

DIDACTIC AND MOTIVATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE USE OF MUSIC IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

OPORTUNIDADES DIDÁTICAS E MOTIVACIONAIS PARA O USO DA MÚSICA NO ENSINO DE LÍNGUAS ESTRANGEIRAS*

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Abstract: The main idea of this article arises from the fact, that music has a major role in our daily routine and habits and it can be considered as a communicative medium that conveys a variety of important information. Music has multiple functions, including communicative, coordinative, concentrating, and emotional ones. The importance of the music being involved in teaching of foreign languages is presented in this paper from several possible points of view – the view of motivation, the view of the language reception and production, the view of the support of intensive perception and the emotional view. Language is regarded as the fundamental means of communication used for the exchange of information between people. Through the combination of language, rhythm and movement, grammatical structures, vocabulary and texts are better processed and language skills are developed. The theoretical basis entailed the study of literature detailing music's benefits on foreign language learner cognition, affect, motivation and other sources related to the topic. The study also includes chapters on utilization of music in language learning classrooms in which its benefits are highlighted.

Keywords: Foreign Language. Music. Language Skills. Song.

Resumo: A ideia principal deste artigo surge do fato de que a música tem um papel importante em nossa rotina e hábitos diários e pode ser considerada como um meio de comunicação que veicula uma variedade de informações importantes. A importância do envolvimento da música no ensino de línguas estrangeiras é apresentada neste artigo sob vários pontos de vista possíveis - a visão da motivação, a visão da recepção e produção do idioma, a visão do apoio à percepção intensiva e a visão emocional. A língua é considerada como o meio fundamental de comunicação utilizado para a troca de informações entre as pessoas. Através da combinação de linguagem, ritmo e movimento, estruturas gramaticais, vocabulário e textos são melhor processados e as habilidades lingüísticas são desenvolvidas. A base teórica implicou no estudo da literatura detalhando os benefícios da música no conhecimento, afeto, motivação e outras fontes relacionadas ao tópico. O estudo também inclui capítulos sobre a utilização da música em salas de aula de aprendizagem de idiomas, nos quais seus benefícios são destacados.

Palavras-chave: Língua Estrangeira. Música. Habilidades lingüísticas. Música.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The use of authentic material in the classroom has increasingly become the focus of teaching concepts and discussions in recent years. Suppose it is intended with these authentic materials to create a motivating effect on the learners. In that case, it makes sense to connect the learners' private areas of experience when selecting these materials (Murphey, 1990). Music puts people in a particular mood, encourages group cohesion, and ultimately musical skills play a crucial role in developing language skills (Jetschke, Koelsch, 2010: 37). Music is the constant companion of children and young people. Young people, in particular, consume music via various channels and almost non-stop. With the use of music in foreign language lessons, spoken and written language elements can be combined with various forms of expression and communication in a balanced way. The motivating effect of authentic material in the classroom is emphasized repeatedly. In order to consider such motivating factors, it is appropriate to tie in with the private experience of the learners when selecting the lesson concept and topic content.

This finding is the reason for the interest in the present study, in which the question is addressed to what extent music can be beneficial in foreign language teaching and how one can work with music in this context. This way, appropriate didactic concepts can be developed by offering various possibilities for productive learning for foreign language learners in which practice-oriented, exploratory, associative-intuitive, and playful learning environments can be arranged successfully. In addition to the "relaxation" of the lesson, and the motivation of the students, the discussion of songs also has a number of other positive aspects that now need to be considered more closely: Their effective, content-related and linguistic aspects offer a variety of starting points for classroom discussions and other classroom activities. Starting with intensive, purposeful "listening comprehension training", songs also offer the opportunity to expand basic speaking and writing skills. Of course, songs can be used for vocabulary exercises and, in certain cases, even as grammar exercises. In addition, there is also their unique suitability for imparting knowledge about the country, which must be seen as an essential part of foreign language teaching. Thanks to these diverse possible uses, songs contribute to the development of meaning and values and release linguistic processing within the foreign language learning processes.

2. MUSIC IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING- THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Working with songs in the classroom must be developed into an action-oriented and student-activating approach concerning foreign language teaching. In this way, cognitive and affective aspects interact with individual to produce wholeness: intellectual, emotional and sensory engaging experiences, alternation of effort and relaxation, and verbal interactions.

Frequent repetition through listening and possibly singing along leads to quick and easy memorisation of the texts, which contributes to memorising structures and vocabulary to expand textbook knowledge. This way, songs promote automation and intuition in the target language, with the verse character of the text as well as the connection to music and the emotional content promoting memory. In this case, learning is holistic. Its logical-rational mental operations are combined with music, rhythm, rhyme, emotions and associations.

Songs also offer the possibility of a collective realization and experience of a foreign language and represent a significant aspect of cultural studies. The encounter with music - and here it behaves similarly to poetry - causes a predominantly individual experience of being and language, ideally an individual experience, which gives the lesson a dimension of depth that can that can remarkably affect the entire learning process.

According to Bell, the use of music in foreign language lessons places high demands on the ability to concentrate and retain. Listening to music activates those brain structures in which memory and high emotional processing occur. The use of music creates a potential for for language learning growth, whereby traces can be laid in cultural awareness, creativity can be stimulated and individual language performance can be triggered. (G. Blell, K. Hellwig, 1996, S. 9).

2.1. Music and Communicative Skills

There are three aspects of communication that are notable at the theoretical level and these are communicative, interactive, and perceptual aspects. The correlation of actions and ideas in communication can be denoted as an interactive side of it.

Musical Works, which are used during the process of foreign language teaching, operate as a subject of communication. The perception and cognition of partners in

communicating with each other through hearing and subsequent discussion of the heard musical composition can be viewed as the perceptual side of communication. The exchange of information exemplifies the communicative side. Furthermore, the similarity of the material of speech and music, as well as the notable similarity of the functions of speech and musical intonation, are essential factors that allow for the transfer of speech experience to the perception of musical works.

From the point of view of music psychology, Ulrike Quast describes an integrative concept of music and foreign language. In according to her seven basic functions that music can have in the foreign language learning process are following:

1. physiological (promoting retention),
2. psycho-hygienic (inducing relaxation),
3. as a trigger for emotions and emotional processes,
4. socio-psychological (strengthening group dynamics),
5. as a means of promoting cognitive processes,
6. unconscious learning and
7. as a trigger of communication processes.

Foreign Language through music conducts its work on interpreting listener's personality as a subject of activity in a socio-psychological context, in addition to data on perception at the psychophysiological level. This activity maintains the connection between music and the listener. A musical work's after-effect can stimulate cognitive, communicative, and creative-productive activity. The proceeding after-effect can lead the way to understand the unfamiliar via and through language production and writing.

On the level of personal, group and culture-specific perception, the recorded meanings are first assigned individually, then in a generalized way, according to the concepts called up. Cultural comparisons are encouraged by reflecting on one's culture through encounters with foreigners. With the success of the work with music in foreign language lessons, the way to an intercultural foreign language didactics is opened.

Wagner lists the song selection criteria as follows:

Content: Songs contain statements intended for practical use of language that include idioms and expressions

Grammar progression: The complexity and difficulty of the grammatical structures contained in the lyrics of the songs

Phonetics: The songs offer many opportunities to work on sentence phonetics, word accent and intonation.

Indeed, this explanation shows indeed that, in general, the selection of songs for foreign language teaching must meet the following criteria: the topics should address the areas of experience of the learners and be appropriate to their age and language level. With a suitable rhythm and a refrain, the song should be straightforward for learners concerning the understandable pronunciation of the singer. The songs should aim for concrete grammatical structures and language work if possible. Furthermore, the song can also contain cultural aspects, which may provide wealth opportunities for comparing cultures.

If the selected songs meet these criteria, you can then deal with the following in certain teaching situations: practice pronunciation, intonation and rhythm by singing, consolidate and expand vocabulary and grammatical structures, facing with cultural studies, use them as support for conversation exercises

2.2 Influence of Music on Learning

Emotions and motivation are decisive factors for successful learning. Positive feelings enable effective learning and retention- negative feelings, such as fear, inhibit effective learning and block the learning process. The perception of music is a complex process involving many areas of the brain. As a result, music triggers physical and emotional reactions and influences cognitive processes. Therefore, the correct use of music comes with beneficial effects on many aspects of learning and thinking. Situational music can promote cognitive learning by stimulating positive feelings to increase learning motivation and break down learning barriers (Quast, 2005).

Listening to music and practising itself creates evolutionarily decisive functions such as communication, coordination of groups and feelings of togetherness. In this context, Krashen's theory of the affective filter can be used. He points out that a number of studies show how emotional factors influence language learning (Krashen, 1982). Music can create a pleasant and stress-free learning environment; it has a calming effect and thus keeps the affective filter low.

During the perception of music, psychological and physiological reactions could be measured in experiments, which can be interpreted as an evaluation process. From this, the conclusion can be drawn that the music we hear, whether we like it or not, always involves at least an activation process (Grewe 2010). As music evokes associative processes and

mental thought processes, imagination and creativity are stimulated. In summary, it can be stated that music works on many levels: It has a positive effect on concentration, it creates a balance that contributes to improving attention, structuring situations, strengthening group dynamic processes and activating or calming down (Blell, 2006).

3. LANGUAGE LEARNING AND MUSIC

Music and language have many things in common: Both are means of expression and communication simultaneously and have their own rules, melody and rhythm (Blell, 2006). With the simultaneous input of speech and music, the brain is activated in many ways, and favourable learning conditions are created. Given all of these learning-enhancing effects, it is clear that using music in the classroom is a great resource to have on hand.

Badstübner-Kızık (2010) makes a distinction between the functions of the music medium

- language-carrying and language-forming-,
- conscious,
- perceptual,
- identity-enhancing and
- intercultural sensitizing functions.

She considers the use of music as it provokes communicative reception and language production. Accordingly, the music itself initiates learning-psychological contexts, intra- and intercultural sensitivity, empathy, tolerance, and cultural studies.

Mastering grammatical rules should not be an end in itself, but should always serve communication. The starting point for teaching grammar must be verbalising a thought; the content should lead to expression and not vice versa. The topics should be based on personal experiences and interests so that the learners are encouraged to deal with them mentally and verbally (Timm, 1998)

Self-active learning processes should be promoted by language material that stimulates intellect, feelings and senses in equal measure and leaves scope for action. Singing, playing, and project work are particularly suitable as activities to learn productively. Based on these activities, the teachers help the learners to develop individual learning strategies and working techniques. The different learning types and learning styles should be considered by individualizing and differentiating the courses and the teaching

process (Neuner, 1998). As a result, analytical, practical and playful exercises must be offered for the different learning types.

Working with texts (songs are text-based music) in foreign language lessons introduces the learners to content that broadens their knowledge and encourages them to make communicative statements. Furthermore, lexical, phraseological and grammatical units from the language material can be conveyed through text work (Lademann, 1997).

Song lyrics can be used in different ways for language learning purposes: for vocabulary and grammar work, listening exercises, pronunciation training, cultural embedding, discussion opportunities and for singing. Exercises based on a song address many language skills simultaneously; thus, the four basic skills- listening, speaking, reading and writing- and the ability to mediate language can be promoted (Haag, 2012).

Thaler (2015) names five competencies that can be striven for with the help of text-based music:

1. Functional communicative competence (Listening/listening comprehension, reading comprehension, speaking, writing, language resources)
2. Intercultural communicative competence
3. Text and media literacy
4. Language Awareness
5. Language learning skills

Piechocki (2010) lists reasons for using songs in foreign language lessons as follows:

1. Mediation of regional and cultural studies
2. Development of intercultural competence
3. Songs as authentic lyrics
4. Training of listening comprehension strategies
5. Practice all language skills
6. Consolidation, repetition and expansion of grammatical structures and vocabulary
7. Promotion of retention performance
8. Pronunciation training
9. Improving the classroom atmosphere
10. Increase in motivation
11. Contribution to learner autonomy
12. Project-oriented teaching work

13. Food for Thought,
14. Reason for learning music

According to Van Eunen (1992), listening to music and understanding songs is an inner activity in which students make sense of the material and bring their emotions into play. The identification possibilities that result from the song reception have a highly positive influence on student motivation

3.1 Cultural and intercultural potential

Music and language are always forms of expression of the respective culture. Pop songs are composed of melody, harmony, rhythm and language and convey cultural values on these levels. The music scene represents a significant part of the cultural backdrop of the target language and thus always contributes to intercultural learning. With the help of song lyrics, young people learn how cultural impacts influence music genres, and artists and their work. The similarities in Western cultures make it easier for learners to build a bridge to the foreign language world (Allmayer, 2008). Pop songs are characterized after Piepchoki (2010) by the fact that they are authentic text productions without didactic intentions. Unmodified authentic texts often contain ungrammatical and incomplete forms, as well as filler words and repetitions, and are, therefore, similar to colloquial language. Thus they represent linguistic reality (authenticity).

The structure of the pop song, characterised by the text's brevity and completeness, is notably beneficial for practising grammatical elements. The focus can be explicitly directed to the structure to be learned, aiming at the grammatical structures embedded in the musical-linguistic phrases that are stored implicitly and can subsequently be derived explicitly.

A pop song's structure is usually that of a strophic song. The strophic song is characterized by its two-part scheme: it is divided into a verse and a refrain. The stanzas have the same melody, the chorus the same melody and the same lyrics. The text passages are small information units and the flow of information is interrupted by pauses such as musical interludes or transitions. The pauses and the repeated repetition of the same content facilitate the storage of information and the grammatical structures contained in the text are also stored. The information is processed more deeply by repeating the same information in the refrain, possibly in the verses, and by the multi-channel information absorption. The more intensively the learners deal with the text and thus with the

grammatical structures and create links themselves, the more efficient the coding. (Allmayer, 2008).

Singing along also has a positive effect on different levels: when singing, very different networks in the brain are activated and linked together concurrently. Emotional centers are activated and the consequent feelings triggered are evaluated as positive. Hence, singing is coupled with a happy emotional state. When singing along, the correct pronunciation is practised, and the rhythm assists in memorising words that belong together.

3.2 Didactical Implementation of Songs in Foreign Language Teaching

For the use of pop songs in the classroom to be successful, the right choice of song and well-thought-out didactic implementation, tailored to the curriculum's respective teaching and learning goals, is required. Due to the fact that pop music represents a part of the living environment and the personality of young people, a sensitive approach is necessary.

3.2.1 Selection of the Song

The Internet opens up many new possibilities for the didactics of text music: Unlimited research options, easy access to song lyrics and freely accessible listening to music and watching music videos. These give the teacher an immense selection of various music styles, artists, bands, music lyrics and topics that can be used in many ways to the design of the lesson (Haag, 2012). It is essential to check if the target grammar structures are in the song and to check how they are contained. According to Allmayer, three categories can be roughly distinguished, which, however, can also be found as mixed forms:

In the first category one finds the desired structure in the chorus. The advantage of this is that the chorus in the song is often repeated and has the most memorable melody. From a cognitive-psychological point of view, this is a favourable prerequisite for successful memorization.

In the second category, the target structure to be learned plays a constitutive role and is understood as a paradigm of the overstructured song text. It is immanent in the text on the phonetic, metrical, rhythmic, semantic and linguistic levels. The more often the repetition, the better for a positive learning effect.

In the third category, the grammatical structures are distributed in the text, so the focus must be specifically directed to them when teaching. (Allmayer, 2008)

3.2.2 Didactic models and methodology

The following models show how didactic implementation can take place.

Phase Model

It makes sense to divide the lesson into sections: in exercises before listening (introduction), during listening (development) and after listening (consolidation).

In the introductory phase, learners are prepared for the following activities and can develop an expectation and interest. In the introductory phase, the necessary previous knowledge or vocabulary is also developed. The necessary previous knowledge or vocabulary is also developed in the introductory phase. It can be started using images, sociograms, and so on

In the development phase, the focus is on the song's lyrics and the text is developed via listening comprehension or the text specification. The following exercises are suitable for this phase:

1. *without submitting the lyrics*

- Questions
- True/False statements
- Multiple-choice answers
- A specific list of terms, some of which appear in the text (variant: accurate estimation of the song content before the presentation)
- (Partial) dictation by sound recording
- Implementation in picture collages

2. *With complete specification of the lyrics*

- jumbled lines/stanzas (inverted line/stanza order)
- Breaking down the text into several parts (snippets of paper or foil strips)
- Beginning of line correct, end of line mixed order
- Text without word gaps, only with capital letters

3. *with a complete, modified text template*

- Replacement of certain words with entirely different ones
- Replace with similar-sounding words (mondegreen)
- Replacement with similar-sounding but completely inappropriate words (nonsense version)
- Replacement with pictograms
- Indication of two alternatives per word
- Insert additional words

4. *if the text is incomplete*

- Omission of any words (creative-communicative variant: fill in before presenting the song and compare with a partner)

(Karyn, 2006)

The newly learned material should be consolidated in the consolidation phase with exercises. It is a good idea to use creative exercises, such as writing one's own verses or rewriting the text.

3.3 Didactic Implementation of Pop Songs for Grammar Lessons in German

In the following part, one German-language song is didactically prepared for one teaching sequences. It is shown how a grammatical topic can be treated using different exercises and learning activities, and the learning units described should suggest how songs can be used in German lessons to teach grammar. The learning objective focuses on teaching grammar, but many other skills are always included when working on a song. The song has been selected regarding the criteria mentioned in the previous section and didactic implementation is based on the models described.

The grammatical theme, which is studied in detail as an example using the song, is in German conditional sentences. These express that an action or an event only occurs under certain conditions. These structures are introduced at the level of learning A2-B1;

Christina Stürmer – Ich lebe- (Teaching the temporal clause linkage)

The learning objective pursued with the first learning unit is to convey the temporal clause linkage). The construction primarily contains the present tense and is, therefore, also suitable for less advanced learners (learning level A2). The lesson sequence is designed for

one hour (45 minutes). The song is used in this unit for the time being as an introduction to the topic.

Characteristics of the song:

The song used for this lesson sequence is *Ich lebe* by the Austrian singer Christine Stürmer. The song's theme is love and the content is easy to understand. The vocabulary and language structure are kept simple. The speaking rate is not so fast, and the pronunciation is clear. The main arguments for the song are that the rhythm and the melody are catchy. The grammatical structure occurs in the refrain which is beneficial for memorisation since the chorus repeats itself several times.

The lesson sequence

Holistic listening as an introductory phase:

1st Step: The lesson sequence begins with the learners listening to the song without text and a task. The rhythm and the melody activate the learners and motivate them for upcoming activities.

2nd Step: The students listen to the song a second time and are asked to write down the words they have understood. Then the words are noted on the blackboard and completed in the plenum. After, an analysis of the song's topic is started. With the help of vocabulary involving *leben, müde, Welt, Wasser* and *durstig*, learners recognize the topic easily.

Recovery / Recognition Phase:

1st step: In this phase, learners first deal unconsciously with the temporal clause linkage. They are given a worksheet (worksheet 1) the lyrics and fill in blanks with the missing words while listening to the song again. These are the verbs of the conditional clause in the refrain. This exercise is straightforward and is intended to draw attention to the grammatical structure.

2nd step: After the learners have the text entirely in front of them, unfamiliar vocabulary is clarified.

Consolidation Phase:

1st step: The formation and the semantic function of the actual conditional sentence are explained based on the leaflet (Leaflet 1).

2nd step: Now, the learners should form conditional clauses independently. The students are given ten subordinate clauses to be completed creatively in individual work

(worksheet 2). Some sample sentences will be read out in the plenary. For a spirited conclusion, the song is heard and sung again.

wenn (when, whenever/if)

Ich dusche, wenn ich nach Hause komme. *I have a shower, when I get home*

weil (*because*)

Ich esse etwas, weil ich hungrig bin. *I eat something because I'm hungry.*

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to present in detail why songs, especially pop songs, are suitable for conveying grammatical structures. It became apparent that from a cognitive-psychological point of view, numerous arguments exist for using (pop) songs in grammar lessons. Retention is promoted due to the schematic structure of the strophic song because of the small information units; the repetitions and pauses promote storage. In addition, there is a multi-channel information acquisition through the parallel processing of music and speech. All this leads to a deeper processing of the information. The motivational aspect should also be remembered because songs have the potential to liven up grammar lessons and provide variety. The students are motivated because their living environment is included.

The work has clearly shown that the frequent integration of songs in foreign language lessons is very beneficial and effective. It is therefore worthwhile in many respects to take on the expense of a methodical and didactic preparation of a song.

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