

英文歌曲和童謠融入音樂課教學 對國小學童英語學習動機之影響

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摘要

本研究旨在探討英文歌曲和童謠融入音樂課對國小學童英語學習動機之影響。實驗研究對象包含 197 位嘉義市某國小四年級與五年級學生(97 位男生與 100 位女生)，兩種問卷作為分析學童們的英語學習動機與對此實驗的感受之研究工具。所有搜集資料併用量化與質性兩種方法來分析，以 SPSS 12.0 的軟體做量化分析，其統計方式包含：描述性統計、獨立樣本 T 檢定、相依樣本 T 檢定、以及二因子單變項變異數分析(two-way ANOVA)；質性方面則是將學生寫下的感想與訪談內容予以分析。結果如下：(1)對照組學生(僅限於英文課中唱英文歌曲和童謠)的英語學習動機前、後測的統計分析中達到顯著之水準，顯示其對英語學習的動機明顯下降；而實驗組學生在音樂課接受了英文歌曲和童謠教唱後的統計分析中雖未達到顯著效果，卻仍然持續保持住其英語學習動機，故此教學法持正面的肯定。(2)實驗組四年級學生比五年級學生更持續保持其英語學習動機，顯示此教學法較適用於中年級學生(三年級和四年級)。(3)大部份實驗組學生表達對於在音樂課接受了英文歌曲和童謠的教學方式得到放鬆與快樂，更在哼唱這些歌曲時不自覺得把英文單字與句型嵌在腦海裡。簡言之，此教學法對國小學童英語學習動機有正面的影響與幫助。

關鍵字：英文童謠、動機、英語學習動機、國民中小學九年一貫課程綱要

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The Effects on Elementary School Students' English Learning Motivation through Integrating English Songs and Nursery Rhymes in Music Classes

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the effects on elementary school students' English learning motivation through integrating English songs and nursery rhymes in music classes. 197 students of 4th and 5th grades (97 male, 100 female) in Chia-Yi city participated in this quasi-experimental study. Two kinds of questionnaires were used to investigate students' English learning motivation and perceptions of the experiment. Both quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis were used to analyze all of collected data. Data was analyzed with descriptive statistics, two-way ANOVA, and *t* tests. As to the qualitative analysis, the students' perceptions about this experiment were translated into English and analyzed. The findings were as follows: First of all, through integrating English nursery rhymes and songs, the EFL motivation of the participants were stimulated to be maintained. Second, it's more effective to apply this strategy of combining music and language teaching in music classes into the middle graders (3rd and 4th grades). Third, the more happiness, relaxation and pleasure the children feel in EFL learning environment and atmosphere, the more positive effect they receive in studying English. To sum up, based on the findings, the pedagogical implications in EFL teaching and suggestions for the further studies are recommended at the end of this study.

Keywords: English Nursery Rhymes, Motivation, EFL Motivation Orientation, Grade 1-9 Curriculum Guideline

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I、Introduction

English has been the language most commonly used in communication between people from different countries, and has become an important language in the 21st century. Dai (2001) emphasized that learning English as earlier as possible (i.e., from the first grade of elementary school) has become an innovative guiding principle in plenty of the countries which are in an attempt to advance with big strides for becoming one of the international cities in this new century. Just as English is the key to entering the universal village (Jenq, 2003), music is also the common language in the world. Language and music have been the two main elements of each human society. Both music and language are the forms of psychological presentation and mental expression by human being (Jedynak, 2000). Stansell (2005) stated an essential concept and suggested that concerning the relationship between music and language learning was a parallel development.

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether the instruction of English songs and nursery rhymes in music classes could promote elementary school students' motivation to learn English. Specifically, this study aimed to examine the effect on motivation intensity, students' desire to learn and on the two motivation orientations (i.e., integrative or instrumental motivation orientations). In addition, the students' responses and perceptions to the integration of English songs and nursery rhymes were also investigated.

II、Literature Review

A. Music and Language Education: Neurology Aspect

Music has been a memory aid for learning language (Chen, 2005; Harman, 2007; Salcedo, 2002). According to the theory of neurology, each component of music affects a different part of the human's brain (Harman, 2007). Harman put in plain words that a familiar song or rhyme stimulates the left frontal lobe, timbre holds up the right frontal lobe, and pitch activates the left posterior. That, the integration of songs into language learning, can activate the whole brain, and ensures better retention because words are



processed in one side of the brain while the other side processes the music. The ability of short-term memory only can contain seven bits of information (Harman, 2007). However, if bits of information are bonded together just like a song, the input information can be processed as one piece. As a result, the brain can receive and process much more by condensing the information (Anton, 1990; Chen, 2005; Guglielmino, 1986; Merrell, 2004; Wang, 2005). Accordantly, the stimuli of music could be useful to assist in restoring and retrieving the received data (e.g. language) into the long-term memory (Chen, 2005; Wang, 2005), which means that the implement of musical materials can enhance both memory retention and the obtainment of the target language. Consequently, these received data would be embedded in the zone of long-term memory ultimately (Chen, 2005; Wang, 2005). For example, the use of the Alphabet Song is frequently adopted by lots of English teachers to teach EFL beginners. In the way of singing out the melody of ABC, it could be much easier and faster for students to memorize the 26 letters of the alphabet. Eventually, the alphabet letters were embedded in learners' long-term memory with the assistance of music, and easily for them to recall at a later date while crooning the melody of the song (Ortis, 2008).

B. Music and Language Education : Psychology Aspect

Music is an essential part of language learning for abecedarian students and has been used as a remedy for decreasing the EFL beginners' high-anxiety during the learning process (Ortis, 2008). As Chiu (1998) and Doong and Jenq (2003) claimed, singing songs has been one of students' favorite activities in their EFL classes. Researchers and educators have noticed the beneficial outcomes when they integrated song-singing and rhyme-chanting into their language classes, especially on enhancing students' interests (Graham, 2006; Schoepp, 2001; Shi, 2003), making English-learning less stressful (Yang 2008), and also providing the appreciation toward the target culture (Brown,2002; Chang, 2000, 2003a, 2003b; Li, 2003; Lu, 2003; Saricoban & Metin, 2000). In fact, Saricoban and Metin (2000) echoed these findings and stated that song-teaching could present a change from inflexible and humdrum classroom environment to joyful atmosphere so as to increase the children's motivation in EFL classes. Songs can be a "magic tonic" that motivates students to learn and makes the classroom atmosphere relaxing. To creating the classroom atmosphere with relaxation and exceeding happiness and keeping students from freaking out with English is a very important and effective technique in EFL



learning (Sibarah, 1999). Thus, Orlova (1997) and Schoepp (2001) recommended that songs are effective and useful tools for language teaching and learning.

Wang (2005) illustrated that when the trigger of *amygdale* of human's brain, the control center of emotion, is initiated, the context, the experience, and memorization of learning can pass without any restraint and obstructer into the pair of hippocampus which controls the zone of short-term memory, and can be embedded in here eventually. This kind of influence on emotion is like an effect of sticky gum. Songs reflect people's emotion, and music has long been used to help people deal with their emotions. Based on this neurology theory, as the initiation of *amygdale* is increased, the students' emotion would be instigated, and the memorization of learning context would be reserved in the brain easily and deeply (Wang, 2005). Therefore, adopting a lot of musical materials, such as songs and rhymes, in language classes has been suggested to be a positive method in generating the EFL students' positive learning emotion. In another word, human's emotion can be affected and evoked by music, and music could be involved in forming memories (Jäncke, 2008); therefore, integrating musical instrument into language learning could facilitate EFL learning.

C. Music and Language Education: Motivation Aspect

Motivation has been considered as a vital factor to promote students' engagement in EFL learning (Gardner, 2001, 2006, 2007; Liuoliene & Metiuniene, 2006; Noels, 2001). Ausubel (1968) affirmed that "Motivation is as much an effect as a cause of learning" (Cited in Budden, 2003, p.1). Because "motion drives attention, and attention drives learning" (Wolfe, 2001, p. 86), the more motivation students endorse, the better performance they may achieve in EFL learning. Furthermore, motivation can be seen as individual's willingness and capacity to learn. English songs, as a favorite activity by children, have also become the resource of motivation which encourages students to learn a foreign language (Budden, 2003). The role of music, on the other hand, has also been suggested and adopted to be a effective tool to develop EFL students' interests and desire to learn the target language (Saricoban & Metin, 2000; Giudice, 1986). Schmidt (2002) identified that one of the best principles for students in learning a foreign language was to motivate them to do things that are interesting, enjoyable, and pertinent to their goals. Therefore, the relationship between language and music is very intimate.

Many previous studies have suggested that music and songs can enhance students'



motivation in EFL learning (Liao, 2006, Chang, 2003a, 2003b; Orlova, 1997). Songs, rhymes and chants are considered as culturally resources that can motivate and enhance learners' involvement in EFL classes (Giudice, 1986; Saricoban & Metin, 2000). By implementing these simple and effective exercises through chanting rhythmically and singing repeatedly, EFL learners may become not so frightened and may establish more confidence in learning a new language. Eken (1996), Graham (2006) and Ortis (2008) supported that rhythmic instruction is not only an efficient pathway to arise EFL learners' interest but also an excellent method to stimulate their motivation in the target language. Most importantly, this kind of musical instruction can also be a powerful enforcement on memory and assist in accelerating EFL acquisition (Graham, 2006).

Even though many studies have provided interesting results of how music and songs enhance students' EFL motivation, many difficulties and challenges have been observed for Taiwanese English teachers at elementary schools to include the instruction of music or English songs in the EFL classes. The first and major difficulty is the limitation of time. Because of the pressure on completing the whole curriculum in the English textbook, some teachers could only allot a paucity of time for song-teaching. Second, because of the force for assisting the students to achieve a higher score on EFL examination, some teachers would rather focus on teaching the content of the textbook than song-teaching. Therefore, songs and rhymes have been usually ignored in EFL classes. Moreover, many English teachers are lack of musical competence and are unfamiliar with the musical instrument, nor do they acquire the appropriate instructional methods to teach music. Consequently, even though English teachers understand the important role of music, and that music can facilitate learning a foreign language, they only ask the students to sing with the CD once or twice without providing further instruction or activities.

Collaboration of English and music teachers could be a solution. One main characteristic of the new educational reform system (Grade 1-9 Curriculum Guideline) by the Ministry of Education of Taiwan was to associate, coalesce and integrate all of the courses in the seven major learning areas (information education, environment education, gender equality education, human rights education, career development education, home economics education and marine education). Hence, the teachers of different subjects were expected to assist and work with each other. That is to say, integrating English songs teaching and learning into music classes rather than in English classes may be an



alternative to promote students' English learning motivation. However, so far, very few studies have investigated this possibility. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate whether the instruction of English songs and nursery rhymes in music classes can promote elementary school students' motivation to learn English. Specifically, this study aimed to examine the effect on four different kinds of motivations, including motivation intensity, students' desire to learn and the two motivation orientations (i.e., integrative or instrumental motivation orientations).

III、Method

A. Research Design

A pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design with a control group was employed to investigate the effects of integrating English songs and rhymes into music classes on elementary school students' English learning motivation. During the 8 weeks experimental period, students of the experimental groups received instruction for sixteen English songs and rhymes, such as Good-morning, Bingo, Old MacDonald had a farm, Are you sleeping and the popular song "Over the Rainbow" from Connie Talbot's CD. On the other hand, the control group students only received regular music instruction based on the assigned textbook, including the practice of vocalization, singing the musical notes and Chinese songs, and playing the musical instrument. A motivation questionnaire was used to investigate students' motivation to learn English before and after the treatment for both experimental and control group. After the experiment, students of the experimental groups were asked to respond to another questionnaire asking about their perception of the music class.

B. Settings and Participants

Four 4th grade classes and two 5th grade classes (197 students) from a suburban public elementary school at Chia-Yi city were involved in this study. There were 134 participants (68%) from 4th grade, and 63 participants (32%) from 5th grade. Based on lottery drawing by the total of six class leaders, all classes were evenly and randomly assigned to be either the control group(s) or the experimental group(s) in each grade. There were 98 students and 99 students were divided into control group (50%) and



experimental group (50%). All of the 197 participants in this study were native speakers of either Mandarin Chinese or Taiwanese. The range of their age was between 10-12 years old. The 4th grade students had already studied English for one and half years before this experiment, and two and half for the participants of the 5th grade.

C. Instruments

Motivation Scale. Students' Motivation toward English Learning Scale (Appendix A) was adopted from the original Attitude/Motivation Test Battery questionnaire (AMTB), a standardized measure proposed by Gardner in 1985. Four sections (27 items) of AMTB were selected for this study: Motivational Intensity (items 1-9), Desire to Learn English (items 10-19), Integrative Orientation (items 20-23, and Instrument Orientation (items 24-27). The questionnaire was based on a 5-point Likert scale format, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), indicating the extent to which the participants agreed with each statement.

Students' Perception Questionnaire. The Students' Responses and Perceptions Toward English Song Teaching Questionnaire (Appendix C) was designed by the author. This scale contained twenty discrete items which were categorized into 4 dimensions: EFL motivation (item 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 15, and 16), learning strategies (item 6, 11, 12, 13, and 14), obstacles in EFL learning (item 17, 18, 19, and 20), and engagement (item 9 and 10). Moreover, there were two open-ended questions in this instrument aimed to evaluate the experimental participants' responses toward integrating English songs and nursery rhymes in music classes. This instrument had been modified and reviewed several times by discussing with three experts in the field of English education, and two experienced English teachers, and had been pilot tested.

Both before and after this experiment, participants in both experimental and control groups of 4th and 5th grades all had to fill out the Motivation Questionnaire (Appendix A). This served to establish an understanding of the students' motivation orientations toward EFL learning. After 8-week period of this musical instruction, the experimental group students also filled out Students' Perceptions Questionnaire (Appendix C) which was concerning with students' responses toward this new musical instruction.

D. Data Analysis

The data of this study was analyzed by the computer software SPSS (Statistical



Packages for the Social Science) 12.0 FOR Windows. Paired-sample *t* test, and two-way ANOVA repeated measure were computed to answer the research questions of this study. An alpha level of .05 was used for the all statistical analysis.

As to the qualitative analysis, the experimental group students' perceptions toward the integration of English songs and nursery rhymes in two open-ended questions of Students' Perceptions Questionnaire were also collected, translated into English and analyzed by the researcher.

IV 、 Results

A. *Response Rate*

This study was conducted with one elementary school in Chai-Yi County with a total of 197 students. Before and after implementing English nursery rhymes and songs instruction, all 197 students filled out the motivation questionnaire in class. All 197 students provided usable responses. In another word, the response rate was 100%.

B. *Results of the Reliability*

Reliability analyses adopting the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha test were computed with the procedure of SPSS 12.0 for the windows. A value of .70 or higher was the minimum to be considered evidence of reliability (DeVellis, R. F., 1991). The Cronbach's alpha value for the pretest questionnaire on students' motivation toward English learning scale (Appendix A) was .96, and for the posttest questionnaire was .96. The Cronbach's alpha value for the survey of the students' perception about integrating English songs and nursery rhymes into the music classes (Appendix C) was also .96. According to the scholar Gay (1992), a value of .90 or higher of any survey or questionnaire which means the reliability is extremely reliable. Furthermore, 4 dimensions' alpha values of both the pretest and posttest questionnaires were all above .70, with a range from .75 to .87.

C. *The Results for Quantitative Analysis*

A 2×2 ANOVA repeated measure was conducted to evaluate the difference between the experimental and control groups before and after the experiment. As shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, for motivation intensity, no significant interaction effect was



found between time (before and after) and groups ($F = .45, p = .50$), but there is a significant main effect for time ($F = 6.73, p = .01$). A t -test was conducted following the significant main effect, and the results of the control group showed a significant decrease of motivation intensity after the experiment ($t = 2.30, p = .02$) while no significant difference was found for the experimental group ($t = 1.37, p = .18$), as shown in Table 4. This indicated that students who received the instruction of integrating English songs and rhymes could at least maintain their intensity whereas the students of control group generally become less motivated in English learning.

Table 1. Two-Way Repeated-Measures ANOVA for Group and Time on Motivation Intensity

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between-Subjects Effects					
Group	463.9	1	463.9	6.4	.01*
Within-Subjects Effects					
Time	401.1	1	401.1	6.7	.01*
Time × Group	27.0	1	27.0	.5	.50
Total	26573.2				

Note. * $p < .05$

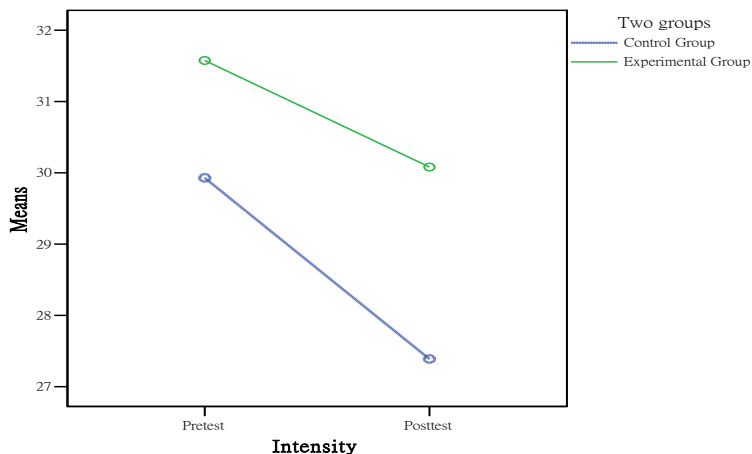


Figure 1. Means Comparison of Intensity between Control Group and Experimental Group



As for students' desire to learn English, as shown in Table 2, the results of the two-way ANOVA showed that there were no significant interaction effect between time and groups ($F = 2.59, p = .11$) while a significant difference was found between Groups ($F = 10.44, p = .001$). According to Figure 2, the control group students' desire to learn English indicated a discernible decrease before and after the experiment while the rating from the experimental group slightly increased. Therefore, a t-test was then conducted for further analysis and a significant decrease after the experiment was found for the control group ($t = 2.36, p = .02$) while no significant decrease was found for the experimental group ($t = -.12, p = .91$), as shown in Table 4. The finding indicated that students who had been taught English songs and nursery rhymes in the music classes could at least maintain their desire to learn English whereas students who did not obtain this instruction generally revealed less desire to learn English.

Table 2. Two-Way Repeated-Measures ANOVA for Group and Time of Desire to Learn English

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between-Subjects Effects					
Group	1151.6	1	1151.6	10.4	.001*
Within-Subjects Effects					
Time	191.8	1	191.8	2.0	.16
Time × Group	244.1	1	244.1	2.6	.11
Total	41453.7				

Note. * $p < .05$



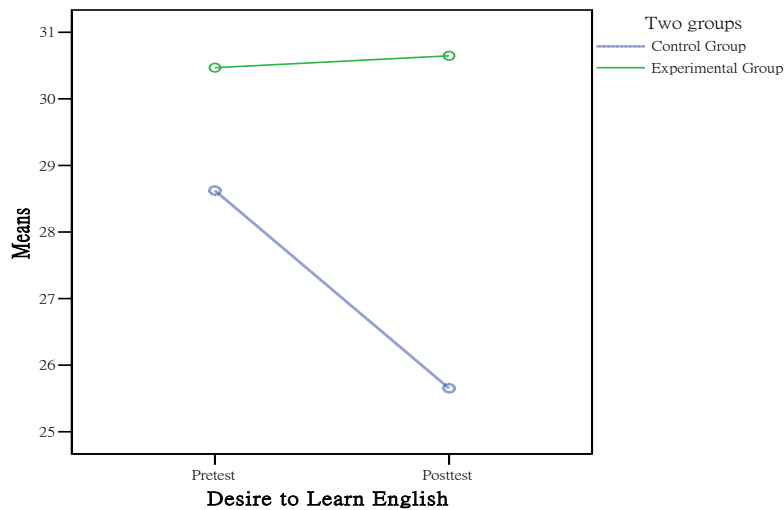


Figure 3. Means Comparison of Desire to Learn English between Control Group and Experimental Group

As to students' integrative orientation, the results of the two-way ANOVA showed no significant interaction effect or any main effect between time and groups ($F = .29, p = .59$). Similarly, no significant difference was found for the t test analysis of the control group ($t = 1.36, p = .18$) and the experimental group ($t = .49, p = .62$). This result indicated that no matter receiving the English songs and nursery rhymes in the music classes or not, the integrative orientation in English learning for both control and experimental groups' students did not change significantly.

For the instrumental orientation, as shown in Table 3 and Figure 3, the results of the two-way ANOVA showed that there was no significant interaction effect or main effect between time and groups ($F = 1.68, p = .20$). However, a significant between subject (Group) effect was found ($F = 8.32, p = .004$). Further analysis with the t test illustrated that a significant decrease before and after the experiment for the control group ($t = 2.06, p = .04$) while no significant difference was found for the experimental group ($t = .16, p = .88$). The results indicated that students who received the instruction of English songs and nursery rhymes in the music class could at least maintain their instrumental orientation in English whereas students who did not obtain this instruction from the music classes generally became less motivated in learning.

To sum up, no significance was found for the experimental group at the 0.05 level. However, paired sample t test of the control group yielded three significant differences on motivational intensity, desire to learn, and instrumental orientation.



Table 3. Two-Way Repeated-Measures ANOVA on the Instrumental Orientation

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between-Subjects Effects					
Group	140.0	1	140.0	8.3	.004*
Within-Subjects Effects					
Time	35.7	1	35.7	2.3	.13
Time × Group	25.7	1	25.7	1.7	.20
Total	6471.2				

Note. **p* < .05

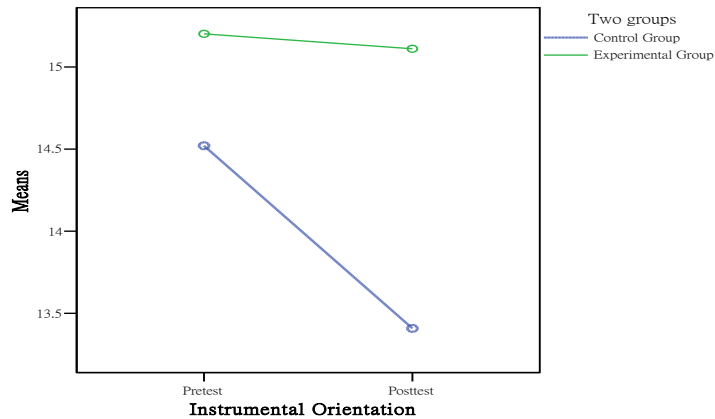


Figure 3. Means Comparison of Instrumental Orientation between Control Group and Experimental Group

Table 4. Paired-Sample *t* Test between the Control and the Experimental Group (N=197)

	Control Group (n=98)				Experimental Group (n=99)			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Intensity								
Pre.-post	-2.54	10.95	2.30	.02*	-1.50	10.89	1.37	.18
Desire								
Pre.-post	-2.97	12.47	2.36	.02*	-.18	14.85	-.12	.91
Integrative								
Pre.-post	-.75	5.44	1.36	.18	-.30	6.13	.49	.62
Instrumental								
Pre.-post	-1.11	5.35	2.06	.04*	-.09	5.72	.16	.88

Note. **P* < .05



D. The Results for Qualitative Analysis

(A) Students' Responses to the Experiment

In addition to students' responses to the motivation scales, students' perceptions toward the integration of English songs and nursery rhymes in music classes was also collected and analyzed. Most items in the questionnaire were rated 3 or greater on average, which suggested that most of the students had a great and positive perception on associating with English songs and rhymes. When being asked about students' involvement in English songs and rhymes, the mean for students' rating was around 3.46 to 3.89. This showed that the participants of experimental group would like to learn more English songs and rhymes in music class. In general, the overall results of these 20 items received a rating of 2.75 or above on average, which suggested that more than 50 percent of the students considered this kind of teaching method positive and helpful.

(B) Perceptions of the English Class and the Music Class

As for the open-ended questions about their perceptions of both the music and English classes, students generally indicated that they did not like English class, and they were less and less motivated as the course requirement piled up. Even though sometimes the activities or games in class helped enhance students' motivation, students reported that they only wanted to play games, or they did not even considered the activities interesting while others reported that they only want to play games.

I dislike English class because all of the games that English teacher adopted I had been played at our cram school before. In addition, all of the content was already taught there. It is so boring in English class. (Student 26 in Class 5B, experimental group)

Students reported that their low motivation to learn English was not because of the instruction of the English teacher, but because they were never interested in learning English from the beginning. No instrumental value was recognized by the students, and as a result, their motivation to learn English stayed low.

I am not interested in English. All of the games are not fun at all. I do not know why we need to learn this subject. My father told me that I can take over his job guarding our temple after I graduated from junior high school. Therefore, I have no need to study this foreign language, which by the way, is difficult and boring. (Student 10 in



Class 5A, experimental group)

Nevertheless, students' responses to the music class were quite opposite. Many of the experimental group students reported strong positive influence of integrating English songs and rhymes in music class on their motivation to learn English. One student explicitly stated how the musical instruction gradually helped develop her confidence in singing in English.

I was very afraid of speaking in English, even if it is just a simple sentence or a single word before. However, because I learned to sing some short, easy, and nice English nursery rhymes and songs in the music class this semester, [I started to change]. In the beginning, I could only sing quietly...After singing twice with the teacher, I became more familiar with the lyrics and melody...I started to sing as loud as I could. Later, all of us were getting more excited and enjoyable, especially when the teacher gradually increased the volume of the music and we sang the song again and again until we asked our teacher to stop. This kind of pleasure is different from singing with CD in the English class. I will remember how I sang English songs in this music class. (Student 31 in Class 4C, experimental group)

Most of the 4th graders stated that they had fun learning English songs and nursery rhymes in music class, and found it interesting, especially male students. Most female students, on the other hand, considered it helpful in their English learning.

I felt so happy while we were singing English nursery rhymes and songs in music classes. And, I think that it helps me a lot in memorizing English vocabulary easily. (Student 21 in Class 4B, experimental group)

Most students also described their experience in the music class as feeling relaxing, happy, and perceived the musical instruction help them enlarge their vocabulary. Still other students reported that they not only acquire more knowledge, but also learned different types of music and enjoyed the music in class.

I wish we could learn more English nursery rhymes and songs in music classes because it could assist us to learn more English vocabulary and sentence patterns which didn't teach in English classroom. In particular, the way of singing those nice songs with beautiful melody makes me feel so joyful. (Student 28 in Class 4D, experimental group)



As to the 5th graders, most of them, especially female students, expressed that they enjoyed this kind of instruction and wanted to learn more. However, there were also quite a few students, mostly male students, reported that they disliked the activities and materials involving English because they thought English was too difficult and boring. Several students considered the music class fun and interesting, but the same number of students also reported that they disliked to learn the English songs because they were detained by the difficulty with the English vocabulary.

V、Discussions

Originally, the hypothesis of this research was that the students' EFL motivation of control group would stay the same or decrease, and the motivation of experimental group students would increase after the experimental instruction. However, the findings of the study indicated somewhat different results. The students of the control group revealed a decrease of motivation while the experimental group students' motivation seemed to be maintained. A possible elucidation for the results may be that students' EFL motivation in the elementary school declines naturally over the semester. According to the students' responses and perceptions about English class, a lot of learners had a negative perception and reported no interest in learning English. This finding is consistent with Chen's result (2004) stating that only few students were interested in English class. It seems that, sadly, the more English classes the students have, the less motivation they endorse.

On the other hand, based on the students' answers from the data of the open-ended questions, students expressed that they experienced relaxation, happiness, and enjoyment while taking this music class. This result is in accord with the suggestions of Dwyer's (1982), suggesting that songs are the carriers of human's desire, fancy, and aspiration. Additionally, he emphasized that the anxiety, anger, resentment, and discomfort could find outlet by singing songs and chanting.

In addition, more than half participants in experimental group expressed that it was easier to memorize vocabulary and sentence patterns when singing or playing the musical materials with the musical instrument during music class. Students reported that the traditional method of singing English songs or rhymes with CDs was boring and helpless



to overcome the difficulties of memorizing vocabulary or sentence patterns. Comparing with English lessons singing with tapes or CDs, students perceived the English learning in the music class was more fun and meaningful. This finding is also comparable with Chen (2004). Therefore, to design a suitable curriculum and set up an enjoyable and pleasant learning atmosphere for the students to learn a new foreign language is a vital task for the teachers. The more happiness, relaxation and pleasure the children feel in EFL learning environment and atmosphere, the more positive effect they receive in studying this target language (Chang, 2003a; Dwyer, 1982; Eken, 1996; Sibarah, 1999). As Wu (2006) indicated, English nursery rhymes could build the EFL learners' confidence and promote their motivation.

In fact, many students considered this kind of instruction helpful for their English learning. These findings are consistent with the theory proposed by Claerr and Gargan (1984). They suggested that the role of music can be a natural bridge between native and foreign language and music can provide relaxation and enhance motivation to practice the target language. This suggestion also echoed Guglielmino (1986), indicating that music is like a connecting bridge of human' brain which can strengthen retention. While the right hemispheres are learning the melody, the left hemispheres are dominating the words. The integration of English songs and rhymes into the curriculum can result in positive effects.

To sum up, a relaxing and comfortable environment is one of the most important elements that enhance students' EFL learning. However, even if integrating music in English classes have been recognized a fundamental and valuable tool to enhance students' confidence and to promote EFL learners' interests and motivation (Chang, 2003a; Failoni, 1993; Wolf, 2002), most English teachers nowadays still emphasize much on the practices of vocabulary, dialogs, sentence patterns and grammar and ignore the value of songs and nursery rhymes.

As the result of this study indicated, these traditional ways of English instruction can only lead to the decrease of students' motivation to learn. Therefore, teachers in elementary school should try their best to incorporate songs or nursery rhymes in the English class. If it is difficult to apply these activities in the limited time of English classes, music teachers should cooperate and collaborate with the English teachers so that students can receive more appropriate instruction to learn English songs or rhymes as well as enhance their motivation to learn English.



Even though this study may offer valuable insights of integrating English nursery rhymes and songs in music classes, the present study was only conducted for eight weeks, due to the limited time and resource. If the study was implemented for more extensive and intensive period of time, the result may be even more significant. Another limitation was related to the restricted number of participants, it may be worthwhile to expend the study to a larger number of participants or to the students of younger ages. Thus, the findings of this study may not be able to generate to every class context in Taiwan, and there is still room for further investigation in the area of integrating music or English songs in music or English class at the elementary school context.



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