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The Pros and Cons of Using Pop Music in English Primary-Level Lessons

Výhody a nevýhody používání populání hudby při výuce angličtiny na základních školách

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Anotace

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Klíčová slova: populární hudba, hudební psychologie, výuka angličtiny jako cizího jazyka (T.E.F.L.), píseň, text, gramatika, slovní zásoba, výslovnost.

Tato bakalářská práce je zaměřena na metodu učení angličtiny pomocí hudby a populárních písní. Popisuje tuto metodu a posuzuje její výhody a nevýhody. V teoretické části se zaměřuje na akademické texty vysvětlující a pojednávající na toto téma. V praktické části představuje vlastní výzkum provedený autorem této práce, který studuje rozšíření dané metody na českých školách a názory učitelů. V závěru se autor zamýšlí nad tím, zda je tato metoda užitečná a efektivní a zda by měla být na školách při výuce dětí používána.

Abstract

DOKULIL, A. 2013. The Pros and Cons of Using Pop Music in English Primary-Level Lessons České Budějovice. Bachelor thesis. The University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice. Pedagogical Faculty. The English Department. Supervisor Regina Helal, M.A

Key words: pop-music, music psychology, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, song, lyrics, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation.

This work focuses on methods of learning English through music and lyrics of popular songs. It explains the method and describes its advantages and disadvantages. In its theoretical part, it looks at academic writings explaining and critiquing this approach. In its practical part, it includes the author's own research on the extent this method is practiced at Czech primary schools and on the teachers's attitudes to it. The author attempts to conclude whether this method can be effective and whether it should be used in teaching children English.

1. **Introduction**

This bachelor thesis deals with the practice of teaching English through pop-songs, which has already become a favorite method in many schools all over the world. However, to apply this method effectively, every teacher should know several basic rules and tips. My purpose was to write a thesis which could also work as a guide incorporating useful advice. Due to my specialization, I will mainly focus on pupils in the second grade of primary schools and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (known also as TEFL Classes).

In the theoretical part, I have summarized the definitions and facts concerning this method, answering questions like: What is this method about and how is application of pop-music different from standard methods of teaching a language? What are its advantages and disadvantages? What components of language can be taught through pop-songs? How should teachers work with them? What should teachers be aware of? Where can they search for inspiration?

In the practical part, I have described my personal research done among both pupils and teachers in the second grade of a primary school. I have applied the method in my lessons, tried to find out the feedback, and measured its effectiveness.

Music is a branch I have been dealing with many years, so it was the reason why I chose this topic. I have been singing and playing the piano approximately for fifteen years, I have also been teaching music and I am a member of three musical bands and projects. I am also concerned with music production and making music for commercial purpose, which is closely related to music psychology. Therefore I am very grateful that I could choose such topic for my bachelor thesis and focus on the field that is familiar to me.

THEORETICAL PART

2. Definitions

Teaching English as a Foreign Language through pop-songs is currently a popular method which can boost routine and 'boring' lessons, if used properly. It is quite an extensive topic to write about and discuss. Despite its increasing popularity, there has been published just a couple books dealing with this issue, and few are available on the Czech market. However, in specialized libraries there are several older titles available, so teachers can search there for some instructions, tips and inspiration. In this thesis, I will mainly focus on "Music and Song" by Tim Murphey which contains plenty of facts, advice and also some practical examples and methods concerning teaching through songs.

For better comprehension of the whole content, we have to separately define the following terms: *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*, a *pop-song*.

2.1. Teaching English as a Foreign Language

According to many books, online dictionaries and definitions, Teaching English as a Foreign Language is an international term which stands for teaching students whose mother-tongue is not English and who are not direct users of English.[1]

This implies that such students have to immerse themselves in language artificially via lessons at school, special courses or via multimedia. In ideal cases the teacher should be a native speaker from an English-speaking country (i.e. Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, etc.), but this is not a strict rule. In contrast to TEFL, we can also meet TESL, Teaching English as a Second language, a term applied to teaching English in countries where English is dominant, but is not the first language (e.g. in India, Uganda, etc.). There are many organizations all over the world providing certifications and license to instructors and teachers interested in these methods. The Czech Republic is sort of a country where English is studied according to principles of TEFL and that is a reason why I will focus on this way.[2]

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[1] (Editors of TEFL & TESOL Training 2010)
[2] (Hubbard 1994, p. 1-2), (Beare 2012)

2.2. Pop-Songs and Pop Music

Pop-songs are elements of popular music, which can be briefly characterized by the following definition:

> *Popular music can generally be defined as "commercially mass produced music for a mass market" (Roy Shuker: Understanding Popular Music 2001), and most modern pop music derives from musical styles that first became popular in the 1950s. However, this definition does not address the part that popular music plays in reflecting and expressing popular culture, nor its socio-economic role, nor the fact that much of popular music does not make a profit nor does it effectively reach a mass market. It cannot easily be defined in musical terms, as it encompasses such a wide range of rhythms, instruments, vocal and recording styles.*[3]

3. Music - Its Development and Relationship to Psychology

3.1. History of Music

As scientists and musicologists have asserted many times, both spoken communication and music have been a part of human history since the first humans began to live in tribes and were developed hand in hand. Music also had a magic function and was used as part of religious rituals. Before the first marks of recognizable melody appeared, music was mostly represented by cycled rhythmical patterns. Subsequently, plenty of musical instruments were found − pipes made of bones and wood, string and percussive instruments and many others − which laid the foundations for development of instruments as we know them presently. In the Middle Ages monophonic concepts were replaced by polyphony which later led to formation of classical music, especially symphonies and symphonic music. Master composers are still well-known, e.g. Beethoven, Mozart, Dvorak, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, etc.[4]

3.2. Music in Every Day Lives

Music, particularly pop music, currently plays an extensive part in everyday life of our globalized culture. Billions of people, especially teenagers and adolescents, are surrounded with music on TV, radio, on the Internet, in films, public transport, at public places as pubs, bars, clubs, restaurants, during culture events, etc. Such music is also an important component of commercials and spots. It is undoubtedly because of its impact, that the psychology of music is

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[3] (Wilson 2011)
[4] (Schnierer 2007)

an extensive branch of psychology dealing with music's impact on health, mood and internal state.

Murphy (2009, 9-10) listed what people usually do with songs in their everyday life. They do not have to be active musicians − they do not necessarily have to play musical instruments or study music. Despite that, everybody listens to music and songs, many of them sing, hum, whistle, tap and snap fingers while they listen to them, which usually makes them less nervous. It is a secondary activity during work or waiting.

A similar phenomenon, according to Murphy and also to Franěk, is called 'background furnishing' which means the use of songs and music to set or change an atmosphere or mood. In research studies, one led by Oldham in 1995 and one led by Lesiuk in 2005, it was proven that music can positively influence people during their work, mainly during manual and routine activities. When people had permission to listen to the music of their choice, they achieved better productivity and they were more positively tuned. The subsequent absence of music revealed in depressions and high levels of stress. This implies that listening to the music can be partially addictive.[5]

Background furnishing is an increasing trend among catering industry. Their owners create such environment in their restaurants to put their customers at ease so that they would feel more relaxed and opened to talk without fear of unpleasant and annoying people all around. People also use music as a social topic for conversation − they discuss songs, lyrics, the singers or the groups, and also video clips. If they are interested, they read about the production, performance, effect, producers, and authors of music and song. *'We also use music and song to make internal associations with the people, places, and times in our lives, so they become the personal soundtrack of our lives'.* [6]

This phenomenon has been known since music composer Hector Berlioz released his Fantastic Symphony (first performed in Paris, 1830). During the symphony there occurred several motives (short impressive melody or rhythmical pattern) that were repeated several times throughout the symphony. These motives were so-called 'leitmotiv' or 'ideé fixe'. Each of these short melodies represented and introduced one of the characters. They were used as a part of musical utterance. Later it became an essential mean of artistic expression.[7] Presently, we can notice similar

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[5] (Franěk 2009, p. 200-201)
[6] (Murphey 2008, p. 9-10)
[7] (Schnierer 2007, p. 143-144)

phenomenon in motion pictures in films (James Horner's Titanic, John Williams' Jaws), in musicals (Andrew Lloyd Webber's Phantom of the Opera, Jesus Christ Superstar) in commercial spots and in jingles of TV programmes and TV series.

3.3. Music and Emotions

Scientists, teachers, psychiatrists, psychologists and musicians confirm the fact that music emotionally influences its listeners and operators. According to Franěk, it can be detectable through physiological reactions which people cannot control because they occur automatically and subconsciously, e.g. skin electrical response, muscle tension, changes of respiration rate and blood pressure. Modern neurochemistry explores the relationship between music and neural system, especially changes of endorphin and cortisol levels.

Franěk also writes about a phenomenon studied by Meyer and Narmour, which is called *'musical anticipation*'. It depends on gained knowledge and experience of every individual. While listening to music, people are anticipating some changes and elements that may probably come after. Emotional reaction is brought when their anticipation is confirmed or disproved. However, in both cases, the reaction can be positive or negative.

When we consider emotions, most musical factors are bipolar - they have positive or negative impact on people's minds. Articulation can be expressed by staccato (shorted and detached notes or melody) or legato (smooth and connected notes or melody). Staccato evokes positive emotions, energy, activity, fear and anger. On the other hand, legato evokes melancholy, softness, smoothness and festiveness. Another factor is harmony (chord order) and intervals of melody. When harmony is simple and consonant, it evokes positivity, happiness, dignity and seriousness, but when it is more complex and dissonant, it brings negative feelings, such as fear, thrill, energy and unpleasantness. Other components of music work on similar principles, e.g. loud × calm music, wide × narrow melodic range, ascending × descending melody, major × minor tonality, high × low tone height, regular × irregular rhythm, quick × slow tempo, etc.)[8]

The following brief quotation also deals with the importance of music during the process of growing up:

> *Music is an integral part of life in adolescence and its importance is partly related to the developmental tasks of adolescence. The perspective is typically psychological in the sense that the reasons for exercising music are considered to be internal. Musical*

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[8] (Franěk 2009, p. 170-186; Severance 2008)

behavior is considered as a goal-oriented activity of the psyche, and adolescents are seen as active agents who engage in music to satisfy psychological needs. The underlying assumption is that by satisfying these needs, musical activities may contribute to adolescent development, health, and quality of life.[9]

The following extract explains the principles of combining music and language from a neurobiological point of view:

The left hemisphere of the brain expresses thoughts in words, while the right hemisphere of the brain controls actions, problem resolution, memory, and emotions. Most learners use the right hemisphere of the brain to process music, and since most instruction relies heavily on left brain approaches, music opens an opportunity to learners who have a strong right brain orientation. As Guglielmino (1986) states, "Songs bridge the hemispheres, strengthening retention through a complementary function as the right hemisphere learns the melody, the left the words". That connecting bridge also mentioned by Claerr and Gargan (1984), who propose music's benefit as relaxing and motivating, a natural bridge between native and foreign languages, motivating students to increase language practice.[10]

4. The Contribution of Music to English-Language Lessons and the Advantages:

While traditional methods of teaching English are very similar to methods used in any other school subject, music can bring another dimension in comparison with spoken word. In accordance to relation to psychology, music placement into English lessons can emotionally enhance the learning process.

Working with pop-songs is quite a flexible activity. There are no strict instructions on how long this activity should be, whether the pupils should work individually, in pairs or in groups, or how frequently should a language be taught through this method. In recent years many teachers have complained about the lack of children's concentration and this may be one of the ways how to attract their attention. While enjoying and listening to the song, they can relax and forget about their worries. The tension and stress that they often feel during a class is released. The teachers can thus relax and train the pupils' vocal cords, and that it is beneficial for both sides. If the activity is well-done, the pupils are positively attuned for the following lessons and quite possibly for the rest of the day.

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[9] (Lipscomb 2004)
[10] (Salcedo 2002, 43-44)

According to educational theories, one of the basic principles for successful following a new curriculum long term is its repetitive revision. In every pop-song there is at least one part that occurs in the song several times - mostly called *chorus* or *refrain*, which can be usually found there three or more times. And popularity of repeating is still growing. Plenty of songs currently contain also *verses* which are at least partially repeated.

Lukasz Gottwald (known as Dr. Luke) is worldwide one of the most successful music producers of the last six years. Recently, while giving an interview, he also mentioned another phenomenon, which he called "the king's speech" - stuttering of a word pattern, a single word or just a single syllable and its repeating several times. It is almost identical with anaphora, epistrophe or epizeuxis in poetry. As a consequence, the song is even more memorable.[11] In the 'Appendix J' you can find a few brief examples.

Another advantage is the possibility of individual revision outside class time because almost every song is available on the Internet. Singers and music bands are idols for the vast majority of teenagers and so this may be a way to combine work with pleasure. It is likely that they will voluntarily search for songs on their own. On YouTube there are lots of video versions of the songs for free and many include the lyrics too. If a pupil finds any song interesting, he or she can sing along and for the more musically-oriented ones there are karaoke-instrumental versions without leading vocal track, so they can sing alone.

5. Possible Disadvantages of Teaching English Through Pop Songs

Of course, using pop-songs in language lessons may also bring some trouble. If teachers follow several essential rules, however, there is a high probability that this method will work properly. At first, they should be careful when they look for a suitable song. When they make light of selection, they may easily fail, so children will get bored and they will not enjoy the song at all. The teachers should also possess a sense of constant observation of mood in the class, so when the children give evident signals of dissatisfaction, the teachers should not prolong this activity and switch into another tasks.

I had experienced using this method as a pupil several times while attending the primary school. Sometimes, and especially before Christmas, our teacher prepared season-oriented interesting songs. Everything was almost perfect, however, he usually had to face significant revulsion. In

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[11] (ABC News 2011)

my opinion, he always made the same mistake. He ordered his pupils to sing loudly and clearly and that was probably his main reason for introducing this activity. Most of teenagers though are sensitive, bashful, and they refused to express themselves so loudly. The teachers should not force the students to sing. They should rather be content with the fact that pupils follow the lyrics or try to fill in the missing words.

I also met with another situation. At high school, our teacher could work with pop-songs very well, so she faced the opposite problem. This activity was so popular that she had to permanently ignore students' requests to bring other songs into the class. Otherwise, she would not have managed to follow the syllabus prescribed by school authorities. To make a compromise, she made her own rules and brought the songs into the lessons only as a reward for exemplary accomplishment in all homework and tests given.

Almost in all public schools in the Czech Republic, as in other states belonging to the European Union, there are no difficulties in working with modern multi-media and using the latest technologies. Almost every language class has been equipped with CD or MP3 player and lots of them contain also smart boards and computers, where teachers can connect to the Internet and project videos and content of websites. In such conditions, using songs in lessons is expected and quite easy to apply. However, there are many places in the world where the schools cannot afford to equip any class with such technology. In less-developed countries, especially in Africa, there are many parts where schools are not even able to use electricity. So one of the disadvantages of this method is that it cannot be run in every class worldwide because it depends on necessary technical facilities.

Another requirement is teachers' abilities. The relation between teachers' age and capabilities does not have to be strictly determining, but there is evident rule. Generally, the teachers of lower age are more willing to use modern technologies and their attitude to computers and players is more positive. They are in close touch with trends and pop-music charts, so they can choose appropriate songs according to the students' taste more easily. In contrast to them, there are lots of teachers over the age of fifty. There is no doubt that they are rich in experience. However, as I have met several times through my studies, these teachers are more conservative about using any sort of modern technology. It is simply due to the fact that there was not any appliances, neither computers or the internet in time when they were younger and more opened to new inventions. These teachers usually do not follow the trends and do not seek for latest pop-hits, so they are incapable of choosing appropriate songs which their pupils might like. For some

of them, this method can be exhausting or disturbing, some of them may suspect derision from the pupils, so they do not use songs to avoid negative expectations.

6. Components of Language that Can Be Taught through Pop-Song Method

There is huge amount of phenomena that can be taught through songs. If the teachers are creative and already experienced, they probably develop a sense for choosing suitable songs which may be effective to teach the actually discussed or taught phenomenon. The songs can be focused on new vocabulary, pronunciation, stress in multiple syllable words, grammar, and territorial differences, which may include accents, differences in vocabulary, etc.

6.1. Vocabulary

Learning new vocabulary is probably one of the most frequent purposes of the song method. According to the editors of One Language, there can be several ways how to work with new words. For the beginners, usually young children, there is the benefit in perceiving the words not only through listening and singing, but also to express themselves by integrating the whole body - e.g. when there occur words as eyes, nose, head, the children can point to the pronounced body part or even touch it.[12] These techniques are also described in Murphy's publication[13] in the chapter 'With Young Children'. Such songs are defined as TPR (Total Physical Response) songs or action songs. He even categorizes these songs on the basis of their function and the studied purpose. For older students and for teaching complicated vocabulary, where many abstract words and phrases usually occur, it is better to do listening with less motoric activity. Remembering new words is even more simple when the word is repeated several times or when it is somehow different or catchy, e.g. by some rhythmical elements intensified by musical features.[14]

6.2. Pronunciation and Stress In Multiple Syllable Words

Pronunciation is one of the language features obviously learned from spoken words and therefore conceivably also from the songs. Ebong and Sabbadini assert that 'songs provide examples of authentic, memorable and rhythmic language. They can be motivating for students

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[12] (One Language 2010)
[13] (Murphey 2008, p. 121-133)
[14] (Lynch 2009)

keen to repeatedly listen to and imitate their musical heroes.'[15] Later they offer three main approaches to work with the songs − to focus on sounds, to focus on words or to focus on connected speech. The first approach is focused on similarities and differences of vowels and consonants. Activities can be based on categorizing occurring words into groups with similar sounds, e.g. talk, walk, New York. The second approach is focused on words and also on stress, because words are compound of stressed and weak syllables, which altogether give the words their meanings. Ebong and Sabbadini on the website of British Council explain this through the following points:

- *Words in songs fit the music, helping learners associate the number of syllables / stress in these words, with memorable rhythms.*

- *The relaxed atmosphere songs create can expose students to this difficult pronunciation area, without their realizing.*

- *Songs contain endless examples of weak syllables, helping to convince learners of the way English is pronounced.*

This may include some activities, e.g. pupils guess the number of syllables in multiple-syllable words and then they underline the stressed syllable during the listening. The third approach focuses on connected speech, including phrases and compositions. When pupils learn or memorize new words, they learn them as separate units. However, in speech there are several differences and deviations − not all of words carry the same weight, some sounds are even suppressed or muted. Many sets of words may blend into sounds, which may resemble entirely different words. These are phenomena that could be hardly taught through written form of language. Similar ideas and opinions are also mentioned byMurphey in his book Music and Song.[16]

6.3. Grammar

There are plenty of grammatical phenomena which can be taught through music - tenses, prepositions, numbers, pronouns, comparative and superlative forms of adjectives, conditionals and many more. Especially, in the section 'Where Can The Teachers Search for Inspiration?' I am presenting more sources, which are concerned with these particular phenomena and also equipped with searching engines and filters for finding suitable songs (see more in 'Appendix K').

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[15] (Ebong and Sabbadini 2006)
[16] (Murphey 2008)

In my opinion, every teacher should be able to determine what the songs are suitable for and if they can be beneficial.

However, sometimes there can be a conflict in language accuracy. It has something to do with stylistic or territorial differences. Czech schools, like many other countries across Europe, teach the British version of English, including British spelling (*theatre* instead of *theater*), vocabulary (*underground* instead of *subway*) tenses and phrases (*haven't got* instead of *don't have*) or expressions of colloquial speech (*gonna* instead of *going to*), etc. Teachers should take this fact into consideration when they select the song, and if they meet such phenomena, they should immediately notify the pupils of the non-British or non-standard terms that they are not in accordance with the version of English taught in the course of time. I must say that I was often confused with what I had experienced in the lyrics. Unfortunately, many teachers did not pay attention to these phenomena enough.

6.4. Stylistic or Territorial Differences

There is nothing special about the fact that the language of pop songs is hard to define unambiguously. We can usually determine their origin − experienced people can identify whether the song is written in American, British, Australian English, etc. However, many songs are written by non-native English speakers, who sing in mixed international kind of English. So it is always good to search for some information about the artist. We can also find many stylistic differences among the songs - some are written like poetry, some songs are in colloquial language, some in slang, in archaic language, and so on. Murphey (2008, 84) mentions several features and makes references to example songs; here are some:

- ***Poetic***
  "Hello darkness, my old friend" (Paul Simon) - personification
  "For long you live and high you fly,
  And smiles you'll give and tears you'll cry" (Pink Floyd) - inversion

- ***Colloquial***
  "Take it easy" (Eagles)
  "It is anybody's ballgame, it is everybody's fight." (John Prine)

- ***Archaic***

"There's an iron train a-travellin'

That's been a-rollin' through the years. (Bob Dylan)

- ***Slang and non-standard English***

"I'm bad" (Michael Jackson)

"Feelin' Groovy" (Paul Simon)

"You ain't nothing but a hound dog" (Elvis Presley) - ain't, double negative

7. Criteria For Choosing Appropriate Songs

When teachers plan to use the "pop-song" method, they should be selective about appropriate tracks. There are several rules, which every teacher should respect, otherwise this method can impact students negatively and even immorally. Briefly highlighted, every song should be positive, comprehensible, and morally and linguistically uncontroversial.

7.1. Positiveness of Music and Lyrics

In education, positive approach is crucial. When pupils or students are motivated positively, they are able to process new information much faster. This is a proven general rule and it is even more important to take it into account in the contemporary world where plenty of negative news and events surrounds us on every step. Music, even instrumental music without lyrics, affects the listeners through its timbre, tempo, tonality, melody, harmony and also through contrast in dynamics.[17] In classical music (symphonies, operas, sonatas and many more), there are plenty means of expression. This is the genre that the most publications about music psychology are about. In pop-songs, harmony is an essential feature to determine whether a song is rather positive or negative.

The major key and dominance of major chords evoke positive and optimistic emotions and feelings, e.g. Mamma Mia by ABBA, What Makes You Beautiful by One Direction or Call Me Maybe by Carly Rae Jepsen, etc. Such songs are from emotional aspect absolutely proper to be used. In contrast to that, there are many songs written in minor scale. Such songs usually bring negative emotions, so they are not very suitable due to its pessimistic tonality - e.g. Hurt by Christina Aguilera, Sweat by David Guetta feat. Snoop Dogg, etc. Tempo, another music aspect, can emotionally influence the listeners. It is measured in BPM (beats per minute). The songs

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[17] (Franěk 2009)

below BPM=70 can be labeled as relaxing and too slow, which reduces an ability to concentrate and can make pupils tired, even though outside the class they are undoubtedly worth listening (e.g. Everytime by Britney Spears). On the other hand, the songs above BPM=140 are labeled as too fast and can have a disruptive impact. They also may arouse aggression among pupils (e.g. The Kids Aren't Alright by The Offspring). The ideal tempo for educational purpose is approximately from BPM=090 to BPM=130. Fortunately, most popular songs belong to this group.

Music usually goes hand in hand with lyrics, which can often be obvious and predictable just from the title of the song or just from the first few seconds of the song. Teachers should eliminate songs with negative messages involving death, violence, pain, war, apocalypse, infidelity, crime, religion, hatred or despair. These topics surround us everyday in media, film and TV series and it is wise not to remind students of them. However, sometimes songs deal with current events and illustrate personal opinions of their artists, which can act afterwards as useful stimulus for subsequent discussion - e.g. Dear Mr. President by Pink.[18]

7.2.   Comprehensibility

Teachers should always consider age and language skills of their pupils. If grammar and vocabulary of a song is too easy, the activity may probably be boring and purposeless. On the other hand, if lyrics are too complicated, the pupils will easily get lost and may feel discouraged. Their self-confidence may deteriorate, so they may become reluctant to participate in similar activity next time. In ideal cases, the lyrics supplement curriculum and help to understand phenomenon actually discussed.

Even when an optimistic song of middle tempo, grammatically suitable for children is chosen, it does not necessarily lead to success. It must be comprehensible not only within a language, but also within an overall content. According to Fleming, teachers should avoid songs containing complicated lyrics, too abstract and poetic expressions, which cannot be clearly explained. Children of age between 11-15 are probably not ready to identify and comprehend complicated irony or satiric depictions; they may be able to understand such words separately and translate them into Czech; however, the lyrics are confusing and hard to understand as a whole. Religious, political and similar controversial issues are rather unsuitable without supplementary discussion. However, the songs can help with their depiction and can work as a complementary evidence.

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[18] (Hadland 2012; Douglas 1987, p. 37-42)

Naturally, teachers' competences of dealing these problematic issues are essential. Undemanding, more ideal lyrics concern teenagers' problems, dating boys and girls, first relationships, Christmas, summer, holiday and also geographic and culture knowledge.[19] For example, The Empire State of Mind by Alicia Keys is rich in vocabulary connected to New York City, it gives a detailed description of the city and its grammar is not very difficult. It is a great example of linking up the scope of English subject and language with musical lyrics (see Appendix J).

Teachers should also avoid songs with high density of text. This is typical for hip hop and rap music. For example, Super Bass by Nicki Minaj or songs interpreted by Pitbull can be impressive, catchy and admirable, yet most students might not be able to follow the printed lyrics while listening to the track.

7.3. Moral Harmlessness

In the last few decades moral boundaries across globalized society have been liberalized. What was immoral and obscene twenty years ago, has become natural and ordinary. Due to the expansion of media and the Internet, every consumer and user, even a little child, is very close to content that should be approachable only to adults over eighteen years old. Sexual issues and abusive vocabulary has reached pop-music industry and become absolutely common and popular. Such lyrics are not censored because its separate elements, words, are proper.[20] The writers defend their pieces successfully by arguments that evident ambiguity of the lyrics was not purposeful and it is just figment of listeners' imagination. Sometimes a song, sounding innocent and serious, is degraded thanks to its music video, where its artist may act immodestly, wearing seductive clothing, or doing things which can almost be marked as pornography. And this is what current trends are like. Teachers therefore have to be very selective. Ali Catterall[21] even claims that he spent five hours seeking for a current appropriate song without any reference to sex, drugs or religion.

Teachers should thus make sure that any song planned to be used in the lessons is in harmony with the prevailing morals and ethics. Sometimes it is obvious, but sometimes the immoral subtext is well-hidden behind metaphors and symbols. A very interesting example of that is a song called "If You Seek Amy" by Britney Spears. Except for some references to smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol, the content seems to be innocent. However, after thorough

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[19] (Fleming 2007)
[20] (Greitemeyer 2009)
[21] (Catterall 2005)

analysis, the title of the song itself, if pronounced, contains a play on words - politely expressed, it informs the listeners about having intercourse with the singer.[22] And this slogan occurs in the song several times as a part of the chorus - see Appendix J.

No matter how popular the single has been - there is another example when an absolute hit, which reached the top positions in the charts all over the world, is greatly inappropriate to appear in any lesson. Even if we cannot find any unsuitable words, the intended sense is apparent. Teachers should be strict and not allow such songs to be listened to, even if the entire class had begged for it - see the extract from 'Rude Boy' in Appendix J.

Elimination of songs where impolite words occur is a matter of course. Obviously, teachers should not work with songs containing expressions like *fuck, motherfucker, bitch, dick, suck, blow* at all.

To prevent the use of inappropriate lyrics, teachers should rather use more "classical" songs from previous decades, when the writers had seemingly respected moral boundaries. Lyrics by The Beatles, Sting, ABBA or Michael Jackson are much more applicable.[23]

7.4. Language Accuracy and Origin

In the present globalized world, most singers and bands desire to make an international breakthrough, so they want to sound "supra-nationally" and English is essential necessity to impress the masses. There are thousands of artists with e.g. of German, French, Czech, Indian, Japanese origin singing in English. If the teachers are native English speakers, they can recognize immediately the grammatical mistakes and affective, unnatural accent that such songs are rich in. But if the teacher is native Czech, they will probably overlook these slight mistakes. That is why he or she should find some basic information about the artists and use rather songs sung by English native speakers.

8. **Where Can Teachers Search for Inspiration?**

For beginning teachers, there are of plenty sources where they can find tips and song activities already prepared. Even experienced teachers can save their time and energy due to present-day multimedia technology.

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[22] (Lamb 2010)
[23] (Media Smarts 2012)

Undoubtedly, the richest and the most available source is the Internet. When you put key words into Google browser, such as 'teaching English through songs' or 'songs in English class', there appear thousands of results. Many of them are websites containing theoretical tips and knowledge. Some of them are also well developed and structured into user-friendly categories of songs. Besides just the mere list of song titles and lyrics, there are also exercises and detailed instructions how to work with them, so the teachers do not have to be specially creative or talented. Thanks to these sources, they can arrange great and funny English lessons in hand with music. However, some websites offer only paid content, so every individual has to decide whether it is worth paying. In 'Appenix K' I summarized few example sites and tips.

The lyrics and exercises is not everything we need. Another duty is to have audio tracks. In present days, we are pretty advantaged in comparison to times twenty years back. We do not have wait an eternity until the songs reach our country and we do not have to strenuously search for them in tape rental libraries, among friends and their relatives or paying extortionate prices in tape and CD stores. Almost all music is available on video server YouTube[24], and it is absolutely free. If the classroom is equipped with computer connectable to the Internet and loudspeakers with sufficient performance, there are no other obstacles. Another way is to buy audio online. The most extended is iTunes - an application, where users can buy music online. The songs are not for free, but it is a legal way to download music. The prices are mostly around € 0.99 per track. On some of websites mentioned above, there are audio tracks already available directly on pages.

9. Song Analysis and How to Work with It

There are thousands of songs, which are usable for teaching English. Naturally, when teachers search for the song, they should follow the rules mentioned in the part "Criteria For Choosing Appropriate Songs". We can find many similarities in genre, tempo, melody, purpose, grammar and the language layer of the lyrics, but above all, every song is unique. So there is no simple and uniform rule, how to work with the song. If a teacher is creative, there are no limits in discovering new activities and exercises. Other teachers might find several proven methods in books and on the Web. The following techniques occur in the sources named in the previous chapter.

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[24] http://www.youtube.com/

One of the most used methods is making gaps. The task is to fill them while listening It is an applicable method to teach or revise vocabulary. It is good to put the words in the box above the lyrics, so the pupils can choose the proper word. For advanced pupils, the box can be missing.

Another technique is to cut the lyrics into pieces - per rows or rhymes. The task is to put them in the correct order. This activity is suitable even for working in pair or in groups of three or four pupils.

Handouts can also contain additional questions. The purpose is the same as while doing the regular listening - to find out, whether the lyrics are comprehensive and whether pupils understand them. The questions can be primarily formed on principles of *yes* or *no*, *true* or *false*, or naming items.

There can also occur tasks such as underlining. It can be focused on any specific grammar, e.g. underline all plural forms, underline all adjectives, underline words forming present perfect, etc.

While correcting the answers, the song can be collectively translated to mother tongue. If the pupils are told to speak and translate on their own instead of the teacher, it can be beneficial even more.

Cross[25] mentions a method called "disappearing texts", which is suitable for songs of shorter range. Teacher writes the whole lyrics on blackboard and then he lets pupils sing. Before they start singing again, the teacher erases some of the words. This can be repeated until the lyrics have been completely wiped off.

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[25] (Cross 1991, 166)

PRACTICAL PART

10.   Introduction to the Practical Part

In the theoretical part, I collected and quoted ample amount of thoughts and opinions of educators and researchers focused on music and learning English. The main purpose of the practical part was to test the pop-song method in classes of primary schools in the South Bohemia. My motive was to compare the theory and reality − specifically, whether the opinions mentioned in the sources are applicable and efficient. I decided to make a lesson containing a pop-song method based on the rules and tips that I was concerned in the theoretical part.

As a students, I had experienced many lessons containing music or work with songs and carols. I can remember several interesting lessons and also a few boring lessons which were almost pointless. For us, the students, it was quite easy to express our dissatisfaction with the song or tasks given. However, this time I wanted to stand on the opposite side and test the activity as a teacher. Fortunately, I have already experienced three years of working as a part-time teacher. I have been teaching singing and playing the piano for several private schools across the region. The youngest children have been in the age of five, but there have even been some adults over fifty. The largest group of students has been between eight and fifteen years old which is the same age as the age of the pupils researched for this bachelor thesis. Due to this opportunity, I have learnt the way how to deal with people of almost any age, especially with teenagers, the target group of my research. However, there was a difference in the number of students per class, while in my music classes there were usually only four or five members per class. It was clear that there would be many more pupils in the classes researched. My purpose was to test the pupils of four classes, so I supposed that there would be around a hundred teenagers. And that was the reason why I felt a bit nervous. I knew that only one student unwilling to cooperate could ruin my lesson and my work prepared for the class.

To get more detailed information, it was decided to include some extra parts of my research, not only a mere activity with the lyrics and the song and focus on teachers' and pupils' opinions and their attitudes in relation to my topic. It consists of two parts - interviews with the teachers and a questionnaire spread among the pupils. The teachers approached had been working with this method, according to my knowledge. The purpose was to find out how much they like it, how often they use it, how they choose songs, how they work with them, etc. I chose three teachers of different ages to compare their attitudes, whether there are any differences between them and

whether the age of the teachers can be somehow determining. Later I visited their classes – three in Pisek and one in Ceske Budejovice. Altogether I met one hundred pupils of seventh and eighth grade of primary schools. Firstly, they filled in a brief questionnaire for me, then I proceeded to a practical activity including listening and working with the paper. After that, as a conclusion, I handed them a second questionnaire, where I summed up their opinion and feelings of the previous work. My visit took approximately thirty minutes of their lesson.

11.   Part 1: Interviews

The first step of interactions were the inteviews. My research includes interviews with three teachers – two from Pisek, which is the town where I originally come from, and one from Ceske Budejovice. I prepared some general questions as guidelines which were the same for each teacher. Later I asked for more additional information related to the facts mentioned during the interview. Each interview lasted approximately fifteen minutes.

The youngest teacher interviewed was Tereza. The subsequent interview was with Pavel, who was a few years elder. The eldest was Jan, however he has the least experience with using songs in the English lessons. Here I present the summarized versions of the interviews. The complete versions are in the appendix.

11.1. Interview with Tereza

Tereza is a teacher at Gymnazium Pisek. She has been teaching English and French since 2005 after finishing her studies. She tells about herself that she prefers innovative ways of teaching and her priority is to keep her pupils and students focused and active. She seems to be quite talkative and energetic which, in my opinion, are the essential qualities for every language teacher, however the reality is a little bit different. At the time when I met her, I had already known that she works with songs in her lessons, so my first questions were directed to the details of its frequency and techniques.

She used the song method during the first year of her work. The song activity was the curriculum of the students' book. The vast majority of the pupils accepted the method positively, smiling and trying to sing. Requiring pupils' involvement and activity, she brings some extra songs to the class.

After she had let pupils vote for the song of their taste, she experienced negative behavior, so since that time she has preferred to choose songs of her choice. She brings seasonal songs into

the class, especially during the Christmas. She also searches for songs relating to topics discussed.

In most cases she uses the "gap method", considering pupils' knowledge. For this way she prefers to use words and expressions that the pupils have already known. Another method is to arrange pieces of the lyrics in correct order, which is suitable for working in pairs or groups. Most frequently the pupils have to hear the song twice. After that the class usually goes through group discussion and correct the mistakes. Then she plays the song for another time. Sometimes she brings the song once more into the following lesson.

In her opinion, teaching through songs is quite a favourite method and it can be useful if the teachers do it correctly. She recommends to get inspired on the Web or from experienced teachers. She is in favor of this method.

11.2. Interview with Pavel

Pavel is a teacher in the second grade of primary school in Pisek who has been teaching for fourteen years. He had began teaching English and biology. Presently, he is more oriented on administrative work, however. Although he teaches only few hours a week, he is been widely considered as favourite teacher among pupils. He claims that he is content with the low number of his classes because he can be more concentrated on making preparations and he enjoys teaching without a routine and exhaustion.

Before he started with his work as a teacher, he had got inspired abroad, especially in Denmark and Belgium. The method of using songs was at its beginning at that time. Immediately after he had tested it, using songs became very popular in his classes. As he told, his pupils had been amazed, because it was something new and also entertaining. He prefers work with the songs of his taste and making his own tasks.

For a few reasons he rather does not let the pupils participate in song selection. In his opinion, the situation was better approximately fifteen years ago, in times without the Internet, smartphones and MP3 players. Teachers had to complicatedly search for tape records among friends or on the radio and for the lyrics in magazines or in original booklets, which had its own charm. Now the children can easily access the Internet via smartphones and laptops and they refuse work. As Pavel says: *'Once I told pupils name of the song prepared for the following lesson and they all came prepared with the lyrics printed or saved in their smartphones. [...]*

Since then, I rather not tell them the titles before, and I am always supervising not using their smartphones during the work.'

Pavel chooses songs that he likes himself and that will probably have positive impact on pupils. He avoids using negative songs with immoral content and also mainstream songs by interpreters that can be loathed by many pupils, even though another group might admire them. As controversial interpreters he names British boy band *One Direction*, or American singers as *Justin Bieber* or *Lady Gaga*. He rather searches for songs that are more universal and less fashionable. He has good experience with songs by *Michael Jackson, ABBA, Tina Turner*, etc.

The way he uses this method depends on the type of every song. His purpose is to mix as many miscellaneous activities as possible to make every work task different. Like Tereza, Pavel wants to make connections between the song used and the curriculum. He prefers working in groups. Mostly he plays the song three times − the third time is mentioned for revision.

He states that using songs can be as effective as any other way of teaching process.

11.3. Interview with Jan

Jan is 44 years old and he has been working as a teacher for eighteen years. He originally comes from a village near Prachatice, but he is presently employed in a primary school in Ceske Budejovice. He is a bit different in his mind in comparison to previously interviewed teachers. He has little experience with teaching English through songs, but he is rather on the opposite side. He considers himself as not very musical. He also admits that he experienced this method during his studies, but he never found any significant reason to copy his teachers. I wanted to find out the reasons for his opinions.

Jan started using songs in English lessons in the third or fourth year of his work. The song and the tasks were given in the students' book that their classes had worked with. He has not searched for any extra materials. In his opinion, the activity was not very popular, which may probably be caused by the fact that the class was not aesthetically and musically oriented. However, the response was almost the same later in parallel classes. He mentioned that half of the class had stopped working and concentrating and they had been not willing to participate in the activity. Due to his experience, he calls the pop-song method as a waste of time − he uses it just occasionally, especially before Christmas and summer holiday. During the year, he rather spends time on more important parts of the curriculum.

Used method is mostly filling gaps. He usually plays the song twice and if the children like it, he repeats it for the third time.

He thinks that each teacher is individual, as same as are the pupils. 'If the teachers are musical and they are able to find the way how to do it effectively, I am for it and I wish them the best possible results.

11.4. Conclusion of the Interviews

Among the three utterances of the teachers interviewed there were a few similarities and also differences. Tereza's and Pavel's opinions were quite positive and similar. They both support the song method and they have been using it through their work as English teachers. They make their own exercises, while Tereza tries to combine the topics discussed. Pavel likes choosing proven hits, hoping that they will appeal to his pupils. In contrast to them, Jan is not a typical teacher applying this method very often. He is rather conservative and uses songs occasionally, just when he is required to do it. He considers the song method to be not very beneficial, nor favourite among his classes. He is rather stuck to quite traditional techniques. He is excessively against and should be probably more willing to find new ways because I think that the children enjoy it and that they would positively benefit from this.

As mentioned above, there can be probably some dependence on age. Tereza finished her studies in the times of the Internet and highly-developed technology, so she is definitely more familiar with modern technology and current pop-music. On the other hand, Jan did not. He is eleven years older than Tereza and seems to be a rather conservative teacher who is resistant to modern ways of teaching.

What surprised me was their common opinion on song selection. I expected that they would provide children with wider involvement, e.g. by letting them vote or bringing songs of their taste. I wondered how both teachers and pupils would react to my song activity, if they would like it, and how they would work. In many ways I would agree with Pavel and Tereza − they like variable tasks and combine curriculum with music. My song was focused on cultural and language differences between Britain and America, so I can say that it is definitely suitable for English learning independently on seasons or topics discussed. Moreover, I included the technique of filling gaps, which both Tereza and Pavel called as their favourite, so I hoped that I will get positive reactions.

12. Part 2: Group Activity

12.1. Activity 1: Entrance Questionnaire

Subsequently, classes were observed, which was the most crucial part of the research for me. The children were informed about my presence at the beginning of the lesson. After the first fifteen minutes everything went on schedule. The teachers introduced me in briefly in few sentences and then everything was under my control. The teachers stayed in the class watching quietly my work without any comments during the lesson.

At first, I passed out the first, three-minute questionnaire, which inquired pupils' general experience and opinion on songs in English lessons across their studies. Among the pupils in each class, the answers regarding frequency were quite homogenous.[26]

In most cases, Tereza's pupils mentioned numbers around five. The lowest number was two (occurred once), the highest number was eight (occurred once too). The arithmetic mean of given counts by twenty-five respondendents was 5,04. This approximately matches one song in every two months. Twenty of twenty-five pupils liked the activity, they found it beneficial and sixteen would welcome song activities more often. Five of them find it seasonal, happening mainly before Christmas, and they would experience it more regularly. Two boys who are against the songs mentioned girls' fanatically exaggerated reactions as the reason for their disgust. One boy felt forced into singing.

Statements of Pavel's fifty pupils were quite homogenous too. Arithmetic mean was 7,70 songs per year, which equals approximately one song per a six-week period. None mentioned a number lower than five. Forty-two of them like the activity and thirty eight of them find it beneficial. Forty children would be glad if pop-music would occurred in their lessons more often. Eleven pupils find the exercises made by Pavel original or enjoyable, three boys and three girls think that the songs are too unattractive and outdated. Five pupils with negative attitude said they would probably like it only if they could choose songs on their own. None of the fifty pupils felt forced into singing.

The answers in Jan's group of pupils were considerably different. The arithmetic mean was only 1,86 which is less than one song per half year. Everybody mentioned a number higher than zero, however no one mentioned four or higher. Twenty-three of twenty-five like the method and

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26 Note: For better comprehension entrance and summarizing questionnaires were written in Czech.

would like to do it more often. Nineteen of them named some advantages, why song method could be useful for them, and some also gave brief examples. Some pupils referred to positive experience with their previous English teacher. Nine children affirmed that their teacher had required singing from the class.

12.2. Activity 2: Working with the song

12.2.1. Song selection

Then I moved to the key activity − working with the audio track and the passed handout. I must admit that choosing the trial song was really hard for me because there were thousands of good songs that I would have liked to work with. I searched for a song that would not be very known or overplayed, but catchy, current and beneficial, and also, suitable for pupils, considering their language skills and age. I already received the information that the pupils were between the ages of 13 and 14, they had already been learning for six years and in the teachers' opinion they were quite diligent and co-operative. It occurred to me that I would use the song that I had recently noticed in Pixar's animated film 'The Cars 2'. It is called 'Collision of World' and is performed by British pop-singer Robbie Williams and American country rock singer Brad Paisley. When I heard it for the first time, I was amazed by the major message of the song − it was like a 'duel' based on two territorially different versions of English − British English vs. American English. Generally, the song is grammatically simple, but great for teaching vocabulary. In the chorus both singers sing together. However, in verses and special parts there occur plenty phenomena and expressions compared in close pairs, e.g. president × queen, petrol × gasoline, right lane × left lane, dollars × pounds, etc. The song also includes some words of colloquial or slang language, e.g. cops × bobbies, howdy × cheerio, etc.

12.2.2. Working with handout and audio

In this part, the pupils worked in groups of three or four members. It was the practical and key activity of my visit.

Inspired by many sources, I desired to try and combine some methods presented in books and on websites. I decided to use these four activities:

- assembling lyrics from cut pieces

- filling gaps with missing words

- answering questions

- sorting pictures containing vocabulary

The first two tasks were accomplished simultaneously. Each group got six paper stacks with the lyrics in them. While listening, they were supposed to rearrange them into the correct order. From the beginning it seemed to be quite an easy activity and finally it really was. Filling gaps with missing words was a bit more difficult. I had browsed a few English students' text books to find out the vocabulary that the pupils might possess. And I must say that I was quite successful. All the pupils successfully filled in approximately three quarters of the missing words. I think that the most problematic word was 'potatoes'. Almost all groups left this gap empty. This would be probably caused by stress placed on the second syllable or by the overall pronunciation of this line, which was quite swift and unintelligible. Another mistakes occurred in spelling of 'gasoline' with double S and in 'parliament' with missing letter I.

Then the pupils had to answer three questions that were to discover their knowledge about a few expressions which had appeared the lyrics. Actually, there was no interruption between the listening part and answering these questions. I wondered how informed the pupils, including girls, had been. The question regarding engines was no problem to answer, almost all the pupils chose the correct option. Translation of 'a decent bloke' was much more difficult. The correct answer was rarely found. Logically from the lyrics, it was the British informal expression of 'a good man'. The pupils were probably a bit confused by Czech words with similar forms, however completely different meanings. 'Decent' resembles 'decentní' (discreet, unobtrusive), 'bloke' may resemble 'blok' (block, notepad).

After that I passed out the last handout. I cut a sheet of paper into pieces to get a pile of ten pictures with titles written above. The pupils had to determine which terms belong to American or British language and culture. Those who had listened carefully made no serious mistakes. The most confusable terms were 'meat and potatoes' and 'bangers and mash'. The rest was usually correct. In this part we also translated and explained the expressions that pupils did not comprehend. I was glad that they asked themselves, so I did not need to stimulate them.

To review the answers and to ease the tensions, I played the song for the third time. I wondered how active the pupils would be and whether they would sing along. There were just a few pupils singing voluntarily, so I was a bit disillusioned. However, I was glad that they kept calm and attentive. I did not have anybody to admonish for disturbing or ask them to be quiet. As I noticed, sometimes the pupils were crooning or whispered some passages of the lyrics.

12.3. Activity 3: Summarizing the Questionnaire

The last task was to summarize the lesson. I passed out a brief questionnaire where the pupils individually evaluated the previous activity. The estimated time was five minutes. In two cases the children managed to complete it in time, in two cases the activity had to be prolonged into the break, approximately by two minutes. Fortunately, the pupils were co-operative. None were against.

Eighty-three of the hundred pupils enjoyed the song. Thirty-three also gave their reasons. Generally they mentioned the positivity of the song and originality of the lyrics. They also appreciated the variety of tasks and the overall lesson. Most favourable assessment came from Jan's class. Twenty-two of his twenty-five pupils enjoyed it and also called it as interesting diversification in comparison to ordinary and routine English lessons. Only two of the sixteen respondents who did not enjoy it gave reasons. One wrote that he hates Robbie Williams, the second found the whole song very poor.

The last direct question investigated beneficial effects. It was not any surprising that the pupils who had enjoyed the song also found some merits and advantages. Eighty-six of them answered positively. They commended learning vocabulary and acquiring new geographical and cultural knowledge. Ten pupils wrote that they felt relaxed and positively motivated for the future lessons. Four pupils, not having enjoyed the song, mentioned that the activity was beneficial for them, so I consider the fact as a matter of taste. The song probably did not match their taste and they would prefer another music genre.

In the last two tables pupils rated their opinion of the song and their overall view of the activities. They gave points from one to five − one as minimum, five as maximum in case of total satisfaction. If the arithmetic mean of the whole examined group were 5.00, it would be on the highest reachable level. In the following tables there are numbers of frequency − how many people ticked the stated value (from 1 to 5). Logically, the total sum of every row equals 100.

SONG

	1	2	3	4	5	
pessimistic	1	2	16	32	49	optimistic
boring, tedious	4	9	23	37	27	interesting, catchy
too fast or too slow	8	18	37	26	11	proper tempo
overplayed	0	2	3	7	88	new
incomprehensible, confusing	4	16	29	30	21	comprehensible, direct
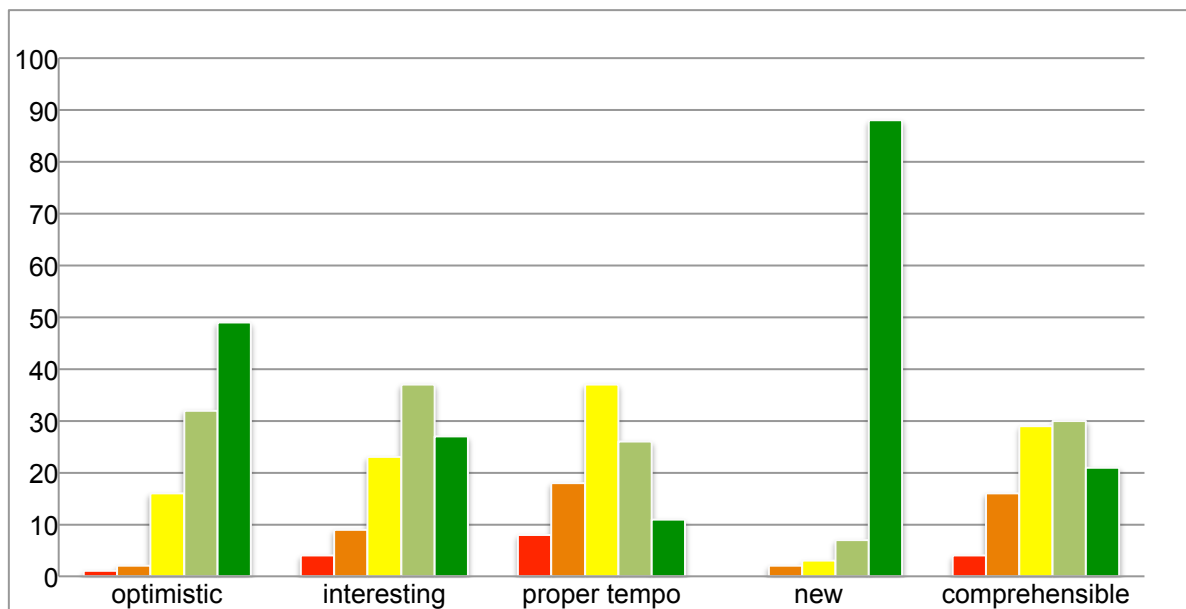
Description: Positive evaluation is obvious in every aspect examined. The song was regarded as very optimistic and quite interesting. The tempo of the song was good, however, it could have been more suitable. What surprised me and pleased me was the aspect of newness. The vast majority of the respondents stated that the song was absolutely new for them. And they also found it as quite comprehensible. Overall arithmetic mean of the song was 3.89, which was quite positive result. It can be therefore considered as a good choice.

Activities were also rated quite positively:

ACTIVITY

		1	2	3	4	5	
filling gaps, reordering:	poor	3	11	33	37	16	great
questions:	poor	8	11	39	28	14	great
sorting pictures:	poor	1	7	25	38	29	great
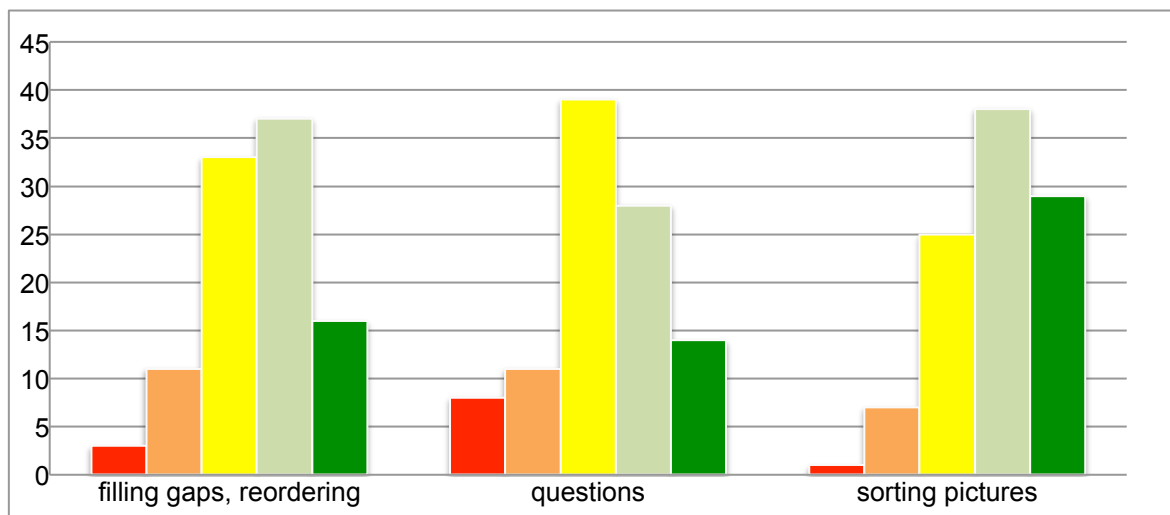
It is noticeable from the chart that sorting pictures was marked as the most favourite activity. The least favourite activity was answering the questions. Most pupils marked 3, which was the middle value. The reason may be simple − it is one of the most generally frequented tasks during the class, so the pupils are probably a little bit fed up with it. At the same time, answering questions is not very funny. It is a passive activity which does not lead pupils to creative thinking or any aesthetical feelings. However, the overall arithmetic mean of all activities was 3.58, which is above the average.

Optionally pupils could add some comments or ideas. I received notes from twenty-three of them and they were mostly positive. They mentioned that the activity was relaxing and informative, they liked the way how it had been prepared and especially in Jan's class the pupils mentioned that they would like to see this activity in English lessons more often. One student, evidently a fan of metal music, would rather prefer a metal song.

13. **Reflections**

13.1. Evaluation of My Own Experience

This topic is closely related to the activities that I have been engaged in for many years. However, my concern was about finding appropriate literature. The Research Library of South Bohemia in Ceske Budejovice did not provide much suitable literature neither. Most beneficial for me was the British Centre in Ceske Budejovice where there were several interesting books later used for inspiration − such as 'Music and Song' by Tim Murphy, which is to be highly recommended to anyone searching for tips for their future work with songs in English lessons. Undoubtedly, another useful source rich in inspiration is the Internet. There are plenty forums, blogs and websites concerned about teaching English through songs. Some of them are available free, some of them have a premium access, many of them are worth paying for. Another useful project is found on the website 'Songs For Teaching'.[27] It is a commercial website providing its own songs, which are composed to teach and explain grammar within the lyrics. If you do not pay any money, you are only allowed to browse through shortened demo songs. Despite this, I think that this method is very innovative or even revolutionary and that every teacher should test just once in my assessment.

While searching for useful pieces of facts (mostly focused on the psychological aspects of music and its history), it became obvious that good knowledge of English is very beneficial. When I compare English and Czech printed sources, I must say that English books were more up-to-date, much more practical and enjoyable. Their graphic layout is usually lucid and reader-friendly. On the other hand, the Czech sources are generally too much concerned with the academical approach and do not provide enough good piece of advice. There may probably exist some helpful publications, however, they are hardly accessible.

Many thoughts and ideas which I have already proclaimed on basis of my previous experience were confirmed, so it was delightful to find out that the required literature I felt even delighted while reading required literature shared my ideas. However, sometimes I had to disagree with some thoughts of the writers. It was mostly in cases when they had generalized the rules which, in my opinion, cannot be so clearly defined, because of the fact that every song is unique and individual. Some techniques that would perfectly work on one song can be absolutely

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[27] www.songsforteaching.com

inapplicable on another. However, I mostly agreed with the vast majority of the texts and felt better informed after reading them.

My own work was in classes evaluated positively, with good feedback from both the pupils and all the teachers who had watched the lessons. Tereza's and Pavel's classes have been used to teaching through songs, so their reactions were expected. But the most positive reactions I received from the Jan's class, where all the children were really astonished by this modern attitude to English lessons which they had probably missed in their regular lessons with Jan. It was nice to see that all the pupils actively participated in the activities and gave me positive feedback which was for me, as the teacher, very encouraging. But I think that if I were their regular teacher who meets them three times a week, their behavior might have been different.

Almost the whole activity depended on a good selection of the song. As I saw during the lessons, the children were actively listening to it and they were completing all the missing words with no unnatural tension. While correcting the mistakes and translating the lyrics they were usually questioning me voluntarily, so my words were almost superfluous. All three teachers were nicely surprised of the smooth running of the lessons and positively commented on my song selection − the tempo was proper, the content of the lyrics reasonable funny, and the activities were brisk and miscellaneous. The lyrics were also quite comprehensible, so the vast majority of the pupils understood the meaning with no serious complications. I felt that the tempo of the songs had been ideal. If the tempo had been slower, the children would probably have found the song boring. If it were faster, they could have been confused. However, if I applied pop-song method in the class of younger pupils, I would definitely choose a song with less lyrics and more repetitive expressions, following Dr. Luke's principles.

A few remarks concerning Tereza's comment: She experienced that anytime children are learned through songs, they could remember new vocabulary from the songs more easily and they pronounced such expressions without any difficulties. It is probably the evidence of Guglielmino's theory about the left and the right brain hemispheres and the connecting bridge between them, which was stated in the theoretical part of my thesis.[28] And one of my very good friends, Marta Toulová, who has been a director of local private Helen Doron Early English schools for young children, recently confirmed me this. It is allegedly the most natural way how to teach small children the language as well as to teach people of any age. The emotional aspect

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[28] (Salcedo 2002, 43-44)

of music expressed through the lyrics, melody, harmony, tempo and the overall sound of the arrangement as the whole is the key initiator activating the effective learning processes.

It was pleasantly surprising how well were the classes were equipped with required technology. In every language class there was a computer and a powerful sound system, so it was really easy to come and launch the music.

If I became a teacher of English, I am sure that I would bring the songs to the classes quite often − if I had enough time, I would bring it to the class every month as a reward for active work. The pupils would be motivated and that this suggestion would lead them to better results, in my opinion.

13.2. Tips for Potential Users of Pop-Song Method

Using pop-song method can be truly advantageous and enjoyable at the same time. All you need is to follow some of the rules stated in the theoretical part. Here is a brief summary in points:

- adjust the level of difficulty to skills and the age of your pupils − you can arrange it as an individual work or as the work in groups

- check the positiveness, comprehensibility, language accuracy and origin, moral harmlessness of the lyrics

- consider whether the tempo, tonality and overall sound of the song is suitable for teaching English

- determine for which aspects of language the song is rich in and choose the suitable way of work (filling gaps, additional questions, underlining, cutting into pieces, etc.); you can definitely combine the activities

- check the appliances before the lesson − your CD can be damaged or burnt incorrectly or volume level of the sound system might be not loud enough

- obtain feedback from your pupils during the work and adjust the lesson to make them involved and working actively

CONCLUSION

Teaching English through pop-songs is a popular technique. From the psychological point of view, music affects the listeners and has emotional impact on them. If the song is chosen properly, it can be relaxing, catchy and can positively tune the pupils, while it can also help in teaching pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, territorial differences and many more aspects of the language. This is also intensified by repeating lyrics, which is a typical phenomenon of popular songs. Of course, as any other method, teaching through songs has its own advantages and disadvantages. One of the advantages is the flexibility of methods used for working with the songs. Another is the fact that pop-songs are popular in pupils' every day life, so they will probably search for individually in their free time. And presently, both lyrics and songs are easily obtainable because of advanced modern technology, especially the Internet. There can be also several disadvantages, however. Some schools may not be equipped with required technology. There are also plenty of conservative teachers, who may be not 'music-friendly' or they may be against it because of their higher age and lack of familiarity with pop-music. All teachers should follow some tips while searching for the proper songs in accordance to moral or ethical rules. There are several quoted sources, including activities and exercises, which may be used as inpiration.

In my opinion, there are plenty sources focused on this topic, most of them available online. I would welcome more printed sources in libraries. However, I know that the trends in pop-music develop and change very quickly, so it is almost impossible to go hand in hand with printed sources. The most inspirational book for me had been *Music and Song* by Tim Murphy, which is rich in many useful and great techniques and rules that can be applied on any kind of song. As an experienced teacher of singing in a private school, I can confirm the vast majority of theoretical thoughts mentioned in the sources − every song with English lyrics can be advantageous in teaching English and active singing can lead children to better results in pronunciation and learning new vocabulary. I am always trying to improve their language skills, even though I am more concerned with the technical part of vocal expression.

In the practical part, I presented my research made in three primary schools in Pisek and Ceske Budejovice, where I interviewed three English teachers. Two teachers were favourably disposed to the method, one was rather against. Then I visited their classes containing altogether one hundred pupils in age around fourteen, having applied the pop-song method. The pupils were

quite willing to fulfil all the tasks and readily worked with apprehension. Their team cooperation was very good. As the additional questionnaire proven, they enjoyed the activity on the whole and also found the song interesting and quite pleasing.

After such experience I can confirm the opinion that teaching English through pop-music can be an efficient and popular activity and has its place in English lessons. All the teachers gave positive comments on my performance. Even though Jan, who was rather against the method, had finally changed his mind a bit and acknowledged that he could engage pop-music in his lessons more often. As they later told me, the pupils requested for one more revision during the following lessons.

I am used to teach children and adults in smaller groups of three or four members, so working with twenty-five children in class was a brand new experience for me. Hypothetically, If I ever became a teacher of English, I would definitely take advantages of pop-songs and use this method regularly. I am assured that music emotionally impacts people and can be very beneficial during the learning process.

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APPENDICES

16.   List of Appendices

A: Complete Interview with Tereza

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C: Complete Interview with Jan

D: Example song: Putting Pieces of Lyrics in the Correct Order

E: Example song: Filling Missing Words from the Box above

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16.1. Appendix A: Complete Interview with Tereza

When did you firstly use the "song method" and what was the reason?

I remember that it was the first year of my work. The song was printed in the students' book which I used for teaching. Its recording was available on the attached audio disc, so I considered this activity as a part of curriculum of that book.

How did the pupils respond?

Of course, there were some reactions like 'I won't sing a single tone', 'It's completely dull', etc. However, the vast majority accepted it positively, smiling and even trying to sing, at least the chorus. I also noticed that they were more obedient and willing to accomplish all the tasks. So I came to a conclusion that I could bring it to lessons more often.

Do you rather stick to the selection in the book or do you prepare extra songs at your discretion?

Each of the students' book used contains approximately three or four songs. If the song is good and if we have enough time, I use it. In some cases I saw pupils' indifference, so I realized that to skip that song will be better with another group. When I feel that pupils have been working well and need to relax, I bring some extra songs to the class. Naturally, I require their involvement and activity because it is still a part of the lesson, the same as reading or listening.

Do your students have any privilege to influence the selection?

Well, it depends on the situation. I thought that when they have a choice, they will be more contended. Actually, once I let them choose between two songs, a half of the class got a bit aggressive, because their favourite track did not win the poll. It is the same principle as in the public elections. People tend to express their dissatisfaction. Since that, I rather select songs on my own, although I am sure that my choice will not satisfy the whole class. But I am the main authority and pupils know that they must respect me.

What are the main aspects of a suitable song? What does influence you?

Sometimes it is clear. In time before Christmas I choose from carols and world-famous tunes, another time I choose songs that are somehow related to the topic that we discuss, i.e. when we

were going through chapter called "Sports & Games", I brought "We Are The Champions" by Queen, when we were talking about California, I brought "San Francisco" by Scott McKenzie.

How do you work with the songs? What are the activities about?

In most cases I make a few gaps and I let pupils' to fill the missing words while listening. But I must consider their knowledge. It is nonsense to give them the words that they had never heard. Sometimes they are skilful, so they derive the spelling from the recording, but it is just a rare occurrence. Another way was to cut the lyrics into parts (two or four rows on every piece) and their task was to arrange all the pieces in correct order. This is suitable for pairs or groups.

How many times do you usually play the chosen song in the class?

I try to manage the activity according to feedback that I receive from the pupils. When the activity and the lyrics are simple, the pupils complete it during the first listening. More often they need to hear it twice. Then, when we have gone through group discussion and have corrected the mistakes, I play it once more. When I feel that the pupils like it and they work without any reprehension, I bring that song into the following lesson.

What would you say to the teacher who never practiced teaching English through songs?

Teaching through songs is quite favourite method and it can be useful if you do it correctly. I recommend to get inspired on the Web or from experienced teachers. You do not have to be musical, it is very similar to regular listening, possessing some qualities that can have stronger emotional consequences. I am FOR it.

16.2. Appendix B: Complete Interview with Pavel

When did you firstly use the "song method" and what was the reason?

During my studies, using songs was at its beginning. Our teachers were not used to work with tape players and schools weren't equipped with necessary technology. But I was lucky and got abroad for inspiration, especially to Denmark and Belgium. Their schools were quite ahead of Czech educational system and using songs, as well as many other activities, were utterly regular. I was happy to test it just in the very beginnings of my work and I must tell that it became really popular.

How did the pupils respond (how was the feedback)?

They were quite amazed, because it was something new for them and it was also entertaining.

Do you rather stick to the selection in the book or do you prepare extra songs at your discretion?

I like that creative process of making tasks, so I prefer preparing extra songs on my own. It is better if it is original, isn't it?

Do your students have any privilege to influence the selection?

I think it is better to choose myself and not to give them too many privileges and keep them aside from this issue.

That sounds a bit strange. Can you explain more about this assertion to me?

It may be probably my own view on moral situation of present children and teenagers, maybe it is a global view of all teachers at least in the Czech Republic... But I can see that fifteen years ago children were more honest and grateful. When I began teaching, music and lyrics was almost unavailable on the Internet. When desired for a new song, we had to copy it on the tape, to record it from broadcasting or to buy it. To find lyrics was even more complicated. Sometimes there were lyrics in the original booklet and some lyrics were published in magazines, but we had to be contend with publishers' selection. It was quite difficult but it had its own charm. In present, everybody is connected to the Internet. Once I told pupils name of song prepared for the following lesson, they all came prepared with the lyrics printed or saved in their smartphones. And what is even worse, they are able to connect to the Internet even during the lesson. They

know that they must not, nevertheless they do it. Since that, I rather do not tell them the titles before and I'm always supervising not using their smartphones during the work.

What are the main aspects of a suitable song? What does influence you?

Mostly I choose songs that I like myself and that will probably have positive impact on pupils. I avoid using negative songs with immoral lyrics or content. I have also not very good experience with mainstream songs. There are plenty of commercial interprets that are very popular and admired by one crowd of people, but loathed by the another. Nowadays such examples can be Justin Bieber or One Direction. Most of the girls love them and would sing all the songs that they evere made, but most of the boys cannot even hear their names and refuse to work. My colleague faced similar situation with the song by Lady Gaga. Half of the boys went on strike proclaiming that is "too gay and wierd". So I'm always searching for a song that is more universal and not so "fashionable". I have good experience with songs by Michael Jackson, ABBA, Tina Turner, etc. When children are motivated, I'm sure they like it.

How do you work with the songs? What are the activities about?

It depends on every song. There are some that are really applicable to teach grammar and tenses, there are some that are applicable to teach vocabulary and so on. My purpose is to mix as many miscellaneous activities as possible to make every work a little bit different. And of course, I want to make connections between used song and currently discussed curriculum. I prefer when pupils work in groups. Sometimes I add some additional true/false questions.

How many times do you usually play the chosen song in the class?

I play it at least three times. Pupils usually need to hear it twice to complete all the tasks. Then we discuss it and explain it. After that, I play it for the third time. That time the pupils revise the corrected solution and some of them even try to sing it.

What would you say to the teacher who never practiced teaching English through songs?

In my opinion, using songs can be as effective as any other way of teaching process. We are now living in the era of high-technology, multimedia widened via the Internet (including video servers as YouTube), so it has never been easier to find songs, audio-tracks and lyrics. It is popular to search for new alternative and efficient means of teaching and this is surely one of them.

16.3. Appendix C: Complete Interview with Jan

When did you firstly use the "song method" and what was the reason?

It was in the third or fourth year of my work as a teacher. My colleagues often talked about this method, so I realized that I would try it.

How did the pupils respond (how was the feedback)?

Nor positive, nor negative. It was a part of curriculum of the students' book, so I played a cassette and let children fill in the missing words. I felt that the activity wasn't very popular. Maybe the reason was that it was a sport class and the pupils weren't very aesthetically and musically oriented. However, the response was nearly the same in parallel classes. I think that teaching through songs is not as beneficial as many people claim.

So I could tell that you are AGAINST the songs in English lessons?

I cannot say that I hate them or that I entirely avoid using any song. But during my studies, our teachers played us several songs and I never found any significant reason to copy them. Besides, I am not very musical, so I prefer more traditional methods.

There are lots of educators, who claim that teaching English through pop-songs can be beneficial in many ways. Have you ever been looking for any tips or inspiration?

I haven't searched for any extra materials. I have been talking about that with my colleagues. They are more willing to accept new techniques than me and they use songs regularly. But I'm not sure if songs are so much beneficial. As I experienced, when we started doing song activity, at least a half of the class stopped working and concentrating and literally, they went offline. So in the group of approximately twenty pupils, there were only six, who were willing to participate in this activity. And I think that is a waste of time. Our school curriculum, which we have to follow, is quite extensive. We, as teachers cannot afford to waste it on songs and games unless we have successfully completed what we had to. I use them just occasionally.

What does "occasionally" mean?

I have a few handouts of Christmas songs and carols, which I usually use in the lessons before Christmas. I got also some more non-Christmas songs from my English colleagues, which I use

before the summer holiday, in times when classification is closed. These are times when pupils are not willing to learn, so using songs is suitable.

How do you work with the songs? What are the activities about?

In most times handout consists of lyrics with gaps - sometimes the missing words are in table above, so the pupils put these words in correct order. Sometimes pupils have to fill in the gaps on the basis of listening.

How many times do you usually play the chosen song in the class?

It is always different. I usually play it twice, while children actively write what they heard. Then we correct it and discuss it and when I feel that they like it, I repeat it for the third time. When I feel that the pupils got bored, I stop it.

What would you say to the teacher who never practiced teaching English through songs?

I think that the each teacher is individual as same as the pupils. I recommend to try it and then to make their own view on this method. If they are musical and if they find the way how to use it effectively, I am for it and I wish them the best possible results. If a teacher doesn't like it, it is probably better not to do it and rather use more efficient and time-proven methods.

16.4. Appendix D: Example song: Putting Pieces of Lyrics in the Correct Order

I Don't Want To Talk About It (sung by Rod Stewart)

- -

Oh-oh-oh my heart!

- -

If I stay here just a little bit longer

- -

They're a mirror

- -

Blue for the tears! Black for the night's fears!

- -

I can tell by your eyes that you've probably been crying forever

- -

How you broke my heart!

- -

They're a mirror

- -

And the stars in the sky don't mean nothing to you;

- -

If I stay here, won't you listen to my heart?

- -

And the stars in the sky don't mean nothing to you;

- -

I don't want to talk about it!

- -

If I stand all alone, will the shadow hide the colour of my heart?

- -

Source:

http://www.musicalenglishlessons.org/music-rod1.htm

16.5. Appendix E: Example song: Filling Missing Words from the Box above

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS (sung by Queen)

face / all / lose / crime / end / race / cruise / few / call / friend / through / time / dues

VERSE 1:
I've paid my ……………, ... after ……………;
I've done my sentence, but committed no ……………
And bad mistakes, I've made a ……………
I've had my share of sand kicked in my ....,
But I've come ……………

CHORUS:
We are the champions, my ……………
And we'll keep on fighting to the ……………
We are the champions
We are the champions
No time for losers 'cos
We are the champions of the world.

VERSE 2:
I've taken my bows and my curtain ……………
You've brought me fame and everything that goes with it; I thank you ……………,
But it's been no bed of roses, no pleasure …………….
I consider it a challenge
Before the whole human race -
And I ain't gonna …………….

(Repeat Chorus x3)

Source:

http://www.musicalenglishlessons.org/music-queen1.htm

16.6. Appendix F: Example song: Filling Verbs in Correct Form

(infinitives in brackets)

THIS LOVE (sung by Maroon 5)

I ....(be) so high I ....(not recognize)
The fire burning in her eyes
(Nor) The chaos that ....(control) my mind.
(She) ....(whisper) 'goodbye' and she ....(get) on a plane;
Never to return again,
But always in my heart

This love ....(has taken) its toll on me;
She ....(say) 'goodbye' too many times before
And her heart ....(break) in front of me.
I ....(have) no choice 'cause I
....................(say) 'goodbye' anymore.

I ....(try) my best to feed her appetite,
Keep her coming every night.
(It was) So hard to keep her satisfied;
(She) Kept playing love like it ....(be) just a game,
Pretending to feel the same,
Then turn around and leave again.

This love ....(take) its toll on me;
She ....(say) 'goodbye' too many times before
And her heart ....(break) in front of me.
I ....(have) no choice, 'cause
I ....(say) 'goodbye' anymore.

I....................(fix) these broken things;
(I'll) Repair your broken wings
And make sure everything....................(be) alright.
My pressure on your hips,
Sinking my fingertips
Into every inch of you,
'Cause I ....(be) that....................(be) what you ....(be) me to do

Source:
http://www.musicalenglishlessons.org/music-maroon5.htm

16.7. Appendix G: My Own Entrance Questionnaire

Questionnaire 1

BEFORE ACTIVITY - **3 minutes**

How many times per year (approximately) does your teacher use songs in lessons?

....

Do you generally like activities including songs and do you find it any beneficial?

....

....

Do you think that it should occur in lessons more or less often? Why?

....

....

Does your teacher want you to sing?

       Yes × No

16.8. Appendix H: Lyrics of the Song Used in Classes

COLLISION OF WORLDS (Robbie Williams & Brad Paisley)   - 12 minutes

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Lyrics	
At the first sign of morning light ol' glory's in the sky	
Across the pond, it's _____, and the Union Jack flies high	1
We're on our first cup of coffee	
We're on our _____ cup of tea	2
And we can't pretend to live on _____ planets, you and me	3

In this collision of worlds	
Watch the new day dawn on a distant _____	4
In this collision of worlds	
Oh, you can't sit this out no more	

Abbey Road, Route 66,	
_____ to the MI-6, right lane, left lane,	5
Metric, imperial, pounds, dollars	
Howdy, cheerio,	
That V8 growl to a V12 scream	
Hail to the chief, Well, God save the _____ !	6
Cops, Bobbies, Tabasco, Wasabi	
Pistachio, _____!	7

In this collision of worlds	
Well it's too _____, you can't stop it now	8
In this collision of worlds	
Yeah, find you a place and just watch it now, watch it now!	
Yeah, you're a _____ ol' boy	9
Well, you're a decent bloke	
I say it's irony, I say it's a _____	10
When I look around, now I can see	
We ain't so different, you and me	

Meat and _____, bangers and mash	11
Dollars, pounds, dosh, cash	
Autobahn, to the rising sun	
The I10, to the M1	
Congress, _____, President, The Queen!	12
Petrol, you say _____	13
Now grab your bird, and get your girl	
Now it's a small world!	

Collision of worlds	
Watch the new day dawn on a distant _____	14 (4)
In this collision of worlds	
No, you can't sit this out no more	
It's a collision of worlds	
It's too _____ and you can't stop it now	15 (8)
Collision of worlds	
Find you a place and watch it now	

answers: 1) afternoon 2) third 3) different 4) shore 5) CIA 6) Queen 7) ice-cream 8) late 9) good 10) joke 11) potatoes 12) Parliament 13) gasoline

16.9. Appendix I: Summarizing Questionnaire

Questions: **- 2 minutes**

1) 'Hail to the Chief' and 'God Save The Queen' refer to:

      a) religious slogans

      b) national anthems

      c) greetings

2) 'V8' and 'V12' refer to:

      a) TV channels

      b) sport clubs

      c) car engines

3) How would you explain or translate "a decent bloke"

16.10. Appendix J: Texts and Lyrics Related to Chapters in the Theoretical Part

Here are the lyrics related to the chapter: 'The Contribution of Music to English-Language Lessons and the Advantages':

> *Tonight we're going hard hard hard ha-ha-hard*
> *Just like the world is our our-our our-our-ours*
> *We're tearin' it apart-part-part pa-pa-part*
> *You know we're superstars, we are who we are!*
>   *(the chorus of Kesha's "We Are Who We Are")*

> *Make me come alive, come on turn me on*
>
> *Touch me, save my life, come on and turn me on*
>
> *I'm too young to die, come on and turn me on*
>
> *Turn me on, turn me on, turn me on, turn me on*
>   *(the chorus of David Guetta's "Turn Me On" [feat.Nicki Minaj])*

The extract from 'Empire State of Mind' by Alicia Keys mentioned in the chapter Comprehensibility.

> *Grew up in a town that is famous as a place of movie scenes*
> *Noise is always loud, there are sirens all around and the streets are mean*
> *If I can make it here, I can make it anywhere, that's what they say*
> *Seeing my face in lights or my name in marquees found down on Broadway*
> *Even if it ain't all it seems, I got a pocketful of dreams*
>
> *Baby I'm from New York!*
> *Concrete jungle where dreams are made of*
> *There's nothing you can't do*
> *Now you're in New York!*
> *These streets will make you feel brand new*
> *Big lights will inspire you*
> *Hear it for New York, New York, New Yooork!*
>
> *On the avenue, there ain't never a curfew, ladies work so hard*
> *Such a melting pot, on the corner selling rock, preachers pray to God*
> *Hail a gypsy cab, takes me down from Harlem to the Brooklyn Bridge*
> *Some will sleep tonight with a hunger for more than an empty fridge [...]*

Refrain of the Song 'If You Seek Amy' by Britney Spears mentioned in the chapter 'Moral Harmlessness':

Love me hate me
Say what you want about me
But all of the boys and all of the girls are
begging to If You Seek Amy

The extract from 'Rude Boy' by Rihanna mentioned in the chapter 'Moral Harmlessness':

Tonight I'm a let you be the captain
Tonight I'm a let you do your thing, yeah
Tonight I'm a let you be a rider
Giddy up, giddy up, giddy up, babe

Come here rude boy, boy, can you get it up
Come here rude boy, boy, is you big enough
Take it, take it, baby, baby
Take it, take it, love me, love me [...]

Source:

http://www.azlyrics.com/

16.11. Appendix K: Example Sites and Tips for Searching Songs

Here are a few example sites and tips:

- **Musical English Lessons International**[29] - this page does not look any commercial and the design is poor. However, there are many tips and pop-songs ready to print and use. The site also includes lot of useful tips focused on grammar, language and the literature.

- **Agenda Web**[30] - similar website containing the latest hits.

- **Tefltunes**[31] - a commercial site with pop-songs and handouts. These include several pages with activity for the whole lesson, not mere lyrics with gaps, but also crosswords, puzzles and many more. Songs can be filtered per language level, theme or kind of activity. Some handouts are available for free, however the most songs require paid membership.

- **Songs for Teaching**[32] - this is the site that I already mentioned above. It is a commercial database of unique songs with educational lyrics that are especially composed for instruction. The songs are focused on many language features − vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, etc. The site also an includes e-shop with publications concerning teaching English through music and many more useful pieces for teachers.

- **ESOL Sources**[33] - the website with free complex system of ESOL[34] courses, including a free section with songs and exercises which can be done directly online. If the school is equipped with modern IT classes, the pupils can work on it individually and check the answers just by a single click. Songs are focused on many features of grammar and classified by level of skills.

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[29] http://www.musicalenglishlessons.org/

[30] http://www.agendaweb.org/songs/learn_english_through_songs.html

[31] http://tefltunes.com/

[32] http://www.songsforteaching.com/

[33] http://www.esolcourses.com/

[34] ESOL = English for Speakers of Other Languages

- **Help For English**[35] - probably the most extensive Czech website concerning learning English. It has been a highly-developed system of uncluttered design, containing theoretical and practical articles, activities and support of long-term language development. It is good for self-study as well as for educating pupils in school lessons. In the section with music, there are plenty songs and lyrics with audio available just right on the page. However, due to copyright, most of the songs are generally unknown which may probably discourage some teenagers oriented stringently on commercial mainstream.

I would also recommend printed sources. They are usually more general and not so easily obtainable, but it is good to acquire new knowledge. 'Music and song' by Tim Murphy, which I have studied before writing my thesis, is quite helpful and I would even call it the bible of this issue.

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[35] http://www.helpforenglish.cz/