

THE USE OF MUSIC IN TEACHING SPANISH, SOMETHING ELSE THAN ENRIQUE IGLESIAS

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Each semester when I start to work with a new group of students willing to learn Spanish I always ask them the reason, why they want to learn Spanish. I have got many kinds of answers. And the Spanish music is always one of them. Simply Spanish language is popular thanks to famous singers and performers like Enrique Iglesias, Shakira, Ricky Martin, Bustamante, Juanes, Jenifer López or the always ubiquitous Pit Bull. Music then should be not be excluded from the language teaching but included actively. There are many reasons for that. Researches in the field of foreign language teaching have pointed out that students' motivation and interest are among the most important factors for the learning of a foreign language. There are several means to improve the teaching effectiveness and to raise the interest and motivation of the students. Recorded tapes, sound films, songs, newspapers and magazines are all familiar to teachers and students and they have proved to be, in most cases, very effective because they are strongly related to everyday life. I think that among these teaching aids, pop and folk song are materials that best reflect young people's concerns as they often relate to important trends in modern society. Young people enjoy original folk and pop songs because of their authentic cultural content. Research has proved that music has the ability to help acquire and remember vocabulary. Moreover, music helps to recall the lyrics of songs when listening to them, and thus encourages learners' confidence in language. The teachers can, by using songs in their lessons, also contribute a great deal to help learners improve listening skills. What speaks in favour of using songs in language teaching is also the fact that the students perceive the lessons with songs as interesting, instructive, positive, relaxing and enjoyable. Songs without any doubt can become a tool which we can use to animate and facilitate language learning and acquisition. Furthermore, music can be used to help control a classroom environment or to support the content within that class. It can be used to signal different transitions within the class as well as to serve as writing prompt itself. Music is also a way to build community and to share yourself as a teacher. Music is a way in with students, a way for them to learn about you and for you to learn about them, their needs, expectations and goals.