey baby! Teaching short and slow songs in the ESL classroom. *TESL Reporter*, 23(4), 3-8.
11. Gatbonton, E. & Segalowitz, N. (1988). Creative automatization: Principles for promoting fluency within a communicative framework. *TESOL Quarterly*, 22, 473-492.
12. Krashen, S. D. (1983). *Principles and practices in second language acquisition*. Oxford, England: Pergamon Press.
13. Lems, K. (1996). *For a song: Music across the ESL curriculum*. Paper presented at the annual convention of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Chicago. (Ed No. 396 524).
14. Lems, Kirsten (2001). Using Music in the Adult ESL Classroom: "Eric Digest". n.p., n.pag.
15. Maess, B. & Koelsch, S. (2001). Musical syntax is Broca's area: An MEG study. *Nature Neuroscience* 4, 540-545.
16. Murphey, T. (1992). The discourse of pop songs. *TESOL Quarterly*, 26(4), 770-774.
17. Medina, S. L. (2000). *The effects of music upon second language vocabulary acquisition*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. Ed 352834).
18. Malone, Samuel A. (2003). *Learning about Learning*. London. Chartered Institute of Personal and Development, 250.
19. Medina, S. L. (2002). Using music to enhance second language acquisition: From theory to practice. In J. Lalas and S. Lee (Ed.) *Language, literacy and academic development for English language learners*. Boston: Pearson Education Publishing.
20. Maess, B., & Koelsch, S. (2001). Musical syntax is processed in Broca's area: An MEG study. *Nature Neuroscience* 4, 540-545.

21. Moi, C. M. (1994). Rock poetry: The literature our students listen to. *Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning*, 2, 56-59.
22. Mora Fonseca (2003). Foreign language acquisition and melody singing. *ELT Journal*, 54(2).146-152. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/54.2.146>
23. Moriya, Y. (1988). *English speech rhythm and its teaching to non-native speakers*. Paper presented at the annual convention of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. Chicago. (Ed No. 303 033).
24. National Centre for Education Statistics. USA.
25. Patel, A. (2003). Language, music, syntax and the brain. *Nature Neuroscience*, 6(7), 674-681. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/nm.1082>
26. Poppleton, C. (2001). Music to our ears. *American Language Review*, 5(1), 23-26.
27. Puhl, C. A. (1989). *Up from under: English training on the mines*. (Report on 1988 research project conducted at Gold Field Training Services). Stellenbosch, South Africa: University of Stellenbosch. (ED No. 335 864).
28. Rauscher, F. H., Shaw, G., & Ky, K. (1993). Mozart and spatial reasoning. *Nature*, (365) 611.
29. Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2008). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
30. Rivers, W. M (1981). *Teaching foreign language skills* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
31. Wilcox, W. (1995). Music cues from classroom singing for second for second language acquisition: Prosodic memory for pronunciation of target vocabulary by adult non-native English speakers. *Doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas: UMI 9544866*
32. Woodall, L & Ziembski (2004) Promoting literacy through music, (online) available: <http://www.songsforteaching.com>

### Appendix I

#### Survey Questionnaire on Using Music in Adult EFL Classroom

Below are a number of statements with which you may agree or disagree. Please indicate your opinion by ticking the boxes below which best indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Your statement will be kept confidential.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Dependent/Self-dependent

Professional Status: Part time job holder /full time job holder/ full time student

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Using music in your language classroom acts as an effective motivating tool to create a proper motivating environment in classroom.					
2. A major motivation for you to learn English is, you want to get a good job, promotion, better salary, status and such practical benefits					
3. Your family care responsibility, career, time and money, social responsibilities, time management create pressure on your normal delivery in classroom.					
4. Fear of making mistakes and to lose dignity and respect in front of your classmates makes you anxious and obstructs you to speak before audience.					

5. At times, your past negative experience of your learning creates hindrance in your response in classroom					
6. Music based activity lessens your stress level, helps you to forget outside stresses and motivates you to response confidently.					
7. Speaking is the most-affected skill by affective states					
8. Listening is another highly-affected skill by affective states					
9. Teachers can play very important role in creating positive classroom environment.					
10. Music helps to create environment to response promptly and automatically					
11. Students should not expect that the classroom environment to be 100% congenial for them and they will be a fluent speaker only by using music based activity in classroom; otherwise they can grow habit of listening and practice speaking in the TL ( Target Language) outside classroom.					

12. Did you ever use music based classroom activity before undertaking this course?

a. yes-always      b. sometimes      c. rarely      d. no-never

13. According to your view –what are the factors that music can bring into classroom?

14. What are the difficulties that you face in participating in musical work?



2. b) Pick up three verbs from the above stanza:

- i. ii. iii.

[Student's Answer: i. wish ii. wake up iii. melt]

3. Tick True/False in the following sentences.

- a. A lullaby is a kind of a story.  
True/False[ Student's answer: false]
- b. The singer of the song wants to fly like the birds.  
True/False[ Student's answer: true]
- c. The birds fly right under the rainbows.  
True/False[Student's answer: false]
- d. The singer eats lemon drops in the song.  
True/False[Student's answer: false]

4. Read the following stanza:

Somewhere over the rainbow  
Bluebirds fly  
Birds fly over the rainbow  
Why, then, oh, why can't I...?

5. Briefly describe what the speaker is expressing in these lines.

[Student's answer: The speaker regrets if bluebirds can fly over the rainbow, then why cannot I able to fly?]