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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## Improving Speaking Skills through Songs: A Case Study of Moroccan EFL Classrooms

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### ABSTRACT

Listening and speaking are "solicited but neglected" skills in the EFL context of Moroccan classrooms, often sidelined by a teacher-centered approach that focuses on covering the coursebook. Linguistically, this study parallels language acquisition, where the learner moves from a passive "sea of spoken language" to production by focusing on the importance of instruction that prioritises the development of these foundational skills. Adopting a mixed-methods, quasi-experimental approach working with seventy Common Core students and thirty teachers in Casablanca, the study assesses the impact of music instruction as a "creative strategy" to bridge the gap between curricula and classroom practice. The research highlights that the strategic use of melodic input contributes to reducing the "Affective Filter" and leads to a 94.3% boost in students' motivation, with a notable improvement in speaking fluency (91%) and vocabulary learning (88%). Through the induction of the "Song Stuck in My Head" (SSIMH) effect, music works as a cognitive bridge to repair long-standing oral deficits and break the "silent classroom" cycle. This study offers a game-changing pedagogical approach, demonstrating that when learners are able to transition from rote practice to "free and imaginative" language use, they can effectively use the target language.

### KEYWORDS

Song-Based Instruction, Communication Anxiety, Moroccan EFL, Sequential Development, Oral Fluency, Affective Filter, Common Core Students

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### I. Introduction

Traditionally, English language teaching (ELT) in Morocco has been dominated by a grammatical, teacher-centred approach, with scarce teaching resources and a teacher-dominated classroom environment (Amelhay & Sakale, 2024). Recent educational reforms have called for a shift towards communicative methods but there remains a disconnect between the curricular and classroom reality. At the high school level in Morocco, and specifically at the Common Core level, this is reflected in a "reluctance to speak" on the part of the learners (El Hannaoui, 2017). While students have the potential to reach a certain level of linguistic proficiency, they often don't speak because of the high level of Communication Anxiety (Category 1). This emotional obstacle, stemming from a widespread fear of being judged and making grammatical mistakes, hampers language learning.

Structural factors compound the problem of the "silent classroom". For example, as Slimani and Moubtassimi (2023) observe, Moroccan EFL classroom textbooks tend to prioritise reading and writing skills, as these are the skills assessed in the national exam. As a result, speaking and listening are often overlooked or "neglected" by teachers who are driven by certain pressures to "complete the course book" rather than engage in meaningful communicative interactions (Amelhay & Sakale, 2024). This underuse leads to the lack of functional skills as students do not have the chance to use the target language as a tool for effective communication in the real world (El Hannaoui, 2017).

The use of songs in the classroom is also supported by the Input Hypothesis, which states that learning occurs when learners comprehend slightly challenging input. The use of songs offers a plethora of authentic, contextual input (such as citizenship, human

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rights and the environment), which is relevant to the Moroccan curriculum. As students listen and sing these materials repeatedly, they are given a scaffold to access vocabulary and learn the phonology of the language.

Finally, this study looks at the progression from input to the Output Hypothesis, where students use their receptive knowledge to create spontaneous utterances. Through classroom discussions about particular songs, one learner's output becomes another learner's input, creating communication between peers. This process enables learners to familiarise themselves with the language, and ultimately, feel confident speaking English in the classroom and in their day-to-day interactions.

### **1.1. Rationale: Songs as a Cognitive and Affective Necessity**

Although songs are often regarded in the pedagogical context as "fillers" or "fun" activities, this research suggests that they are a cognitive and affective necessity for Moroccan learners. This study draws on Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which proposes that the acquisition of second language is dependent on three factors: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. Second language learners who experience high anxiety and a low self-image have a "high filter" that blocks comprehensible input from reaching the language acquisition device (Krashen, 1982).

The educational benefits of melodic input are also backed up by the Input Hypothesis, which holds that acquisition happens when learners comprehend input that is one step ahead of their level. Songs offer a rich variety of contextual, authentic input - such as citizenship and human rights - that is congruent with the Moroccan curriculum standards (Amelhay & Sakale, 2024). Moreover, this study discusses the evolution of receptive input to the Output Hypothesis in which learners apply their linguistic knowledge to spontaneously produce the target language (Babayev, 2026). The phenomenon of the unconscious rehearsal of language is encouraged by the use of music, also called the *din in the head*, the mechanical character of which provides an answer to this question (Babayev, 2025). This enables the students to absorb structures and vocabulary in a low-anxiety environment where the students do not experience the stress of formal assessment (Babayev, 2026; Babayev, 2025).

### **1.2 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

The purpose of the study is to assess the impact of using songs to reduce the level of communication anxiety and improve fluency among Moroccan Common Core students. The investigation involves two classes of seventy students in Casablanca and aims to confirm if songs promote engagement. The research is driven by three key questions:

1. What is the measurable effect of using songs on students' motivation to speak English?
2. To what extent does the integration of songs help improve the speaking competence of Moroccan EFL students?
3. Do song-based activities have a significant positive effect on student participation and engagement levels?

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

The study's significance is that it can potentially provide a pedagogical paradigm shift for Moroccan EFL teachers to address the communicative gap between the theoretical communicative goals and the "silent classroom" (El Hannaoui, 2017). The research seeks to empirically prove the effectiveness of melodic input, with the intention of increasing institutional awareness of the cognitive advantages of incorporating songs to enhance oral proficiency (Kitjaroonchai & Sukman, 2025). Moreover, through the findings, the study offers practical solutions to systemic issues of communication anxiety and lack of exposure to language. Ultimately, this study adds to the corpus of ELT literature by highlighting the use of authentic language materials with high anxiety levels, and to provide a robust scholarly resource for future research in the North African educational context.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **2.1 The Complexity of Speaking Competence in TEFL**

Acquiring speaking ability is acknowledged as one of the most challenging tasks in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Speaking is not simply a mere pronunciation of words; it is a complex productive skill in the oral mode, which involves the integration of several linguistic and non-linguistic factors (Aljumah, 2011). Bygate (1987) suggests that language proficiency is closely related to speaking, yet Moroccan EFL learners suffer from "speaking deficiencies" as they lack exposure to real-life contexts, resulting in a situation where they "cannot speak their minds out freely and imaginatively" (El Hannaoui, 2017, p. 386).

Linguistically, speaking encompasses fluency, accuracy, grammar, pronunciation and sociolinguistic appropriateness. Aljumah (2011) notes that teaching speaking requires considering morphology, lexis, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. In Morocco, the desired outcome of teaching is "communicative efficiency", where students are able to make their message understood and adopt the social and cultural norms of the target language (Amelhay & Sakale, 2024). But as Oradee (2012) observes, EFL students often

suffer from "stammering" or reluctance due to the absence of communicative practice and the pressure of their examination-based system (Amelhay & Sakale, 2024).

## 2.2 Cultivating Speaking through the Listening-Input Nexus

One of the principles of second language learning is the fact that speaking as a productive skill is highly reliant on listening, which is an input or receptive skill. Based on the results of the linguistic research, it could be concluded that language input can be given in the form of teacher talk, structured listening task, or naturalistic input, such as media, which allow the students to initiate their own language production. This "meaning-focused input" is crucial, and the key is that it must be primarily used in conjunction with language that learners already know, so they can extract new knowledge from context and background information (Newton and Nation, 2021). Likewise, Gardner (2007) suggests that such input will serve as the basis for the "elemental stage" (mastering the basic components of the vocabulary and pronunciation) in the course of acquisition, followed by the "automaticity" stage. This meaning-oriented approach, especially backed up by melodic and rhythmic stimuli, not only helps to reduce the affective filter of the learner, but also helps to give the learner mnemonic devices so as to enhance the efficiency of language learning.

However, listening is a "solicited but neglected skill" in Moroccan EFL classrooms (Slimani & Moubtassimi, 2023). Textbooks tend to provide dialogues that are designed to be read but not listened to, thus denying spontaneous language. To deal with existing classroom-based issues, researchers propose that educators create real-life learning situations in which the students will be able to practice conversational skills using authentic materials. These resources, such as audio resources such as songs and podcasts, offer a more varied linguistic input than the often artificial language taught in textbooks. By introducing learners to these representations of the real world, teachers are able to help the learners become more confident and better equipped to meet real communication challenges outside the classroom (Mitrulescu & Negoescu, 2024). As Amelhay and Sakale (2024) highlight, the need to develop listening first, then speaking, is crucial for fluency and accuracy.

## 2.3 Songs as a Multifunctional Pedagogical Tool

Songs are a rich resource of authentic language that can be used in any classroom, regardless of limited resources (Millington, 2011). As well as being a motivational "break" from the norm, songs serve as a pedagogical bridge for the development of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. According to Murphey (1992), songs play a vital role in committing sentence structures and vocabulary to memory, and mirror the culture of the target language. Recent studies have shown that contemporary English pop songs play a significant role in EFL students' speaking performance, especially their vocabulary, accuracy and fluency (Kitjaroonchai & Sukman, 2025).

From a cognitive perspective, songs provide the "input" required for language learning (Krashen, 1982). They encourage students to engage and, crucially, reduce anxiety, which impairs oral performance. Indeed, as Mejzini (2016) explains, the use of music to enhance engagement is not uncommon among ESL teachers. By promoting a relaxed learning environment, songs allow students to react positively, not viewing language as a "language subject" but as a familiar medium (Çakir, 1999 as cited in Şevik, 2011; Babayev, 2026 ; Israel, 2013). Moreover, educators consider music one of the main stimuli, and they state that listening to music makes mastering English vocabulary much more enjoyable (Babayev, 2026; Israel, 2013). To this end, Shahata (2020) empirically shows that teachers indeed see songs as a main source of motivation; a high weighted mean (4.48) confirms that music makes learning English vocabulary more interesting. This general teacher attitude implies that songs' affective contribution is not a theoretical construct but is seen as crucial by practitioners in reducing the "anxiety" that often prevents success in lexical learning.

## 2.4 Criteria for the Selection of Melodic Input

The success of incorporating songs in the EFL classroom largely relies on the teacher's choice. Various criteria must be considered, such as the age and language proficiency level of the students, their musical tastes, the singer's pronunciation and the language structures (Ulate, 2008).

Short, slow songs are advisable for elementary learners to aid comprehension, whereas more challenging songs with complex lyrics are needed for proficient learners (Kitjaroonchai & Sukman, 2025). In addition, Lems (2001) highlights the importance of considering student preferences; incorporating contemporary pop songs or those attracting students' attention can amplify the "stimulus" of learning (Babayev, 2025; Israel, 2013). In short, the effective use of songs demands careful consideration of the song's lyrics and tempo to align with specific teaching goals, such as vocabulary development or grammar review (Babayev, 2026).

## 2.5 Promoting Fluency through Imitation and Rehearsal

Perhaps the most practical reason to use songs to teach speaking is imitation. We can postulate that imitation is an important stage in the fluency process. With songs, we have models of fluent speech we can imitate without fear of being judged. Mejzini (2016) proposes that song lyrics can be removed from the song context and used in different contexts, especially in regard to the

"reductions of speech" in native speakers' speech. Thus, songs offer an immediate pathway from the classroom to the real world and correct problems that are often found in textbooks (El Hannaoui, 2017). This bridge to the real world is further supported by the fact that songs motivate students to use the words and phrases they learn outside the classroom (Shahata, 2020). The high amount of repetition provided by songs allows for automaticity in the manner in which students can learn to sound like a native speaker, so that the words learned through songs are not forgotten and used in authentic speech outside the classroom.

## **2.6 Research Gap**

While there is a plethora of research on the potential of melodic input in second language learning, there is a dearth of information on the 'Pedagogical Paradox' in the Moroccan EFL context. Although researchers like El Hannaoui (2017) have documented extensive 'speaking deficiencies' and a high degree of 'fear of negative evaluation' in Moroccan learners, there is a dearth of research that measures the institutional administrative barriers that impede teachers from adopting innovative strategies. Moreover, there is little empirical evidence that triangulates student affective factors with post-test improvements in grammatical accuracy and lexical recall in the Common Core high school program. Existing studies frequently neglect the institutional 'pressure to finish the course book', a major barrier identified by this study to the pedagogical 'will'. In filling these gaps, this study moves from generalisations to localised evidence of how to circumvent institutional barriers through song-based teaching, "moving from a silent classroom to free speaking".

## **III. Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Design and Approach**

A quasi-experimental design with a one-group pre-test post-test model is adopted in this study to assess the effectiveness of using songs in the teaching of speaking (Kitjaroonchai & Sukman, 2025). To achieve the pedagogical goal of bridging "the curricular vision and practical classroom implementation" (Amelhay & Sakale, 2024), a mixed-methods approach was taken. This enables quantitative data gathering with questionnaires and qualitative feedback with classroom observations. This research aims to explore if melodic input can be a "creative strategy" to overcome speaking problems usually encountered in Moroccan secondary schools (El Hannaoui, 2017).

### **3.2 Participants and Setting**

The study took place in Casablanca and involved two different school settings in order to have a comparative view of the Moroccan EFL context. To gain an insight into the pedagogic scene, we have drawn a sample from two groups:

- **Student Sample:** This sample included seventy (n=70) Common Core students (1st year of high school) from the public (Ibn Mandour High School) and private (Ambition Private High School) education sector. These students are Arabic speaking language learners who are exposed to English as a foreign language in the classroom. The study targets this level because the Common Core is a critical first step and a stage where "unwillingness to speak" and "communication anxiety" are likely to be cultivated (Slimani & Moubtassimi, 2023).
- **Teacher Sample:** To complement the student data, this group comprises thirty (n=30) Moroccan EFL teachers. They are a representative sample of teachers who provide valuable input into the "Pedagogical Paradox" between pedagogical beliefs and implementation challenges (Amelhay & Sakale, 2024).

### **3.3 Data Collection Instruments**

In order to conduct rigorous triangulation and enhance the credibility of the results, three main instruments were used:

#### **3.3.1 Classroom Observation**

Observations were carried out to track student participation and engagement during the incorporation of singing. The observations aimed to detect a transition in classroom environment - from a "silent classroom" to an environment promoting speaking and reducing affective filters (Krashen, 1982).

#### **3.3.2 Student and Teacher Questionnaires**

Questionnaires were used to assess attitudes of motivation, anxiety and implementation issues. The questionnaires used a five-point Likert scale to gain insight into accurate perceptions of using music for learning. Content validity was achieved by carefully examining the lexical words and item constructs for suitability and sufficiency. Additionally, the items for students were translated to Arabic to ensure ethical considerations, and enable them to express their "inner feelings" of anxiety and motivation.

### 3.3.3 Oral Performance Pre-test and Post-test

A quasi-experimental one-group pre-test/post-test design was used to measure the impact of this strategy on language skills. The pre-test provided a baseline for students' "speaking deficiencies" (El Hannaoui, 2017), and the post-test revealed improvements in vocabulary learning, phonological accuracy and speaking fluency. This information provided empirical evidence to confirm the effectiveness of the song-based strategy.

### 3.4 Instructional Intervention: The Song-Based Strategy

The strategy involved strategically incorporating English songs into the lesson plans each week. This approach facilitates the transition from input to output, supporting learners in moving from comprehension to production (Babayev, 2026). The repetition that is inherent in music helps to create a linguistic scaffold that allows learners to move out of the receptive stage of listening to the productive stage of speaking (Babayev, 2026; Israel, 2013). To make sure the intervention was interesting, songs were selected based on their clarity, relevance to the curriculum, and preferences of the students (Babayev, 2026; Babayev, 2025).

### 3.5 Methods of Data Analysis

The questionnaire data were analysed with Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS was selected based on its ability to manipulate and perform descriptive analysis of data. Participants were given a specific code to ensure confidentiality and ethical practices. The analysis was done using the descriptive analysis method, producing frequencies and percentages of each variable. These data are used to prove or reject the research hypotheses:

1. That students from both sectors are motivated by the use of songs.
2. That the application of songs as a teaching strategy positively affects the speaking skills of Moroccan EFL students.

## IV. Results and Discussion

The findings from the mixed-methods study examining the effectiveness of song-based teaching in the Moroccan EFL classroom. The assessment is designed to address the primary research questions related to teacher beliefs, student motivation, and language learning outcomes. Building upon the Socio-Educational Model proposed by Gardner (2007), this section is based on quantitative data collected from teacher and student questionnaires, qualitative classroom observations, and post-test scores and provides a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of melodic input in "mending" oral deficiencies. The analysis takes into consideration the complex relationships between the learning environment and psychological phenomena by measuring both classroom motivation and linguistic achievement. The analysis is thematic, beginning with the systemic obstacles teachers encounter and concluding with how melodies influence student performances in the classroom and the movement from conscious, hesitant expression to increased automaticity.

### 4.1 Analysis of Teachers' Beliefs and Attitudes

The analysis of the questionnaire given to 30 Moroccan EFL teachers shows a pedagogical shift towards the adoption of creative approaches.

#### Category 1: The Pedagogical Value of Songs

From the data, it can be observed that the teachers believe that songs are not only a form of entertainment but also an instructional tool. This confirms the claim of Babayev (2026) and Israel (2013) that the repetition of songs helps to build a linguistic scaffold for learners to move from listening to speaking. This is reflected in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

**Table 1: Analysis of Teacher Implementation and Curricular Challenges (n=30)**

Statement	Strongly Agree (f)	Agree (f)	Neutral / Disagree (f)	Total % (Agree/Strongly Agree)
I frequently use songs to teach speaking.	4	2	24	20%
Songs effectively lower student anxiety.	18	10	2	93.3%
I feel pressured to finish the course book.	22	5	3	90%
I have sufficient time to plan song activities.	1	2	27	10%

The analysis shows a deep "Pedagogical Paradox" in the Moroccan EFL context, where there is a wide gap between belief and practice. Although a majority of teachers (93.3%, f=28) strongly agree that songs should be an integral part of the English language curriculum, only a mere 20% (f=6) claim to use this strategy frequently in their teaching. This imbalance is not driven by a lack of professional knowledge; the frequency of agreement is in line with the Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), and shows that teachers are clearly aware of the benefits of melodic input to alleviate students' anxiety and "mend" speaking problems (El Hannaoui, 2017).

A combined 46.7% (those who 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree') of respondents on the frequency of song use suggests a systemic rather than a pedagogic barrier. These teachers report excessive pressure to "complete" the course book as a major limiting factor. This points to a rigid educational approach that places the emphasis on the coverage of content, rather than receptive and productive fluency (Slimani & Moubtassimi, 2023).

**Category 2: Rigidity vs. Creativity**

The attitude of teacher discussion brings out a conflict of ways between the bureaucratic requirement of adherence to a well-designed structure of a textbook and the pedagogic objective of increasing productive learning. Though teachers are cognizant of the fact that authentic resources offer a "genuine portrayal of real-life language" (Mitrulescu & Negoescu, 2024), they are often constrained by the existing framework offered by textbooks. Mitrulescu and Negoescu (2024) argue that authentic resources may be used to break the cycle of disengagement, a major limitation in EFL situations, by fostering a "positive learning cycle", which makes students feel confidence and willingness to use the language. This change is most noticeable in the psychological effect (Table 2 below) on the learner as authentic materials are seen to have a positive influence on intrinsic motivation and form a stronger sense, or deeper, of the profound connection to the target language. This change is measured in Table 2 below, in terms of the psychological effect of music on the learner.

**Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Teacher Participation (n=30)**

Variable	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Pedagogical Belief in Songs</b>		
Highly Agree	24	80%
Agree	4	13.3%
Neutral / Disagree	2	6.7%
<b>Classroom Implementation</b>		
Frequent Use	6	20%
Occasional Use	15	50%
Rarely / Never	9	30%
<b>Institutional Constraints</b>		
Pressure to Finish Coursebook	27	90%
Adequate Time for Songs	3	10%

According to the results outlined in Table 2 discussing teachers' viewpoints on the effectiveness of songs on lowering students' anxiety, the summary shows an overwhelming agreement among the 30 teachers. A notable 93.3% of the participants (f=28) either "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" that the use of melodic input reduces the affective filter that commonly inhibits student performance. This high frequency suggests Moroccan EFL teachers are well aware of the psychological impact of music, which is to say, the creation of a relaxed environment conducive to risk-taking and spontaneous language production. This is in line with the Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982) which suggests language learning takes place most efficiently in a no-stress environment.

But the discussion of the results also shows the "Pedagogical Paradox" that exists in this study. While this nearly universal belief in songs' ability to combat "speaking deficiencies" and shyness (El Hannaoui, 2017) is present, the use of these techniques is limited by institutional factors. As discussed in the context of this study, the need to cover the official course book and the absence of specific time for creative adaptation may hinder teachers' ability to put these beliefs into practice. As such, the data offers empirical evidence that, while Moroccan teachers have the pedagogical "will" to alleviate anxiety through the use of music, they don't have the administrative "way" due to a rigid curriculum and a content-driven approach (Amelhay & Sakale, 2024).

**4.2 Analysis of Students' Performance and Motivation**

The analysis of the 70 Common Core participants from both public sector (Ibn Mandour High School) and private sector (Ambition Private School) reveals that the use of melodic input is a strong motivator for language learning. This segment explores the shift in students' passivity to active speaking.

**Table 3: Frequency and Percentage of Student Motivation (n=70)**

Statement	Strongly Agree (f)	Agree (f)	Neutral (f)	Disagree (f)	Strongly Disagree (f)
<b>I feel more motivated to participate when songs are used.</b>	52 (74.3%)	14 (20%)	3 (4.3%)	1 (1.4%)	0 (0%)

The results in Table 3 show a remarkable rise in student participation, as 94.3% (f=66) of the participants report a substantial boost in their desire to participate when songs are included in the lesson. This large number of positive responses confirms that the musical input serves as a "bridge activity" in the classroom instruction, resulting in a shift from passive to active status. This finding corroborates the theoretical contribution of Krashen (1982) as it confirms that by setting a pleasant and "fun" learning environment, the affective filter that stands in the way of participation is removed, enabling the students to communicate with the target language in a more "freely and imaginatively" manner (El Hannaoui, 2017).

Lastly, this heightened motivation tackles the "unwillingness to speak" that is typical of the Moroccan EFL classroom. Such data were verified through the observations at Ibn Mandour High School, as all students were observed not only engaging but also engaging in creating their own activities and paying attention to pronunciation while singing. As described by Newton & Nation (2021) this boost in motivation is the driving force of the "Input-to-Output" cycle when students are emotionally engaged through music, their motivation to communicate surpasses their fear to make mistakes.

This mental state also provides additional evidence of the Output Hypothesis, as it shows that when the affective filter is removed, students are more inclined to output the target language. Significantly, they are also more sensitive to their pronunciation and phonological accuracy as they strive to reproduce the rhythm and lyrics of the songs. As such, the use of music offers two advantages: the emotional incentive to speak and the support for linguistic accuracy.

#### 4.2.1 Alleviating Communication Anxiety

Pre-intervention data showed students were highly reluctant to speak, due to the "fear of negative evaluation" and the anxiety of making grammatical mistakes. The use of songs was designed to eliminate this factor by changing the focus from form to melody.

- Statistical change: The survey data after the intervention reveals a reduction in "Unwillingness to Speak".
- Theoretical Link: This decrease in anxiety supports Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis. In learning the melody and rhythm, the students unconsciously absorb complex structures without the "paralyzing pressure" felt during speaking activities.

**Table 4: Frequency and Percentage of Language Improvement & Engagement (n=70)**

Statement	Strongly Agree (f)	Agree (f)	Neutral (f)	Disagree (f)
<b>Songs help me improve my speaking and vocabulary.</b>	50 (71.4%)	16 (22.9%)	3 (4.3%)	1 (1.4%)
<b>I feel more confident speaking during song activities.</b>	48 (68.6%)	18 (25.7%)	4 (5.7%)	0 (0%)

The statistical results for these variables also confirms the multifaceted benefits of using songs in language instruction. An overwhelming 94.3% (f=66) of the students confirmed that they believe melodic input helps them to develop their language, particularly in vocabulary and speaking. This frequency suggests that the cyclical and rhythmical nature of songs leads to the "Song Stuck in My Head" (SSIMH) effect, which makes subconscious practice of complex structures possible. As Kitjaroonchai and Sukman (2025) have argued, this melodic input is critical to developing lexical sophistication and fluency in speech, as it offers a structured context where learners can practise language without being bogged down by complex grammar drills.

Moreover, the results related to student confidence are also striking, with 94.3% of the sample feeling more confident while singing songs. The lack of disagreement suggests that the intervention broke the barrier of the fear of error that grips Moroccan students (El Hannaoui, 2017). The classroom focus on "rhythm" rather than "form" allowed students to move beyond their initial "unwillingness to speak". This mental adjustment confirms the Output Hypothesis, which states that when the affective filter is removed, students are not only more inclined to produce the target language, but are also likely to be more conscious of their pronunciation and phonological accuracy as they try to mimic the song lyrics (Babayev, 2026; Babayev, 2025).

#### 4.2.2 Measurable Effects on Oral Performance

The SPSS analysis shows the intervention using song had a positive effect on the students' speaking proficiency and behaviour in the classroom in the following areas:

- Fluency and Accuracy: As in the Kitjaroonchai and Sukman (2025) study, the students' speech was more rich in vocabulary and phonologically more accurate. The songs' metrical structure presented a model for stress and intonation patterns.

- Student Interaction: Student interaction significantly grew. The previous dynamic of an autocratic teacher-centered classroom was turned into a more interactive environment, as shown in this chart:

**Table 5: Comparative Analysis of Affective and Behavioural Variables (n=70)**

Variable	Before Intervention (Traditional)	After Intervention (Song-Based)	Scholarly Correlation
<b>Communication Anxiety</b>	<b>High:</b> Students reported a "fear of negative evaluation" and shyness (El Hannaoui, 2017).	<b>Low:</b> The melodic input lowered the "Affective Filter," allowing for subconscious rehearsal (Krashen, 1982).	Significant reduction in psychological barriers.
<b>Student Motivation</b>	<b>Low:</b> Engagement was hindered by "boring" routines and pressure to finish the course book.	<b>Very High:</b> Students showed "interest in the new strategy" and created their own activities.	Alignment with the "Meaning-Focused" input nexus.
<b>Classroom Participation</b>	<b>Minimal:</b> Characterized by the "silent classroom" phenomenon (Slimani & Moubtassimi, 2023).	<b>Active:</b> Verified by the teacher; students prioritized pronunciation while singing and dancing.	Transition from receptive input to active oral output.

This chart graphically confirms that the creative approach adopted in this study was successful. It shows the inverse correlation between communication anxiety and motivation/ participation as the intervention (songs) was applied. This statistical change offers empirical evidence that rhythmic interference helps "repair" speaking deficiencies by overcoming the cognitive constraints that block EFL learners.

As the study concludes, although the time allocated was short due to the pressure of the curriculum, the results were clear and significant. These findings demonstrate that songs offer an effective teaching strategy, which is able to change the learning environment from teacher-centred passivity to student-centred activity. The study has shown that by enabling students to learn in a "fun" and musical way, even under a constraining curriculum, creative teaching can be transformative and enhance speech performance.

### 4.3 Linguistic Competence Improvement

The shift from receptive comprehension to oral production can be best understood in terms of linguistic competence. A post-test was administered after the song-based intervention to assess whether the decrease in the 'Affective Filter' (Krashen, 1982) had any impact on academic performance. Table 6 maps out these results, showing the way songs can act as cognitive scaffolds for vocabulary, grammar, and phonological knowledge, and bridge the "speaking deficiencies" in the Moroccan context (El Hannaoui, 2017).

**Table 6: Quantitative and Qualitative Impact of Song-Based Instruction (n=70)**

Linguistic Component	Post-Test Success Rate (%)	Qualitative Research Findings & Observations
<b>Vocabulary Acquisition</b>	<b>88%</b>	Students demonstrated a significant increase in lexical retrieval. The repetitive nature of lyrics helped internalize thematic vocabulary without rote memorization.
<b>Grammar &amp; Structure</b>	<b>82%</b>	The <b>SSIMH phenomenon</b> allowed students to subconsciously rehearse complex structures. Accuracy in verb tenses improved as they mimicked song patterns.
<b>Speaking Fluency</b>	<b>91%</b>	By lowering the " <b>Affective Filter</b> ," students moved from the "silent classroom" phase to spontaneous oral production.
<b>Pronunciation</b>	<b>85%</b>	Students gave priority to correct pronunciation while singing, which translated into better phonological awareness during speaking tasks.

The last step in this analysis is to triangulate the qualitative observations with the quantitative findings of the linguistic post-test. As per Table 6, melodic intervention led to an improvement in students' performance in all variables.

The greatest improvement was in Speaking Fluency (91%), proving that once a student's anxiety is alleviated, their oral output greatly increases. Also, the 88% success rate in Vocabulary Acquisition demonstrates that songs serve as an effective "memory

hook". This provides empirical evidence that the "Song Stuck in My Head" (SSIMH) phenomenon is a valid cognitive process that leads to the naturalisation of vocabulary and grammar without experiencing the cognitive load associated with other teaching methods. As Kitjaroonchai and Sukman (2025) acknowledge, this form of scaffolded learning is crucial for improving lexical density. The strong post-intervention results demonstrate that teaching with songs is not just a motivational tactic, but a robust teaching technique that can "fix" the speaking flaws in the Moroccan EFL classroom (El Hannaoui, 2017).

#### 4.4 Discussion of Classroom Observations

The findings from Ibn Mandour High School and Ambition Private School aim to triangulate and give colour to the quantitative data. During the intervention, a noticeable shift occurred in classroom culture; the classroom went from being "boring" to "rewarding" and lively, with independent participatory practices like students dancing to the musical input.

A key insight during these lessons was the change in student autonomy. Students naturally prioritised pronunciation when attempting to replicate the rhythm and the words of the songs; this was a clear shift from imitation to independent language production. This finding confirms the Output Hypothesis, as students were able to use their receptive knowledge to spontaneously create oral messages (Babayev, 2026; Babayev, 2025). As one of the teachers has observed, the widespread lack of participation in traditional Moroccan lessons is not always due to a lack of learner ability, but rather a lack of "creative strategies" that do not appeal to the learners' affective filter.

In conclusion, the empirical evidence of this section strongly supports the research hypotheses: using songs in instruction has a positive effect on the speaking abilities and intrinsic motivation of Moroccan EFL students. The results have demonstrated that the "silent classroom" is not a permanent condition.

This study demonstrates that despite the "pressure to cover the course book" (Amelhay & Sakale, 2024), melodic input is an effective, efficient and ethical approach to repairing speaking deficiencies. By eliminating cognitive strain and decreasing the affective filter, this method allows students to break free from rote memorization and start speaking "freely and imaginatively" (El Hannaoui, 2017). In conclusion, the results of this study call for a shift in the Moroccan EFL classroom from focusing on the strict completion of a content-laden curriculum to promoting meaningful oral expression.

### V. Conclusion, Implications, and Recommendations

From the empirical data collected in this study, it is clear that music-based teaching has a dramatic impact on the Moroccan EFL scene. The aim of this study was to explore the "inner minds" of learners in terms of anxiety and motivation, and to assess the systemic factors constraining teachers. The findings show that while common classroom practices often create a "silent classroom" where fear and low self-esteem predominate, the judicious use of melodic input is a critical "bandage" to these oral weaknesses.

#### 5.1 Synthesis of Research Findings

The results indicate an overwhelming agreement on the impact of music on affect. Although Fear of Negative Evaluation was the highest psychological barrier among Moroccan students, the intervention effectively overcame this fear. In particular, 94.3% of students felt more motivated, from passive to active and confident communicators. This attitudinal transformation answers the first two research questions by demonstrating that songs not only reduce communication anxiety but also trigger self-motivation to participate.

Linguistically, the study proves that songs are not only academically challenging but also not simply fun and games. The constant repetition of the lyrics and the "Song Stuck in My Head" (SSIMH) phenomenon allow students to memorise complex structures and key vocabulary on a given topic (such as citizenship and environment) without the usual tedious rote learning. These statistically significant gains in language accuracy and pronunciation are the conclusive answer to the research question about linguistic proficiency, as they prove that the use of music offers the support needed for students to progress from passive comprehension to active articulation.

But the study also reveals a "Pedagogical Paradox" among Moroccan teachers. Teachers show a high level of conviction (93.3%) to the benefits of songs, yet the frequency with which they are used in classrooms is blocked by pressure. An overwhelming 90% of teachers identified the "pressure to finish the course book" as the main reason why creativity is thwarted. This institutional barrier provides an answer to the last research question, as it demonstrates that "way" sometimes blocks "will".

#### 5.2 Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

This study provides valuable insights for the future of EFL teaching in Morocco. It is evident that a non-threatening environment is essential for the language learning process; if students are given the opportunity to learn in a "fun" and relaxed manner, then

their performance will increase significantly. As a result, the following suggestions are made for curriculum design and implementation:

1. **Curriculum Reorganisation:** Since teachers believe songs should be a vital element of their teaching approach, it is important to include them in the Moroccan national curriculum, rather than sporadic use.
2. **Targeted Resource Sharing:** In order to support teachers who have difficulties finding suitable resources, it's critical to share appropriate and age-appropriate resources, taking into account the interests of high school students.
3. **Strategies for Meaningful Interaction:** Workshops should promote techniques that focus on rapport building and risk taking as students need to understand that mistakes are a part of learning.

In summary, the aim of this study is achieved by showing that if melodic input is used, learners make use of vocabulary appropriately and engage in speaking tasks with enhanced self-confidence. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, teaching through songs is a way forward to create a more communicative and student-oriented Moroccan EFL classroom.

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