

BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF MUSIC ON EFL LEARNING

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Abstract. *This paper explores the attitudes of Serbian tertiary-level EFL students towards doing a particular type of language exercise, a cloze test, and their attitudes towards music-based cloze tests in particular, as well as their general attitudes towards the inclusion of music into EFL classes at university level of study. It is comprised of two parts. The theoretical part reviews reference materials related to significant effects of music on FL learning in general and EFL learning in particular. The empirical part presents the results of the empirical research conducted with fourth-year students of the English Department, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš. The method used was descriptive together with the scaling technique and the five-level Likert scale consisting of 5 items. The first two items tested the students' attitudes towards conventional cloze tests, the third item examined their attitude towards music-based cloze tests, and the remaining two items tested the students' attitudes towards the integration of music-based exercises into EFL classes and the beneficial effects of music on EFL learning. The results of the empirical research confirmed the starting premise, i.e. that tertiary-level EFL students consider cloze tests important for the improvement of their proficiency in English and that they agree with the statement that the use of music in their classes is beneficial for improving their skills.*

Key words: *Serbian tertiary-level EFL students, cloze test, music-based language exercises, beneficial effects of music*

1. INTRODUCTION

The use of music in the context of foreign language (FL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) learning is not new. As early as Bartle (1962), Richards (1969) or Jolly (1975), scholars have emphasised the benefits of using music in a language acquisition context for both linguistic reasons and for the motivational interest it creates in language learners. Numerous researches have proved the beneficial effects of music on FL acquisition, development of language skills and motivational and cultural aspects

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(Engh2013a; Jamouille2017; Tse 2015). This scientific evidence is in concord with the fact that music and language are closely connected. The relationship between language and music has been documented throughout history (Abbott 2002; Kao & Oxford 2014; Lieb2008; Patel 2010; Stansell 2005), in fact, history itself has been encoded in the lyrics of songs, i.e., oral tradition (Patel 2010; Stansell 2005). Oral tradition is defined as “the first and still most widespread mode of human communication...[it] refers to a dynamic and highly diverse oral-aural medium for evolving, storing, and transmitting knowledge, art, and ideas” (Britannica, 2010: para. 1). This strong relationship between music and language is substantiated by research in the fields of cognitive science, anthropology, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, first language acquisition (FLA) and second language acquisition (SLA).

“Music had been used on occasion with the Audio-lingual Method in language teaching classrooms to reduce the boredom that could occur from repetitive drills from the 1950s through to the 1970s (Bartle1962; Kanel 2000) and later, the use of classical instrumental music was used with the goal to produce a relaxed state of mind that makes the brain receptive to inputs and activates the subconscious in Suggestopedia methodology (Lozanov 1978; see also Bancroft 1978)” (Engh 2013: 113).

Nevertheless, a greater demand for the pedagogical material needed for the use of music in an FL classroom was felt only after Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task Based Learning (TBL) approaches became prevalent (Griffiee, 2010). Parallel to the undeniable fact that music and language are closely connected, a foreign language teachers’ intuitive feeling that music has mostly positive effects on their learners’ accomplishments, regarding their performance at the linguistic level is also present. Yet, the use of music in FL classrooms is still occasional. This can be proved by the results of an online questionnaire about the practices of FL teachers in 2005–2006 compared to 2013–2014, devised by Ludke and Morgan. It examined whether the increased scientific interest in research about music and FL learning was reflected in the extent and ways in which teachers from different countries used music in the classroom. The results showed that the actual use of music did not notably change and that songs were used mainly with beginners. Two main reasons are suggested in order to explain “the lack of crossover between stated teacher attitudes and stated teacher present classroom practice” (Engh 2013a in Degrave 2019: 412). One reason is that adequate material be used in the classroom is not always easy to find. According to Tse (2015: 88), more than 60% of the surveyed teachers claim that they “do not have enough resources”, that “there are inadequate song materials”, and that they “find it arduous to find suitable songs for classroom use”. Another reason is that teachers sometimes lack theoretical knowledge that could help them decide what music to use in the classroom. It can be concluded that

“while many teachers intuitively felt music was beneficial in teaching the English language, there was also the perception that there was a lack of understanding of the theoretical underpinnings that supported such a choice. Therefore, some educators felt unable to defend the decision to champion the use of music in the classroom to administrators, business English students or those in a predominantly exam-focused environment” (Engh 2013: 113).

Given this contradiction between the occasional incorporation of music into FL classes, on one hand, and foreign language teachers’ positive attitudes to the use of music, on the other,

there is an apparent need for more empirical research in this field. The outcome would be the development of more materials as a resource to be used by FL teachers. The empirical research presented in this paper aims at examining tertiary-level EFL students' attitudes towards the effects of music on the improvement of their knowledge of English, particularly on their achieving better results in doing one type of language exercise - the cloze test.

1.1. The subject of the paper

This paper examines and analyses the attitude of tertiary-level Serbian EFL students towards three important issues: a traditional open cloze test, a cloze test based on the lyrics of the song they have listened to prior to doing the cloze test and the benefits of incorporating music into EFL classes at university level of study. The starting premise is that, given the students' results in their grammar and use of English examination tests, even proficient students of English are not enthusiastic about doing cloze tests and that their results would be much better if they were given a music-based cloze test.

1.2. The goal of the research

The goal of this paper and the empirical research conducted with the Serbian EFL students is to prove the beneficial impact of music, rock music in particular, on the results that tertiary-level students of English can achieve when doing cloze tests. A more general goal of the empirical research is to demonstrate that music-based exercises should be integrated into EFL classes at the university level of study. The paper sets up two hypotheses:

- 1) Serbian students of English consider cloze tests important for the improvement of their proficiency in English, but they often show a reluctance to do them.

This hypothesis is based on studying the fourth-year students' results in doing a cloze test in their final grammar and use of English examination test, which is part of the final examination for the academic course Contemporary English Language 7. The tests that we have analyzed for the purposes of this paper are those of the January examination term in 2019. The results of this preliminary analysis will be presented later, but not in great detail since it is not the subject matter of the paper but only a point of reference.

- 2) Tertiary-level Serbian EFL students think that music-based cloze tests are enjoyable to do, which consequently implies their positive attitude towards music-based language exercises and an integration of music into EFL classes.

1.3. The corpus

The corpus is comprised of the attitudes that the fourth-year students of English demonstrated when doing the purposefully constructed questionnaire. The questionnaire contained five items (statements) and was constructed as the traditional five-level Likert scale. The students who participated in the research were required to select one of the multiple-choice responses.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework is based on relevant papers related to the beneficial effects of music on FL learning and prospects for its integration into FL classes. Engh (2013) suggests that the survey of the literature should examine "academic perspectives from within the field

of applied linguistics” (Engh 2013: 114) so that connections can be made to the field from other disciplines “that argue that there is a firm empirical, theoretical and pedagogical basis to consider for the use of music as an aid in language acquisition” (Ibid 114). His survey of the literature offers a comprehensive review of relevant papers and studies (Engh 2013), especially because of the fact that the author examines this literature considering several categories, significant for the understanding of the relationship between music and FL learning. Some of these categories, such as Sociological Considerations, Cognitive Science, First Language Acquisition and Second Language Acquisition are relevant for the empirical research presented in the paper.

2.1. Sociological considerations

Various papers emphasise the anthropological aspects of music-FL learning relationship, the characteristic of music and language learning as collective activities, the potentiality of music to help FL teachers to remove boundaries between various communities and cultures that their students belong to and to provide “a window into the frames of reference and values of the peoples whose language we are learning” (Candlin 1992: ix). Moreover, Murphey (1990) states that the connection of song to the development of human language and linguistic development of individuals is anthropologically relevant. According to Livingstone (1973), humans developed song before speech, which has never been proven but which raises the issue of first language acquisition in childhood, usually achieved through songs chanted by parents and caregivers. Moreover, the preservation of ballads, oral tradition, odes, stories of the tribe and epic poetry was enabled by the use of songs, passed on from one generation to another, which only supports the interconnectedness between music and language. This kind of activity, singing by parents or individual storytellers, has developed as a collective activity. Thus, “the use of song in the language classroom enhances social harmony (Huy Le 1999), creates a safe space to experience learning collectively and contributes to the building of a community (Lens 1996, Lake 2003), all of which are essential factors for effectively attaining teaching and learning goals” (Engh 2013: 114). Being both an individual and collective activity, learning a foreign language can benefit greatly from music since its use promotes “the specific feeling of belonging to a cohesive community that many teachers explicitly strive to establish for their learners in the classroom” (ibid: 114). According to some authors (Nagy & Herman 1987), music can be used to overcome differences between various communities to which students of a foreign language belong. Additionally, due to the fact that today young people learn English (in particular) from an early age and mostly outside of the official institutions of education, some scholars (Medina 1990) propose that non-traditional teaching methods be applied. Thus, Cheung (2001) states that music bridges gaps between formal and informal learning, Huy Le (1999) emphasises that it bridges the gap between teacher and student as well, whereas other authors (Jenkins & Dixon 1983, Harwood 1998) believe that through music, students are introduced to a more natural and authentic language that they can practice outside the classroom. This supports Murphey’s (1992a) argument that “the school environment is the only place in society not using music and song to its full potential” (Engh 2013: 115). Although a universal language, music is also culturally specific, this means that it can be used to teach cultural norms and ideals of the target language (Gravenall 1945, Jolly 1975). Pop culture, for instance, is a global phenomenon associated with the cultures of the western societies, particularly English-speaking countries. Studying English, young people frequently identify themselves with those cultures, considered to be more advanced and

wealthier than the cultures of their own. Therefore, pop music, as the backbone of this youth culture, is a helpful tool in the hands of EFL teachers who want to enhance their students' linguistic performance and competence by validating "their music", "their language" and "their culture" (Hamelin 1987, Domoney & Harris 1993).

2.2. Cognitive science

Studies in the field of cognitive science exploring the structure of the brain and its neural functions with the purpose of proposing that language and music converge and overlap significantly are numerous due to both the increase of sophisticated neuroscience technology and an increased interest in the neural and functional structure of language and music. Cognitive science research proves that language and music are related. Yet, the issue of the manner in which this connection occurs is a matter of some contradiction. Neuropsychology states that musical and linguistic elements may work together as discrete domains, that they are processed in different hemispheres of the brain (Borchgrevink 1982), which turns the concurrent use of language and music into a powerful pedagogical tool in FL learning and that music parallels the perception of language (Jackendoff 1991, 2006). A study of song lyrics suggests "that the monitoring of speech and music in songs is performed by independent neural processors" (Peretz 2002: 174). However, recent neuroimaging data indicate that musical structure is processed in language areas of the brain (Patel, Edward, Ratner, Besson & Holcomb 1998, Koelsch, Gunter & Friederici 2000, Koelsch et al. 2002), "localized in Broca's area and its right-hemisphere homologue, in areas involved in syntactic analysis during auditory language comprehension ... indicating that these regions process syntactic information that is less language-specific than previously believed" (Maess, Koelsch, Gunter & Friederici 2001: 540). This leads to the conclusion that our brain recognises "aspects of linguistic and musical sequences in a similar manner" (Engel 2013: 116). Patel (2003) proposes a resolution to this theoretical contradiction by stating that it leads to "the hypothesis that syntax in language and music share a common set of processes (instantiated in front brain areas) that operate on different structural representations (in posterior brain areas)" (Patel 2003: 674).

2.3. First language acquisition

Papers related to first language acquisition also support the benefits of the use of music in language learning. "Music and language are the two ways that humans communicate and express themselves through sound. Since birth babies start to listen and produce sound without distinguishing between music and language, singing and speech" (Chen-Hafteck 1997: 85). Nursery rhymes and lullabies are literally the first language input that infants receive and they have a significant impact on their linguistic development. As children grow up they receive "less and less of the affective 'motherese' language that caregivers use with infants", which is replaced by "pop music as the 'motherese of adolescents'" (Engel 2013: 117). It is suggested that there is very little difference between spoken intonational contour and sung melodic contour before an infant acquires the first words (Papousek and Papousek 1981, 1991). Therefore, it appears that the melodic propensity of speech is not only important for FLA but also for language acquisition in general.

2.4. Second language acquisition

As far as second language acquisition (SLA) and FLA is concerned, the literature in the field is ample. The most successful language learning occurs in an atmosphere that is characterised by low anxiety, self-confidence and motivation (the ‘affective filter hypothesis’, Krashen 1982). A number of scholars (Merriam 1964, Coe 1972, Claerr & Gargan 1984, Wilcox 1995) suggest that music lowers emotional barriers that students have when learning a foreign language and makes them more relaxed, thus more prone to language learning. Murphey (1992b) characterised pop songs as a ‘teddy-bear-in-the-car’: they create a low affective filter since they are conversation-like and occur at half the speed of spoken language. Also, in the context in which society provides little moral guidance to individuals, important social issues, such as homelessness, social uncertainty and inequality, poverty or crime can be addressed by the use of music in the classroom (Schoepp 2001, Lake 2003). Besides lowering stress levels in language acquisition, music is a powerful motivation factor in FLA. Namely, young people learning a foreign language, English in particular, frequently attempt to identify with the native speakers, which is most easily accomplished by music, since it is an authentic activity performed by first language users, either individually or at public events (as group singing ranging from karaoke to football chants).

The arguments that the rhythmic patterns of ‘Jazz Chant’ are fragments of authentic language use (Graham 1992); that popular rock music provides meaningful authentic activity with frequent integrated exposure (Domoney & Harris 1993); that rock songs are short, accessible authentic texts rich in content that work as a catalyst to engage with and build meaning from (Pope 1995); that the poetry of rock music provides a valid authentic text (Abrate 1983, Griffiee 1992); and that this ‘rock poetry’ may be considered an example of inclusive literature (Ferradas Moi 1994, 2003), all provide further support to the motivating factor of music in the language classroom (Engh 2013: 118).

The fact that the use of music can have a positive effect on the development of specific language skills has been proved by various empirical researches in SLA. Modified cloze procedures have been used to examine aural comprehension and spelling (Froehlich 1985), conventional listening exercises and pop song gap-fill exercises have been analysed in a comparative study (Kanel 1997) and passage correction tests have been done through the use of music (Odlin 1986). Also music can be used to practice and improve vocabulary and grammar (Richards 1969, Saricoban & Metin 2000), as well as pronunciation (Allen & Vallette 1977).

3. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The postulated hypotheses of the paper were tested in the empirical research conducted with Serbian tertiary-level EFL students. The respondents were the fourth-year students at the English Department, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš. The research was conducted during their grammar and use of English classes as an integral part of the mandatory academic course Contemporary English Language 7 in October 2019. Prior to the empirical research, a pilot analysis was performed in January 2019 with the purpose of devising the most appropriate form for the empirical research.

3.1. The pilot analysis

The subject and the goal of the empirical research required that a pilot analysis be done which would test previously postulated premises and determine the most appropriate research methods. The goal of this research was set as two-fold: to examine the students' attitudes towards conventional cloze tests, as a particular form of language exercise, and their attitudes towards music-based cloze tests and integration of music into the EFL classroom at university level. Teaching experience has proven that even proficient EFL students have rather poor results when doing cloze tests. The students' final examination grammar and use of English tests were analyzed. The tests selected were done in the January examination term in the academic year 2018/2019. This examination term was selected because the majority of the fourth-year students take this test in this particular examination term, which means that the results obtained were expected to be relevant for the empirical research conducted for the purposes of this paper.

Sixty students took the final grammar examination, thirty (50%) of whom failed the test. The grammar test consisted of five language exercises: cloze test, transformation, rewriting, vocabulary and spot the error. The analysis of the students' results was focused on their achievement in the cloze test (Appendix 1). This exercise was a traditional open cloze with twenty gaps that tested both vocabulary and grammar. The students were required to provide only one word in each gap. The content of the texts used for the open cloze is always related to one of the topics covered in grammar classes during the autumn semester. This particular examination test contained a cloze text related to art (Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood), which was another reason why this examination test was analyzed prior to the empirical research, which was performed with the lyrics of the song dealing with the same issue.

The results of this pilot analysis were relevant and determined the empirical research method. Forty-five of the sixty students who took the test had very poor results for the open cloze. Namely, they obtained fewer than ten points out of twenty, which means that 75% of the total number of students who took the grammar examination test could not achieve more than 50% of the correct responses required for particular gaps. This result supported previous experience and contributed to the postulation of the first hypothesis of this paper, i.e. that tertiary-level students, although presumably aware of the importance of cloze tests for the improvement of their English language proficiency, demonstrate rather poor results in this particular language exercise and are thus not very enthusiastic about taking it. This conclusion generated a logical assumption that EFL students should be offered another, non-conventional type of this very important language exercise, possibly with the use of music as a proven anxiety and stress facilitator.

3.2. The empirical research procedure

The review of the relevant literature in the field and the analysis of the university EFL students' results in cloze tests determined the procedure taken for the empirical research. The research was performed in the course of regular grammar classes in October of 2019. A number of forty-two fourth-year students participated in the research. The topic covered in the grammar and use of English class prior to the research was related to art, the position of artists and the role of art in contemporary society, particularly related to the issue of whether art should be appreciated for its own sake or for its other, possibly educational purposes. The content of the empirical research was consequently analogous to this topic. The rock song "In the Gallery" performed by the rock band Dire Straits was selected as the most

appropriate one since it met the criteria of the research: the song lyrics describe the life of an artist and his works being appreciated only after his death, and are thus related to the topic covered in the previous grammar class; the vocabulary and grammar structures correspond to those which the students practice (art vocabulary and modal verbs and their variants).

The students first played the song in its authentic studio version. This first listening was followed by listening to the song performed in concert, which only added to a better appreciation of the atmosphere created by this live performance and consequently the message conveyed by the lyrics and music. After that, a cloze test constructed from the song lyrics (Appendix 2) was distributed to the students who were required to fill in thirty gaps with the correct lexical and grammatical items. Then, the students swapped their tests and were asked to examine their partner's test while listening to the song for the third time. Finally, the students were given sheets of paper with the complete text of the song (Appendix 3). The analysis of their individual task showed that they were extremely successful in doing this non-conventional cloze test. Out of forty-two students who participated in the empirical research, a number of twenty-nine students or 69% demonstrated excellent results in doing this test since they completed correctly twenty-one of thirty gaps, i.e. 70% of the exercise. When compared to the students' results in doing the conventional cloze test in their final grammar examination test, this result proved the premise that students would do better if offered a different, in this case, music-based cloze test.

Then the questionnaire was distributed to the students in order to examine three relevant points, i.e. the students' attitudes towards conventional cloze tests, music-based cloze tests and the beneficial effects of music on EFL learning. The questionnaire (Appendix 4) was devised as a traditional Likert-type scale survey which contained five items (statements), each one with five offered responses for the students to select one. The items were the following: 1) Cloze tests are important for the improvement of my proficiency in English; 2) I like doing conventional cloze tests; 3) I think that cloze tests composed of lyrics of a song are both useful and interesting; 4) Music-based exercises should be integrated into EFL classes; 5) The use of music is beneficial for tertiary-level EFL students.

4. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The results of the research are described with reference to the students' responses to the items from the questionnaire. The responses are presented in the tables and described.

The first two statements from the questionnaire, *Cloze tests are important for the improvement of my proficiency in English* and *I like doing conventional cloze tests*, were devised in order to test the students' attitudes towards doing cloze tests and their awareness of the significance of this language exercise for their language competence and performance. They were also expected to test the first postulated hypothesis that Serbian students of English consider cloze tests important for the improvement of their proficiency in English, but that they often show a reluctance to do them. This hypothesis was based on the author's long teaching experience and the pilot analysis of the students' results in the cloze test exercise as part of their grammar and use of English examination test in January of 2019.

Table 1 Responses to the statement *Cloze tests are important for the improvement of my proficiency in English*

	Responses				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The number of students	2	1	5	26	8
%	4.76	2.38	11.9	61.9	19

The responses obtained for the first two statements in the questionnaire partially confirmed the first hypothesis. Out of forty-two students who participated in the research, twenty-six of them, or 61%, considered cloze tests very important for their further language improvement since they selected the response “Agree” for the first statement. The fact that this response was chosen by the majority of the respondents (when compared to other responses: two for “Strongly disagree”, one for “Disagree”, five for “Neither agree nor disagree” and eight for “Strongly agree”). The conclusion is that fourth-year students are reasonably aware of the importance of cloze tests as crucial in testing and improving their language skills, especially those concerned with the vocabulary and grammar of the English language.

Table 2 Responses to the statement *I like doing conventional cloze tests*

	Responses				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The number of students	1	7	16	17	1
%	2.38	16.66	38	40.47	2.38

The results obtained for the second item in the questionnaire, *I like doing conventional cloze tests*, did not confirm in full the second part of the first hypothesis, i.e. that university students of English are not very enthusiastic about doing cloze tests. Out of forty-two respondents, as many as seventeen selected the response “Agree” and sixteen chose the response “Neither agree nor disagree”, which is slightly different from the expected results (that the students would generally dislike doing this type of language exercise) based on the students’ previous results in cloze tests. The number of the respondents who selected other responses is significantly smaller (one for “Strongly disagree”, seven for “Disagree” and one for “Strongly agree”).

Table 3 Responses to the statement *I think that cloze tests composed of lyrics of a song are both useful and interesting*

	Responses				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The number of students	2	2	8	23	8
%	4.76	4.76	19	54.76	19

The third item from the questionnaire, *I think that cloze tests composed of lyrics of a song are both useful and interesting*, tested fourth-year students’ attitude towards non-conventional, specifically music-based cloze tests. The obtained results confirmed the

first part of the hypothesis that university students of English consider this type of language exercise enjoyable to do. Out of forty-two respondents, twenty-three of them, i.e. over 54% of the surveyed students, selected the response “Agree”, while eight students selected the responses “Neither agree nor disagree” and “Strongly agree” respectively. This proves to the fact that university students of English not only achieve better results in doing non-conventional cloze tests, but that they do them in a less stressful and more relaxing atmosphere created by music, a point already emphasised in the reviewed relevant literature.

Finally, the last two items, *Music-based exercises should be integrated into EFL classes* and *The use of music is beneficial for tertiary-level EFL students*, were devised in order to examine the students’ attitudes towards the effects of music on EFL learning even at university level of study. The responses obtained from the students for these two items confirmed the second part of the second hypothesis, i.e. that students have a positive attitude towards music-based language exercises and an integration of music into EFL classes.

Table 4 Responses to the statement *Music-based exercises should be integrated into EFL classes*

	Responses				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The number of students	0	3	6	19	14
%	0	7.14	14.28	45.23	33.33

Regarding the statement *Music-based exercises should be integrated into EFL classes*, nineteen students selected the response “Agree” and fourteen students selected the response “Strongly agree”, which means that 78.5% of the respondents expressed their approval of the integration of music into EFL classes.

Table 5 Responses to the statement, *Using music is beneficial for tertiary-level EFL students*

	Responses				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The number of students	2	4	9	16	11
%	4.76	9.52	21.42	38	26.19

The responses to the last item in the questionnaire, *Using music is beneficial for tertiary-level EFL students*, were in accordance with the aforementioned results. Actually, the number of the respondents was almost evenly distributed to two offered responses: sixteen students selected the response “Agree” and eleven chose the response “Strongly agree”, which, when considered jointly, results in a figure of slightly more than 64% of the total number of the students surveyed.

The results of the empirical research partially confirmed the first hypothesis and completely confirmed the second hypothesis postulated in this paper.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper is a modest attempt to prove empirically the assumption that music has a positive impact on FL learning. Ample literature in the field as well as numerous empirical studies have established that music and language are interconnected and, as previously mentioned in the Introduction, foreign language teachers have always intuitively felt that music can be a powerful tool in assisting their students to achieve better results when learning a foreign language.

Music is beneficial to FL learning for various reasons, such as sociological, cognitive, motivational and linguistic ones. Being a predominantly collective activity, music creates an atmosphere of communal spirit among the individuals who participate in the activity of either singing (from karaoke to football matches) or listening to music (at public events, concerts or performances). It is precisely that kind of atmosphere of cooperation that FL teachers have always aspired to in order to stimulate their classroom. This anxiety-free and relaxing atmosphere enhances the process of FL learning and consequently breeds better results. Cognitive science proves that music and language are closely related and that our brain recognises linguistic and musical sequences in a similar manner. Music has proven beneficial for first language acquisition since it is through nursery rhymes and children's songs that infants are introduced to their mother tongue. Second/foreign language acquisition is enhanced by the use of music, which has proved to have a great motivational power. Young FL students learn more about the culture of the target language speakers through music that is listened to in that culture. It is also a way to learn authentic real-life vocabulary and identify with the culture of that society. Song lyrics are suitable for constructing language exercises that focus on vocabulary and grammar of a foreign language, such as cloze tests, fill-in the blanks, listening comprehension, transformations and rewriting.

The empirical research conducted with the fourth-year students of the English Department, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš, is presented in this paper. The goal of the research was to examine the students' attitudes towards a non-conventional type of cloze tests and towards the integration of music into EFL classes at the university level of study. The research proved that music can be used not only with primary or secondary school pupils, but also with university students to both improve the classroom atmosphere and make learning enjoyable and to enhance their cloze test results.

As previously mentioned in the Introduction, although FL teachers intuitively feel that music has a positive effect on FL learning, music is still used occasionally and incidentally in FL classes. The reasons are the lack of theoretical knowledge on the part of FL teachers and the lack of adequate teaching materials. Therefore, some further research in the field might be aimed at devising more detailed and comprehensive teaching materials for university students, not only for primary and secondary FL students. They could be textbooks containing various language exercises based on listening to music, whose content is related to the topics covered in foreign language classes. We consider that a textbook with the tasks for analysing various song lyrics from the point of their syntactic structures, morphological and semantic aspects has been and will be a long-felt need. University students might benefit greatly from a textbook which prescribes listening to particular genres of music that assist them in essay writing, especially descriptive and narrative essays. It is recommendable to compile teaching materials that contain song lyrics of various music genres that can be used in translation classes.

To sum up, the research we have conducted contributes to further study of the benefits of music for EFL learning and tackles the issue of creating non-conventional teaching materials adequate for university students of English.

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POZITIVNI UTICAJ MUZIKE NA UČENJE STRANOG JEZIKA

Ovaj rad istražuje stavove srpskih studenata engleskog jezika na tercijarnom nivou učenja prema jednoj posebnoj vrsti jezičkih vežbanja, "cloze" testu, kao i njihove stavove prema "cloze" testovima napravljenim na osnovu tekstova pesama i njihove stavove prema integrisanju muzike u nastavu engleskog jezika na osnovnim akademskim studijama. Rad čine dva dela. Teorijski okvir daje pregled referentnog materijala koji ukazuje na značajne pozitivne uticaje koje muzika ima na učenje stranog jezika i engleskog kao stranog jezika. Empirijski deo rada prikazuje rezultate dobijene nakon empirijskog istraživanja sprovedenog sa studentima četvrte godine osnovnih studija na Departmanu za anglistiku, na Filozofskom fakultetu Univerziteta u Nišu. Prilikom empirijskog istraživanja korišćene su deskripcija i skaliranje stavova pomoću Likertove skale, koja je sadržala pet tvrdnji. Prve dve tvrdnje su testirale stavove studenata prema tradicionalnoj formi "cloze" testa, treća tvrdnja se odnosila na stavove studenata prema "cloze" testu napravljenom na osnovu reči određene pesme, a preostale dve tvrdnje su ispitivale stavove studenata prema mogućnosti integrisanja muzike u nastavu engleskog jezika kao i prema pozitivnom uticaju muzike na učenje engleskog jezika. Rezultati empirijskog istraživanja potvrdili su početnu premisu, odnosno stav da studenti engleskog jezika na tercijarnom nivou učenja smatraju da je "cloze" test važno vežbanje koje doprinosi njihovoj boljoj jezičkoj performansi kao i da se slažu sa tvrdnjom da upotreba muzike na časovima povećava mogućnost za njihovo napredovanje pri studiranju engleskog jezika.

Ključne reči: srpski studenti engleskog jezika na tercijarnom nivou učenja, "cloze" test, jezička vežbanja zasnovana na muzici, pozitivni uticaj muzike.

APPENDIX 1

FILL EACH OF THE NUMBERED BLANKS WITH *the* SUITABLE WORD

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was a group of young British painters who banded together in 1848 in (1) _____ against (2) _____ they conceived to be the unimaginative and artificial historical painting of the Royal Academy and who (3) _____ sought to express a new moral seriousness and sincerity in their works. They were inspired by Italian art of the 14th and 15th centuries, and their (4) _____ of the name Pre-Raphaelite expressed their admiration for what they saw as the direct and uncomplicated depiction of nature (5) _____ of Italian painting before the High Renaissance and, particularly, before the time of Raphael. (6) _____ the Brotherhood's active life lasted not (7) _____ five years, its influence on painting in Britain, and ultimately on the decorative arts and (8) _____ design, was profound. Immediately after the foundation, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood began to produce (9) _____ convincing and significant works. Their pictures of religious and medieval subjects (10) _____ to revive the deep religious feeling and naive, unadorned directness of 15th-century Florentine and Sieneese painting. The style that Hunt and Millais evolved (11) _____ sharp and brilliant lighting, a clear atmosphere, and a (12) _____ -photographic reproduction of (13) _____ details. They also frequently introduced (14) _____ private poetic symbolism into their representations of biblical subjects and medieval literary themes. Rossetti's work differed from (15) _____ of the others (16) _____ its more arcane aesthetic and his general lack of interest in (17) _____ the precise appearance of objects in nature. Vitality and freshness of vision are the most admirable qualities of these early Pre-Raphaelite paintings. Some of the founding members exhibited their first works anonymously, (18) _____ their paintings with the monogram PRB. When their identity and youth were discovered in 1850, their work was harshly criticized by the novelist Charles Dickens, among others, (19) _____ only for its disregard of academic ideals of beauty but also for its apparent irreverence in treating religious themes with (20) _____ uncompromising realism.

20 points

(Adapted from Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/art/Pre-Raphaelite-Brotherhood>)

Cloze test key (recommended lexical items): 1) reaction; 2) what; 3) purportedly; 4) adoption; 5) typical; 6) Although; 7) quite; 8) interior; 9) highly; 10) strove; 11) featured; 12) near; 13) minute; 14) a; 15) that; 16) in; 17) copying; 18) signing; 19) not; 20) an

APPENDIX 2

IN THE GALLERY, DIRE STRAITS

Harry made a (1) _____ rider
 Proud and free (2) _____ a horse
 And a fine (3) _____ miner
 For the NCB (4) _____ was
 A (5) _____ angel and Jesus on the cross
 A (6) _____ ballerina
 You should have seen her (7) _____ the skater's (8) _____
 Some are that got to paint and (9) _____
 Harry had to work in (10) _____ and stone
 Like the waves coming to the (11) _____
 (12) _____ was in his blood and in his bones
 He was ignored by all (13) _____ boys
 In London and, yes, in Leeds
 He (14) _____ as well have been making toys
 Or strings of (15) _____
 He couldn't be
 Oh, no, he just couldn't be
 In the gallery
 In the gallery
 And (16) _____ you get an artist
 (17) _____ says he doesn't wanna paint at all
 He takes an (18) _____ canvas
 And (19) _____ it on the wall
 The birds of a (20) _____
 All the (21) _____ and all of the fakes
 (22) _____ the dealers they get together
 And they decide who gets the (23) _____
 And who's gonna be
 Oh, yeah, who's gonna be
 In the gallery
 In the gallery

 No lies, he wouldn't compromise
 No junks, no (24) _____
 And all the lies we (25) _____ that,
 (26) _____ just don't mean a thing
 I've got to say he passed away in (27) _____
 And now all the (28) _____ are coming down from the tree
 So he's gonna be
 Oh, yeah, he's gonna be
 In the gallery
 In the gallery

 Harry made a (29) _____ rider
 Harry made a (30) _____ rider.

APPENDIX 3

IN THE GALLERY, DIRE STRAITS

Harry made a bareback rider proud and free upon a horse
And a fine coal miner for the NCB that was
A fallen angel and Jesus on the cross
A skating ballerina you should have seen her do the skater's waltz
Some are that got to paint and draw
Harry had to work in clay and stone
Like the waves coming to the shore
It was in his blood and in his bones
Ignored by all trendy boys in London, yes, and in Leeds
He might as well have been making toys or strings of beads
He could not be in the gallery
And then you get an artist says he doesn't wanna paint at all
He takes an empty canvas and sticks it on the wall
The birds of a feather all the phonies and all of the fakes
While the dealers they get together
And they decide who gets the breaks
And who's going to be in the gallery
No lies he wouldn't compromise
No junks, no string
And all the lies we subsidize that,
That just don't mean a thing
I've got to say he passed away in obscurity
And now all the vultures are coming down from the tree
So he's going to be in the gallery

APPENDIX 4

QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) Cloze tests are important for the improvement of my proficiency in English
 - a) Strongly disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly agree
- 2) I like doing conventional cloze tests
 - a) Strongly disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly agree
- 3) I think that cloze tests composed of lyrics of a song are both useful and interesting
 - a) Strongly disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly agree
- 4) Music-based exercises should be integrated into EFL classes
 - a) Strongly disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither agree not disagree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly agree
- 5) Using music is beneficial for tertiary-level EFL students
 - a) Strongly disagree
 - b) Disagree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - d) Agree
 - e) Strongly agree