

# College Students' Responses to the Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity (RESLA)

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the voices of 15 college students (F: 13; M: 2) who participated in the Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity (RESLA) within an undergraduate English language classroom in Taiwan. Two research questions were proposed to guide the study: (a) How did the college students respond to the RESLA from the perspective of English acquisition? and (b) How did the college students respond to the RESLA from the perspective of critical thinking? Data were collected via an anonymous questionnaire and through the participants' written reflection papers. The results of the study indicated that (a) the RESLA was able to help the participants stimulate their English acquisition and develop their critical thinking, and (b) the RESLA benefited the participants in their critical thinking more than their English language acquisition. The results obtained via the questionnaire were further supported in the students' reflection papers.

**Keywords: college students; Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity (RESLA); English acquisition; critical thinking; Taiwan**

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## I. Introduction

Learning English has become a growing trend all around the world due to its increasing use as an international communication tool in many fields, such as international trade and commerce. The British Council estimates that the number of people learning English worldwide could reach two billion by the year 2020 (Robson, 2013).

Learner anxiety has played an important negative role in language learning, because it is closely correlated with a reduction in learning ability (Zhao, 2007). In conventional teaching contexts, particularly those focusing on textbooks, students perceive language learning as a laborious, uninteresting and frustrating task due to the number of exams, corrections, rote memorizations and translations required (Riahipour & Saba, 2012). However, learning English through playing games and listening to songs might help alleviate student anxiety and provide an interesting classroom environment in which to engage in the language learning process.

The Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity (RESLA) was designed to increase students' English acquisition skills and also increase critical thinking through playing a game and listening to English songs. Thus, the purpose of the current study was to investigate the reflective voices of the students following completion of the Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity. The two research questions that guided the current study were:

- (a) How did the college students respond to the Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity (RESLA) from the perspective of English acquisition?
- (b) How did the college students respond to the Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity (RESLA) from the perspective of critical thinking?

## II. Literature Review

### 2.1 English Acquisition and Games

Students can learn a target language effectively and improve their language proficiency such as vocabulary power by playing games (Bakhsh, 2016; Derakhshan & Davoodi Khatir, 2015; Richard-Amato, 1996) As Donmus (2010) stated "The value of educational games has been increasing in language education since they help to make language education entertaining" (p.1497). Students are encouraged to work together in a stress-free learning environment (Uberman, 1998), so they can sharpen their communicative skills (SorayaieAzar, 2012) and increase their learning motivation (Derakhshan & Davoodi Khatir, 2015).

Some teachers prefer not to use language games in their classrooms because they think that games could be interesting but time-consuming, yet language games could provide more than that for students (Deesri, 2002). Gozcu and Caganaga (2016) believe that games are not only fun, relaxing, and satisfying but they also reduce anxiety and stress, which can affect students' learning motivation.

In 2011, Aghlara and Tamjid investigated the impact of a computer game on 40 Iranian girls' vocabulary acquisition. The participants, who were aged from six to seven, were randomly divided into two groups. The SHAIEX digital game was used by the experimental group, while a traditional teaching style was used in the control group. Data were collected via a final ten question vocabulary test. The results of the study indicated that playing the computer game provided significant benefits for the experimental group in terms of vocabulary acquisition. The experimental group's mean post-test score was significantly higher than that of the control group.

In 2016, Gozcu and Caganaga investigated the effects of using a game called "Twister" in an EFL classroom setting on two Turkish undergraduates



(aged 22 and 23). The game “Twister” was played by the students for two hours per week over a four week period. Data collection included the researchers’ observations and semi-structured interviews using six questions such as “Do you think this game motivated you to learn vocabulary?” and “Would you prefer learning vocabulary with this game?” The results of the study indicated that the game was an effective and useful tool for teaching English vocabulary, because the game made the EFL classroom more entertaining, relaxing, satisfying, and anxiety-free.

## 2.2 English Acquisition and English Songs

Listening to English songs and discussing their lyrics can be an effective way to learn English, especially pronunciation, vocabulary, listening and reading. Learning English through songs can benefit students in many ways. For example, students do not pay much money (Juste Romé, 2014) and have access to English songs on the Internet. As well as enjoyment, the inclusion of music and songs in a language learning class can stimulate students’ learning interest and motivation, such as vocabulary acquisition (Rosová, 2007). Listening to English songs can help (a) boost a learner’s listening ability (Listiyarningsih, 2017; Malekian, 2016; Rosová, 2007), and (b) learn structures, sentence patterns (Malekian, 2016), and grammar, and (c) imitate native speakers’ pronunciation (Malekian, 2016). Basically, songs and music are a useful means of introducing learners to foreign language practice. Not only do songs make a lesson more interesting because of the use of authentic language and their ability to break a routine, but they also develop students’ language skills in other ways. Although there is not a single ideal model for teaching foreign language songs, they can certainly strengthen students’ motivation to explore the target language.

In 1997, Kim compared student voices obtained from a control group (n=358) that used conventional

listening exercises with those obtained from an experimental group (n=334) that used popular song gap-fill exercises. All 692 participants were Japanese freshman or sophomore males, enrolled in compulsory English classes at a Japanese university. Data collection included both a pre-test and a post-test using Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET) Basic Listening Comprehension Test and a follow-up questionnaire. The listening test comprised 40- multiple-choice questions in four categories, i.e., a) picture, b) statement, c) dialog, and d) narrative. The follow-up questionnaire items focused on whether the participants’ pronunciation, intonation, and contracted forms were improved by the treatment. The results of the pre-test and post-test listening tests indicated that the two groups’ improvements were not significant and about equal. However, the results of the questionnaire indicated the experimental group showed higher interest in learning English than the control group.

In 2007, Rosová investigated the impact of songs on the ability of 53 Czech participants’ to retain vocabulary. Participants ranged between 14 and 51 years of age (M=31, F=22). Data collection was drawn from a song-based lesson questionnaire composed of eight questions, one poem-based lesson questionnaire containing six questions, and face-to-face interviews. The results of the study indicated that (a) the use of music/ songs could help the participants to acquire and memorize vocabulary, (b) the participants preferred the song lessons to the poem lessons, and (c) the participants considered the song lessons “interesting, instructive, positive, relaxing and enjoyable” (pp. 27-28).

In 2015, Batluk investigated the impact of listening to English songs as an out-of-school activity on fifteen Swedish senior high students’ (aged 16 to 18) English acquisition. The source of data collection was individual semi-structured interviews with member



checking validation. The results of the qualitative study indicated that participation in the listening-to-English-song activity could help the participants expand their vocabulary, boost their listening ability, sharpen their listening skills (e.g., repetition, consulting dictionaries, working out the definition of new words, and recognition of familiar words), and improve their speaking ability (e.g., pronunciation and intonation).

In 2017, Listiyaningsih conducted interviews with five English-majors to explore the relationship between English songs and listening ability. The results of the qualitative study indicated that listening to English songs could boost learners' listening ability. Furthermore, the participants increased their lyrics-reading ability, vocabulary power and pronunciation skills through listening to English songs.

### 2.3 Critical Thinking

Some educators and researchers have attempted to shed light on the value of teaching critical thinking in language teaching contexts (Wang, Armstrong, Wu, Wen, & Wang, 2015). Halvorsen (2005) claimed that "Critical thinking is not an easy concept to define as it can mean quite different things to different people in different contexts and cultures" (no page number). Critical thinking employs multiple ways of thinking in that it involves the skills of argument analysis, judgment, evaluation, decision making or problem solving (Lai, 2011). Wang, Chiu, and Wu (2010) defined critical thinking as "*a learning process by which students apply previous knowledge and what they had read and learned in class to brainstorm, employ creativity and imagination to accomplish their [task], learn cooperation, learn to communicate with other team members, learn to respect multiple perspectives, and boost peer relationship*" (italics in original, p. 357).

For the current study, critical thinking was

operationally defined as a learning process by which students apply their creativity and imagination via schemata to complete a required task, learn to respect different ideas, increase cooperation ability, boost peer relationships, and promote their communication skills. The required task in this definition refers to the RESLA that the participants were required to finish in small groups. Moreover, the definition of creativity selected for the current study is "*an ability to generate novel ideas after continuously assembling, selecting, assessing, and connecting existing knowledge and/or prior experiences*" (italics in original, as cited in Wang, Armstrong, Wu, Wen, & Wang, 2015, p.3); that of imagination selected for the current study is "*an ability to form a vivid mental image of what has been studied and/or experienced*" (italics in original, as cited in Wang, Armstrong, Wu, Wen, & Wang, 2015, p.3).

### 2.4. Course activities for English Acquisition and Critical Thinking

This section describes two previous studies which explored the impact of an activity or assignment on students' English acquisition ability and critical thinking skills.

Wang, Armstrong, Wu, Wen, and Wang (2015) explored 119 Applied Foreign Languages (AFL) major freshmen's (M: 19; F: 100) responses to the Grammar-Related-e-Picture-Book Creating (GREPBC) activity. The study had two research questions: (a) How did the AFL freshmen respond to Grammar-Related-e-Picture-Book Creating (GREPBC) from the perspective of English grammar acquisition? and (b) How did the AFL freshmen respond to Grammar-Related-e-Picture-Book Creating (GREPBC) from the perspective of critical thinking? The research data involved a 6-point Likert scale questionnaire, the freshmen's reflection papers, and their e-picture-books. The results of the study indicated that approximately 90% of the participants tended to agree with the



effectiveness of the GRePBC assignment on their learning English grammar and about 93% agreed that the assignment could increase their critical thinking ability (i.e., creativity, imagination, respecting differed ideas, cooperation, peer relationships, and communication skills). Moreover, many participants believed that the assignment could boost their software literacy.

Wang, Wu, Huang, Chuang, and Hong (2019) investigated the attitudes of 113 AFL major students had towards a mini-film creating activity in an English Reading class. Two research questions motivated the study: (a) How did AFL majors respond to a mini-film creating activity from the perspective of English acquisition? and (b) How did AFL majors respond to a mini-film creating activity from the perspective of critical thinking? The two data sources were: a questionnaire and the participants' final reflection papers. As well as increasing their technical literacy, the results of the study showed that the mini-film creating activity could help increase the participants' English acquisition (i.e., vocabulary and four language skills), critical thinking development (i.e. creativity, imagination, respect for different ideas, cooperation, peer relationships, and communication skills).

### III. Methodology

#### 3.1 Nature of the Class

University students from both inside and outside the Department of AFL were encouraged to enroll in an elective undergraduate English language course. Once enrolled, they attended a weekly class two class periods (100 minutes). The course was aimed at helping students explore their interest in English learning and teaching, while also enhancing their critical thinking skills, technology literacy, and their ability to select appropriate materials for English classes. In addition, they were able to improve their skills at creating (e-)works and learning materials, or

educational tools, appropriate for English learners.

#### 3.2 The Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity (RESLA)

The RESLA was completed over a four week period (weeks 3-6) of the Spring Semester in 2019 as follows:

- Step 1: Before class, the teacher selected three English songs (i.e., El Condor Pasa/ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sswFrz32ld0>, Don't Kill the World/ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FoDpsJ-xY>, and The Sound of Silence/ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FB9GYkIT3E>) and cut out each word in the lyrics. All the paper lyric/word pieces were then put into an envelope. In total, there were three envelopes; one for each of the three songs. Besides these lyric envelopes, three posters and three boxes of glue were prepared.
- Step 2: In class, each group received one envelope of word papers (see Pictures 1-3). As a game, they were required to work in teams to create a children's poem, an advertisement, or a dialogue by recycling the words from the song lyrics. They were also instructed to include drawings or pictures to illustrate their writing (see Pictures 4-5). This step, lasting for about three hours in weeks 3-4, provided students with the opportunity to develop their vocabulary power and writing ability and to employ their critical thinking skills.
- Step 3: The teacher reviewed each group's poster individually and had them upload their creations to the university e-campus computer network. This step, lasting for around 30 minutes in week 4, allowed students to practice their reading and writing abilities, especially grammar.





Step 4: The students were encouraged to take time to practice their work in private. This step, lasting for around 10 minutes in week 4, allowed students to practice their speaking skills.




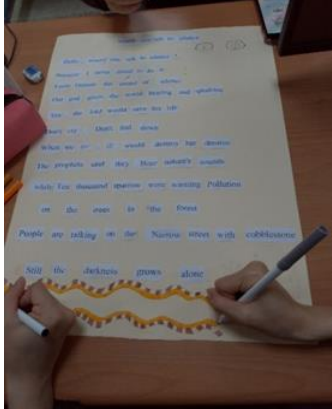
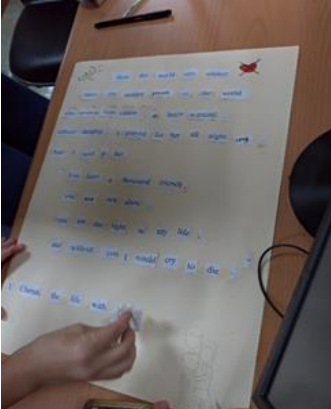
Step 5: The students shared their work with other groups. This step, lasting for about 20 minutes in week 4, allowed them to practice speaking, listening, and reading.

Step 6: The students listened to the first song and filled in the blanks using the lyrics handout twice (see Appendix A). After all the students had completed all the blanks, they checked their answers for accuracy and the whole class read and discussed the lyrics together. Finally, the students listened to the song one last time. The same process was repeated for the second and third songs. In the end, everyone was encouraged to volunteer to sing any of the three

songs in the front of the class. This step, lasting for about two hours in week 5, allowed the students to practice listening and reading.

Step 7: The students were required to write down or type their answers to the questions for their short reflection papers (see Appendix B) from the perspectives of English acquisition and critical thinking development. Afterwards, each of them was invited to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix C) and after that sign a consent form (see Appendix D). This step, lasting for about two hours in week 6, encouraged the students to practice writing and thinking.

In the RESLA, the team poster works and the students' short reflection papers were given grades by the instructor as two items in the section of course assignments/homework.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Picture 1</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Picture 2</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Picture 3</b></p> 
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Picture 4</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Picture 5</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pictures taken by the teacher in class.</b></p>



### 3.3 Participants

This study used a convenience sampling method to draw participants from a population who were conveniently available for study. All participants were students at a national technical university in central-southern Taiwan. Nineteen students (M: 3; F: 16) who had selected an elective undergraduate English language course in the Spring Semester of the 2018-

2019 academic year were invited to participate in the current study (see Table 1).. However, only 15 students (M: 2; F: 13) completed the questionnaire (see Appendix C) in week 6. This was due to three female students and one male student applying for leave of absence from that class. All the English names used in this study are pseudonyms.

**Table 1:** Participants’ demographics (N=15\*)

Major	Valid		Invalid		Total (%)	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
Applied Foreign Languages	11	1	2	0	13	1
	12		2		14	
Multimedia Design	0	1	0	0	0	1
	1		0		1	
Total	11	2	2	0	13 (87%)	2 (13%)
	13(87%)		2(13%)		15(100%)	

\*The class size was 19, but only 15 students rated the questionnaire.

### 3.4 Data Collection

#### 3.4.1 Questionnaire

A slightly modified and redesigned version of the questionnaire utilized by Wang, Wu, Huang, Chuang, Hong (2019) was chosen for the current study. In particular, the statement in item 1 (The activity helped me increase my English ability) and the statement in item 2 (The activity could help me increase my critical thinking) were deleted because they were deemed as overlapping with those of sub-items 1.1 – 1.5 (The activity could help me increase my vocabulary power, listening ability, speaking ability, reading ability, and writing ability) and 2.1 – 2.6 (The activity could help me increase my creativity and imagination, respecting different ideas, cooperation, peer relationships, and communication skills) respectively.

The modified questionnaire used an anonymous 6-point Likert-type scale to measure responses to 12-items (see Appendix C). The questionnaire was divided into two sections: (1a) items related to English acquisition skills (items 1 - 5) and (1b) items related to

the development of critical thinking skills (items 6-11). In addition, one invalid item (item 12: Don’t rate item 12, or your questionnaire will be invalid). In section 2 a box was provided for free comments. In week 6, 15 students attended and were invited to complete the questionnaire and human subject consent forms (see Appendix D). The total return rate was 100% (15/15) and the total valid rate was 87% (13/15), which made the questionnaire persuasive and reliable.

#### 3.4.2 Short reflection paper

After participating in the RESLA, the students were asked to complete or type an individual short reflection paper based on a series of questions (see Appendix A), generated by the instructor, in Week 6. Then they posted their papers on the university e-campus network:

([https://e3.nfu.edu.tw/EasyE3P/LMS2/tea\\_materials\\_homework\\_view\\_status.aspx?crsHwkId=4bae09c5-5103-4345-9f9f-e81f9f1b2bf6](https://e3.nfu.edu.tw/EasyE3P/LMS2/tea_materials_homework_view_status.aspx?crsHwkId=4bae09c5-5103-4345-9f9f-e81f9f1b2bf6)).



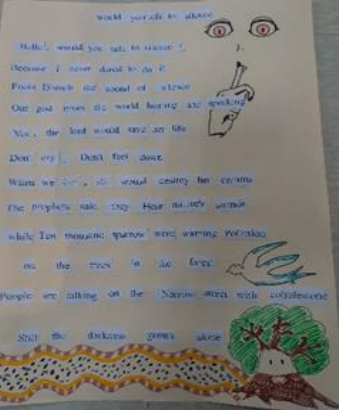
#### 3.4.3 Students’ work

In total, the three student groups created three



posters from the words in the three song lyrics (See Posters 1-3 below). Poster 1 mainly focused on friendship and love between two people; one of them prayed for her and she survived from her brain cancer.

Poster 2 was based on the idea of depression experienced by the saddest people who have no one to care about them. Poster 3 mainly focused on the importance of environmental protection.

Poster 1	Poster 2	Poster 3
		
<p align="center"><b>Hear the world only silence</b></p> <p>She's the saddest person in the world who survives from cancer, a brain waring. Without sleeping, I prayed for her all night long. And I said to her "You have a thousand friends, you are not alone, you are the light in my life, and without you I would cry to die." I cherish the life with her.</p>	<p align="center"><b>The saddest people no one cares</b></p> <p>Hello life, my only friend, I've come to talk to you again because darkness is surely forming/ Left its silence while the swan was talking/ And the cancer planted in my brain still remains within the sound of words/ I feel sad, creeping softly/ And the prophets walked like a snail/ I turned my dreams to the old alone when my eyes were stabbed by the fools/ Don't pray. If the light flashed and tuched the sign of life and in the saddest night I die/ maybe one thousand creatures like the god/ People speaking without hearing/ People sleeping withut listening/ People writing songs that never share sounds</p>	<p align="center"><b>Would you talk to silence</b></p> <p>Hello, would you talk to silence? Because I never dared to do it/ Fools disturb the sound of silence/ Our god gives the world hearing and speaking/ Yes, the lord would save her life/ Don't cry. Don't feel down/ When we fall, we wuld destroy her dreams/ The prophets said they hear nature's sounds whle ten thousand sparrow were warning pollution on the trees in the forest/ People are talking on the narrow street with cobblestone/ Still the darkness grows alone</p>
<p align="center">Pictures taken by the teacher in class.</p>		

**IV. Findings/ Results and Discussion**

Table 2 shows the results of the section 1a of the questionnaire. All the participants tended to agree with the impact of the RESLA on their English acquisition ability, estimating increases in their vocabulary power (100%, M=5.31), listening ability (84.62%, M=4.69), speaking ability (84.62%, M=4.15), reading ability

(92.30%, M=4.92), and writing ability (84.62%, M=4.31). In particular, all the participants (100%) agreed that they could boost their vocabulary power in the RESLA. However, the participants estimated that this activity helped them least in developing their speaking ability. The average mean of items 1 to 5 is 4.68  $((5.31+4.69+4.15+4.92+4.31)/5)$ .





**Table 2:** Analysis of participant responses to the English acquisition section 1a. (n=13)

	item	1	2	3	4	5
		vocabulary power	listening ability	speaking ability	reading ability	writing ability
StA + A + SoA*	n	13	11	11	12	11
	%	100%	84.62%	84.62%	92.30%	84.62%
StD + D + SoD*	n	0	2	2	1	2
	%	0%	15.38%	15.38%	7.69%	15.38%
All	M	5.31	4.69	4.15	4.92	4.31

\* StA + A + SoA = Strongly Agree + Agree + Somewhat agree; StD + D + SoD = Strongly Disagree + Disagree + Somewhat Disagree  
 Note: The percentage was rounded up from the second decimal point.

The positive results of Table 2 were further supported by the participants’ short reflection papers. The following are some example quotations in an alphabetical order:

*Gingin:* I feel when you hear [English] song[s] you can train your listening and learn some new [words].

*Hanhan:* There were some new [words] in the lyrics, such as “cobblestone,” “halo,” “creeping,” and “tenement.” It was great to learn new words and put them into practice.

*Kiki:* I also learned some grammar, because the teacher would correct some parts that we didn’t use the grammar properly.

*Lailai:* Later, teacher [played] the good music to us. I enjoyed the songs very much and learned many [words], such as prophet. To sum up, I think these activities are not only interesting but also helpful.

*Yiyi:* The activity also improved my reading

ability. I learned some new [words] from the English songs. Teacher also let us share our [poster] work with other classmates. This one can improve our speaking skills. Moreover, teacher shared three [English] songs with us.... I think listening [to] English songs is a good way to train listening ability.

Table 3 shows the results obtained following analysis of section 1b of the questionnaire. Results indicated that all the participants tended to agree with the impact of the RESLA on their critical thinking skills, estimating improvements in their creativity (100%, M=5.69), imagination (100%, M=5.69), respecting different ideas (100%, M=5.62), cooperation (100%, M=5.69), peer relationships (92.30%, M=5.31), and communication skills (84.62%, M=5.00). In particular, all the participants agreed that the RESLA could help them increase their creativity, imagination, respecting different ideas, and cooperation. The average mean of items 6 to 11 is 5.50 ((5.69+5.69+5.62+5.69+5.31+5.00)/6).

**Table 3:** Analysis of participant responses to the critical thinking section 1b (n=13)

	item	6	7	8	9	10	11
		creativity	imagination	respecting different ideas	cooperation	peer relationships	communication skills
StA+A + SoA*	n	13	13	13	13	12	11
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	92.30%	84.62%
StD+D +SoD*	n	0	0	0	0	1	2
	%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7.69%	15.38%



All	M	5.69	5.69	5.62	5.69	5.31	5.00
* <i>StA + A + SoA = Strongly Agree + Agree + Somewhat agree; StD + D + SoD = Strongly Disagree + Disagree + Somewhat Disagree</i>							
<i>Note.</i> The percentage was rounded up from the second decimal point.							

The positive results shown in Table 3 were backed up by comments in the participants' short reflection papers. The following are samples of their comments in an alphabetical order:

*Gingin:* Peer relationship would be better in the lyrics activity because you can know each other more, and [what] impress[es] me the most is drawing everyone can draw after creat[ing a team work], us[ing] your imagination....

*Lailai:* From the activity, I learn how to have a good cooperation with the team. When we wanted to find out the [word] we want[ed], we would help each other. In addition, in the process, I had to brainstorm and stimulate my imagination. I thought this was very helpful when I want[ed] to make any ideas.

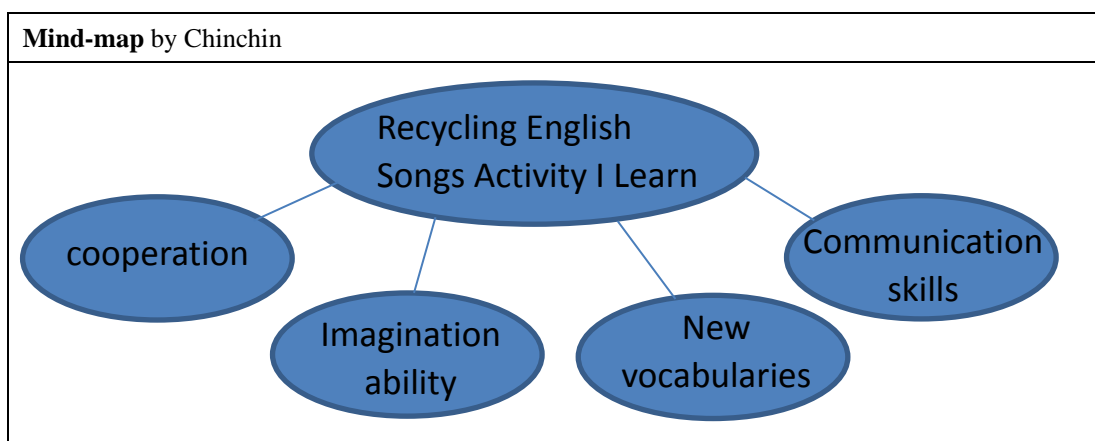
*Mini:* While we were creating our [work], our opinions were different at that time, so we need[ed] to respect others' and communicate[d] with others,....

*Tintin:* Our teamwork is very good. Someone check[s whether] the sentences...are meaningful,

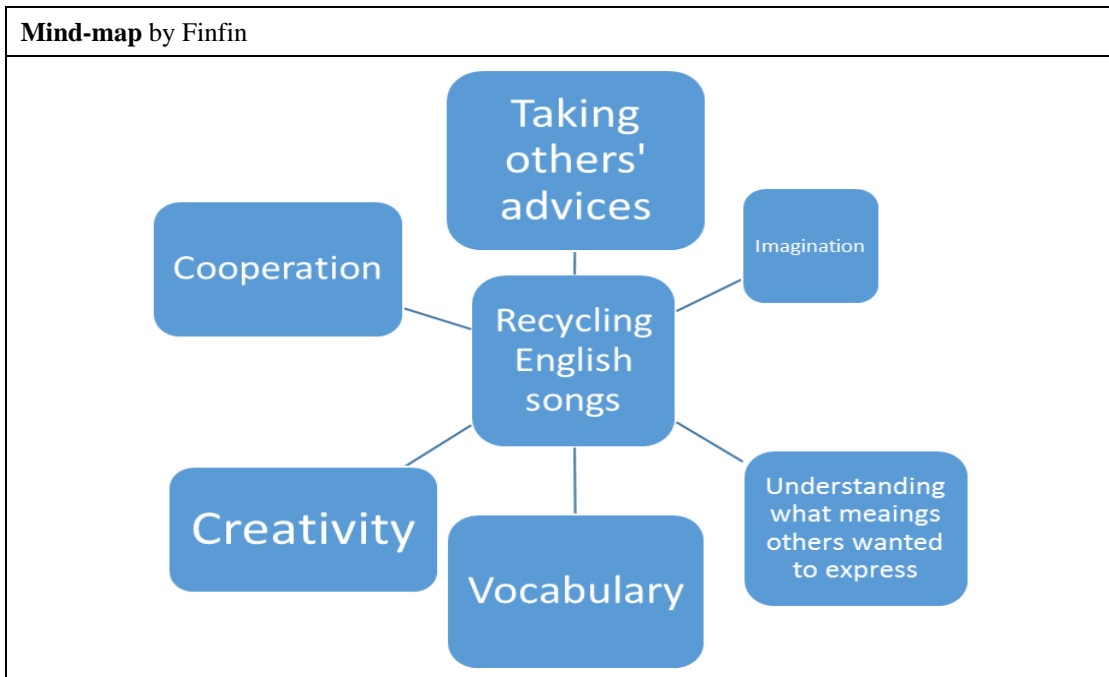
[and] someone look[s] for the words. We create our first sentence "she's the saddest person in the world." We stimulate our creativity and imagination to [complete our poster work based on the lyrics in] the recycling English songs. After we finish it, we draw some pictures relate[d] to the sentences or the words on the paper. This team work increases my vocabulary [power] and learn respect[ing] different ideas and cooperation.

It follows from the results shown in Tables 2 and 3 that the participants, both male and female, tended to believe that the RESLA could provide more benefit in their critical thinking development with the average mean value of 5.50 than in their English acquisition with the average mean value of 4.68.

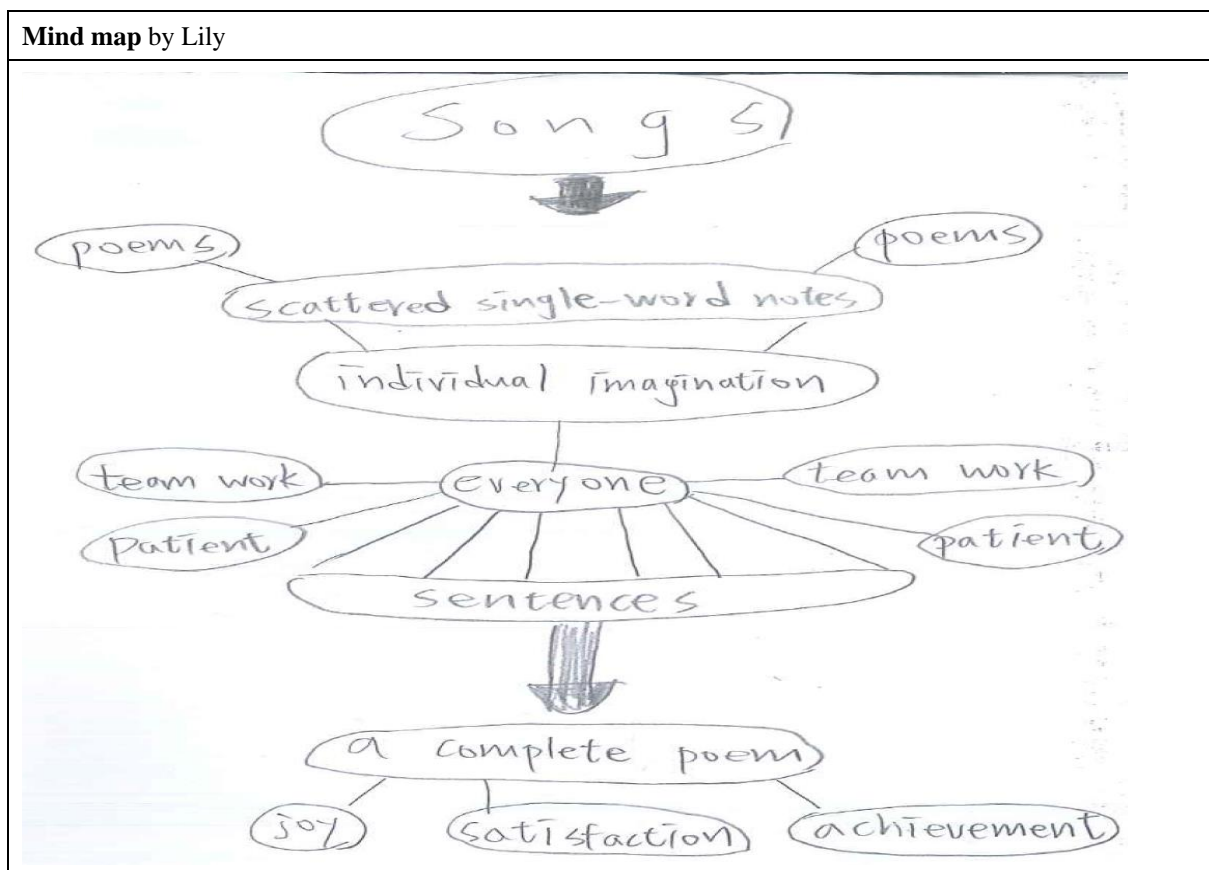
Furthermore, the positive results shown in Tables 2 and 3 were supported by the mind maps participants drew in their short reflection papers. Chinchin's mind map demonstrated that the RESLA could help her increase her vocabulary power, develop her cooperation and imagination, and sharpen her communication skills.



Finfin's mind map showed that the RESLA could help cooperation, creativity and imagination. her increase her vocabulary power, and develop her

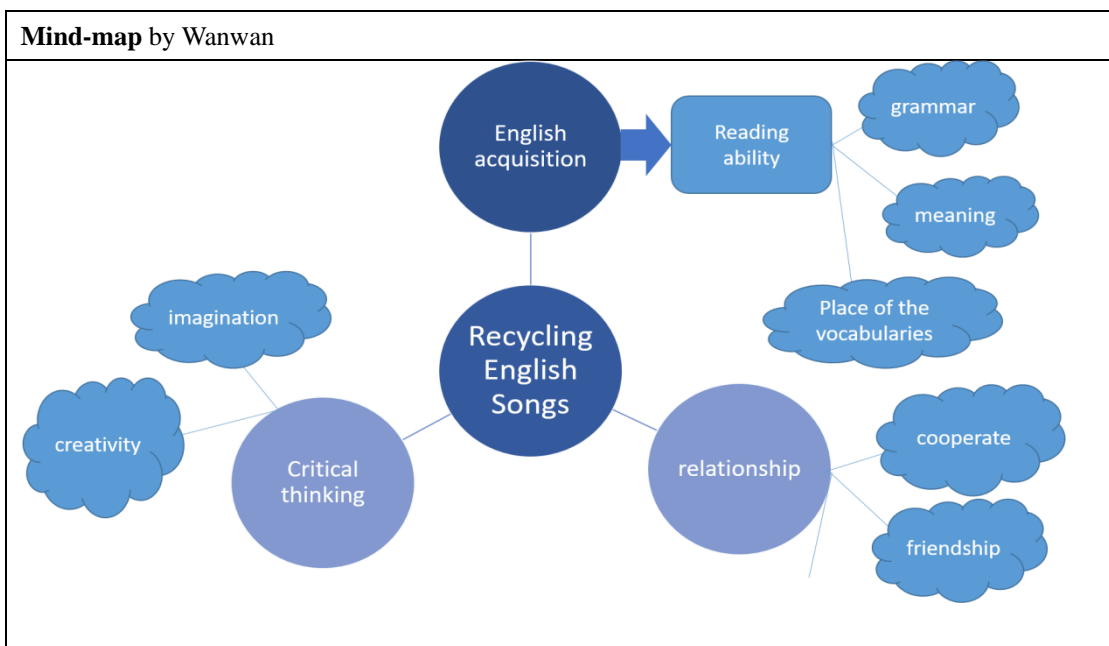


Lily's mind map visually portrayed how the RESLA and poem creation), imagination, and teamwork had benefited her, including writing (sentence writing (cooperation).



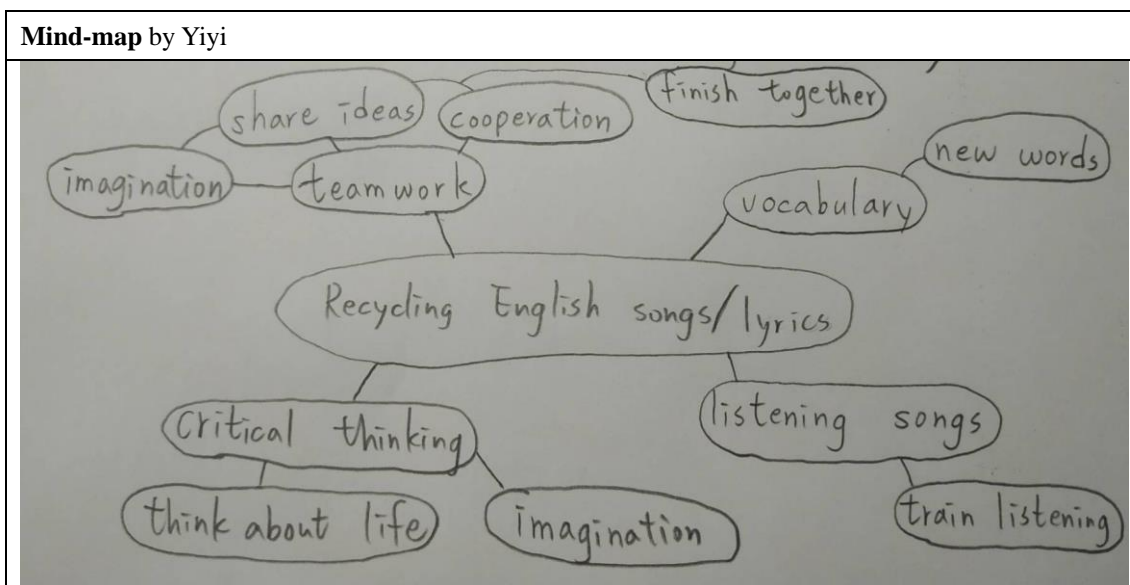
Wanwan’s mind map indicated that the RESLA greatly benefited her in English acquisition (i.e., vocabulary power, reading, and grammar) and critical thinking

(i.e., creativity, imagination, cooperation, and friendship).



Yiyi’s mind map displayed how the activity had benefited her in English acquisition (i.e., vocabulary

power and listening) and critical thinking (i.e., imagination and cooperation/teamwork).



Two other findings were the feeling of joy and the sense of achievement and the awareness of environmental protection. As Lily’s mind-map shows, students could get joy, satisfaction, and achievement

in the RESLA, especially after completing their team work such as completing a poem on their poster. On the other hand, the following quotation from Tintin’s short reflection paper addressed how the activity



helped her gain awareness of environmental protection.

*Tintin*: The English song I liked most is “Don’t kill the world.” The lyrics is about the environment and nature; we should protect it.

## V. Conclusion, Limitation, and Implication

All the participants tended to agree that the Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity (RESLA) could help them increase their English acquisition skills (i.e., vocabulary and the four language skills) and develop their critical thinking skills (i.e., creativity, imagination, respecting different ideas, cooperation, peer relationships and communication skills). In terms of English acquisition, the results of the current study correspond well with those obtained by Batluk’ (2015) and Listiyaningsih’ (2017) studies, which indicated that listening to English songs can help learners increase their vocabulary power, listening ability, speaking ability, and lyrics-reading ability. In terms of critical thinking, the results of the current study correspond well with those obtained by Wang, Armstrong, Wu, Wen, and Wang’s (2015) and Wang, Wu, Huang, Chuang, and Hong’s (2019) studies, which indicated that a well-designed course activity could encourage learners to engage in critical thinking, including creativity, imagination, respecting different ideas, cooperating with other teammates, peer relationships, and social skills. Furthermore, the RESLA was able to benefit critical thinking development even more than English acquisition (average mean value: 5.50 vs. 4.68). Such a result was consistent with that in Wang, Wu, Huang, Chuang, and Hong’s (2019) study. On the other hand, the positive results of the questionnaire in the current study were further supported by the participant’s reflection papers which included their mind maps.

Two other findings obtained from this study

included a feeling of joy and achievement and an awareness of environmental protection. The former result echoed one of the findings in Gozcu and Caganaga’s (2016) study that games could make a classroom more entertaining and relaxing.

Given the small sample size of the current study, the research results could not be generalized to other cohorts or any other populations. The ratio of female to male participants (87% vs. 13%) revealed an inability to compare female participants’ and male participants’ attitudes towards the RESLA from the perspectives of English acquisition and critical thinking. Thus, future studies may invite a larger student population’s responses to the RESLA and recruit students from other cohorts or students with varying levels of English proficiency.

Several participants’ absences could skew the results of the questionnaire because they did not totally participate in the RESLA. Kiki mentioned the reason for her absence in her short reflection paper below:

*Kiki*: I was absent because my grandma got hurt in a car accident and I had to take care of her the very last week before the first time of creating the [team poster work based on the words in the] recycling English songs [activity]. I had no idea about what to do when I first join my team to create the [work]; fortunately, my team members know what to do, and they guide me what I should do.

For students to benefit from an English song-based game or activity, teachers should consider their students’ language proficiency, the course goals, teaching contents, students’ characteristics (e.g., age, attitude and motivation), and selecting an appropriate time for employing games in classroom (Deesri, 2002). Though English songs are easily available on the Internet, the selection of English songs could depend





on the learners' preferences, the theme of the lyrics, and the degree of difficulty in the lyrics. On the other hand, teachers could help sharpen students' critical thinking skills by encouraging them to reflect on their schemata for something new (Kabilan, 2000) such as a course activity. In brief, any activity that makes a classroom interesting and meaningful can be a success, otherwise it will be a waste of time (Deesri, 2002).



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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Blank-filling in the lyrics

#### The Sound of Silence 沈默之聲

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=sound+of+silence&view=detail&mid=F71C409443E53DEE403FF71C409443E53DEE403F&FORM=VIRE>

專輯名稱：Simon and Garfunkel's Greatest Hits 賽門與葛芬可暢銷精選集

歌手：Simon and Garfunkel 賽門與葛芬柯

發行：SONY, 1990 (CBS, 1972)

Hello darkness, my old friend, I've come to talk with you again,

Because a (1)v \_\_\_\_\_ softly creeping,

Left its seeds while I was sleeping,

And the vision that was (2)p \_\_\_\_\_ in my brain

Still remains Within the sound of silence

In (3)r \_\_\_\_\_ dreams I walked alone

Narrow streets of (4)c \_\_\_\_\_,

'Neath the (5)h \_\_\_\_\_ of a street lamp, I turned my collar to the cold and damp

When my eyes were stabbed by the (6)f \_\_\_\_\_ of a neon light

That split the night

And touched the sound of silence

And in the (7)n \_\_\_\_\_ light I saw

Ten thousand people, maybe more.

People talking without speaking,

People hearing without (8)l \_\_\_\_\_,

People writing songs that voices never share

And no one dared (9)D \_\_\_\_\_ the sound of silence.

"Fools" said I, "You do not know

Silence like a cancer (10)g \_\_\_\_\_.

Hear my words that I might teach you,

Take my arms that I might (11)r \_\_\_\_\_ you."

But my words like silent raindrops fell,

And echoed In the (12)w \_\_\_\_\_ of silence.

And the people bowed and prayed

To the neon god they made.

And the sign flashed out its (13)w \_\_\_\_\_,

In the words that it was forming.

And the sign said, "The words of the (14)p \_\_\_\_\_ are written on the subway walls

And (15)t \_\_\_\_\_ halls."

And whisper'd in the sounds of silence.



<p><b>El condor pasa 老鷹之歌</b>  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sswFrz32ld0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sswFrz32ld0</a>                  主唱(singer) : Andy Williams</p>	<p><b>Don't kill the World</b>  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1aa04-asyw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1aa04-asyw</a> (3:30)</p>
<p>I'd rather be a 1.s_____ than a snail                  Yes I would. If I could, I surely would                  I'd rather be a 2.h_____ than a nail                  Yes I would, If I only could, I surely would</p> <p>Away, I'd rather sail away                  Like a swan that's here and 3.g_____</p> <p>A man gets tied up to the ground                  He gives the world its saddest sound                  It's saddest sound</p> <p>I'd rather be a forest than a 4.s_____</p> <p>Yes I would, If I could, I surely would                  I'd rather feel the earth beneath my 5.f____</p> <p>Yes I would, If I only could, I surely would</p> <p>Away, I'd rather sail away                  Like a 6.s_____ that's here and gone                  A man gets tied up to the 7.g_____</p> <p>He gives the world its saddest sound                  It's saddest sound</p>	<p>Don't kill the world                  Don't let her 1.d_____.</p> <p>Do not destroy basic ground.                  Don't kill the world                  Our means of life.                  Lend ear to nature's 2.c_____.</p> <p>Don't kill the world                  She's all we have,                  And surely is worth to 3.s_____.</p> <p>Don't let her die,                  4.F_____ for her trees,                  Pollution robs air to breathe.</p> <p>Don't kill the world                  Help her survive                  And she'll 5.r_____ you with life                  And don't just talk,                  Go on and do, the one who wins is you.</p> <p>6.C_____ the world,                  A present from god                  On behalf of all creatures,                  Made by the lord                  7.C_____ for the earth,                  Foundation of life                  8.S____ progress down help her survive</p> <p>Don't kill the world                  Don't let her down.                  Do not destroy basic ground.                  Don't kill the world                  Our means of life.                  Don't kill the world, our world.</p>





## Appendix B: Questions for short reflection paper

### Short Reflection paper

March, \_\_\_\_, 2019

Department/Year \_\_\_\_\_; ID N \_\_\_\_\_; Name: \_\_\_\_\_; Grade: \_\_

**Q1.** How did you create your (team) work in the Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity? What did you learn from the Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity, especially from the perspectives of English acquisition (e.g., four skills and vocabulary), critical thinking (e.g., creativity, imagination, respecting different ideas, cooperation, friendship/peer relationship, and communication skills), technology literacy, and so on? Draw one or more mind-maps to summarize your reflection points.

**Q2.** Any other comments?

## Appendix C: Questionnaire

Department/Grade: _____											
Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other											
Use the following response categories. Please circle the numbers (6, 5, 4, 3, 2 or 1) in the boxes. Many thanks!!											
<b>6: Strongly Agree (St. A)      5: Agree (A)      4: Somewhat Agree (So. A)</b> <b>3: Somewhat Disagree (So. D)      2: Disagree (D)      1: Strongly Disagree (St. D)</b>											
<b>Part I</b>											
<b>The Recycling English Songs/Lyrics Activity</b>						St.	A.	So.	So.	D.	St.
<b>Was useful to _____.</b>						A.		A.	D.		D.
<b>English acquisition</b>											
1	increase my vocabulary					6	5	4	2	2	1
2	increase my listening ability					6	5	4	3	2	1
3	increase my speaking ability					6	5	4	3	2	1
4	increase my reading ability					6	5	4	3	2	1
5	increase my writing ability					6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Critical thinking</b>											
6	stimulate my creativity					6	5	4	3	2	1
7	stimulate my imagination					6	5	4	3	2	1
8	learn to respect different ideas					6	5	4	3	2	1
9	increase cooperation					6	5	4	3	2	1
10	increase peer relationship					6	5	4	3	2	1
11	increase communication skills					6	5	4	3	2	1
12	<b>Don't</b> rate item 12, or your questionnaire will be invalid					6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Part II: Free Comments</b>											
In particular, if you rate some items <b>3 or below</b> , please write down the item number(s) and explain why in English or Chinese. Your responses will do the researcher(s) a huge favor. Many thanks!!!											



## Appendix D: Human Subject Form

### Human Subject Form

(March, 2019)

Department/Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, freely consent to allow the instructor, Ching-huang Wang, Professor in the Department of Applied Foreign Languages (AFL) at National Formosa University (NFU), and his co-researchers to use our team poster work, class pictures, my reflection paper together with mind map(s), and relevant data in their research study about English acquisition, critical thinking, technology literacy, and so on.

I understand that there is no physical and/or psychological harm anticipated as a result of participation in the research study. I have the right to withdraw personal data at any time. Any question that I have about the study can be addressed to the researcher(s). I understand that I may have access to the results of the study if I request it. Furthermore, I understand that any information I provide for the research study will **NOT** be used against me in any way.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



# 大學生對於「英文歌詞重複利用之活動」(RESLA) 的看法

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## 摘 要

本研究目的在於調查台灣大學生對其英語文課程之「英文歌詞重複利用之活動」(RESLA)的看法，總共有 15 位受訪者(女生 13 人；男生 2 人)。研究問題有二：(1) 台灣大學生對於「英文歌詞重複利用之活動」的英語習得之看法為何？(2)台灣大學生對於「英文歌詞重複利用之活動」的批判思考發展之看法為何？。主要研究結果如下：(1) 「英文歌詞重複利用之活動」有助於大學生的英語習得及批判思考發展；(2) 本活動對於受訪者的批判思考發展的幫助高於英語習得。甚且，學生之心得報告也呼應本問卷的研究結果。

**關鍵字：**大學生；英文歌詞重複利用之活動；英語習得；批判思考；台灣

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