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# ***Integrating Songs with Internet Resources and Educational Software into the French Classroom***

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*Marat Sanatullo, Wichita State University*

## **Abstract**

In light of the standards, research insights, best instructional practices, and modern technology, the author demonstrates the integration of French songs with Internet resources and story-based techniques. This integration makes use of the website YouTube and various types of educational software in the classroom. Incorporated with technology, the use of songs is an effective means of promoting language learners' social, cognitive, language, and cultural growth. The reviewed songs and artists represent a variety of Francophone areas, cultures, and musical genres. Some of them are not currently well represented in the French classroom and curriculum. The article invites teachers to reflect on the place and role of songs combined with Internet resources and software programs in the language classroom. The suggestions provided may be of relevance to the teaching and learning of other languages.

## **Background**

This article demonstrates how songs can be integrated into the classroom by using the website YouTube, Internet resources, and various types of educational software programs to foster French learners' social, cognitive, language, and cultural development. Classroom practices show that many students relate positively to music, so they view songs used in the classroom as entertainment rather than work and find learning vocabulary and grammar through songs amusing rather than tedious. However, despite the number of examples available to teachers, songs are not always used effectively in the language classroom. Textbooks do not consistently incorporate songs, and teaching materials do not offer enough variety of musical presentations. Also, modern technological tools can be used with songs in innovative and effective ways. These new technologies range from sharing and viewing video clips of songs on the Internet, producing and using podcasts, and listening to songs in MP3 format and creating song-based exercises and activities with presentation, hypermedia, video editing, and concept mapping software programs. Unfortunately, such technologies are not often included in the curricular materials, activities, and lesson and unit plans that implement songs.

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**Marat Sanatullo** (Ph.D., University of Nebraska at Lincoln) is an Assistant Professor of French at Wichita State University in Kansas. He teaches French and foreign language methodology courses and coordinates the French and Italian Division and the foreign language teacher education program. His research focuses on methods, technology, and teacher education. He has published in *Dimension* (SCOLT), *CSC Report* (CSC), and NYSAFLT's *Language Association Journal*.

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Songs are a rich linguistic and cultural resource and should be afforded a more prominent place in language curricula. Using a song in the classroom should not be viewed purely as a singing exercise nor as a simple way to create a fun classroom environment. With the educational benefits and opportunities that contemporary technologies can offer, the use of songs should also become a meaningful and purposeful way of fostering learners' development and creativity by exposing them to authentic and diverse examples of the target language and culture.

The inclusion of songs increases the students' motivation and enjoyment of learning the language and culture. It emphasizes and develops a variety of language learners' intelligences and learning styles (Gardner, 1999; Oxford, 1990). It also facilitates the students' language acquisition, since they are engaged in completing the tasks of searching for and evaluating information that is interesting and relevant to them (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). Moreover, it provides an effective connection to those students from the Millennial Generation, born in or after 1982. Many of this generation are now in our foreign language classes, and they tend to learn better via collaborative learning, the use of technology, peer connection, structured hands-on learning, and opportunities for personal creativity (Spodark, 2008).

In this article, I first look at how the standards, research insights, whole language and story-based approaches, text-based factors of song selection, and modern technological tools can guide the teacher in integrating songs into the foreign language classroom. Second, based on the example of a French song, I demonstrate and discuss the use of songs with various types of educational software programs along with whole language and story-based techniques. Third, the article illustrates the integration of French songs with the website YouTube and other relevant Internet resources. At the end, I propose that teachers reflect on guiding questions to help them address multiple classroom goals as they incorporate songs with technology in their classrooms. Teachers of various languages may find the article's suggestions applicable to their own teaching contexts.

## **Aiming at Language Proficiency and the Target Culture**

The integration of songs with the Internet and various types of educational software in the classroom should aim at developing the learners' language proficiency and facilitating an exploration of the target culture. At the Novice level of language proficiency, students can create lists of words and phrases and communicate minimally with formulaic and rote utterances, while at the Intermediate level, they can create with language, initiate, maintain, and bring to a closure simple conversations by asking and responding to simple questions (Swender, 1999). For example, in the context of a song, Novice-level students can be asked to make and share a list of the words (e.g., nouns, adjectives) that describe a particular character of the song. Learners at the

Intermediate level can play the roles of the song's characters by preparing and using the statements and questions in communicative situations. At the Advanced level, students are able to narrate and describe in major time frames and deal effectively with an unanticipated complication, while Superior level learners can discuss topics extensively, support opinions, and hypothesize and deal with a linguistically unfamiliar situation (Swender, 1999). For instance, Advanced-level students can be asked to retell in paragraph discourse what happened to the song's characters and invent an ending for a song that they will discuss with a partner. Learners at the Superior level can be asked to give and support their opinions about the meaning that the song can convey.

Identifying the perspectives, practices, and products of the target culture should also guide the students' learning of a song. Teachers and learners should understand the connections among these aspects of the target culture, recognize the value and role of literary and cultural texts to interpret and reflect upon the perspectives of the target cultures, and integrate knowledge of other disciplines into foreign language instruction (ACTFL, 2002; NSFLEP, 1999). The exploration of the target culture develops the learners' sociocultural competence. As a part of communicative competence, it is "knowledge about context, stylistic appropriateness, nonverbal factors, and cultural background knowledge" (Shrum & Glisan, 2005, p. 14). As Vygotsky (1986) pointed out, language and thought are interrelated. By making the sociocultural context understandable to students, foreign language teachers affect students' comprehension of the content of a song and, thereby, enhance the quality of language learning and memory retention. Language learners, for their part, should realize that songs and music represent how people from the target culture make sense of the world and express their collective identity as a people and nation: "Language is a resource. Language is thought; language is culture; language is identity" (Wink & Putney, 2002, p. 54). Studying manifestations of national identity sets a framework for teachers to develop in their language learners the skills of comprehension, interpretation, and presentation in the target language. "Music brings language alive. Songs provide chunks of language complete with shadings of meaning and emotion. They give context to grammar and syntax and purpose to speech." (Diamond & Minicz, 1994).

## **Benefits of Incorporating Songs**

Foreign language educators across languages and levels may consider various reasons for and ways of integrating songs into their classrooms. Many benefits arise from the incorporation of songs in the foreign language curriculum. It enriches student learning (Auger, 2003; Curtain & Pesola, 1994; Lo & Li, 1998; Poritsky, 1990; Sibarah, 1999), leads to better pronunciation and intonation (Spicher & Sweeney, 2007), increases recall of vocabulary, and improves listening

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and speaking skills (Anton, 1990; Lipton, 1994). It also enhances the teachers' own presentation of the target language and culture (Alberic, 1994; Failoni, 1993; Kramer, 2001; Mariagrazia, 1996; Watson, 1989). With respect to French songs, Humblin (1987) demonstrates that the integration of popular French songs into the curriculum provides opportunities for students to learn about social, historical, and cultural aspects of the French language. Abrate (1983, 1988)

shows that there are different ways to incorporate popular French songs into French classroom for various domains of language study, such as listening comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, conversation, composition, culture, history, and literary study. Julien (1988) encourages the use of contemporary French songs for language instruction, and provides guidelines for choosing and teaching songs and class exercises that exploit the instructional potential of songs. Andrew (1987) shows that translating French songs can be an enjoyable activity. Weinberg (2007) analyzed web-tracking data taken from a website dedicated to French songs for an advanced French comprehension university course during two terms. The variation in time spent on task and in online behavior as students completed activities was analyzed. Data showed that the students with the lowest marks did not necessarily spend the least amount of time on online, nor did the most diligent workers improve their skills the most.

## **Whole Language and Story-Based Approach**

The PACE Model is a story-based approach to teaching grammar that can be effectively used to integrate songs into the foreign language classroom. PACE is an acronym for four phases of contextualized vocabulary and grammar teaching: Presentation of meaningful language, Attention, Co-construction of an explanation, and Extension activities. This model engages learners in focusing on form in the context of a meaningful text. The presentation of meaningful language, such as is found in a song, should be conducted in a holistic, thematic, contextualized, and interactive way. It should not be based on isolated and disconnected sentences whose purpose is to illustrate a target form. A song can be presented as a literary product similar to a story, folktale, or legend. Such an approach enables the teacher to capture learner interest and create comprehension through negotiation of meaning.

The second stage of PACE “focuses learners’ attention on some aspect of the language used during the Presentation” (Adair-Hauck, Donato, & Cumo-Johanssen, 2005, p. 197). The third step of the model leads learners and teacher to Co-construct grammatical explanations, while the Extension activities phase enables students “to use their new grammar skill in creative and interesting ways” and to “allow creative self-expression” (pp. 198-199). PACE advocates a participatory approach to teaching and learning grammar that reconciles both explicit and implicit approaches to learning. In an implicit approach, analyses of grammatical structures are done by learners themselves, while in an explicit approach, the explanation is provided for learners by the teacher or the textbook.

When engaged in the PACE model, learners use both top-down and bottom-up processing skills to reconstruct meaning and recognize structures. They are also engaged in several communicative modes, such as the Interpretive (“interpretation of meaning in oral and printed texts”), Interpersonal (“active negotiation of meaning among individuals”), and Presentational (“formal, one-way communication to an audience of listeners or readers”) modes (Shrum & Glisan, 2005, pp. 155-156). In addition, to facilitate the processing of the song’s meaning, vocabulary, and structure, learners can consistently be exposed to communicative activities before, during, and after listening to or reading the lyrics of the song. Other reading strategy models, such as a story-grammar training (Pressley & Woloshyn, 1995), can guide the teacher in emphasizing story elements of the song, such as its setting, characters, and a possible problem and solution.

## **Text-Based Factors of the Song Selection**

When selecting a song for the classroom, the teacher has to take into consideration the textual features of the song. The factors that are used to select a particular text, such as its length, content, and organization (Riley, 1993; Roller, 1990), should guide the teacher’s evaluation of a song’s lyrics. Teachers might choose relatively short songs with memorable themes, especially for beginning and younger language learners, since longer texts might lead to challenges with retention. A theme might be memorable when it represents a tradition, a holiday, an image, an action, or the like. The attractiveness of, as well as familiarity with, the song’s major topic may influence how actively, meaningfully, and successfully learners will be engaged in interpretation processes. A text should hold the attention and interest of the language learner if it has the characteristics of a story, is meaningfully connected to the learner’s experiences, and reflects powerful images, characters, or events. In his Episode Hypothesis, Oller (1983) posited that “text (i.e., discourse in any form) will be easier to reproduce, understand, and recall, to the extent that it is motivated and structured episodically” (p. 12).

## **Modern Technological Tools and Internet Resources for Song Usage**

### **YouTube**

Founded in 2005, YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com>) is a website that allows uploading, viewing, sharing, searching, and commentary on videos (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/YouTube>). Videos on YouTube are posted by subscribers and can reflect a wide variety of topics. Numerous videos are video clips or presentations of songs. Language teachers can use the features and resources of YouTube to engage their students in learning about songs, and the target language and culture.

### **MP3 Songs**

Various songs and albums in MP3 format can be found on a variety of Internet sources. MP3 songs in French can be downloaded instantly from Amazon (<http://www.amazon.com>), the iTunes store, and stores such as FNAC of France (<http://www.fnacmusic.com>) or Archambault of Quebec, Canada (<http://www.archambault.ca>), directly to an iTunes library or Windows Media Player. MP3 songs

can be effectively used for listening exercises and with presentations and projects about songs and singers. For some songs, karaoke versions exist.

### **Presentation, Hypermedia, Concept Mapping, and Video Editing Software Programs**

The song's content, coupled with the capabilities of various types of software, such as presentation, hypermedia, concept mapping, and video editing software, are the vehicle for the teacher's song-based activities. This type of software enables the teacher to implement the principles of effective language learning and teaching. PowerPoint (Microsoft Corporation) is an example of presentation software. A presentation program serves to generate presentation content and displays information in the form of a slide show. A PowerPoint presentation consists of a number of individual pages called slides. The program enables presenters and users to insert text, images, links, audio, video clips, and other objects into slides and create various effects. HyperStudio (Sunburst Technology Corporation) is a hypermedia program. HyperStudio projects are called stacks and consist of individual pages referred to as cards. In hypermedia, text features, links, annotations, images, sounds, audio, and video can be combined to create a generally non-linear and interactive way of presenting information. For example, by using the same HyperStudio card, a user can simultaneously scroll up and down through a large text inserted in a textbox, make appear and disappear text annotations in the form of small textboxes and images, and watch an embedded video or listen to an embedded audio recording of the text. To provide students with interactive and immediate feedback, the teacher can use sounds available in the program's media library, teacher pre-recorded audios, or teacher pre-written texts. The use of hypermedia capabilities can help students become autonomous and creative learners through various individual, group, and whole class activities. The Inspiration software program (Inspiration Software, Inc.) is a tool for concept mapping. It allows the teacher to build a variety of graphic organizers, such as concept maps, diagrams, and webs, by using visual and linear thinking. Students associate ideas, concepts, data, and other information with images and techniques. Apple's iMovie (Macintosh platform), Microsoft's Windows Movie Maker (Windows platform), and Sony's MovieShaker (Windows platform) are video editing programs. They allow users to record and edit videos with various features, such as effects, transitions, and narration.

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Through the use of these types of software and their products, teacher creativity and imagination may be heightened and thus play an important role in developing original, interesting, and engaging ways to integrate songs. The above-mentioned programs can be used in conjunction with each other to help teachers incorporate songs with story-based techniques. The use of such programs can also enhance students' information processing and make the language input more comprehensible for them, thereby maximizing

the use of songs in the classroom. The comprehensibility of the language input is an indispensable condition for successful language learning (Krashen, 1982).

To demonstrate how a song can be presented through whole language and story-based techniques, in conjunction with the software programs described above, the following section describes the integration of a pop song “Aïcha” (Goldman & Khaled, 1996, track 16) into the French classroom.

### **Integrating a French Song “Aïcha” with Educational Software and Whole Language and Story-Based Techniques**

“Aïcha” is performed by a popular French and Algerian singer Khaled (formerly Cheb Khaled). This singer and song are chosen because the artist and his work have a unique connection to the singer’s homeland, its musical genres, people, and history. They are not well represented in the French curriculum or classroom, despite the fact that their inclusion can only enrich both. The music for the song is composed by a famous French singer and composer of French popular music, Jean-Jacques Goldman. The music and work of Khaled represent the musical genre Raï which is a combination of western-type popular music and traditional Algerian musical rhythms. Raï was developed in the cities of Algeria, and was prohibited by Islamic fundamentalists, so Khaled had to leave Algeria for France in order to compose and perform. To learn about the life and the work of Khaled, students can consult a variety of Internet sites (see the Appendix). The song and the related activities can be appropriately adapted to the students’ proficiency and grade levels.

The main character of this song is a man who sings about his strong feelings and love for a woman called Aïcha. He is prepared to offer her the entire world – its most expensive and delicious things – in exchange for her attention and love. However, Aïcha does not want all of these material things and, instead, requires that the man would daily give her the same rights and respect that he has, which is the expression of true love. The music is catchy and the lyrics use simple but beautiful and poetic images. The song contains examples of the two French past tenses, the *passé composé* (*elle est passée à côté de moi* [she passed by me]) and the *imparfait* (*comme si je n’existais pas* [as if I did not exist]), and the imperative (*écoute-moi* [listen to me], *regarde-moi* [look at me]). The vocabulary of the song describes foods, the physical world, and precious objects. A portion of the song is sung in Arabic, a native language of the singer.

### **Getting Students’ Attention with PowerPoint or HyperStudio**

Pre-listening/reading activities can be used to anticipate the content of the song and activate learners’ background information. The use of extra-linguistic cues, such as acting and visuals integrated with technology, fosters language learning (Chun & Plass, 1996). Students guess and predict the meaning of the song based on its title, “Aïcha”, and visuals representing key words from the lyrics (*soleil* [sun], *vent* [wind], or [gold], *miel* [honey], *ébène* [ebony], *bijoux* [jewelry], *cou* [neck]). The title and the visuals are inserted into the PowerPoint slides or HyperStudio cards and displayed on the classroom screen. Images appear before the students can see the words’ written forms in the target language. With this approach, the teacher enhances students’ critical thinking and guessing skills (Chun & Plass, 1996; Paribakht & Wesche, 1997). The

teacher also teaches students the song's vocabulary, such as the key verbs (*passer* [to pass by], *regarder* [to look], *écouter* [to listen]) and key nouns (sun, wind, gold, honey, jewelry). When using the target language, learners of lower levels of language proficiency (Novice, Intermediate) can be expected to provide single words or short phrases, while more Advanced-level students can elaborate on and justify their guesses by providing detailed narratives.

### **Listening to the Song and Presenting the Lyrics with PowerPoint**

A variety of during-listening/reading activities can be used with learners at different levels of language proficiency. The following are some examples.

First, students listen to "Aïcha" without seeing its lyrics. As the song is playing, the visuals illustrating the key words appear on the PowerPoint slides and follow the order of the lyrics. The purpose of this activity is to continue to engage learners in the practice of guessing the meaning of the song based on extra-linguistic cues. After listening to the song, the teacher asks students to share their impressions in relation to the song: *Qu'est-ce que vous avez aimé le plus dans cette chanson (dans cette musique, dans ces paroles, chez ce chanteur)?* [What did you like the most about this song (melody, lyrics, performer)?] *Comment pourriez-vous décrire cette chanson?* [How would you describe this song?] *Quelle est l'idée principale de cette chanson?* [What is the main idea of this song?]. Then, the teacher asks learners to listen to the song again to try to understand additional details as he/she retells the lyrics of the song by using the same visuals on PowerPoint and incorporating Total Physical Response (TPR) techniques which facilitate comprehension checks. This activity can be conducted across proficiency levels, although for learners at higher proficiency levels, the importance of TPR techniques decreases.

Next, the teacher can ask learners to listen to the song and read its lyrics which appear simultaneously with corresponding visuals on the classroom screen. Scheduling the appearance of the text segments in PowerPoint is a program feature that is especially effective for teaching a song. This activity is primarily suitable for students of lower proficiency levels (Novice, Intermediate). The learners' goal is to match the sound, images, and text in order to expand their understanding of the song. One way to present the lyrics is to make words and lines appear one after another after they are heard on the recording so that language learners can develop skills of matching audio and written input. Another way is to make a particular portion of the text appear immediately before students can hear it.

A variety of post-listening/reading activities can enable the teacher to engage students in practicing the song's content.

### **Exploring the Annotated Lyrics, Audio, Characters, and Plot with HyperStudio**

With this program, the lyrics are embedded in a scrollable textbox on a HyperStudio card. For key words and expressions in the lyrics, vocabulary (nouns, adjectives), grammar (tenses and modes) and culture (behavior, style) annotations are created by the teacher. Small textboxes and visuals that are linked to the selected words and expressions in the lyrics serve as annotations. The purpose of the annotations is to scaffold the learner by giving supporting information, explanations in the

target and native languages, translations and examples. By clicking on the linked word, the user makes an annotation appear. Clicking on it again makes the annotations disappear. Learners also explore lists of key words that are pre-recorded by the teacher. By clicking on a word, students can listen to the recording and then repeat it.

Students are asked to explore the annotated lyrics individually or in groups, for example, in a language lab. The teacher copies HyperStudio cards on the lab computers. Learners read and study the annotations. Afterwards, students are asked a variety of related questions that are written on a card. By clicking on the word “answer,” one brings up answers on the screen. In the textboxes, students also collaborate with each other to write about the main characters of the song (*Décrivez l’homme/le chanteur. Comment est le caractère de la femme?* [Describe the man/the singer. What is the personality of the woman?]), summarize the song (*Faites un résumé de la chanson.* [Summarize the song]), and imagine a development (*Qu’est-ce qui va arriver aux personnages? Est-ce qu’ils vont se marier?* [What will happen to the characters? Will they get married?]). As necessary, students skim and scan the lyrics for specific information.

### **KWL and Venn Diagram with Inspiration Program**

While exploring the song, students complete a KWL diagram created by the teacher with the Inspiration software program. The title of the diagram is an acronym based on the three questions that learners have to answer about a particular topic, such as “What do I Know?” (K), “What do I Want to know?” (W), and “What have I Learned?” (L). Students write their answers in the three corresponding columns of the diagram. At the beginning of the song’s exploration, in the columns “K” and “W” of the diagram, students write what they might know, guess, and want to know about Khaled, Algeria, and North Africa, their people, culture, music, and life, which activates learners’ background knowledge of the target language and culture. At the end, in the column “L,” students report what they have learned from the song and its exploration. While beginners can use both the target and native languages, advanced learners should be encouraged to use only the target language.

With the Inspiration software program, learners create and complete a Venn diagram. The purpose of using a Venn diagram is to show differences and commonalities between two elements (e.g., individuals, places, countries, cultures, stories, songs). The Venn diagram consists of two circles that intersect. One circle is used to describe one element, the second circle represents the other element, and the area where both circles intersect is used to list commonalities between the two elements. For the song, students describe the geographical and cultural environment in which they themselves live (one circle) as well as the environment in which the song takes place (the other circle). In the area where both circles intersect, learners describe similarities between the two environments. Learners complete the diagram on a computer in a language lab, or on a hard copy, individually or in groups. Afterwards, the teacher engages the class in discussing the answers.

### **Making a Music Video Karaoke Clip**

After learning the song, students create and show a music video clip of the song in which they perform a karaoke version of the song. Before choosing a song and this activity, the teacher needs to see if a karaoke version of the song in MP3 format is

available. The class is divided into groups. Each group prepares a music video clip. In the clip, learners are asked to sing the song and include elements of role-play and dance in it with specifically chosen props and clothes to illustrate the song's plot and meaning. Students have to demonstrate that they can be good singers and actors. A class contest is conducted to give awards in several categories: best clip, best singing, and best acting. To practice their clip with the karaoke song, students use the MP3 file of the song (Studio Group, 2006, track 5) on their iPods or computers. To work on the project, students are given time in class and can also meet outside the class. To create a clip, students use a digital video camera and a video editing program, such as Apple's iMovie, Microsoft's Windows Movie Maker, or Sony's MovieShaker. Students create a role-play in which they try to depict the relationship that exists between the man, the singer, and the woman, Aïcha. The actual students' singing can be recorded beforehand by using the audio recording features of HyperStudio or movie editing programs. The recording can also be made real-time as the actors play their roles. To illustrate the integration of Internet resources with songs, the following section describes how students can learn about French songs by using YouTube and other relevant Internet sites.

### **Exploring French Songs with YouTube and the Internet**

By using YouTube and other relevant Internet sites, teachers can engage their students in the selection and exploration of videos of various Francophone singers from several French-speaking areas of the world: Jacques Brel (Belgium), Mes aïeux [My ancestors] (Quebec, Canada), Yves Montand (France), and Zachary Richard (Louisiana, United States), among others. The following songs performed by the above-mentioned artists may be considered for such an exploration: *Le plat pays* ["The Flat Country"] by Jacques Brel (Brel, 2007, disc 1, track 6), *Dégénération/Réel du fossé* ["Degeneration/Reality of the Ditch"] by Mes aïeux (Mes Aïeux, 2004, track 1), *Sous le ciel de Paris* ["Under the Sky of Paris"] by Yves Montand (Montand, 2008, track 12), and *La maudite guerre* ["The Damned War"] by Zachary Richard (Richard, 2008). Before giving the names of specific songs to the students, the teacher needs to check on the availability of their videos on YouTube. New videos can be uploaded and old ones can be taken out from the site at any time. As an alternative, instead of assigning them to the students, Francophone areas, singers, and songs can be chosen by the students. The students, under the teacher's guidance, can review the Francophone areas, songs, and singers they know and then research them on the Internet.

The previously-mentioned artists and songs are recommended because, in a variety of unique ways, they intimately connect to the culture and history of the Francophone area they represent and describe. Some of those places, like the province of Quebec in Canada, and, especially, Paris, are well represented in the French curriculum and classroom. However, some others, like the state of Louisiana in the United States and West Flanders in Belgium, are overlooked and need to be explored more. Jacques Brel is a Belgian artist, singer, and composer of Flemish descent. He was born in 1929 in Scharbeek, which is a district of the Belgian capital, Brussels. He left his native country to go to Paris when he was in his twenties. In France he became a star. However, the artist never forgot his native land. He said: *J'aime les Belges* ["I like

Belgians”] (Brel, 2008). In his song *Le plat pays* (Brel, 2007, disc 1, track 6), Brel talks about West Flanders, a western province of the Flemish region in Belgium where the artist’s family originated. The song was performed both in French and Dutch. In that region, as well as in neighboring parts of the Netherlands, there are many open fields and few trees. Brel is in love with the place and its people, and this work represents his unique style in which the melody and the lyrics reveal his most intimate emotions and opinions.

Mes aïeux is a folk group from Quebec, a French-speaking province of Canada. In their work, they often make references to characters from Quebec’s folklore. They also address the topics of politics and modern life. The selected song *Dégénération/irréel du fossé* (Mes Aïeux, 2004, track 1) talks about changes in the life of different generations of Quebec and how young generations have lost their roots. The melody and rhythm are catchy and appeal to students.

Yves Montand is a famous French actor and singer. Born in Italy, his family immigrated to France when Yves was a child. In France he became a movie star and a popular singer. He deeply cared about his political ideas and views. Montand also wrote numerous songs about Paris, a city he loved so much. His song *Sous le ciel de Paris* (Montand, 2008, track 12) describes Paris, its residents, and their love for their city.

Zachary Richard is a singer and songwriter from Louisiana. His family, ethnic, and cultural roots come from Acadian refugees. In his work and life, Zachary Richard seeks fervently to preserve the Acadian culture. The musical styles of Zydeco, Cajun music, and New Orleans rhythm and blues influenced Richard’s music. He has written numerous songs about Louisiana, its people, and history. The song *La maudite guerre* (Richard, 2008) refers to the Great Expulsion of 1755 when thousands of Acadian families were expelled from their lands and homes in the maritime provinces of contemporary Canada. Some settled in Louisiana, which was the foundation and beginning of Cajun culture in that region. The song underlines the suffering and devastation that a war can bring. It tells a story of a young man who comes back home after the war to learn that his girlfriend left him and his house was destroyed.

To better understand the artists’ work and the selected songs, students can also be asked to search for, listen to, and view available videos for the artists’ other songs (see the Appendix for examples). For example, in *Les Flamandes* [“Flemish Women”] (Brel, 2007, disc 1, track 5), Jacques Brel described Flemish women and societal expectations toward them and in his *Les Flamingants* [“Flemish Nationalists”] (Brel, 2008) the Flemish singer and songwriter criticized Flemish nationalists and their ideas. *Le repos du guerrier* [“The Rest of the Warrior”] (Mes Aïeux, 2004, track 5), *Qui nous mène?* [“Who Leads Us?”] (Mes Aïeux, 2006, track 10), *Ça va mal* [“It Is Going Badly”] (Mes Aïeux, 2004, track 2), and *Train de vie* [“A Way of Life”] (Mes Aïeux, 2004, track 10) are some other songs

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***“By integrating unique, not often used, interesting, and representative songs into standards and proficiency, the language teacher addresses learners’ diversity, fosters communication, and develops learners’ linguistic and sociocultural competencies in the target language and culture.”***

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written by Mes aïeux about Quebec’s history, its people, and modern life there. In his songs *À Paris* [“In Paris”] (Montand, 1998, track 9), *Mon manège à moi* [“My Carousel”] (Montand, 1998, track 1) or *C’est si bon* [“It Is So Good”] (Montand, 1998, track 7), Yves Montand describes his love for the French capital, its residents, and its atmosphere. In the songs, *Au bord du lac Bijou* [“At the Shore of Lake Bijou”] (Richard, 1997, track 4), *Invitation des Mardi gras* [“Invitation to Mardi gras”] (Richard, 1974, track 1), *Ma Louisiane* [“My Louisiana”] (Richard, 1974, track 3) and *Réveille* [“Wake Up”] (Richard, 2008, track 11), Zachary Richard described Louisiana, its people and traditions.

In groups, students can be asked to use all suggested songs and to search for available video on YouTube to select one to serve as the basis for a presentation. Since there are usually numerous videos posted for each singer and song on YouTube, groups have to find the best ones (see the Appendix for examples). After selecting the best video for the singer and the song, each group evaluates and rates it on a scale of 1-5 by using the following criteria: quality of the clip, quality of music, quality of lyrics,

and quality of the performance. Groups analyze how the target culture, its perspectives, products, and practices are presented in the video. To learn about the artists, students can consult a variety of websites (see the Appendix). Students can also search for videos about the singer, the singer’s country and musical style. In the search engine on YouTube, students type key words, such as the names of the artist, song, country, and musical genre. By going to a variety of websites (see the Appendix), students find, translate, and analyze the song’s lyrics.

## **Conclusion**

Foreign language practitioners and curriculum developers, such as textbook writers and publishers across languages and grade levels, should be encouraged to incorporate a variety of songs and related song-based activities with Internet resources and various types of educational software programs as an integral part of their curriculum. By integrating unique, not often used, interesting, and representative songs into standards and proficiency, the language teacher addresses learners’ diversity, fosters communication, and develops learners’ linguistic and sociocultural competencies in the target language and culture. In light of this, foreign language professionals have to reflect on the integration of particular songs with Internet resources and various educational software programs into a lesson or unit, and the teaching and learning processes in general. The following questions can guide them in this process to address multiple classroom goals:

1. What is the purpose of using a particular song with the Internet and various software programs in a lesson? How do the song-based activities support the teacher's teaching objectives?
2. Does the use of a song and related song-based activities with the Internet and software support, enrich and develop language learners' multiple intelligences?
3. Can the use of a song and song-based communicative activities with the Internet and software develop learners' knowledge of and proficiency in the target language? Do song-based activities enhance learners' cognitive and social development, as well as the comprehension of and use of different language skills and communicative modes in the target language?
4. Do learners acquire insight into the perspectives, practices, and products of the target culture through songs combined with the Internet and software?
5. Does the use of songs with the Internet and software contribute to the creation of a meaningful learner-centered community of language learners in the classroom? Does language practice and learning with songs and technology contribute to the learners' enjoyment of the target language and the learning process in the classroom?

The incorporation of a variety of songs and related curricular song-based materials and activities with Internet resources and various types of educational software programs into classroom practices can make language learning an invaluable educational experience leading to an individual's growth as a language learner. It can introduce meaningful context and content, bring exciting practice and thoughtful focus on language learning theories, and integrate authentic and multi-sensory materials and related activities into the classroom. It can also lead students to an increased interest in foreign language study and foster an appreciation of other cultures and languages.

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# Appendix

## Internet Resources

Internet Sites Dedicated to Song Lyrics:

<http://www.metrolyrics.com/>

<http://www.mp3lyrics.org/>

Internet Sites Dedicated to French Songs:

[http://french.about.com/od/music/French\\_and\\_Francophone\\_Music.htm](http://french.about.com/od/music/French_and_Francophone_Music.htm)

<http://www.paroles-musique.com/>

<http://www.utm.edu/staff/gjobeg/atelmusique.shtml>

<http://www.geocities.com/foursov/>

<http://people.southwestern.edu/~prevots/songs/>

<http://www.mamalisa.com/?t=el&lang=French>

<http://platea.pntic.mec.es/~cvera/ressources/recurfr9.htm>

Internet Sites with Video Resources (in French):

<http://beta.dailymotion.com/fr>

<http://www.tv5.org/>

Internet Sites Dedicated to:

Jacques Brel:

<http://www.jacquesbrel.be/index2.cfm?lg=EN> (official site)

<http://www.artistdirect.com/nad/music/artist/card/0,,407793,00.html> (biography, songs, movies, links)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques\\_Brel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Brel) (an article in English)

[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques\\_Brel](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Brel) (an article in French)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PPBE75O9tkU> (*Le plat pays* ["The Flat Country"])

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=blaeGVpcXrA&feature=related> (*Les Flamandes* ["Flemish Women"]) with English subtitles)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-I5HLa5-cDM&feature=related> (an interview in French)

Khaled:

<http://khaled-lesite.artistes.universalmusic.fr/> (official site)

<http://www.khaledmania.com/> (biography, discography, audio, video, fan forum)

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Cheb-Khaled-King-Of-Ray/10995698427> (Facebook)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khaled\\_\(musician\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khaled_(musician)) (an article in English)

[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheb\\_Khaled](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheb_Khaled) (an article in French)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ilyyPsqRweE> ("Aïcha")

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXMoUDa8pbM&feature=related> ("Aïcha" with subtitles)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DatdLyV68fY&feature=related> ("Aïcha" with a role-play)

#### Mes Aïeux :

<http://mesaieux.qc.ca/flash/> (official site)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mes\\_A%C3%AFeux](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mes_A%C3%AFeux) (an article in English)  
[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mes\\_A%C3%AFeux](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mes_A%C3%AFeux) (an article in French)  
<http://fr-fr.facebook.com/pages/Mes-Aieux/37599710088> (Facebook)  
<http://www.myspace.com/mesaieux> (MySpace)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9UYaWVOarM> (*Dégénération/réel du fossé*  
[“Degeneration/Reality of the Ditch”])  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crDWEhaWJWU> (“*Train de vie*” [A way of life])

#### Yves Montand:

<http://www.yvesmontand.com/index.html> (biography, music, films, links)  
[http://filmsdefrance.com/FDF\\_ymontand.html](http://filmsdefrance.com/FDF_ymontand.html) (biography and films)  
[http://www.rfimusique.com/siteen/biographie/biographie\\_6043.asp](http://www.rfimusique.com/siteen/biographie/biographie_6043.asp) (biography)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yves\\_Montand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yves_Montand) (an article in English)  
[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yves\\_Montand](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yves_Montand) (an article in French)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPpxxZSskkw&feature=Playlist&p=EE143DADFIDEI3E0&playnext=1&index=22> (“*Sous le ciel de Paris*” [“Under the sky of Paris”])  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMoLn-NT-NA&feature=related> (*C'est si bon*  
[“It Is So Good”])  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0do-UYWZKoY&feature=related> (*À Paris* [“In Paris”])  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWnn8bylHJM> (an interview in French)

#### Zachary Richard:

<http://www.zacharyrichard.com/> (official site)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zachary\\_Richard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zachary_Richard) (an article in English)  
[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zachary\\_Richard](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zachary_Richard) (an article in French)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJfaxymQd3A&feature=related> (*La maudite guerre*  
[“The Damned War”] with the lyrics)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DvuQjOo9xs&feature=related> (an interview in  
French and *La maudite guerre* without the lyrics)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vC7i9KoWrV4&feature=related> (“*Réveille*”  
[Wake Up])