

## THE USE OF SONGS IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

It's a well-known fact that songs have been part of the human experience for as long as we can remember. Songs have become an integral part of our language experience, and if used in coordination with a language lesson they can be of great value. Songs are successful in developing the four skill areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking, and can be used: to present a topic, a language point, lexis, etc.; to practice a language point, lexis, etc.; to focus on common learner errors in a more direct way; to encourage extensive and intensive listening; to stimulate discussion of attitudes and feelings; to encourage creativity and use of imagination; to provide a relaxed classroom atmosphere; to bring variety and fun to learning. In other words, songs provide a break from classroom routine, and learning English through them develops a non-threatening classroom atmosphere in which the four language skills can be enhanced. Songs also present opportunities for developing automaticity as a component of language fluency, which involves both knowing what to say and producing language rapidly without pauses. Besides, some songs are excellent examples of colloquial English, that is, the language of informal conversation. Using songs can prepare students for the genuine language they will be faced with.

The following activities can be applied to the carefully chosen songs: song dictation, song building, song composing, cloze or gap fill, ear training and pronunciation, song discussion, picture drawing, oral song project (oral presentations), etc.

The teacher of English willing to use songs in the EFL classroom though lacking singing ability will probably draw inspiration and courage from the following piece of advice: "It doesn't matter whether you can sing or not. You operate the cassette or CD player very well. The students will be doing the singing. Good Luck!"