

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
GRADUATION WORK**



**“THE IMPACT OF THE USE OF ELT GAMES AND SONGS IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE LANGUAGE ORAL PROFICIENCY OF STUDENTS IN
THE INTENSIVE INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH I IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE
DEPARTMENT AT UNIVERSIDAD DE EL SALVADOR”**

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ABSTRACT

The present qualitative and descriptive research project focused on finding out what the impact of the use of songs and games is in the development of the students' language oral proficiency of the Intensive Intermediate English I course in the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador. The research team planned to carry out this project because they realized that songs and games are used in the English class by most teachers. However, the research team also realized that most teachers only use these types of activities in the classroom as warm up and filler activities, which most of the time do not pursue a specific objective to develop students' oral ability . Hence, by carrying out this qualitative research project, researchers got to understand what the impact of the use of songs and games is in the development of the students' language oral proficiency taking the before mentioned subject. One issue that researchers found is that teachers and students agree on the fact that the use of songs and games can help in the development of the students' oral language proficiency since according to both parts, teachers and students, these activities bring fun to the class, help students learn new vocabulary, among others, which are key factors to develop the language oral proficiency. So, in order to get to know this situation better, the researchers made use of a checklist and administered some questionnaires to the teachers and students involved in the teaching-learning process of the before mentioned course. At the end, researchers understood this issue better by analyzing the data that led researchers to draw to the conclusion of what the impact of the use of songs and games is in the development of the students' language oral proficiency.

1. INTRODUCTION

The research called “The impact of the use of ELT games and songs in the development of the language oral proficiency of students in the Intensive Intermediate English I in the Foreign Language Department at Universidad de El Salvador” focused on describing the use, if any, of ELT games and songs in the Intensive Intermediate English I class in the Foreign Language Department and what the impact of the use of these types of activities was in the development of the language oral proficiency of students. The purpose of this study was to describe, through teachers and students’ perceptions as well as through some observations that were carried out in some classes, if teachers made use of ELT games and songs in the class as well as the type and what the main purpose of using them was. Moreover, the main purpose of this research was to investigate what the impact of the use of these types of activities was in the development of the language oral proficiency of students in the before mentioned class.

The readers of this research will also find reliable information that was gathered directly from the informants that were part of this research. This information was classified according to the indicators that the team considered appropriate. This research study contains all the necessary data so that future researchers can also understand what the impact of the use of ELT games and songs in the class can be, if used appropriately, in the development of the language oral proficiency of students.

a. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As students of Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, Opcion Enseñanza, the research team has observed, through our own experiences and others', that most Intensive Intermediate English I students do not reach the oral proficiency level that they are expected to up to this term. This problem might be associated to a set of different circumstances, being one of them and perhaps the most important, the type of methodology used in the classroom by teachers, which can be something that hinders students from developing their oral proficiency to the highest in this level.

For instance, it seems that some teachers do not pay special attention to the use of ELT games and songs in the classroom as valuable tools to help students develop their language oral proficiency. These types of activities are sometimes used as simple warm up activities or fillers by the Foreign Language Department teachers in the class, which, to some extent, is not considered to help students develop their language oral proficiency. Teachers should not consider these types of activities just to work as a simple warm up activity or a filler but as activities worthy carrying out in the class in order to develop students' language oral proficiency, since according to Hadfield J (1984) one has to acknowledge that songs and games are the best ways to enhance students' interest in communicative learning, and since also as stated by Warschauer & Kern (2000, 1) games have been associated with a move from the teaching of discrete grammatical structures to the promotion of communicative ability.

Therefore, in order to identify, describe, and explain what the impact of the use of ELT games and songs is in the development of the language oral proficiency of

students, the research team found necessary to take into account the following questions:

1. GENERAL QUESTION

- What is the impact of the use of ELT games and songs in the development of the language oral proficiency of students in the Intensive Intermediate English I in the Foreign Language Department at University of El Salvador?

2. RELATED QUESTIONS

- What are the students' perceptions towards the use of ELT games and songs in the class?
- What are the teachers' perceptions towards using games and songs as teaching resources in the classroom?

b. OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

- ❖ To find out the impact of the use of ELT games and songs in the development of the language oral proficiency of students in the Intensive Intermediate English I in the Foreign Language Department at University of El Salvador

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To observe the students' perceptions towards the use of ELT games and songs in the class
- ❖ To observe the teachers' perceptions towards using games and songs as teaching resources in the classroom

c. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM (AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND)

Through the completion of this study, the research team wanted to investigate and describe what the impact of the use of ELT games and songs was in the development of the language oral proficiency of students in the Intensive Intermediate English I in the Foreign Language Department at University of El Salvador. Therein, the importance of carrying out this project lied on the fact that the conclusions identified the impact that the use of ELT games and songs has in the development of the students' language oral proficiency, taking into account the teachers', but at the same time, and above all, the students' perceptions towards the implementation of the before mentioned activities in the class. Similarly, it can be said that this project was worthy carrying out in order to make teachers aware, if it is the case, of the need to consider ELT games and songs as meaningful tools to develop the students' language oral proficiency since for example, according to Macedonia (2005) games may serve to proceduralise foreign language knowledge, i.e. to encourage and support fluency against the generally rule-based, declarative approach to foreign language teaching. It seems that most teachers in the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador only use these activities as simple warmers and fillers. Finally, the research team also identified that there was no previous research conducted about this topic; therefore, this fact made the team look for some reasons regarding this issue.

d. PURPOSE

By completing this study, the research team wanted to identify, describe, and explain what the impact of the use of games and songs was in the development of the language oral proficiency of students. In addition, the main focus of this qualitative research study was to explain and describe in detail what types of ELT games and songs were used in the classroom and what the main purpose of using them was. Besides, this research was worth carrying it out because the research team wanted to explore and elucidate if for some teachers the use of these activities can be a meaningful tool to develop the students' language oral proficiency and if for some others they can only work as warm up activities and fillers.

e. STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

According to the literature related to the development of the English language oral proficiency by making use of games and songs in the class, the research team identified three hypotheses:

1. The use of games and songs afford a non-threatening environment for students in the classroom.
2. Making use of games and songs help present new vocabulary or recycle known language in the class
3. Using songs in the class help learners become familiar with word stress and intonation and the rhythm with which words are spoken

f. ASSUMPTIONS

It is taken for granted that English teachers are constantly looking for activities and techniques to be used in the class to help students develop their linguistic abilities. Most teachers make use of songs and games in the class as simple warmers and fillers. They do not pay too much attention to the valuable significance the use of these activities can bring to the class to develop the students' linguistic abilities, being one of them and, perhaps, the most important, the language oral proficiency. In order to get acquainted, to some extent, with what the impact of the use of these activities in the class is in the development of the students' language oral proficiency, it is necessary to address the parts involved, both the teachers and the students.

To find out the subject matter of this research, the teachers in charge of facilitating the Intensive Intermediate English I, as well as the students taking the before mentioned subject were addressed by the research team in order to give their points of view regarding the issue. In order to have reliable information, all the teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire. On the other hand, students were selected randomly, according to have a representative sample, to complete the questionnaire in order to obtain the most trustful information to carry out this investigation. In order to do so, it is also worth mentioning that a pilot test was carried out before addressing the population of students.

Similarly, it is also important to mention that the results of this research project were treated and analyzed carefully in order to obtain and present the most reliable information to the readers.

g. LIMITATIONS

The research called “The impact of the use of ELT games and songs in the development of the language oral proficiency of students in the Intensive Intermediate English I in the Foreign Language Department at University of El Salvador” was carried out in the Foreign Language Department at University of El Salvador. The population consisted of approximately 80 students belonging to three groups of the subject called Intensive Intermediate English I corresponding to the semester II-2013. Out of this estimated population, the research team considered a significant sample in order to carry out the investigation. It is important to mention that the research team did not distinguish the sex that students belong to in order for them to be considered as part of the sample that was chosen randomly.

Similarly, it is worth mentioning that the execution of this project started during the second half of semester I-2013 and it finished during the semester II of the year 2013, period in which the research team faced different limitations. One of the most important limitations that the research team faced along this period of time was the accessibility to get information from teachers and students. Since this research focused on the perceptions teachers and mostly the perceptions students have regarding the subject of study, the research team had to follow the corresponding procedures in order to deal with this situation. Another important limitation, which was closely related to the previous one, was the limitation of time. The research team had to manage in order to follow the corresponding procedures to get permission to obtain the information needed to carry out the investigation in the expected time.

h. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Based on the related literature, the research team stated the following operational definitions:

- **Games:** A game is structured playing, usually undertaken for enjoyment and sometimes used as an educational tool.
- **Songs:** They refer to rhythmic chants and they are a group of words arranged, put together and presented to convey a message in an easy way and used as a method of teaching and learning.
- **Development:** A process in which something passes by degrees to a different stage (especially a more advanced or mature stage)
- **Oral language/ linguistic proficiency:** Measurement of how well an individual has mastered the speaking skill of a language
- **Intermediate English students:** An independent user of the language who can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
- **Warm up:** Activity to make or become someone ready for an event or operation
- **Filler:** Activity that is added to augment weight, size or fill space
- **Schema(ta):** A mental model of aspects of the world or of the self that is structured in such a way as to facilitate the processes of cognition and perception

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE (AND ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH)

a. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

This research project named “The impact of the use of ELT games and songs in the development of the language oral proficiency of students in the Intensive Intermediate English I in the Foreign Language Department at University of El Salvador” has no identical previous study to be related to, neither inside the university nor outside the university according to the investigation carried out by the research team. However, the team has identified some studies that, to some extent, might be associated to the subject matter of this research, studies carried out both inside the university and as well as outside the university.

For instance, the graduation work “The most effective techniques to develop fluency in the speaking skill” that was carried out in the University of El Salvador in 2010 by Bojorquez Solorzano, L.; Garcia Martinez, Y.; and Torres Zepeda, M. deals with how to reach a high level of fluency when speaking. This study, which is the study carried out inside the university that relates the most to the subject matter of the present study, suggests the use of a specific type of game in the classroom, guessing games, as one of the most effective techniques for teachers of the English language to use in order to lead students to talk in the classroom using the language in a creative, purposeful and individual way. This study points this since according to Krashen (1983) games are liked by students of all ages because they combine language practice with fun and excitement. Similarly, this research suggest that “most of the time when developing a speaking activity some students tend to be afraid of participating because they worry about what people may say if

they make a mistake.” L. Allington (1979), but with guessing games this fear is reduced because they have the opportunity to use their knowledge of the target language in a creative way from the very beginning of their study; and this makes guessing games a true communicative situation. The study concludes that students need to be provided with different techniques that help them achieve a good level of fluency in the speaking skill, and that the use of this type of game, guessing games, in the classroom must be considered an excellent way to fulfill this purpose.

Similarly, the study carried out in Senegal in 2010 by Sylla N. called “The impact of songs and games in English language teaching” points out that in an effort to supplement a lesson plan in the English language teaching classroom in the 4th form, teachers often turn to songs and games. This justification for using songs and games in the classroom has been well demonstrated as benefiting students in a variety of ways. For example, the results of this study suggest that teachers use songs and games in their classes for various and different reasons. There are some teachers who use them for grammatical purpose; others use them for vocabulary reasons and some others just for fun. It still remains that teachers perform them to achieve their aims. Teachers as well as students find songs and games very interesting and motivating because they can draw lots of information on them. According to the teachers songs and games help students to master in a very quick way, for instance, the nouns of animals. In this respect they are very informative and constructive. Even if some teachers find sometimes designing songs and games can be a tedious task to perform; students fully appreciate games in class as they find them pleasurable. We notice today that songs and

games are performed through pair work or group work in order to increase participation of students and prevent at the same time inhibition. When making a cross analysis of results, the study also suggests that teachers and students have nearly the same opinion as far as the questions they are asked are concerned. They all acknowledge that songs and games are really important and vital to English Language Teaching. In the same way, the author recommends that "it is really important for teachers to make use of songs and games in their classes if they really want to promote their students communicative capacities. We must not lose sight of the fact that when using songs and games in our classes, we give students sense of self confidence and it is only by being self-confident that students can express themselves freely and without constraint. It is an imperative to assert that today teachers should not only worry about the success of their students in exams. What is important is that the teachers of English should strain every nerve so that their students use the English language without any difficulties. This can only be achieved when they are more aware that songs and games are really an opportunity for them to promote communicative skills." Finally, the study says that accuracy is important in a language but the new trend favors fluency. Fluency can be developed in the learners of English if the teachers use songs and games regularly in classes.

As stated before, there is no previous study that is specifically related to the subject matter of this research project, the development of the language oral proficiency of students. As it can be noticed, the former study deals with how to reach a high level of fluency when speaking and the latter focuses on the impact of songs and games in English language teaching in general. However, according to

the search done by the team, these two studies carried out inside and outside the university respectively are the ones that are closer to the subject matter of the present research.

b. THEORETICAL BASIS

Learning a second language is considered a hard task which can sometimes be frustrating and demotivating for students, and learning English is not an exception. It is taken for granted that a great effort is required by the students in order to understand and use the target language. Many students consider speaking as the most important skill since for them communicating is the main reason for studying English, but at the same time they also consider it the most difficult skill to master. Indeed, learners who master the language are called its "speakers". (Ur 2004:120). It is, however, a very long and tiresome process to become capable of speaking in the foreign language. "One frustration commonly voiced by learners is that they have spent years studying English, but still can't speak it." (Thombury, 2008: 208); therefore, the obvious solution is getting students to talk as much as possible. However, this is probably the most difficult task teachers can face. This is why teachers must permanently look for resources that help them overcome this problem. As a way to take up this challenge, teachers have turned to the use of games and songs in class to enhance the learners' desire to learn the language, and, moreover, to develop their language oral proficiency skill as a main tool for communication.

This section will address three theses related with the impact of the use of games and songs in the development of the students' language oral proficiency.

The first thesis will address the non-threatening ambiance for students that games and songs afford in the classroom; the second thesis will focus on how games and songs are used to teach vocabulary or recycle known vocabulary in the class; and the last thesis will be related to how songs help learners become familiar with word stress and intonation and the rhythm with which words are spoken, all of which have an impact in the development of the language oral proficiency of students.

Games and songs afford a non-threatening environment for students in the classroom

In most of the English classes, students are usually tense when speaking English, which is one of the main factors that hinders students from developing their language oral proficiency, since they do not give themselves the opportunity to practice the language. As suggested by a recent review in Languages, technology and learning (Milton 2006) learning a language is different from any other subject in the curriculum as it combines explicit learning of vocabulary and language rules with unconscious skill development in the fluent application of both things. In this sense, teachers must look for a way to make the English learning process a different experience for learners. And here it is where games and songs come to play an important role.

According to Wilgo M Rivers (1987) songs are the means in the course of which educational topics are presented successfully. Songs propose a change from habitual classroom actions in the English class. They are valuable resources to expand students' abilities in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They may support widespread and concentrated listening, inspire resourcefulness and use of imagination in an undisturbed classroom atmosphere. According to Penny Ur

(2004), the speaker has to pay attention to vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation at the same time. He or she has to be a good listener, too, since we usually say something in response to something else. Similarly, games are considered to set a non-threatening atmosphere in the classroom for learning to take place since according to Krashen S. D (1988) they also reduce the stress in the classroom.

The lack of interest and motivation is another reason why students are usually not willing to participate in speaking activities in the English class. Games and songs are also known to lower the "affective filter" or, in other words, to motivate learners to learn. The Affective Filter Hypothesis is one of five proposed hypotheses developed by Steven Krashen. Basically, it is an explanation of how the affective factors relate to language learning. It is particularly appealing to teachers because it provides an explanation to why some learners learn and others do not. The practical application of the Affective Filter Hypothesis is that teachers must provide a positive atmosphere conducive to language learning. Games and songs are methods for achieving a weak affective filter and promoting language learning. Teachers have long recognized the need for students to have a positive attitude in regard to learning. With the affective filter weak, Saricoban and Metin (2000) have found that songs can develop the four skill areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking; and in the same way, it is also suggested that the variety and intensity that games offer may lower anxiety (Richard-Amato, 1988) and encourage shyer learners to take part (Uberman, 1998), especially when games are played in small groups.

Games and songs are tools to present new vocabulary or recycle known language in the class

One of the key elements in learning a foreign language, and, moreover to develop the oral language proficiency of students, is learning vocabulary. This is something that has always caused students difficulties. Thornbury quotes the linguist David Wilkins to stress the importance of learning vocabulary: "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (2002:13). Therein, English learners need to acquire a critical mass of words for use in both understanding and producing language.

For instance, music is a subject of everyday communication and it is something that is ever present in people's lives intentionally or unintentionally, which can be very beneficial for a method of using songs to teach English vocabulary since it increases the possibility that students will come across the taught material, frequently revising it. Songs are highly repetitive and "catchy". They activate our acquisition devices and as a result remembering words and phrases seems an effortless activity. They work both on our short- and long-term memory. (Murphey 1995:7)

However, as Harmer (1991: 159) points out that a word that has been active through constant use may slip back into the passive store if it is not used. A word that students have in their passive store may suddenly become active if the situation or context provokes its use. In other words, the status of a vocabulary item does not seem to be a permanent state of affairs. And here it is where games and songs play an important role. It can be said that songs help build vocabulary to be used while speaking since the words used in songs are remembered, along with the melody of the song throughout a lifetime. Similarly, games can help activate vocabulary that students have accumulated in the passive store due to lack of use

since as stated by Uberman (1998) games can also be used as a way to revise and recycle previously taught language.

Finally, there are some advantages in using songs to teach vocabulary. For instance, in the lyrics, words usually appear in context, the sound of new words is easily remembered along with the melody of the song and by listening to the song, students are exposed to the new words many times, which is very beneficial for learners since this can help them develop a kind of self-directed learning on how to use the words and the language in general when speaking. And this, as already mentioned, is beneficial for students since according to Thornbury (2002:30) not all vocabulary that learners need can be taught; learners will need plentiful exposure to speech and text as well as training for self-directed learning.

Songs help learners become familiar with word stress and intonation and the rhythm with which words are spoken

Songs can also be used to teach a variety of language matters such as sentence patterns, vocabulary, pronunciation, rhythm, adjectives, and adverbs. While they supply genuine texts, they are inspiring. Prosodic features of the language such as stress, rhythm and intonation are presented through songs, thus from side to side using them the language, which is cut up into sequences of structural points, becomes an entire once more. Through songs, learners have the opportunity to listen to pronunciation in a wide range of varieties of the language. We can't generalize, but research has found that pop songs have characteristics that help learning a second language: they often contain common, short words; they are written at about 5th grade level (US); the language is conversational, time

and place are usually imprecise; the lyrics are often sung at a slower rate than spoken words and there is repetition of words and grammar. (Murphy, 1992)

Songs helping learners become familiar with word stress and intonation and the rhythm with which words are spoken or sung also helps memorization. Memorization enables learners to remember chunks of language which they can then use in conversations or writing.

Since the nature of songs is fairly repetitive and consistent, songs also present opportunities for developing automaticity which is the main cognitive reason for using songs in the classroom. Gattaboni and Segalowitz (1988, p.473) define automaticity as "a component of language fluency which involves both knowing what to say and producing language rapidly without pauses." Using songs can help automatize the language development process. Then, interacting with songs again and again is as important to language learners as repeatedly practicing a tennis technique is for a tennis player. Learners get to know what to say and to produce language rapidly without pausing.

As shown, the three previous theses provide information related to the impact of the use of games and songs in the development of the students' language oral proficiency. The need for the teachers to make of the language classroom a different place where language learning, in this case, learning English, and, moreover, the development of the language oral proficiency of students takes place, has encouraged them to look for different techniques to accomplish this goal. Teachers have turned to the use of games and songs in the English classroom as a technique to help them overcome the problems faced when trying to develop the students' language oral proficiency. The previous theses state that

the use of these techniques in the classroom afford a non-threatening atmosphere for students in the classroom, present new vocabulary or recycle known language in the class in an appropriate way, and help learners become familiar with word stress and intonation and the rhythm with which words are spoken, all of which have an impact in order to develop the students` language oral proficiency in the English language learning.

3. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

a. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES USED

In order to carry out the study called “The impact of the use of ELT games and songs in the development of the language oral proficiency of students in the Intensive Intermediate English I in the Foreign Language Department at University of El Salvador” the research team addressed the following research questions:

What is the impact of the use of ELT games and songs in the development of the language oral proficiency of students in the Intensive Intermediate English I in the Foreign Language Department at University of El Salvador? What are the students’ perceptions towards the use of ELT games and songs in the class? What are the teachers’ perceptions towards using ELT games and songs as teaching resources in the classroom?

Thus, in order to answer these research questions, the research team created some data collection instruments such as a questionnaire for which three Intensive Intermediate English I classes were used as the sample, a questionnaire for the English teachers, and as well as an observation checklist. The questionnaires aimed at identifying both the students and teachers’ perceptions towards the use of ELT games and songs in the classroom. In order to obtain a good result in the investigation the team took into account the participants’ points of view for developing the problem, collecting data, interpreting and analyzing all the information gathered through the whole process.

b. SOURCES OF DATA

The main sources of data of this research project were three. First, the research team counted on the population of teachers of the Intensive Intermediate English I classes in order to obtain reliable information about their perception towards the use of ELT games and songs in the classroom. Next, the researchers had to carry out some class observations in order to experience and see what really happened in the classroom regarding the use of songs and games in the class, and in this way, obtaining useful information for this investigation. Finally, the research team counted on the population of students taking the Intensive Intermediate English I class as, perhaps, the most valuable source of information in order to carry out this project since they are the ones that are more directly involved in the subject matter of this project.

c. SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The team created a questionnaire for three Intensive Intermediate English I classes (80 students approximately) in the Foreign Language Department at University of El Salvador taking into account that, at this level, students should have developed, to some extent, their language oral proficiency. Among the total of students of these three groups, half of them (44 students approximately) were selected making use of a sampling technique called non-intended probability sampling specifically because members of the population were chosen based on their relative ease of access, not taking into account their gender, age and occupation at work. Similarly, the teachers in charge of teaching the Intensive

Intermediate English I classes served as part of the population and sample for a questionnaire that was designed by the research team in order to get acquainted with their perceptions toward the use of games and songs in the class as teaching resources.

d. METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS OF DATA GATHERING

This study took place in the University of El Salvador, taking into account students registered in three groups of the subject Intensive Intermediate English I and as well as the teachers in charge of teaching this subject. The instruments that the research team used to collect data were the following:

- A questionnaire made up by 7 closed-ended questions and one open-ended question to assess the students' perceptions towards the use of games and songs in the class
- A questionnaire made up by 6 closed-ended questions and two open-ended questions to assess the teachers' perceptions towards the use of games and songs in the classroom as a teaching resource
- An observation checklist to get acquainted with the types of games and songs, if any, used by the teachers in the classroom and how students respond to the use of these activities in the class

e. STATISTICAL TREATMENT

The information that was gathered through the use of the before mentioned instruments were entered into computer files. The team used the Nvivo software which is a quick and easy tool for storing and retrieving data. It provided the tools to manage data, create codes, and search text to hone the analysis of data and it organized the entire information gathered from the instruments making the team's work easier. Similarly, the research team used the software Excell to create the graphics. All this helped the research team to foster their understanding for the final research report in order to classify and present the information and the respective findings and conclusions obtained out of the present study.

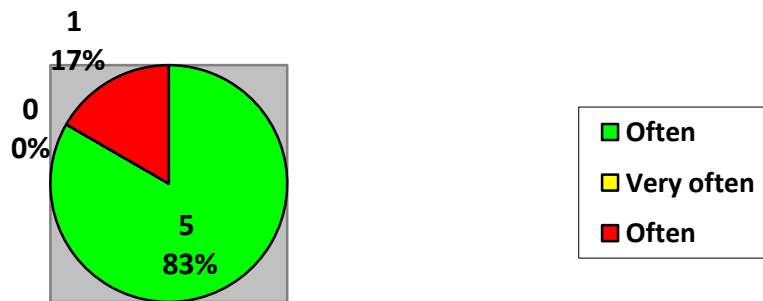
4. ANALYSIS OF DATA

In order to have a comprehensive picture of the impact of the use of songs and games in the development of the language oral proficiency of the students taking the Intensive Intermediate English I of the major Licenciatura en Idioma Ingles, Opcion Enseñanza, the data will be presented and analyzed in a systematic way. Firstly, the teachers' data will be presented and analyzed from a qualitative view. Next, the students' data will follow the same procedure and, finally the research team will compare if what teachers and students stated is being applied by presenting and analyzing the results obtained through the use of an observation checklist. A questionnaire was created for teachers and another questionnaire for students, and in order to compare their opinions with what the research team could observe, a class observation checklist was designed. These instruments will be represented by some graphics and a short analysis of each question.

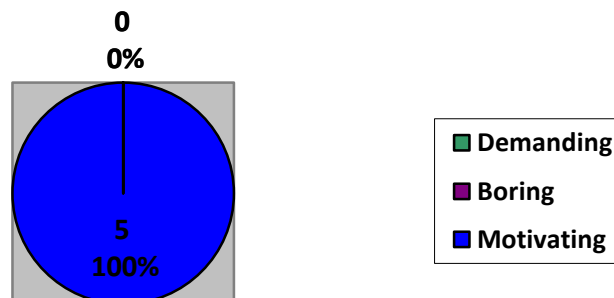
a. Teachers' questionnaire data: presentation and analysis

Out of 8 handouts given to teachers only 6 have been returned. For the questionnaire the analysis is carried out question after question.

1) **How often do you use games and songs in your class?** If we consider the first question we can see that the great majority of teachers **often** use songs and games in their classes.

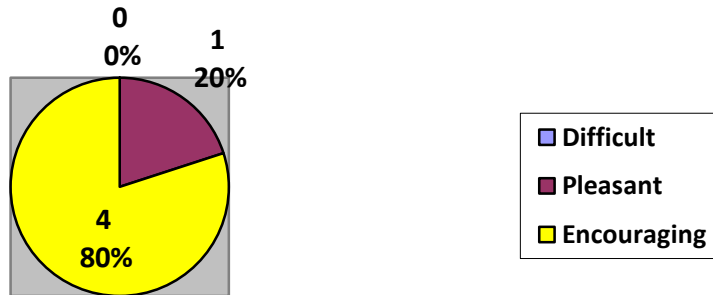


2) **What is using games and songs in the class for you?** From the answers we can notice that many teachers believe that designing songs and games is **motivating** for them.



3) How do you think games and songs may be for students in most cases?

Teachers find them so **encouraging** for students to participate efficiently in the class.

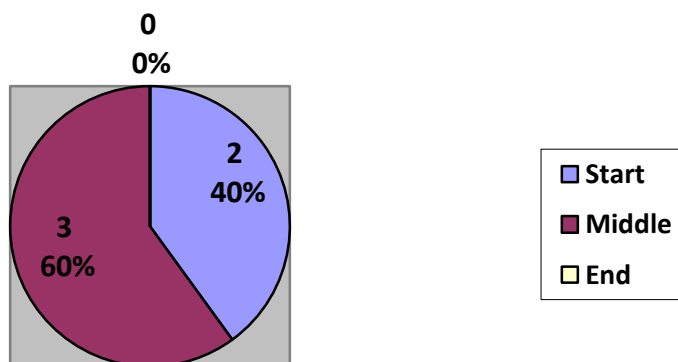


4) What type of grouping do you use most of the time?

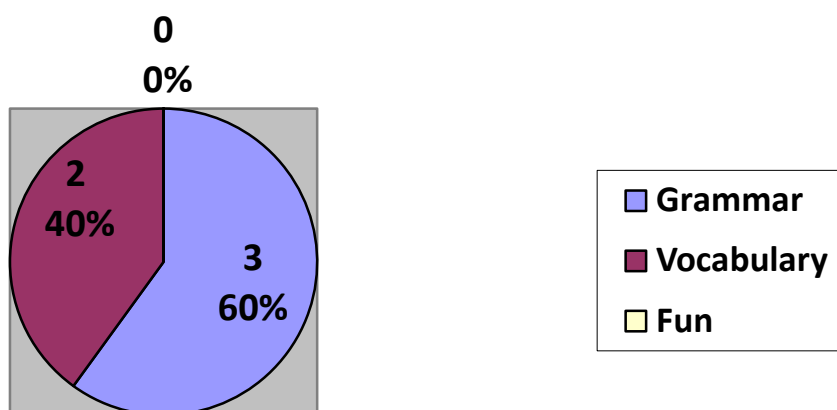
When taking into account the answers of the teachers we can acknowledge that teachers tend to use most of the time **pair work** and **group work**, perhaps to encourage participation of all the students.



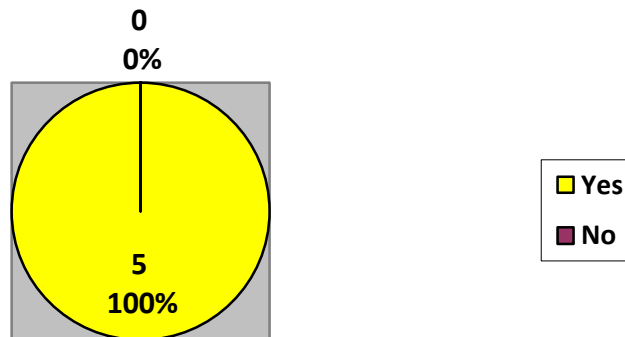
5) **At what moment of the lesson do you often use them?** The conclusion we can draw here is that most teachers do these activities at the **middle** and the **start** of the lesson, maybe because they do not think they can be integral lessons. So they use them most of the time as warmers or routine breakers



6) **When using games and songs, what is your commonest objective?** Here we can state that most teachers focus more on Grammar.



7) Do you think the objective you pursue helps students develop their speaking skill? Most teachers stated that the objective they pursue by using songs and games in the class help students develop their speaking skill since according to them the practice of Grammar and the acquisition of new vocabulary are very important tools in order to develop their speaking skill



8) What is your opinion in general towards the use of games and songs in the classroom as a teaching resource? Most teachers agree on the fact that the use of games and songs in the class plays an important role as a motivator for students. According to them, these activities help to motivate students to be attentive in the class and participate more.

-“I agree that using songs and games is an important part of the class because it motivates students to participate more.”

-“They engage students’ participation.”

-“It’s a good way of motivating students to be attentive to the class.”

However, some teachers also made emphasis on the need for them to be matched with the objectives of the lesson plan and to be used appropriately.

-“They are very useful for academic purposes.”

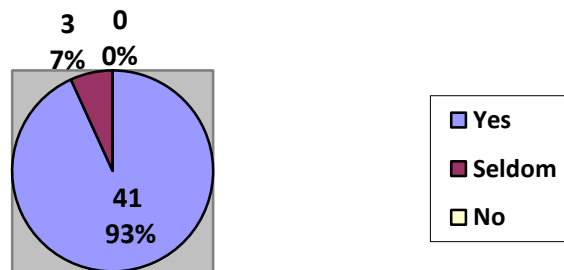
-“As a teaching resource it can be helpful at times if used appropriately.”

-“It could be beneficial as long as they are matched with the objective of the lesson plan, contents, units to consolidate, the learned contents or skills.”

b. Students' questionnaire data: presentation and analysis

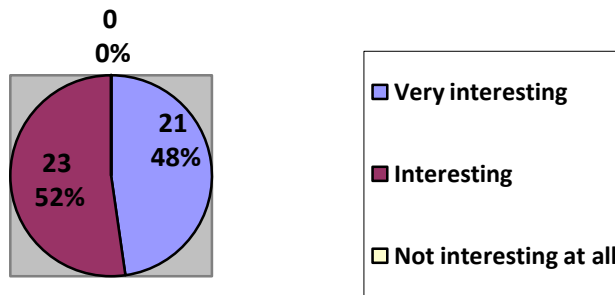
The research team focused our project in 3 different groups of the Intensive Intermediate English I students and took a sample of 44 students that were selected using a non-intended selection, resulting in 22 female and 22 male participation. All of these students were in their first year of the career and having an average age of 22 years old that was an very important factor that helped us to think about their reaction when exposed to games and songs among adults and teenagers population.

1) Does the teacher use games and songs in the class? If not, go to question 8



The 93% of the students in the 3 Intensive Intermediate English groups stated that their teachers use games and songs in the class and only 7% stated that they don't make use of them. However, later in this research the questionnaire will show if they are used correctly or used with a purpose.

2) How do you often find these activities?



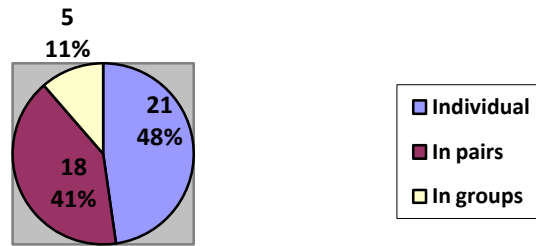
In this question the research team realized how students react when exposed to these activities and it shows the results of how teachers make use of them. The graphic illustrate close results whether some students find these activities "Very Interesting" and the rest "Interesting", but none find it "Not Interesting at all."

3) Do they help you get ready for the class when they are used at the beginning?



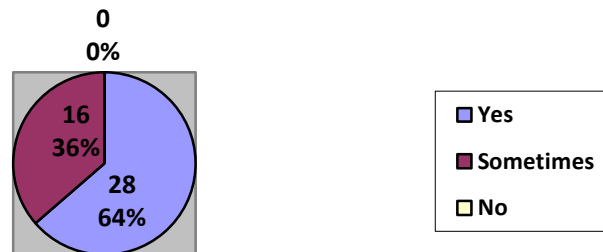
The results of this question helped the research team to prove that most of the games or songs are used by teachers as a warm up for the class. This warm up helps more students to get ready for what is coming and for few of them this warm up sometimes help them.

4) How are you organized most of the time when exposed to them?



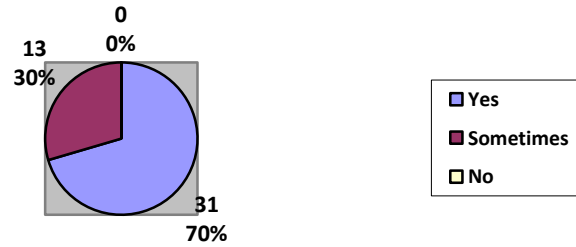
With the following question the research team could have a vague idea about how teachers organize students most of the time depending on the kind of activity they are going to carry out. The graphic shows that 48% of the students stated that they are organized most of the time individually, another 41% shows that they are organized in pairs and the 11% of students stated that they are organized in groups at the moment of being exposed to games of the activities.

5) Do you learn new words from them?



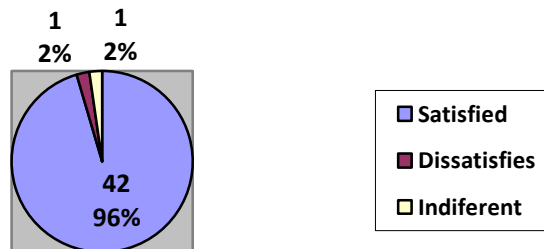
The research team could realized that the 64% of the students learn new words from the games and songs that they are being exposed to, and the 36% of the students stated that sometimes they learn new words, but 0% of the population stated that they do not learn new words, what helps the research team to make a good idea about the results.

6) Do these activities give you the chance to practice your speaking skill?



In the following graphic the research team could realize the importance of the use of the games and songs and specially the results that they bring with them since though the population was divided in their answer, none of those groups showed a negative results. The graphic illustrate that 70% of the students practice the speaking skill when exposed to games and songs and a 30% of the students stated that they sometimes have the chance to practice their speaking skill.

7) If so, how do you feel regarding the chance games and songs give you to practice your speaking skill?



The following question showed the research team that though the games and songs used by the teachers helped in a positive way, the graphic shows that 96%

of the students feel dissatisfied, 2% feel satisfied and another 2% feel indifferent regarding the chance games and songs give them to practice their speaking skill.

8) What is your opinion in general towards the use of games and songs in the class?

Regarding this open-ended question, most students considered the use of these activities in the class a good technique in order to acquire new vocabulary, practice their pronunciation and develop their speaking skill; all of which can help as valuable tools to develop their oral language proficiency.

-“ I think that games and songs can help us to learn vocabulary.”

- “ It is very good because you can practice your English and you can better your speaking skill.”

-“I think that I improve my pronunciation.”

Similarly, some students considered these activities motivating, since they are dynamic and entertaining as students stated that they bring fun to the class and help to lose fear when interacting or communicating with other classmates, which can help students develop their oral language proficiency too.

-“ Games and songs are important because you lose fear of speaking in English. Also you can learn new words for your vocabulary.”

-“ I think that it makes the class dynamic because I don’t sleep in class.”

-“sometimes it is good because we can share with other partners.”

-“It makes the class very funny and I really like it.”

c. Observation checklist

The third instrument used by the research team was the class observation checklist that helped researchers to have a better perception about the reactions of these two parts studied in this research. This observation checklist was used in 3 Intensive Intermediate English I groups that were in charge of 3 teachers that, according to some references and according to the teachers' questionnaire results, showed up that they were the ones that use games and songs in their classes the most.

- The research team could observe that from the teachers selected, they sometimes used games/songs in their classes showing little motivation when carry them out and used them without providing clear instructions when given. Another fact that was observed by the researchers was that they few times used them just to introduce a topic or to activate SCHEMATA. Moreover, these games and songs were used most of the time individually and teachers rarely asked for new words or promoted proper pronunciation.
- On the other hand, the research team could observe that most of the students felt motivated to participate in the class when exposed to these activities previously mention, but the rest did not feel comfortable since they were not being encouraged or motivated to get involved in them. At the same time students looked confused since they did not know or have clear objectives towards these activities. Moreover, students were not asked or

provided with new vocabulary included in the games and songs used and they were not helped/corrected in the pronunciation of new words.

The research team concluded that though these games/songs are not used in a 100%, taking advantage of all their properties or functions, students questionnaire showed positive results that help them improve their English Language oral proficiency.

5. MAJOR FINDINGS

The observation check list helped the research team to diagnose if the answers teachers provided in the questionnaire were applied in the class and according to those observations, which were made to 3 different Intensive Intermediate English I groups, the research team observed that most of the teachers used games or songs at the beginning of the class as a warm-up. In this way teachers were able to have students ready for the class. The research team observed students' reaction when being exposed/ involved to the songs / games used by teachers and the researchers could identify a nice students' participation in most of these activities, though sometimes these games / songs did not have a purpose or instructions stated by the teacher before using them.

However, despite the fact of fostering motivation and participation in the classroom, not all of those games or songs are used with a well defined purpose to develop students' oral language proficiency directly. Most of the time they are used as warm up and fillers. Teachers do not focus on using these activities in the classroom to develop linguistic abilities such as, the acquisition of new vocabulary, the practice of pronunciation and intonation patterns, the development of automaticity, among others, which, according to the literature reviewed, are key factors to help Ss develop their English language oral proficiency. Even worse, the research team could not identify any signal of trying to develop certain functions of the language with the use of games and songs in the classroom, which are also essential for the development of the language oral proficiency.

Nevertheless, the research team found out that games and songs used by teachers at this level do help students develop their language oral proficiency, but in an indirect way, since the way they use this type of activities in the class has something implicit, Grammar, vocabulary, etc., to develop this skill.

As the research team had predicted, these games / songs help students´ in a great way to learn new vocabulary, grammar structures and at the same time help students to have fun and get relaxed, something that can help develop their language oral proficiency.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- Students state that the use of songs and games in the class is a very important tool to help them develop their oral language proficiency since they promote motivation and a fun environment in the classroom. Similarly, students state that songs and games give them the chance to acquire new vocabulary and practice grammatical structures, linguistic factors that help develop their oral language proficiency.
- Teachers do use songs and games in the classroom. However, teachers use these activities just as warmers and fillers whose purpose is only associated to fostering motivation in the classroom, which is a factor that helps develop the language oral proficiency to some extent,. However, there are more linguistic factors that need to be developed to help students master their language oral proficiency, and this can be achieved by using games and songs as integral activities in the class
- As a research team, we must admit in this respect that well-chosen songs and games are really invaluable as they give the students the opportunities to practice language skills, but moreover, the oral skill. Today it is shown that songs and games in English Language Teaching are highly motivating and play an important role as they can be used to give practice in all language skills and be used to practice many types of real life communication.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS

Since the subject matter of this research project was to find out what the impact of the use of songs and games is in the development of the students' language oral proficiency taking the Intensive Intermediate English I course, the research team recommends that future investigation research the impact of the use of songs and games in the development of the oral language proficiency of students taking a higher English course such as the Advance English I or II, since these students represent or show a more advance level of oral proficiency to be associated to the fact of being exposed to the use of songs and games in the class as tools to have developed their oral language proficiency.

Similarly, the research team recommends that future investigation research the impact of the use of songs and games in the development of the four macro skills of the English language, reading, writing, listening and speaking, since they are related to each other as a whole for the linguistic competence of the English language.

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9. APPENDIX

a. Students' Questionnaire



UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
GRADUATION WORK PROJECT
LIC. VERONICA ARGELIA SERRANO

QUESTIONNAIRE ADDRESSED TO STUDENTS TAKING THE INTENSIVE INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH I, CYCLE II, 2013

Sex: _____ Age: _____ Year in the major: _____

Objective: To investigate the students' perceptions towards the use of ELT games and songs in the class and its impact in the development of their oral language proficiency

DIRECTIONS: Check just one option. Check the option that best describes your opinion and answer as required

- 1) Does the teacher use games and songs in the class? If not, go to question 8
Yes Seldom No
- 2) How do you often find these activities?
Very interesting interesting not interesting at all
- 3) Do they help you get ready for the class when they are used at the beginning?
Yes sometimes No
- 4) How are you organized most of the time when exposed to them?
Solo in pairs in groups
- 5) Do you learn new words from them?
Yes sometimes No
- 6) Do these activities give you the chance to practice your speaking skill?
Yes sometimes No
- 7) If so, how do you feel regarding the chance games and songs give you to practice your speaking skill?
Satisfied dissatisfied indifferent
- 8) What is your opinion in general towards the use of games and songs in the class?

b. Teachers' Questionnaire



UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
GRADUATION WORK PROJECT
LIC. VERONICA ARGELIA SERRANO

QUESTIONNAIRE ADDRESSED TO TEACHERS IN CHARGE OF TEACHING THE INTENSIVE INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH I, CYCLE II, 2013

Objective: To investigate the teachers' perceptions towards the use of ELT games and songs in the classroom as a teaching resource and its impact in the development of the students' oral language proficiency

DIRECTIONS: Check just one option. Check the option that best describes your opinion and answer as required.

1. How often do you use games and songs in your class? If never, go to question 8
Very often often never
2. What is using games and songs in the class like for you?
Demanding boring motivating
3. How do you think games and songs may be for students in most cases?
Difficult pleasant encouraging
4. What type of grouping do you use most of the time?
Solo work pairwork group work
5. At what moment of the lesson do you often use them?
Start middle end
6. When using games and songs, what is your commonest objective?
Grammar vocabulary fun
7. Do you think the objective you pursue helps students develop their speaking skill? Yes No If yes, How?
Explain briefly

8. What is your opinion in general towards the use of games and songs in the classroom as a teaching resource?

c. Class observation checklist

Class observation checklist

Name: _____ Date: _____

Class observed: _____ Time: _____

Observer: _____ Classroom: _____

Teacher instruction	Viewed	Not viewed	Comments
1- Makes use of songs and/or games			
2- shows motivation and try to transmit it to the students when using these type of activities			
3- Uses these activities in the proper phase of the class for the objective to pursue			
4- Uses an appropriate grouping for the objective to pursue			
5- Tries somehow to provide the students with tools that help them develop their oral language proficiency through the use of these activities			
Students participation	Viewed	Not viewed	Comments
1- show motivation and/or interest when exposed to songs and/or games in the class			
2- look like they understand what the objective or benefit of getting involved in these type of activities is; therefore, remain on task			
3- are provided with opportunities or with the tools that help them develop their oral language proficiency through being exposed to these activities in the class			