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**DEVELOPING SKILLS THROUGH SONGS**

**Diploma Thesis**

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V Dubanech dne 17. dubna 2009

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**Declaration:**

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that all the sources of information I have used are listed in the references.

I approve that this diploma thesis is stored and available for study purposes in the library of the Faculty of Education at the Masaryk University Brno

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

After a few years of teaching adults in language courses I realised the need of making classes more manifold and the necessity of adapting them to different types of learners. I gradually arrived at a conclusion that most of my lesson plans turn to verbal/linguistic intelligence of the students while marginalising those abilities which originate from other types of intelligence. This approach disadvantages the students whose strengths lie in a different area.

According to Scott Thornbury (2008) who dealt with the issue of multiple intelligences, there are several ways how to solve this problem and one of them is the method of using songs. Many other authors mentioned this technique in their works on language teaching and learning. The technique of using songs seemed to be the most appropriate for the purposes of my students, especially for the course where the students only use the “conservative” textbook *Angličtina pro jazykové školy* which contains mostly reading texts and grammatical exercises based on drilling. This book lacks listening and speaking activities which makes it rather one-sided.

I was aware of the fact that it was important to assess the situation in my courses in order to find out what to focus on. I knew that I did not devote enough space to listening activities and that my students did not feel confident in this area. I decided to carry out a survey on the use and difficulty of language skills with special emphasis on listening. I prepared a questionnaire with the aim to verify the hypothesis mentioned above. From the beginning I intended to make use of songs as a basis for developing listening as well as other language skills. Questions about the acceptability of using songs in the classroom presented a significant part of my questionnaire. I was also thinking about which songs or interpreters would be suitable and after considering many factors I selected the songs by the Beatles.

In my view there are many Beatles songs appropriate for teaching English. The most important reason is probably their comprehensibility. The lyrics are easy to understand as the vocabulary is rather basic and the range of grammatical structures

used is quite limited. The melodies are pleasing and easily remembered. Another reason is the general familiarity of the songs. I assumed most of the adult learners in my courses knew the songs which might also function as a strong motivational factor. Moreover, there is a wide range of information about the band and their lives available from many different sources including the Internet which make it possible to create many supplementary materials. The above mentioned advantages corresponded to my original intention to create lesson plans which would involve all the four language skills, namely reading, listening, writing and speaking.

In my bachelor thesis (Kubjátová 2006) I created three lesson plans for basic schools and at the same time I described the history of the Beatles. I considered this topic interesting enough to be used in lesson plans for adult learners. Therefore I implemented the texts about the band's history as reading activities and a basis for practising other skills, vocabulary and grammar.

I divided my diploma thesis into two major parts. The first part compiles the theoretical preparation for my survey and the creation of practical teaching aids. This theoretical section involves chapters on developing all language skills, the specificity of teaching adults, the problems of teaching heterogeneous classes, the issue of motivation and the use of communicative approach in foreign language teaching. The second part is comprised of the questionnaire and its detailed analysis, the evaluation of the students' needs and suggestions for making the classwork more effective. The whole thesis is supplemented by six lesson plans all of which seek to create a balanced lesson involving all four skills.

## 2. THEORETICAL PART

In foreign language teaching we distinguish four major skills which should be equally practised in the teaching process. These skills can be differentiated into receptive skills (reading and listening) and productive skills (writing and speaking). In the following section I will look at each of the skills separately, trying to point out their uniqueness and suggest ways in which they can be cultivated through the use of music and songs.

### 2.1 TEACHING RECEPTIVE SKILLS

Receptive skills are often considered passive (from the point of view of the learner's involvement), but nothing seems further from the truth. As Jeremy Harmer puts it, we have to “employ our previous knowledge as we approach the process of comprehension”, which is apparently an active process (Harmer 2001: 199). Our pre-existing knowledge of the world which is crucial for understanding written and spoken texts can take form of one of the four following patterns:

- (1) Knowledge can be structured as a FRAME – *a set of related elements* (in no particular order). Thus a “room”-frame immediately activates other related terms such as “table”, “chair” or “ceiling”.
- (2) SCHEMA is very similar (in fact, it is often considered a synonym), but there is an important difference. While frames are not defined temporarily, schemata are *ordered sequences of actions and events*. “House”-schema “could describe the order in which houses are assembled, or the sequences in which people can walk through them.”<sup>1</sup>
- (3) PLAN is a *goal-oriented sequence of actions* and is therefore very much individual. An example (however dishonest and crooked) can be provided by a “shop burglary” which consists of series of thoroughly premeditated steps to be successful.
- (4) The last pattern of knowledge is called SCRIPT in which the participants fulfill their given roles. Scripts are in their substance very stereotypical – for

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<sup>1</sup> DE BEAUGRANDE, Robert. *Text, Discourse and Process*. 27 March 2009.  
<<http://www.beaugrande.com/TDPCHAPTERSIX.htm>>.

example a “restaurant”-script would be a conventional dialogue between the waiter and customer. However we must bear in mind that these scripted situations are to a certain extent culture-bound (stereotypic situations such as ordering meals or business meetings in Western Europe differ from those in Japan or China).

(for more information on patterns of knowledge see for example Tárnyiková 2002: 58 - 59)

“When we are stimulated by particular words, discourse patterns, or contexts, such schematic knowledge is activated and we are able to recognise what we see or hear because it fits into patterns that we already know.” (Harmer 2001: 199) This activity is part of the *top-down process* during which we decode the texts based on our life experience and previous knowledge of similar situations. Frames and schemata (these two terms are most important for our purposes) help us to activate certain words, phrases and structures and at the same time block others and they also help us to make predictions about the forthcoming parts of the text. Our hypotheses are subsequently validated or disproved. (Harmer 2001; Ur 2004) This tension between predictability and unpredictability is according to David Nunan crucial for every text: “If language were totally predictable communication would be unnecessary (...). If language were totally unpredictable, communication could probably not occur.” (Nunan 1995: 42)

Song lyrics can be treated as any other type of text and as such they can also activate our previous knowledge. For example, the Beatles song *P.S. I Love You* (lesson plan 1) is structured as a love letter – during the reading or listening learners are expected to make use of their knowledge of this text genre to understand it and to form a series of hypotheses concerning both its content and form. This knowledge can be further exploited for example in the gap-fill exercise that is part of the while-listening activity – students make decisions based on their knowledge of this particular literary genre with its idiosyncratic vocabulary and structure (phrase to “be in love with you”; “P.S.” as a way to end the letter etc.).

We usually distinguish between instrumental and pleasurable reading and listening (Harmer 2001: 200). Songs can provide both pleasure and a “purposeful” activity –

they are not only a way of creating a relaxed atmosphere, but also a means to teach vocabulary, reinforce grammar and practice all major skills (listening as being the obvious focus of song activities) – as we will see in the following chapters. (Murphey 1995: 6) According to my research, students find listening to songs a pleasurable activity, since half of them stated that they listen to songs because they like the melody (see graph 11).

Receptive activities can be further divided into intensive and extensive activities (Rixon 1990: 10). Extensive reading and listening should increase the amount of students' exposure to the target language. Students are encouraged to read magazines, (abridged) novels or carefully chosen websites and to listen to songs, stories or radio broadcasts at home. The more they are exposed to the language, the better their skills should get. Still, they need our guidance – we should advise them what type of material to choose (unabridged novels are only appropriate for advanced students; popular songs are presumably more suitable than the songs of for example Nick Cave whose complex lyrics are often difficult even for native speakers) and we should regularly make sure it is not discouraging and demotivating for them. (Harmer 2001: 205) A good way to monitor them and to check the appropriateness of the material is to advise the students to keep reading journals (or listening and film journals). Issues concerning intensive activities will be dealt with in the chapters on reading and listening.

### **2.1.1 DEVELOPING READING SKILLS THROUGH SONGS**

Many students and even teachers of English underplay the role of reading in the learning process. As my research has shown, students find reading the easiest skill (see graph 3) and perhaps that is the reason why they sometimes think they do not need to practise it as often as speaking or listening. What they do not realize is that reading is not a passive skill – it requires as much of our activity and effort as the other skills and that a well prepared reading exercise can significantly support also our speaking, writing and listening proficiency. English texts surround us on the Internet, in schools or in the shops and therefore we should not underestimate the power of the written word.

As Penny Ur states “reading means reading and understanding.” (Ur 2004: 138) That is a slight problem – according to her, students usually want to understand every single word – even if the activity is oriented on the overall gist rather than on the specific information (Ibid. 141). One possible solution is to pre-teach difficult vocabulary or to give students dictionaries (“the dictionary is best used as a means to confirm or disprove a preliminary guess of their own, based on understanding of the context.” (Ur 2004: 149)) Their effort should be encouraged, we should stress, however, that the ability to “guess” the meaning from the context is equally important. (Ibid.) Regarding the difficulty of the reading tasks, Jeremy Harmer claims that there should be balance between the text and the task: if the text is difficult, the task should be easy and vice versa. Tasks should be “difficult but achievable.” (Harmer 2001: 207 - 208)

Songs and song lyrics can provide a variety of reading activities. Here are some of them:

- reading a text related to the band or the theme of the song (either before or after the listening) (see lesson plan 3)
- skimming through the gapped lyrics and predicting answers (as in lesson plans 1 and 3)
- reading the lyrics and predicting the tone/mood/melody of the song (less known songs are more appropriate – for this activity we should select a song by Beatles students are not likely to know)
- reading the lyrics and guessing the song’s title or the performer
- getting the jumbled lyrics in the correct order (lesson plan 6; the same can be done with other texts such as articles – lesson plan 3)
- matching words with their definitions (lesson plan 4)
- gap filling – either with or without the list of missing words
- correcting mistakes in the lyrics
- re-reading the lyrics and checking correct answers
- various other activities we can do with other text types (true – false, translation, jigsaw reading, continue the text, reading aloud etc.)

Reading should always be purposeful – students should be given clear instructions to know what to focus on. We must also bear in mind that not every song lyrics are

appropriate – for example, abstract lyrics with poetic qualities are more suitable for advanced learners than for beginners. Nevertheless, if carefully chosen, song lyrics can provide a valuable authentic reading material.

### **2.1.2 DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS THROUGH SONGS**

“We tend to take listening for granted. (...) We only become aware of what remarkable feats of listening we achieve when we are in an unfamiliar listening environment, such as listening to a language in which we have limited proficiency.” (Anderson 1991: 3)

According to my research, listening is the most difficult and least favourite skill of all (see graphs 4 and 5). In comparison to the other receptive activity - reading, “spoken words do not stay still to be scrutinized and puzzled over, as do written words.” (Rixon 1990: 36) However, students realize that listening *is* important since 32% of them would like to preferably focus on listening activities (see graph 2).

There are several reasons why students find listening to foreign languages and English in particular, so difficult:

- spelling and pronunciation of English differ a lot: “Many learners of English fail to recognise the spoken forms of words that they ‘know’ very well in print or writing.” (Rixon 1990: 38)
- connected speech – students are able to recognise the words in isolation, connected speech poses a big problem though (factors of assimilation, weakening of sounds etc. come into play) (Ibid.)
- rhythmic pattern of English, rules for putting stress and intonation (while in Czech the stress is always on the first syllable of the word, in English it can also be on the second or the third)
- the ‘same’ sounds (usually vowels) can be pronounced in several different ways (*break* x *weak* x *fear* etc.)
- use of colloquial vocabulary in informal dialogues; grammar deviations; broken syntax

- the pace of the recording or speech is the same for everybody – we can not replay it anytime we want; in real-life listening we are usually exposed to the text only once: “Written discourse is fixed and stable so the reading can be done at whatever time, speed and level of thoroughness the individual reader wishes. Spoken text in contrast is fleeting, and moves on in real time. The listener – though he or she may occasionally interrupt to request clarification – must in general follow what is said at the speed set by the speaker.” (Ur 2004: 160)
- other factors such as poor acoustic conditions or noise can make the listening activity even more stressful for the learners

(for more information on problems concerning listening see Ur 2004: 106; Rixon 1990: 38)

However, all these reasons should not discourage us or the students from preparing and participating in listening activities. On the contrary, they should provide motivation to improve their listening skills. Apart from other things, listening activities should be integrated in lessons because:

- they provide variety - “one of the main reasons for getting students to listen to spoken English is to let them hear different varieties and accents – rather than just the voice of their teacher with its own idiosyncrasies.” (Harmer 2006: 97) However, we must be reasonable: listening to a native speaker with a strong accent can become a formidable experience. (Rixon 1990: 56 - 58)
- students learn the language “subconsciously” – they get used to the language, it “inconspicuously” reinforces grammar points, vocabulary, English intonation and stress patterns (Harmer 2006: 98)
- it becomes a good source for imitation
- we can introduce authentic language through songs, news recordings or real-life dialogues. Authentic recordings, useful as they are, should not be overused. We should combine them with semi-authentic (constructed) material. (Ibid.)
- listening activities present a challenge for the learners
- developing listening skills can also substantially improve other skills, especially speaking. The experience of being a listener is important: as a

result you become a better speaker because you have knowledge of what the listener needs. (Anderson 1991: 16)

- through songs, films and stories you also introduce the culture of the target language speakers

As I have already suggested, when not conducted properly, listening can become a very stressful and de-motivating activity. According to Penny Ur, in order to avoid this, we must make several things sure. Firstly, we need to ensure good listening conditions – the recording and the recorder (CD player) must be in perfect condition and we are obligated to guarantee that all students can hear it properly. Secondly, we must pay special attention to pre-listening activities. Students should be given specific instructions (are they listening for the gist or for detailed information?) – otherwise they will not be able to focus properly. (Ur 2004: 108) If necessary, we can pre-teach vocabulary or specific grammatical constructions. Sometimes it is also advisable to introduce the topic by asking a few questions or reading an article – however the listening itself must remain challenging and therefore we should not expose the topic too much. (Rixon 1990: 68) Thirdly, we can give students extra material as a support – pictures, worksheets etc. Listening does not equal remembering. Shelagh Rixon suggests that since many students worry about their spelling and grammar you may ask them to tick or circle the correct answer. (Ibid. 70) It removes one burden from a very challenging activity (of course only if it is appropriate and the task is aimed at general comprehension, rather than at specific grammar or vocabulary issues).

Extremes should be avoided – the activity should not be too long, after few minutes students begin to lose concentration and interest (pop songs with their usual length between three and four minutes are perfect). Strong accents, as stated before, are also not appropriate. The most important thing is to emphasize that (as with reading) it is not vital to understand every single word. (Ur 2004: 111 - 112) Penny Ur claims that “the effort to understand everything often results in ineffective comprehension, as well as feelings of fatigue and failure.” (Ur 2004: 112) In casual conversation the informative part is often even insignificant:

“Most listening comprehension courses focus on the information element in recorded material, even when the original event was an informal conversation

rather than a transactional exchange of facts. In this way they may create the impression that such events arise in response to a speaker's need to give the listener information, rather than arising as part of their social relationship.” (Anderson 1991: 72)

“If we treat every piece of L2 conversational data as a package of detailed information for the learner to unwrap, we do two things that can distort the listening purpose: (1) we encourage the belief that to understand a text you have to get questions right; (2) we make the listening task more demanding than it was for the original listener.” (Anderson 1991: 74)

According to Shelagh Rixon, the process of understanding the spoken text takes place on several levels which are equally important

- “hearing all the words”
- “understanding the plain sense of the information”
- “deducing the meaning of unknown words and phrases by using the context”
- “reading between the lines”
- “recognising the speaker's mood and attitude”
- “recognising the degree of formality”

(Rixon 1990: 1)

Based on the list we can see that there are several important skills concerning listening and identifying individual words are only one of them.

There has been a debate among methodologists concerning the number of hearings students should be exposed to. Penny Ur argues that “if real-life discourse is rarely “replayed” then learners should be encouraged to develop the ability to extract the information they need from a single hearing.” (Ur 2004: 108) I think that even though her point seems valid, it is to a certain extent unrealistic and unfair request. While real-life communication offers a set of safety nets such as the context, possibility to ask for clarification, body language, facial expressions etc., in-class tape recordings provide nothing of that sort. (see for example Rixon 1990: 5) To prevent confusion and frustration we should play the recordings at least twice. We can however ask students few general questions after the first listening.

We can generalize and say that narrative texts are easier to comprehend than complex (and/or) abstract texts and that monologues are less demanding than texts spoken by more speakers. (Anderson 1991: 48; Rixon 1990: 60 - 62)

“Music is a powerful stimulus for student engagement precisely because it speaks directly to our emotions while still allowing us to use our brains to analyse it and its effects if we wish so. (...) It can make a satisfactory connection between the world of leisure and the world of learning.” (Harmer 2001: 242) The same point is made by Tim Murphey who says that “the use of music and song in the classroom can stimulate very positive associations to the study of a language, which otherwise may only be seen as a laborious task, entailing exams, frustration, and corrections.” (Murphey 1995: 6) It is precisely the combination of enjoyment and practicality that is the most valid argument for integrating songs into educational process.

Songs are:

- highly repetitive and therefore “catchy”. They activate our acquisition devices and as a result remembering words and phrases seems an effortless activity. (Everyone knows ‘the song stuck in my head’ phenomenon as Tim Murphey calls it.) They work both on our short- and long-term memory. (Murphey 1995: 7)
- cultural artefacts – we introduce not only the target language but also the culture
- usually easy to understand. Pop songs with their simple lyrics provide great material especially for young students. But there are also more complex lyrics with poetic qualities that can be analysed and interpreted again and again – they are therefore more suitable for advanced and/or adult learners.
- rhythmical – they often copy the rhythm of spoken English
- amusing and relaxing. “They provide variety and fun, and encourage harmony within oneself and within a group.” (Ibid. 8)
- we can ask students to choose songs they want to work with. That would give them more responsibility and the tasks thus become more motivational. (Ibid. 14)

Songs present a type of highly motivational (see further), authentic listening material (since they are commonly listened to by native speakers) that can be used in several different ways:

- gap-fill exercises either with or without a list of words to choose from (see lesson plans 1 and 4)
- spotting words which can be ticked, circled or written down (the same can be done with specific grammatical constructions – e.g. students are told to identify all examples of passives or forms of the future tense as in lesson plan 5)
- correcting mistakes in the lyrics (as in lesson plan 2); finding words that were not sung (lesson plan 3)
- true-false exercises
- multiple choice exercises
- dictation – students are told to write down the lyrics by themselves; guessing difficult words
- pronunciation exercises – students can practise pronunciation of individual sounds and words, they might be told to copy the intonation patterns
- spotting differences between the lyrics and a given picture
- drawing a picture – based either on the mood and atmosphere of the song or its narrative
- organising the lyrics into individual lines and stanzas
- listen-and-do exercises – students can imitate the actions described in the song
- especially young learners might want to sing the song in class which may be a pleasant way to end the lesson (if possible they can even bring their musical instruments). It can be accompanied by pantomime (total physical response approach).

Songs represent valuable teaching material. However, not every song is appropriate for teaching purposes. Pop songs are generally speaking better because they are usually of reasonable length, their lyrics and tunes are memorable<sup>2</sup> and the learners

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<sup>2</sup> It may seem self-evident, but we need to avoid songs with offensive or aggressive lyrics. I prefer to use popular songs because they are potentially appealing to more students than alternative music genres.

are familiar with them – we as teachers do not bring something alien to the class, songs are part of our everyday lives.

## **2.2 TEACHING PRODUCTIVE SKILLS**

It is not as obvious as with receptive skills but songs can also significantly contribute to the development of writing and speaking – which is together referred to as productive skills. (Harmer 2001: 246) The production of written and spoken texts is dependent on several factors. They are primarily determined by setting, purpose and channel (a formal business letter and a conversation of two friends in a pub certainly differ in terms of vocabulary and grammatical structures used). (Ibid. 247) Students should be taught all kinds of functional styles and should be provided with variety of exercises to practise them. Teachers are expected to introduce different texts as models (listening and reading as an input) and encourage students to produce texts of their own. (Ibid. 250 – 251) Reception and production depend on each other. Productive activities must be creative. Vocabulary drill or gap-fill exercises are not considered tasks to practise productive skills. (Ibid. 249) Neither is dull copying of model texts. The elements of self-reliance (formal letters) and imagination (narratives) are of crucial importance.

### **2.2.1 DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS THROUGH SONGS**

Written texts are usually more structured than spoken texts (with possible exceptions such as formal speeches which however often exist in written form as well). “Writing demands a greater degree of explicitness, since writers and their readers are separated in time and space. They therefore can’t rely on immediate feedback in order to clear up misunderstandings.” (Thornbury 2008: 249) We must respect punctuation rules and given layout when writing for example formal letters. Most text genres are associated with stereotypical vocabulary and grammatical constructions (conventional ways of opening and closing letters; “legal” or journalistic vocabulary etc.). Students need to get familiar with these types of texts to be able to imitate their form in the future. We should stress that the pre-writing and post-writing phases are very important and therefore time-consuming. The

author has to think about the layout and content of the particular piece of writing, he or she has to collect necessary data, review the text, edit it if necessary etc. (Harmer 2001: 256 – 258) In creative writing we should encourage students to use their imagination and life experience. Writing is stereotypically considered an individual activity but it can be also practised in pairs or larger groups – and the results are often very interesting. (Ibid. 260)

Songs can help to develop writing skills in several ways, written texts being both a means and an end of song activities:

- taking notes of the song lyrics. “Notes taken from the listening passage can be re-worked into full written form, and you do useful work on the differences between the spoken and the written form of the same information.” (Rixon 1990: 117)
- taking notes of the mood of the song – emotional associations aroused in the listeners
- song report
- CD review, concert review
- completing the lyrics
- students can write their own (alternative) lyrics
- writing an essay about the interpreter; about the kind of music students like to listen
- rewriting or/and interpreting the story of the song (see lesson plan 6)
- writing a reaction to the song lyrics – for example in lesson plan 1 I ask students to reply to the letter in Beatles song *P.S. I Love You*

Writing is not a typical aim of lesson plans based primarily on listening. We can nevertheless use other activities (reading, listening and speaking) as a springboard to practise both creative and purposeful writing.

## **2.2.2 DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH SONGS**

My research has shown that students consider speaking the most important and useful skill. 40% of respondents stated that they would prefer to focus on speaking

in their lessons (see graph 2) and for 43% of them communication is the main reason for studying English (see graph 1). Indeed, learners who master the language are called its “speakers”. (Ur 2004: 120) It is however a very long and sometimes tiresome process to become capable of speaking in the foreign language: “one frustration commonly voiced by learners is that they have spent years studying English, but still can’t speak it.” (Thornbury 2008: 208)

“One of the main difficulties, of course, is that speaking usually takes place spontaneously and in real time, which means that planning and production overlap. If too much attention is paid to planning, production suffers, and the effect is a loss of fluency. On the other hand, if the speaker’s attention is directed solely on production, it is likely that accuracy will suffer, which could prejudice intelligibility. In order to free up attention, therefore, the speaker needs to have achieved a degree of automaticity in both planning and production.” (Ibid.)

The obvious solution is to make students talk as much as possible. However getting students to speak is probably the most difficult task teachers can face.

Why are students afraid or unwilling to talk in class? First of all, speaking is a very complex skill. According to Penny Ur, the speaker has to pay attention to vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation at the same time. He or she has to be a good listener, too, since we usually say something in response to something else. Another reason for unwillingness to participate in speaking activities is students’ lack of interest and motivation. Often students feel afraid of being embarrassed by producing mistakes. Last but not least, classroom environment might seem to them artificial, out of touch with real-life situations. (Ur 2004: 121)

In order to prevent these problems, we have to make sure that:

- the topics are carefully chosen and students find them interesting. We can not expect them to express their opinions if they do not have any (political situation in Far East does not seem an appropriate topic for adolescents, while contemporary music does).

- students have something to say – if they seem “stuck”, we can provoke discussion by using pictures, giving them some hints, pre-teaching useful vocabulary etc. (Rixon 1990: 64 - 65)
- we introduce variety – we have to teach both interactional (“social”) and transactional (“practical”) language (Nunan 1995: 21)
- everybody is involved. To prevent embarrassment we might encourage group-work which is usually preferred by shy students. (Ur 2004: 121)
- students use adequate level of English – we should monitor their work and help them if necessary. However we should not over-correct them since it often results in de-motivation and frustration. Students should be told that while accuracy is certainly very important, fluency is the main aim of speaking activities. The level of English should be “lower than that used in intensive language-learning activities in the same class.” (Ibid. 121 - 122)
- mother tongue is not used
- classroom conversations are as near to real-life situations as possible. The best way to achieve that is to encourage role-play activities.

Listening activities present very good stimuli for classroom discussions. Speaking itself consists of a great deal of listening because it usually takes two to participate in a conversation. That is why these two skills should be practised together. (Anderson 1991: 16) Songs can be used as a basis for variety of both pre- and post-listening activities. These are some ideas:

- predicting the lyrics or the mood of the song according to its title
- guessing the name of the song (lesson plan 5)
- giving presentations on students’ favourite interpreters, songs and genres; discussing musical preferences and other topics (e.g. lesson plans 1 and 4)
- describing a relevant picture or photograph (see lesson plans 2 and 3); comparing and contrasting two pictures or photographs (see lesson plan 4)
- discussing the topic that is linked to the song
- post-listening discussion – what do the students think of the song? Did they recognize the interpreter?
- summarizing, interpreting or retelling the lyrics (lesson plan 6)
- translating the lyrics

- guessing the meaning of difficult words and phrases; assigning them to definitions written on the board
- role-playing the events from the song
- problem solving – in lesson plan 4 I ask students to imagine that “they are in Paul McCartney’s situation and they need to do everything they can to keep the band together.”
- guessing following lines of the song; creating new ones
- creating questionnaires concerning musical preferences and interviewing colleagues
- repeating the lines and practising pronunciation
- discussing extra materials – worksheets, newspaper articles etc.

As we have seen, songs present an almost inexhaustible reservoir of stimuli and it depends only on us if and to what extent we are able to exploit their potential.

## 2.3 TEACHING ADULTS

“The precise relationship between age and second language learning remains unresolved and controversial, despite a good deal of research into the issue. It is still not clear what the best age to begin learning a second language is, or whether there *is* a best age. (...) Nor is it clear whether, and how, the process is different in children compared to adults.” (Thornbury 2008: 10)

The age, however, seems a significant factor in deciding what and how to teach. It is obvious that young and adult learners distinctly differ in their experience, “needs, competences, and cognitive skills.” (Harmer 2001: 37) Scott Thornbury suggests, that children are “likely to become more native-like” and that they “are capable of acquiring a native accent in informal (ie, non-classroom) learning contexts.” (Thornbury 2004: 10). Adolescent and adult learners, on the other hand, “appear to do better on all linguistic measures (including pronunciation)” in “formal (ie, classroom) contexts.” (Ibid.). The common belief that “the younger student, the better student” is therefore very controversial and dubious. (Ibid. and Harmer 2004: 37) Songs with their flexibility can be used for a range of various activities and thus might suit students of all ages. For several remarks concerning this issue see below.

In the following lines I will describe particular characteristics and needs of adult learners who will be therefore treated as a uniform group (which in reality is often necessary, because, as I have already implied, it is impossible to please every students' needs and wishes). The biggest and most important difference between younger learners and adults is experience – and not just learning experience, but life experience in general. (Harmer 2006: 10 - 11) It may be a very positive factor, since their age has enabled them to cope with a variety of situations concerning both private life and work. They may have travelled a lot, met many interesting people, read hundreds of books – all this can be exploited in the educational process which in result may become richer and more interesting for everybody concerned. However, the experience can also be a negative influence: “Those who underachieved at school may subconsciously assume that they are going to fail again; those who were school successes may believe that learning English will be easy.” (Ibid. 11) Adult learners are often accustomed to particular set of routines and stereotypes, they have “specific expectations about the learning process” (Harmer 2001: 40) and may react negatively to certain teaching methods. Songs might alleviate their transition from one teaching method to another, since they have the power of making the learning process less stressful and more relaxed. Students might also want to specialize in a particular branch of English (business, legal, for travel purposes) which puts greater requirements on the teacher's part. (Ur 2004: 288) His or her position in the class is further complicated because while young learners take teacher's authority for granted, in adult classes he or she has to “deserve” it. (Ibid.)

Another problem in teaching adults might be caused by their fear of “losing face” and “looking foolish in front of their classmates” (Harmer 2006: 11) which is often related to their uncertainty concerning pronunciation and speaking skills in general. It often results in their unwillingness to speak in front of a larger audience. (Ibid.) All the possible problems are outweighed by adults' assets. Their motivation is usually very high because they need to study languages for their jobs and for other practical purposes (their extrinsic motivation is extremely high). (Harmer 2006: 11; Harmer 2001: 40; Ur 2004: 287) They study because they want to – they engage in what Jeremy Harmer calls “conscious exercise” – unlike small children, adults know that they actively participate in an educational process. (Harmer 2001: 40) That is

why their concentration and cooperation are better and they usually have no discipline problems. (Harmer 2006: 11) Penny Ur explains that: “this may be partly because people learn as they get older to be patient and put up with temporary frustrations in the hope of long-term rewards, to cooperate with other for joint profit, and various other benefits of self-restraint and disciplined cooperation.” (Ur 2004: 287) The idea of a pay-raise, promotion or other benefits is very strong and motivating.

Adults are also able to “engage with abstract thought.” (Harmer 2001: 40) Penny Ur puts it in other words and says that they have “greater capacity for understanding and logical thought.” (Ur 2004: 287) While children are usually willing (and even excited) to be involved in a learning process only when it is “disguised” as a game, adults often literally require “conscious learning” (see above) with all the definitions, rules and examples both from the target language and mother tongue. Jeremy Harmer stresses the importance of distinguishing between teaching children and teaching adults. At the same time he claims, however, that it should not lead to exclusion of pleasure from the educational process: “We won’t want to treat them like children, but some of them might, nevertheless, respond well to a lighter style of learning which does, indeed, include quizzes, puzzles and the study of contemporary songs.” (Harmer 2006: 11 – 12) He recommends to combine conscious learning with indirect activities; serious study and games should be balanced. (Harmer 2001: 40)

Songs, as I have been trying to demonstrate, can provide both pleasure and conscious learning. They can be used to create a relaxed atmosphere and at the same time they can serve as an object for thorough analysis of its vocabulary or grammatical structure. In adult courses, due to the learners’ experience, songs can be used to serve different purposes than in courses for children. While children might express a wish to sing the song or to play games, adults might be encouraged to identify its “hidden” meanings, describe the poetic qualities of its lyrics or to relate to the songs personally (Beatles songs, being an inseparable part of the 60’s culture, might have a special appeal to adult learners since all my students know them – graph 13 – and many of them like them – graph 14). My research has shown that 65% of respondents *do* think that songs can be used to teach English to a great or to a certain extent; and none of the respondents answered the question “Do you think

songs can be used to teach the English language?” negatively. (graph 15) 81% think that Beatles *can* help in learning English to a certain extent and only two of the respondents (5%) think they can not help at all. (graph 16) I find the results very promising since they clearly show that adult learners have also spotted the great “educational” potential of songs and are willing to work with them in the classroom.

## 2.4 TEACHING IN HETEROGENOUS CLASSES

Ideally, teachers would teach in small groups of students who have achieved the same level of second language proficiency, who share the same needs and who have set themselves similar goals. In reality, teachers often have to cope with large and disparate classes formed of students that come from different cultural backgrounds, have diverse skills and levels of knowledge and study the foreign language for a variety of reasons. These classes are usually called heterogeneous or mixed-ability classes.<sup>3</sup>

Penny Ur lists several factors which can cause the class’ heterogeneity. The students may differ in their: language-learning ability (the ability to learn languages; students’ potential); the current state of language knowledge; cultural background; learning style; attitude to the language; mother tongue; intelligence (or, as we will see, *intelligences*); world knowledge; learning experience; knowledge of other languages; age or maturity; gender; personality; confidence; motivation; interests; independence; self-discipline; educational level. (Ur 2004: 304) All these variables have to be taken into account when deciding what and how to teach because teaching in a heterogeneous class poses one significant problem. All these variables have to be taken into account when deciding what and how to teach because teaching in a heterogeneous class poses one significant problem which is the difficulty to achieve what Penny Ur calls “effective learning” – whatever task you

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<sup>3</sup> Penny Ur favors the former term, since she finds the phrase “mixed-ability class” misleading. (Ur 2004: 302). Scott Thornbury claims that we have to distinguish between “mixed-ability classes” and “classes of mixed levels”. The former is a class “where there is a marked difference among the learners in terms of aptitude, learning style or motivation.” The latter is formed of students “with different levels of proficiency.” (Thornbury 2008: 132) In the following lines I will use the term “heterogeneous class” as defined by Penny Ur: heterogeneous classes are “classes whose members are particularly or unusually ‘heterogeneous’, and which therefore present special problems for both learners and teacher.” (Ur 2004: 302)

ask your students to complete, it will always be either too difficult or too easy. (Ibid.) The textbooks with their supplementary material are usually homogenous which means that they are targeted on a group of students with similar second language proficiency. This makes activating all the students at the same time and getting them to work according to their fullest potential difficult and sometimes almost impossible. (Ibid.)

According to Penny Ur, teachers can approach this problem with several possible solutions: They are advised to vary the topics, methods and texts used in the class as much as possible – to make the activities interesting and to meet the needs of as many students as possible. Collaboration between students in groups or pairs should be encouraged – and in the end what at first seemed an insurmountable barrier can become an advantage since weaker students might profit from the contact with the more talented ones. Another possibility is to individualize the educational process – students do the tasks on their own according to their potential – weaker students do only the compulsory exercises while more talented students are given optional instructions (we must make sure that they are motivated properly. Penny Ur states that we must count on their own competitiveness). Last but not least we should use more open-ended cues – exercises with more acceptable answers which in result will reflect the class' heterogeneousness. The existence of more possible answers may also remove the burden of being embarrassed by producing a mistake. (Ur 2004: 302 - 314)

Songs are highly appropriate to be used in heterogeneous classes because they can be exploited in various ways. Through the use of songs you introduce variety which is, as we have already seen, crucial. They can be used both for close-ended (gap-fill, true-false, multiple choice) and open-ended tasks (especially pre- and post-listening activities) and thus might be suitable for all types of students. (Ur 2004: 309 - 311) You can also ask each student to select his or her favourite song which will be analyzed in class – you make them feel responsible for a given lesson. (Murphey 1995: 14)

## 2.4.1 MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

“Intelligence is usually thought of as being a single, inborn capacity. But the theory of multiple intelligences (MI), as first proposed by Howard Gardner, views intelligence as being multi-dimensional.” (Thornbury 2008: 138) Howard Gardner and his followers usually distinguish eight types of intelligences “that individuals possess in different strengths and combinations.” (Ibid.) All of these intelligences should be represented in and developed through the educational process. In this chapter I will briefly suggest and demonstrate how it can be done through the use of songs.

- (1) Verbal/linguistic intelligence – students might be told to analyze, retell or interpret the lyrics or to do the exercises aimed at vocabulary (gap-fill, multiple choices etc.). Learners with predominating linguistic intelligence also like to engage in discussions which can form part of pre- and post-listening phase.
- (2) Logical/mathematical intelligence – students might analyze the rhythmic or rhyme patterns of the song. You can prepare various quizzes that will test their ability to use their logic.
- (3) Visual/spatial intelligence – if possible, you can provide students with supplementary material such as pictures or maps that will help them to visualize the lyrics. You can also ask them to draw pictures according to the lyrics. Music videos are also appropriate.
- (4) Bodily/kinesthetic intelligence – you can encourage students to clap while listening to the song to demonstrate its natural rhythm. Younger learners might even like to dance. You can ask students to prepare questionnaires and then move around the class to get the answers.
- (5) Musical/rhythmic intelligence – music and rhythm help students in coping with the vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation issues. For students with prevailing musical intelligence songs become natural means of acquiring the language.
- (6) Interpersonal intelligence (“the ability to understand other people’s feelings and wishes” (Ibid.)) – learners can for example analyze the emotional level of the songs or the mood of the interpreter. They also like to participate in

post-listening discussions, are keen to express their opinions and listen to ideas of their colleagues.

(7) Intrapersonal intelligence (“the ability to understand oneself” (Ibid.)) – introspective students might want to compose their own lyrics, write essays on their musical preferences etc.

(8) Naturalist intelligence – we can prepare lyrics that are associated with animals, plants, space etc.

(more on multiple intelligences – Harmer 2001: 46 – 47; Thornbury 2008: 138 – 139)

David Nunan has introduced another concept in which he differentiates four types of learners according to their learning preferences:

(1) Concrete learners – are those who prefer authentic material. They like games, films and music. Songs present concrete examples of authentic texts and are therefore highly appropriate for this kind of learners.

(2) Analytical learners – are those who prefer working on their own and enjoy studying grammar. Song lyrics can be analysed in various ways, they can be used to demonstrate grammatical constructions and can be exploited for a variety of exercises aimed at grammar (for example one of the aims of lesson plan 5 is future tense, in lesson plan 1 students practise question formation, in lesson plan 4 present continuous etc. ).

(3) Communicative learners – are those who like to learn especially by listening and conversation. Again, songs can be used as a springboard for various discussions concerning musical preferences, culture of the target language, the main theme of the song etc.

(4) Authority-oriented learners – are those who naturally respect the teacher and prefer him or her to do a lot of explaining. They are also more comfortable with reading activities – we can ask such students to take notes during the listening or to read and analyze the lyrics.

(Nunan 1995: 170)

Tasks should reflect variety of learners’ preferences since each student might be comfortable with different kinds of exercises. Therefore it is our duty to plan the lessons so that all intelligences and skills are equally cultivated: “If your class

consists of learners with a range of strategy preferences, then you will need to provide a range of learning options and activities in class.” (Ibid.)

## **2.5 MOTIVATION**

All methodologists agree (and teachers will undeniably support their conclusion) that motivation is a crucial factor in language learning process. Jeremy Harmer defines it as “some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something.” (Harmer 2006: 51) Scott Thornbury adds that it is “a key factor in determining success or failure in language learning.” (Thornbury 2008: 137) Penny Ur describes a motivated student as being “eager and willing to invest his or her effort into learning process and make progress.” (Ur 2004: 275) Other features typical for motivated students according to Ur are: positive task orientation; ego-involvement; need for achievement; high aspirations; goal orientation; perseverance; tolerance of ambiguity. (Ur 2004: 275) Scott Thornbury lists similar qualities that define motivated learners: attitudes (to the target language); goals and the learner’s orientation to these goals; expectancy of success; self-esteem; intrinsic interest, pleasure, relevance, challenge; group dynamic and teacher’s attitudes. (Thornbury 2008: 137) “But whatever kind of motivation students have, it is clear that highly motivated students do better than ones without any motivation at all.” (Harmer 2006: 8)

Several types and sources of motivation are distinguished – some of them are more associated with the learner’s own aspirations, others rather come under teacher’s authority. Integrative motivation (the learner wants to integrate into the target culture) is stronger than instrumental motivation (learning languages as one of the means to get a better job or a pay-raise). (Harmer 2006: 8) In respect to the time aspect, we differentiate short-term goals (passing an exam for example) and long-term goals (mastering the language; integrating into target language community etc.). (Harmer 2001: 53) The most important distinction (at least for the purposes of this thesis) is between extrinsic and intrinsic sources of motivation. “Extrinsic motivation is caused by any number of outside factors, for example, a need to pass an exam, the hope of financial reward, or the possibility of future travel. Intrinsic

motivation, in contrast, comes from within the individual. Thus a person might be motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process itself or by a desire to make themselves feel better. (...) Even where the original reason for taking up a language course, for example, is extrinsic, the chances of success will be greatly enhanced if the students come to love the learning process.” (Harmer 2001: 51)

As teachers we have virtually no chance of increasing the extrinsic motivation of our students – it is something that already exists outside the classroom. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation is very much under our authority: “One of the main tasks for teachers is to provoke interest and involvement in the subject even when students are not initially interested in it. It is by their choice of topic, activity and linguistic content that they may be able to turn a class around.” (Harmer 2006: 8) I am convinced that integrating songs into educational process can substantially enhance students’ intrinsic motivation which is dependent on the comfort of the environment (classroom) and method and materials chosen by the teacher.

Penny Ur lists several possibilities of increasing learners’ intrinsic motivation. Some of them are (or can be) related to song activities:

- using visuals – song activities can be accompanied by pictures (pre-listening activities in some of my lesson plans) or music videos. Both activate the students and provide variety.
- varied topics – songs can be integrated into various lesson plans, they do not have to stand on their own. While it is certainly possible to arrange a lesson with song activities in its center, it is also perfectly plausible to use them as a “supplement” for textbook exercises.
- games – songs are very flexible and can be used as a basis for games, quizzes, questionnaires. The only limit is teacher’s creativity and imagination. (a game called Jukebox is part of lesson plan 5)
- entertainment – songs are products of the entertainment business and thus one of their natural qualities is the ability to entertain
- relaxed atmosphere – songs can be accompanied by a variety of activities aimed at grammar or vocabulary practise. But they can also be played for sheer pleasure and relaxation.

- personalization – as mentioned in previous chapters, you can make lessons more interesting and interactive by asking students to choose their own songs
- play-acting – disguised as a “game”, play-acting is a good way to prepare students for real-life conversation. For example in lesson plan 5 I ask students to play a flower shop conversation.
- the class – as Tim Murphey believes, songs “encourage harmony within oneself and within a group.” (Murphey 1995: 8)

(Ur 2004: 281)

Penny Ur claims that intrinsic motivation is more associated with children and diminishes with age. (Ur 2004: 276) But I think that we should not underplay its role in teaching adults, too. As teachers we are obliged to do as much as possible to create relaxed atmosphere and to provide interesting teaching material. I find songs a strong motivational tool that has the potential to “bridge the gap between the pleasurable experience of listening (...) and the communicative use of language.” (Murphey 1995: 6)

## **2.6 METHODOLOGY**

Jeremy Harmer describes method as a “practical realisation of an approach” while approach “refers to ‘theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching.’” (Harmer 78)<sup>4</sup> In this chapter I will deal only with the communicative approach which in my opinion is most appropriate to make use of song activities.

### **2.6.1 COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH**

“The communicative approach is an umbrella term used to describe a major shift in emphasis in language teaching that occurred in Europe on the 1970s. Essentially, the shift was away from teaching language systems (such as vocabulary and grammar) in isolation to teaching people how these systems are used in real communication.” (Thornbury 2008: 36)

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<sup>4</sup> The latter is taken from Richards J. and Rogers T. *Approaches and Methods to Language Teaching*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986. 16.

In other words, communicative approach favours authenticity and communicativeness, stresses the importance of exposure to the target language and activation of the students. (Harmer 2006: 32) Concrete language functions (inviting, borrowing, buying a ticket) are favoured over often abstract definitions and vocabulary drills. The language is seen as a vehicle for communication, mother tongue is therefore usually excluded from the process. The approach is purpose-oriented – students are taught to be able to use the language in certain contexts to achieve certain goals. (Harmer 2001: 84) “The new emphasis on the communicative purposes of language also meant recognizing that these purposes might be different for different learners. This encouraged the development both of needs analysis and of special courses designed to meet these needs.” (Thornbury 2008: 37) The amount of exposure and authenticity of material are crucial: “Plentiful exposure to language in use and plenty of opportunities to use it are vitally important for a student’s development of knowledge and skill.” (Harmer 2001: 85) All of the strategies are supposed to prepare the students to face real-life situations. Role-play and simulations are therefore very popular in communicative approach. For the same reason the fluency is considered more important than grammatical correctness. (Ibid.)

“Activities should attempt to replicate real communication.” (Ibid.) Teacher thus uses authentic listening and reading material (including songs) and stresses the importance of grasping the overall message rather than all the details. Students are encouraged to practise variety of language structures, not a single one that is repeated over and over (drills are rare in communicative approach). (Ibid.) All of the four skills are practised – not in isolation but in interaction. Listening is perceived as a stimulus for speaking, reading is a springboard for writing or again speaking. Since fluency is considered the most important goal, teacher usually does not interrupt students; he or she corrects them only after the activity is finished. (Ibid.)

Some of the popular tasks used in lessons based on communicative approach are:

- information gaps - students work in pairs and have different sets of information – they ask each other to fill the gaps (Ibid.) – see lesson plan 1 where students are asked to fill the gaps in an article about the Beatles
- role-plays and simulations

- information sharing
- discussing one's opinions
- writing both formal and informal letters etc.

Useful as it is, Jeremy Harmer claims that the communicative approach is a little bit vague since it is easy to identify its aims, but difficult to precisely define its principles and techniques. In classes we usually use mixture of different methods and approaches which is a positive thing – eclecticism is in this case not a mark of vagueness or inconsistency but of variety and teacher's effort to satisfy the needs of all students. (Ibid.)

### 3. PRACTICAL PART

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This work was written as a reflection of an English teacher at the beginning of her career at the language school. I started teaching in language courses for adults three years ago. As an inexperienced teacher I have been encountering many difficulties regarding the needs and preferences of my students. I have been unable to identify which skills and abilities should be developed in order to meet their aims.

Obviously, it is never possible to prepare a lesson to suit all the learners as they have varied learning styles, different levels of previous knowledge of English and they study the language for different purposes. On the other hand, it is doubtless that a survey among the students and its thorough analysis makes it possible to adapt the classwork and satisfy the needs of most learners.

I decided to take advantage of this opportunity to increase the effectiveness of my classes. I teach in four courses of English (see table 1) which feature certain differences. Two of them are company courses which are quite learner-centered and full of interaction (teacher-student interaction as well as pair work and group work), one is a course in which the learners study using rather conservative methods (grammar translation method and various kinds of drills) and the last one is focused on more modern approaches to language teaching and learning (communicative approach and developing all language skills). The courses also differ in the textbooks used, namely *New English File Elementary*, *Angličtina pro jazykové školy I.* and *New Headway Elementary*. The books are given and the students choose a course according to their preferences. I wanted to find out my students' reasons for enrolling on the courses and the language skills they wished to develop.

Firstly, I carried out some preparatory findings by asking the students what motivates them to learn a foreign language. The members of the company courses mentioned that they were asked to participate in the classes by their employer. Therefore they took up the course with the future prospect of using the language at

work, cooperating with foreigners and increasing their salary. The students in the “conservative class” usually perceive the study of English as a form of brain exercise or they simply want to be able to understand the language they encounter in various situations such as watching television, listening to the radio, reading English headlines and manuals or communicating with foreigners. The members of the last group expressed deeper interest in the language as such. They wanted to listen to music and understand the lyrics of the songs, read in English and use the language while travelling. Many of them were interested in how the language works and they liked its sound.

The findings of this informal discussion with my students were of significant value. I was inspired to prepare a more elaborate research regarding their needs. The research involved five phases:

1. creating a questionnaire
2. assessing the students’ answers
3. detailed analysis
4. evaluation of the students’ needs
5. suggestions for making the classwork more effective

The questionnaire (see appendix 2) was based on the classroom discussion mentioned above. The questions included were focused on the language skills and problem areas which the learners were bothered with. In the second phase I assessed the results and treated them statistically by which I obtained data for a detailed analysis of the learners’ needs. The analysis was performed using graphic devices accompanied by short commentaries which reflected to what extent my original expectations corresponded to the results. On the basis of these results I evaluated the students’ needs to find out what areas of classwork should be emphasized in the future. Finally I came up with specific suggestions which I implied in the form of sample lesson plans.

### 3.2 DETAILED ANALYSIS

First of all, I would like to present the composition of the courses I teach which is shown below.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Company course I.	8	0	8
2. Company course II.	7	1	8
3. "Conservative course"	8	4	12
4. New Headway course	4	3	7
5. My colleague's course	7	2	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>44</b>

*Table 1*

The data for this research was collected from adult students of five courses held in a language school in Prostějov. Three of them are public courses and two are company courses. From the first table we can see that there are 44 respondents and that there are more women than men.

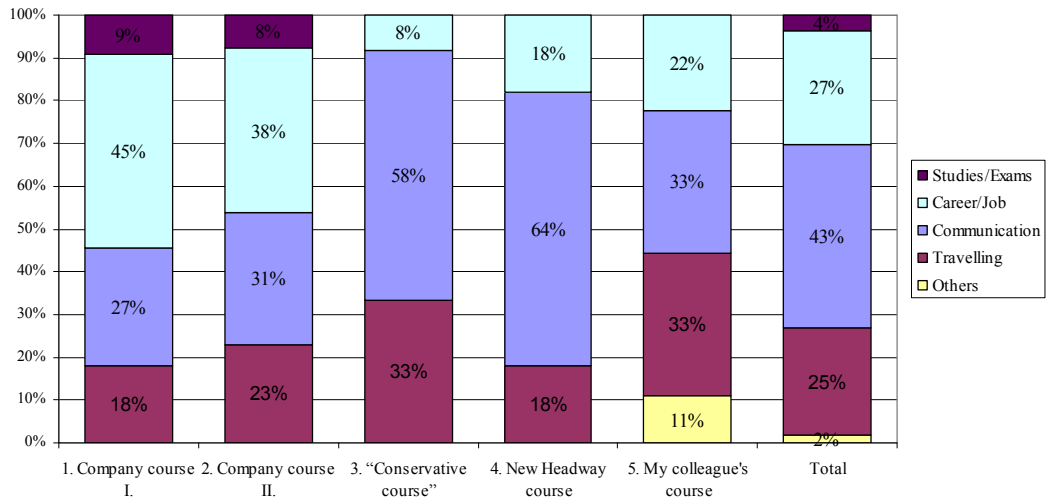
The respondents' age is shown in the following table. The biggest group of the respondents is between 18-29 years old.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>18 - 29</b>	18	2	20
<b>30 - 40</b>	10	6	16
<b>41 - 55</b>	6	1	7
<b>55 and more</b>	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>44</b>

*Table 2*

The above-mentioned group of students was subjected to the questionnaire I had designed. Its results in the form of 16 graphs are presented on the following pages.

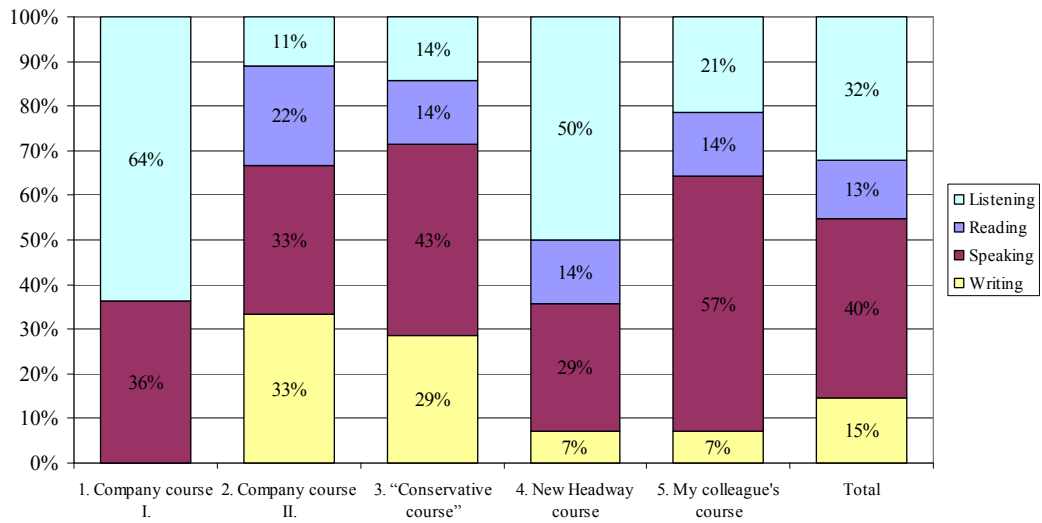
## Why do you study English?



*Graph 1*

The graph shows, perhaps not very surprisingly, that the three major reasons why adults in my courses study English are: *career/job*; *communication*; and *travelling*. In company courses the main motivational drives are naturally the prospects of a pay-raise or promotion. In other courses the prevailing reason to study English is more generally identified as communication (which can, nevertheless, include also some aspects of the other reasons – especially job and travelling – because they involve a good deal of communication, too). Travelling is represented in each of the courses and with its 25% should not be underestimated. Only 4% of the students (all of them from company courses) stated that their reason to study English is to pass an exam. The results clearly show that adults have a very high level of extrinsic motivation.

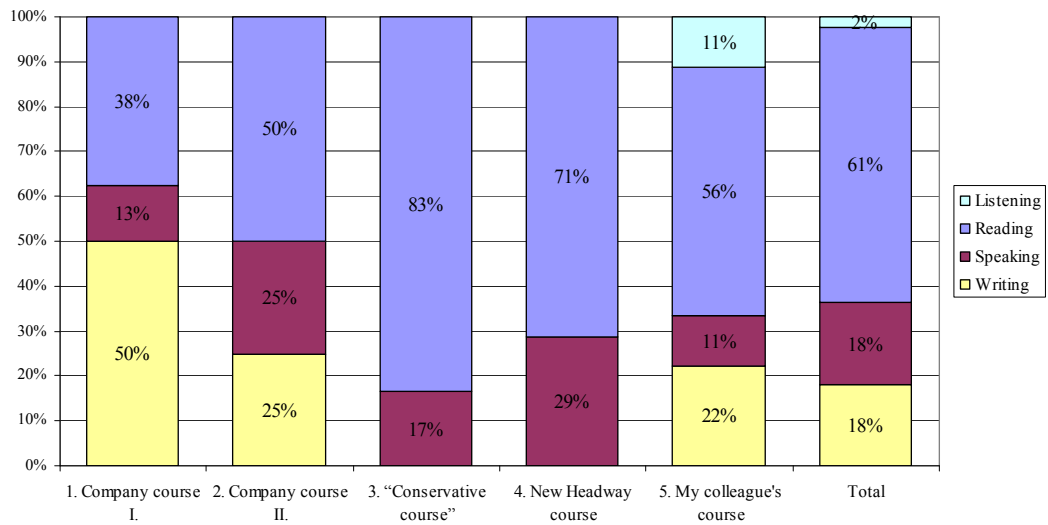
## Which skill do you preferably need to focus on?



Graph 2

Considering the results demonstrated by the first graph, the answers to the question *Which skill do you preferably need to focus on?* were rather predictable. Students want to focus on spoken communication – both its receptive and productive part. Speaking with its 40% is considered the most useful skill by the students. Listening, as the most difficult skill (see below), needs to be practised a lot and was selected by 32% of respondents. Writing and reading, in relation to their oral counterparts, are regarded as marginal skills – they ‘scored’ only 15% and 13%.

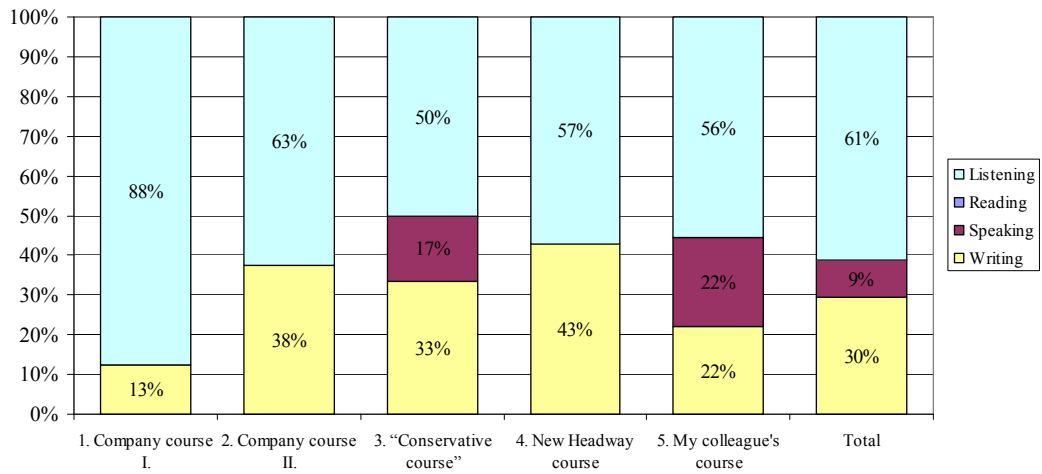
### Which of these language skills is the easiest for you?



Graph 3

Many students consider reading the most passive and therefore easiest skill of all (61%). (That the reality is significantly different has already been stated before – see chapter 2.1.1. on developing reading skills). On the other hand, listening (as validated by the following graph) is the most difficult and problematic skill (only one respondent finds it the easiest skill). Productive skills – speaking and writing – got the same results – 18%. One surprising finding can be seen in the results of Company course I. – half of the respondents find writing the easiest skill, which is very unusual since producing written texts usually causes serious problems.

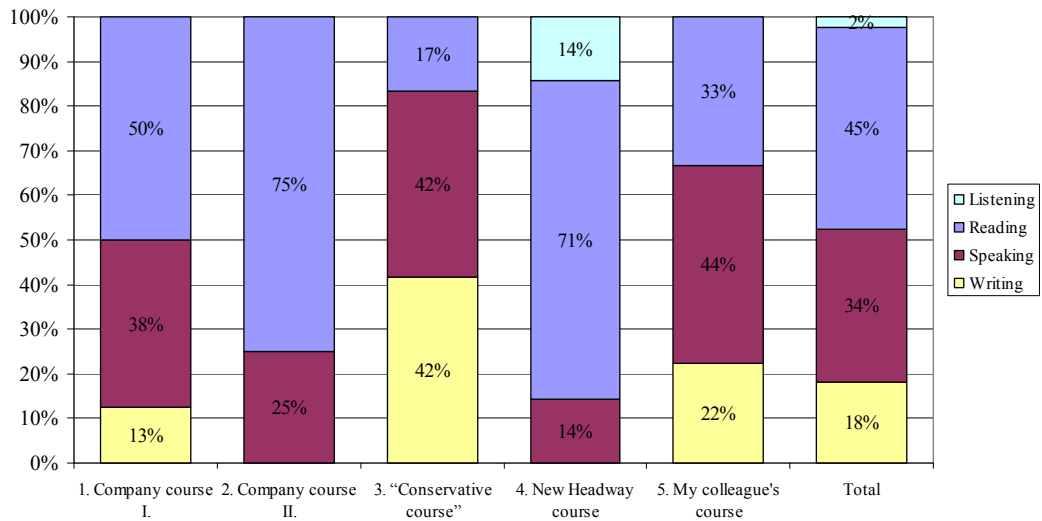
## Which of these language skills is the most difficult for you?



*Graph 4*

The results to a certain extent complement those demonstrated by the previous graph. Students in all courses find listening the most difficult skill (61%). The reasons why most learners are afraid of listening activities are generally known – see chapter 2.1.2. on developing listening skills. In contrast, reading got no vote and its position as the easiest skill (at least in the eyes of my students) is thus strengthened. Speaking of the productive skills, learners are more afraid of writing (30%) than of speaking (9%).

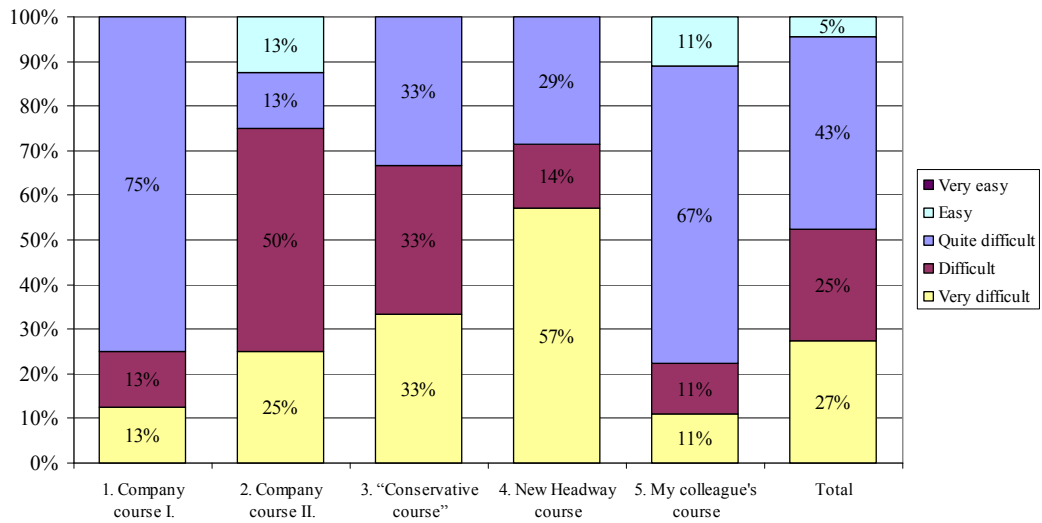
## Which of these language skills do you use most often?



Graph 5

I would say that the results to the fifth question are very ambiguous and the answers perhaps reflect more the question *Which of these language skills do you **think** you use most often?* than the question I actually asked. What students often do not realize is that we usually use more skills simultaneously – we speak in reaction to something we listened to; we write as a response to something we read etc. The most striking thing is the big disproportion between speaking (34%) and listening (2%) – it almost seems that students do not engage in conversations and speak exclusively in monologues. The imbalance between reading (45%) and writing (18%) is probably closer to reality since we are surrounded by English texts (especially on the Internet) to which we do not have to respond.

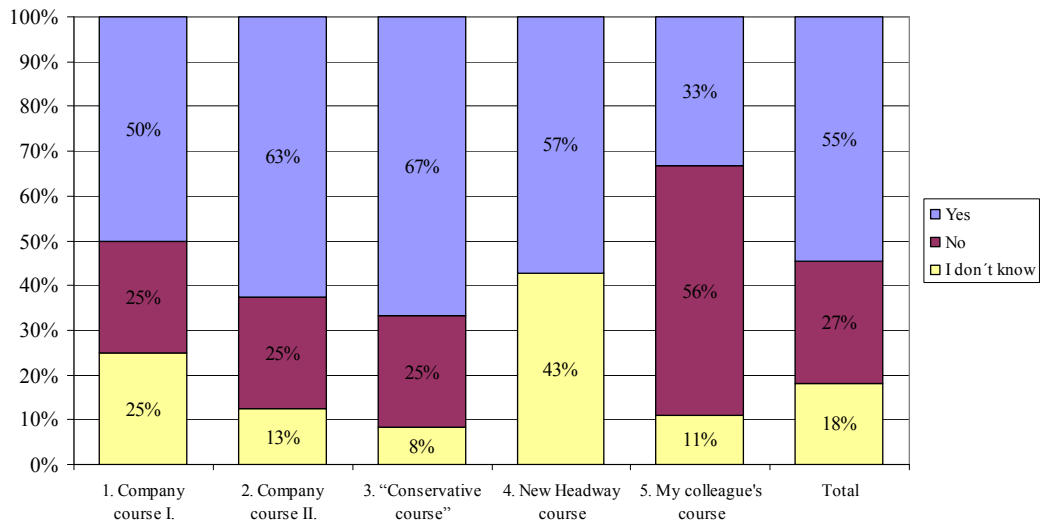
## How difficult is listening to English for you?



Graph 6

Listening is generally considered the most difficult skill (see chapter 2.1.2.). My students share this prevailing view since 52% of them find it *difficult* or *very difficult*. Only 5% of them (2 in absolute numbers) consider it *easy*, the rest (43%) chose the vaguest answer *quite difficult*. Judging from all the previous graphs, listening is still regarded as a *scarecrow* among the rest of language skills.

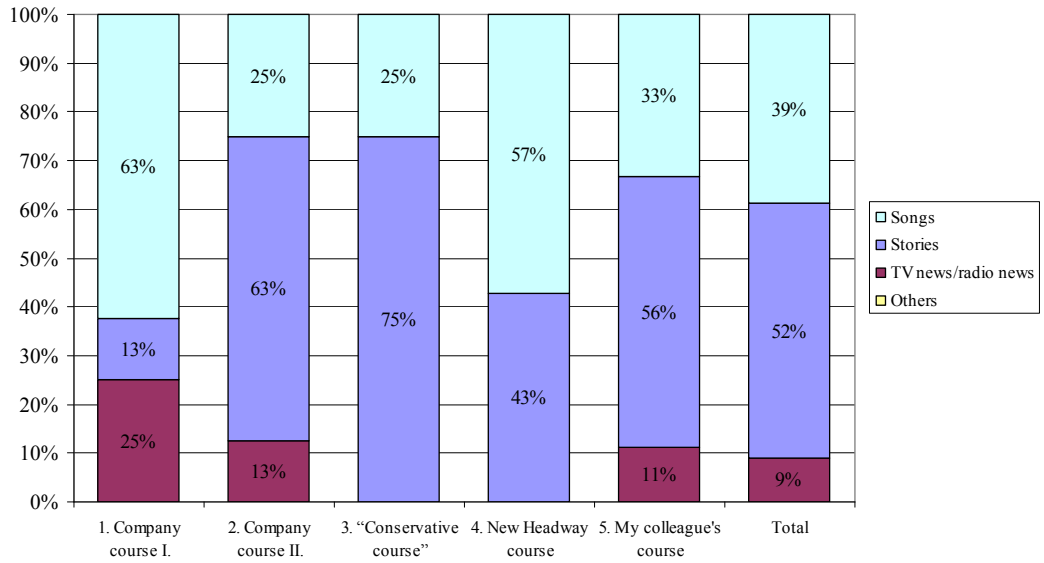
## Is there enough listening in your English lessons?



*Graph 7*

It is quite surprising that the majority of students (55%), while admitting they still have serious problems with listening activities, think there is enough listening in their English lessons. The most striking thing about it is that this view is also shared by the 'Conservative course' (67%) which follows the textbook *Angličtina pro jazykové školy* in which the listening activities are very rare. 18% of the respondents have no opinion at all.

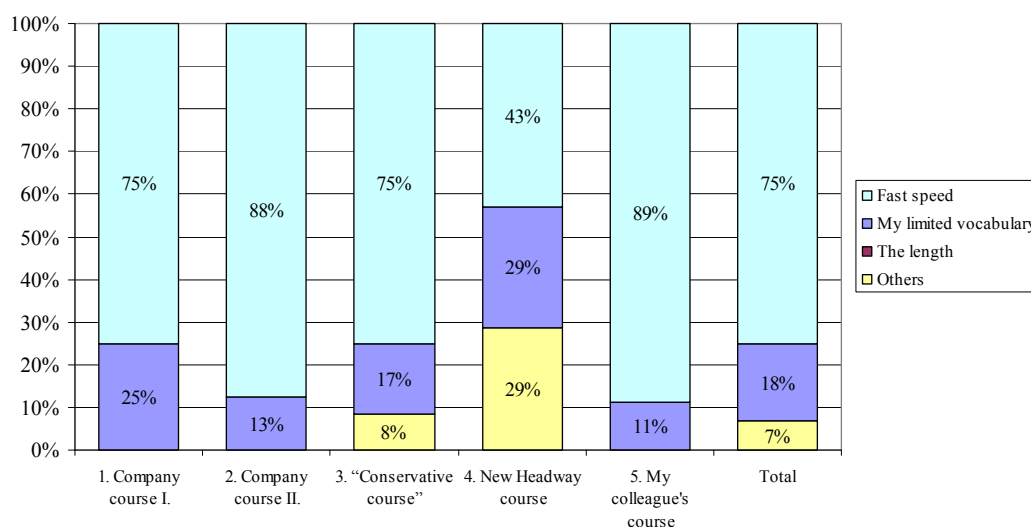
### What would you like to listen to?



Graph 8

My students clearly prefer spoken narratives (52%) and songs (39%) to listening material taken from TV or radio news (9%). It seems that they find stories and cultural artefacts such as songs more interesting and amusing than news extracts on current public affairs and politics. They had no ideas of their own since none of them suggested other types of texts suitable for listening activities.

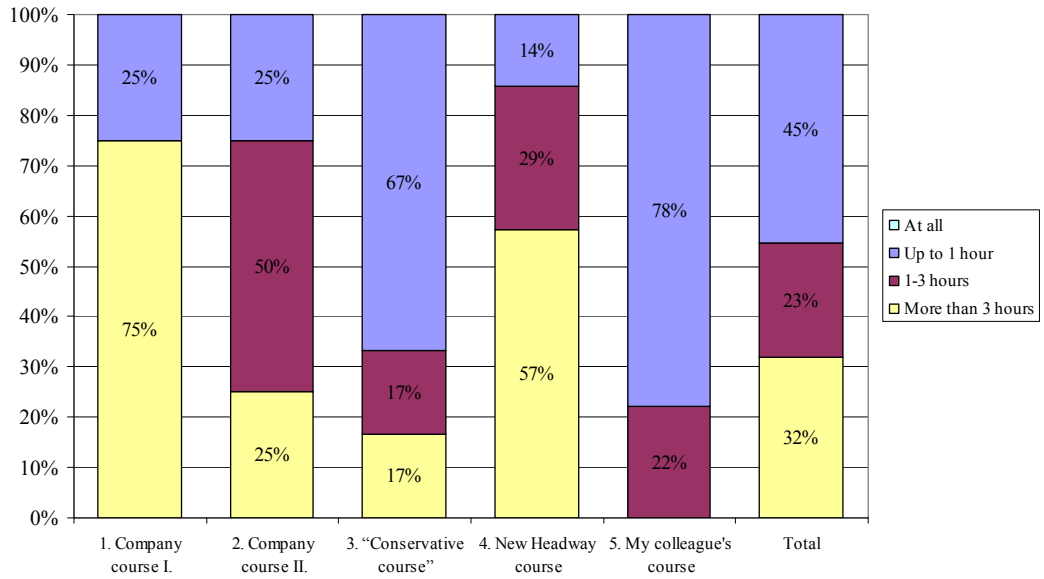
## What are the causes for NOT understanding the listening text?



*Graph 9*

*Fast speed* is the most serious cause for not understanding the listening texts since 75% of respondents chose this answer. Only 18% of them think that the most limiting barrier is their own poor *vocabulary*. The reality is probably more complex since it is the combination of several factors that makes listening to foreign languages and English in particular, so difficult – see the first part of chapter 2.1.2. It is also worth mentioning that the *length* of the listening tasks seems to pose no problem for my learners – none of the respondents selected it as an answer to my question.

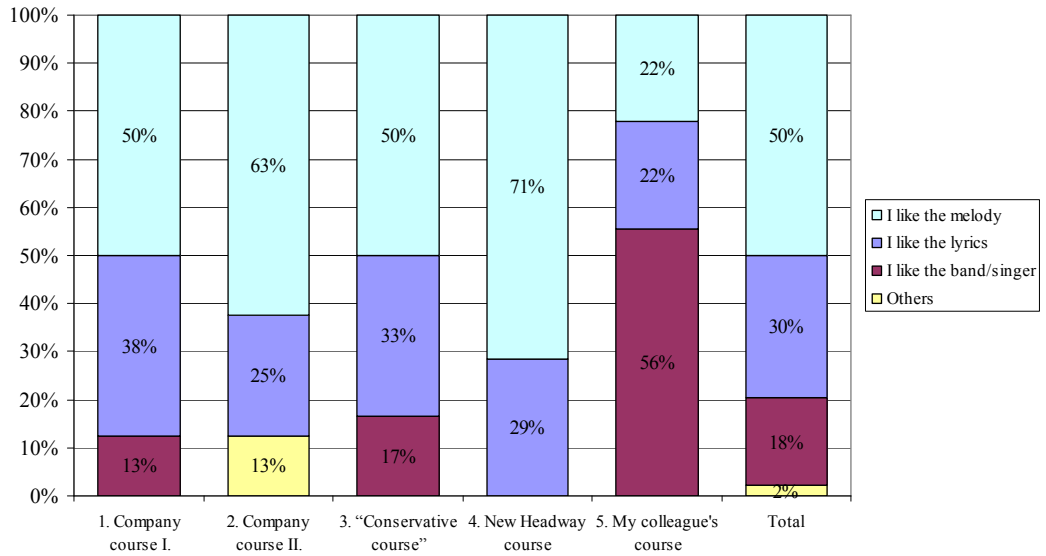
## How much do you listen to music?



*Graph 10*

The most promising finding is that all of my students listen to music – some of them even more than 3 hours a day (32%). Their naturally positive relationship to music can be thus further exploited in the educational process.

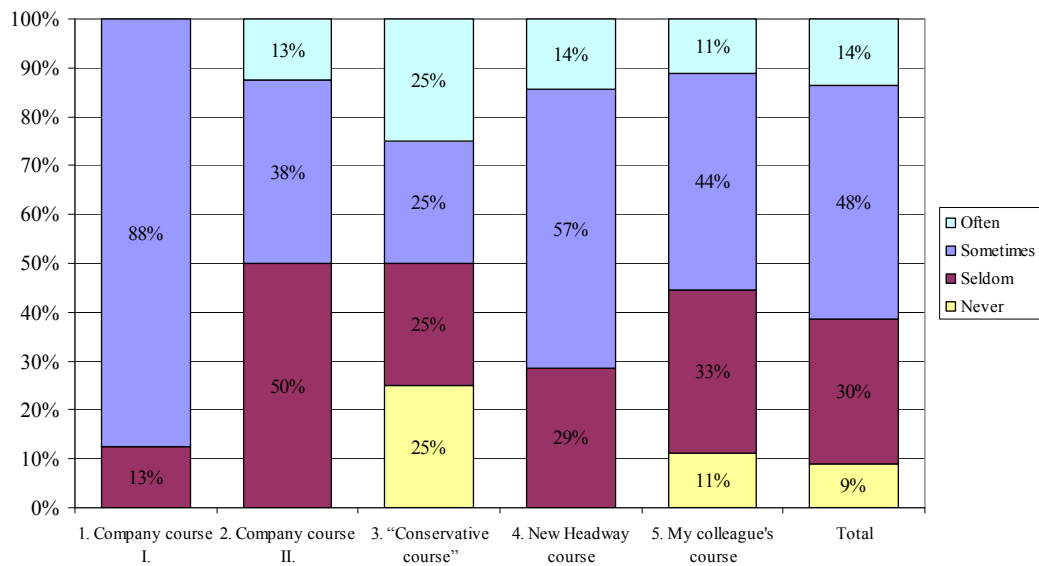
## Why do you listen to songs?



*Graph 11*

The *melody* is obviously the main reason for listening to songs (not only for my students but probably for people in general). Songs with their pleasant tunes and rhythms provide relaxation which is a precious thing in our times. 30% of my students focus on the song *lyrics* which can be elegantly exploited in the class – the lyrics can be analyzed, interpreted etc. 18% of the respondents have their favourite *bands or singers* on which they preferably focus.

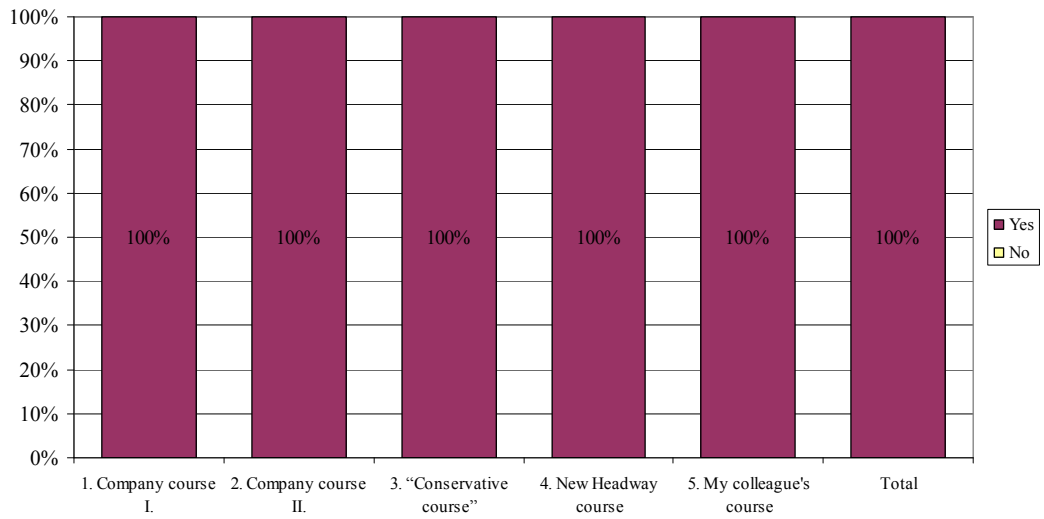
## Do you sometimes listen to songs to improve your English?



*Graph 12*

Even my students spotted songs' educational potential since 62% of them listen to songs (apart from other things) to improve their English *often* (14%) or *sometimes* (48%). 30% use songs to improve their English *seldom*, and only 9% claim they have never listened to them for educational purposes. The results clearly show that students are willing to regard songs as more than entertainment – they are ready to work with them in a class.

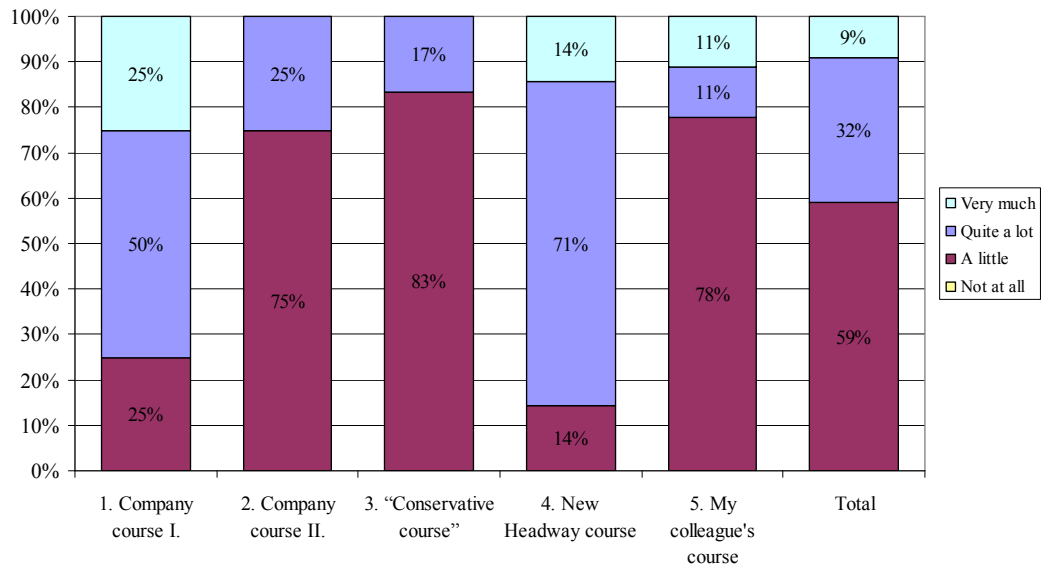
### Do you know the Beatles?



Graph 13

The results to this question are very convincing and self-evident. All of the students know the Beatles which is something I had expected, since the Beatles are a worldwide known phenomenon.

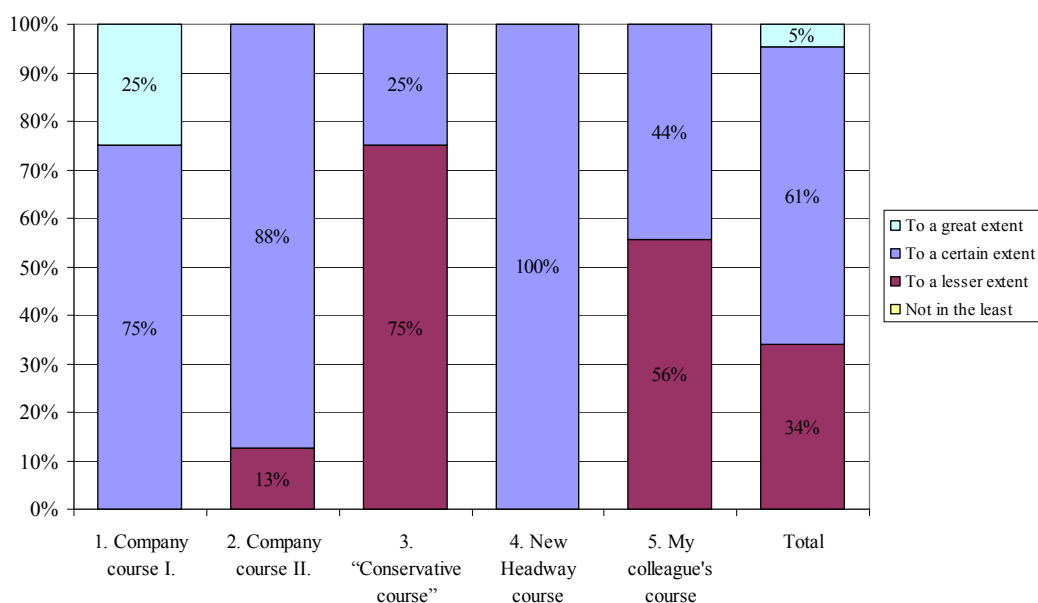
## How much do you like the songs by the Beatles?



*Graph 14*

Students in two of my courses (Company course I. and New Headway course) are very keen on Beatles and like their music a lot (75%). Learners in the other three courses are less enthused. There is, however, nobody who would not like the Beatles at all, the majority of respondents like them at least *a little* (59%). The results are not as convincing as I had expected, I nevertheless interpret them positively. In my opinion, it is very unlikely that another band or singer would get better results.

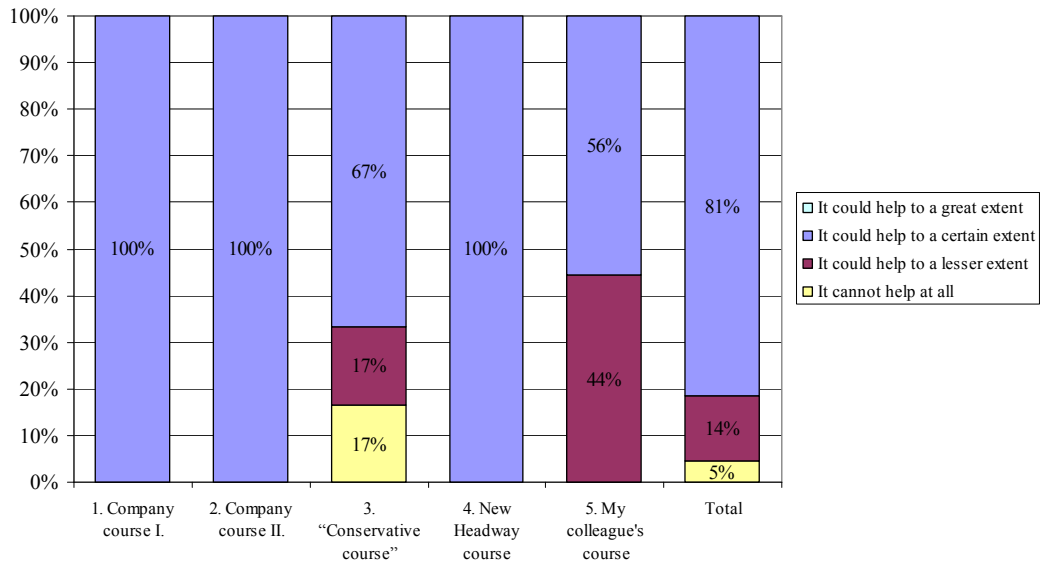
## Do you think songs can be used to teach the English language?



*Graph 15*

While some of the courses (Company Course I. and II., New Headway Course) are very optimistic and enthused by the idea of using songs to teach English, the students in the 'Conservative course' and my colleague's course are rather reluctant and in general think that songs can be used only *to a lesser extent*. But again, the most positive finding is that *not in the least* got not a single one vote.

## How much could Beatles songs help you in learning English?

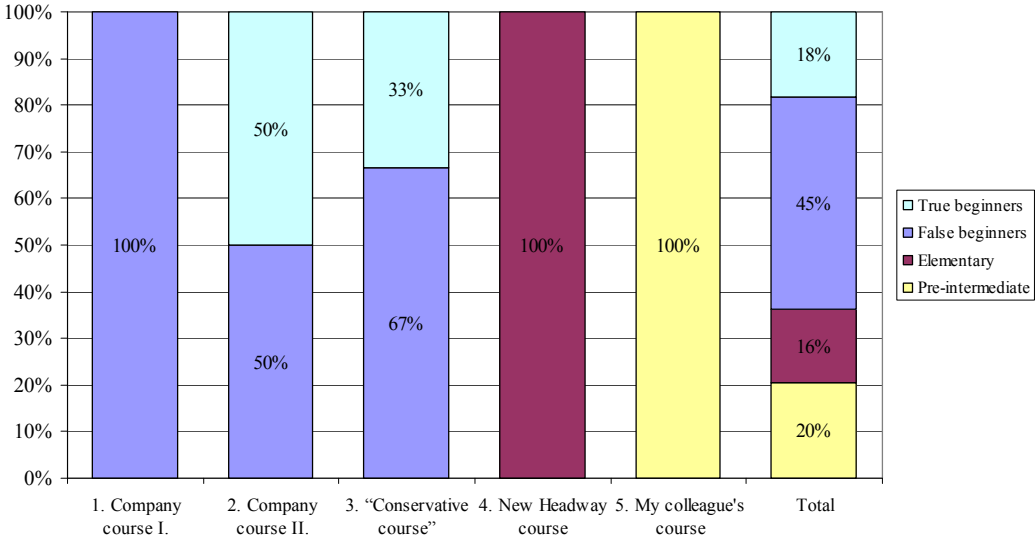


*Graph 16*

Again, students in three of my courses are very unified and consistent in their answers and claim that Beatles songs can help them in learning English *to a certain extent*. In the ‘Conservative course’ and my colleague’s course there are several students who think they can help *to a lesser extent* or that they *can not help at all* (2 people in the ‘Conservative course’). However, the majority of 81% feel very positively about using Beatles songs in English language lessons.

The last graph 17 is not part of the questionnaire. It reflects placement of my and my colleague's students into individual courses according to their English language proficiency.

**Students' level of English**



*Graph 17*

My lesson plans are organized to suit beginners, elementary and pre-intermediate students. The Company course I. is formed exclusively of false beginners. The Company course II. and the 'Conservative course' are attended both by true and false beginners. Students in the New Headway course are all on the elementary level and my colleague's course is formed by pre-intermediate level students.

### **3.3 EVALUATION OF THE STUDENTS' NEEDS**

On the basis of the research described in the chapters above I have developed a plan aimed at improving the effectiveness of the classwork in my courses. According to the students' needs it was necessary to focus on increasing their ability to understand a listening text (see graphs 4 and 6). As the figures show (see graph 8), many of the learners would be interested in using songs in the classes and they feel that activities connected with them would be helpful (see graphs 12 and 15). They regard listening the most difficult of the four basic skills and therefore they demand to reinforce practising it in the classes. Fast speed of the recordings is considered the most serious barrier to understanding the text (see graph 9). Regarding writing skill, the learners consider it the second in order of difficulty. It follows that the proportion of writing practice in the lessons ought to be increased as well. The third in order of toughness is speaking which I find rather surprising as this skill generally causes serious problems and the learners often have difficulty to express themselves (see graph 4). At the same time the students are aware of the fact that speaking is the most essential of the skills and they need to focus on it (see graph 2), which reflects the fact that 43% of them study English for the purpose of communication (see graph 1). Reading is perceived the least demanding of the skills by most of the students (see graphs 3 and 4). On the other hand, they mention reading as the most frequently used skill (see graph 5).

Two thirds of the questions which the learners responded to were concerned with listening practice. 52% of them are interested in listening to stories. Songs are second in their order of preference (see graph 8) but 48% sometimes listen to songs to improve their English (see graph 12). The prevalent majority of the respondents also think that songs could be used to teach the language in the classroom (see graph 15). All the students know the Beatles (see graph 13) and even though 59% like their music only little (see graph 14), most of them find their songs suitable for learning purposes (see graph 16).

### 3.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING THE CLASSWORK MORE EFFECTIVE

Having considered the findings above I started creating a concept of implementing some new techniques into my classes. From the beginning I intended to devote more space to activities based on the songs and factual information connected with the Beatles. The research confirmed my expectations and therefore justified my original objective. I decided to elaborate several lesson plans (see appendix 1) which would serve as a practical teaching aid. In these lesson plans I took into account the preferences of the respondents but I also included the skills they did not find important as I am convinced that the proportion of the individual skills should be kept in balance throughout a lesson.

While creating the lesson plans, I was trying to involve as many skills as possible and to use them in a natural way. Therefore the ensuing lessons are aimed at writing, reading, speaking and of course listening, which is practised both in terms of target words and general understanding. Moreover, various specific aims are pursued such as vocabulary work, grammatical structures, factual information and even so called “social skills”. For the reasons mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, I used songs by the Beatles as the basis of my lesson plans. Each of them uses one song accompanied by other materials such as short texts about the band, photos and a game. Each lesson plan thus contains several activities centered around a common theme or motif. Some of the activities are based directly on the lyrics of the songs, others are loosely connected in order to develop more skills and still others were inspired by various textbooks commonly used in language courses, e.g. *New English File Elementary / Pre-Intermediate*, and resources for teachers available on the Internet, e.g. *OneStopEnglish.com*.

The following are brief descriptions of the aims and activities pursued in the particular lesson plans and the evaluation of the lessons in which the plans were used. I attempted to assess to what extent the aims were realised in practice and whether the activities met with success in my courses.

### 3.4.1 LESSON PLAN 1 (P.S. I LOVE YOU): REFLECTION

The first aim of this lesson plan is to introduce the band and its members to the learners and thus create a context. As a warm-up a photo of the band's members is shown to the students and an ensuing discussion helps to evoke the atmosphere. The next activity tells the story of the band's origins and it is also used to fulfill a grammatical aim – practising question formation. All the other activities draw on the lyrics of the song *P.S. I Love You*. Variety is guaranteed by focusing on vocabulary work, listening with special emphasis on target words and writing practice which aims at the students' ability to express themselves on their own and use some of the information absorbed during the lesson.

I used this lesson plan in my “New Headway” course. My assumptions regarding the students' previous knowledge and interest were fulfilled as they seemed to be very enthusiastic about the topic. Most of them wanted to speak about their favourite style of music and share their attitudes to the Beatles and their songs. The problems with question formation also arose according to my expectations. It was necessary to revise the rules of making WH questions in the past simple tense with emphasis on using the auxiliary verb *did*. During the activity, however, the learners were still unable to form the questions correctly and needed my assistance. It follows that question formation should be practised repeatedly in our future classes. Vocabulary work proved to be fairly successful as the learners were always able to explain their choices no matter whether their answer was right or wrong. It was obvious that they could understand the general idea of the text and guess the meanings of unknown words. On the other hand, some of them required the translation of new vocabulary into their native language. I did not realise this problem while I was preparing the lesson plan, although it is quite common among learners of this age group. It would be helpful to involve this issue into the “possible problems” section of the plan. The teachers using the plan could decide how to solve this problem – whether they pre-teach the unknown vocabulary or insist on an “all-English activity”. After the vocabulary work, the students were well-prepared for the listening activity which I expected one of the most demanding parts of the lesson. Therefore I gave the students some tips on how to listen effectively so that they could complete the task. As the lyrics are rather simple and the tempo is slow, the results of the activity were

fairly satisfying. The success reinforced their self-confidence and had a strong motivating effect. With regard to the low level of my students' knowledge, it was necessary to give the students some basic writing tips as well. Surprisingly, they were unable to react to my questions about the structure of an informal letter. This may be considered the major failure of the lesson plan. I suppose that I should have prepared a sample informal letter as a handout for the students to rely on. The final part of the lesson thus took much longer than I expected and the students had to finish their writing at home.

### **3.4.2 LESSON PLAN 2 (I'M HAPPY JUST TO DANCE WITH YOU): REFLECTION**

The first aim of this lesson plan is to create relaxed atmosphere in order to get students to talk and try to express their attitudes. The picture description is related to the song *I'm Happy Just to Dance with You* and thus represents a lead-in to the song as such. The next phase, in which students are asked to replace certain words in the lyrics, seeks to practise their ability to recognise words in a stream of speech (song). Apart from listening and speaking, reading is also included in this lesson plan, particularly text comprehension. Students find out about the great success and rise of the Beatles. The reading text also provides a basis for practicing grammar – both indicative and interrogative sentences and regular and irregular verb forms.

I used this lesson plan in “Company Course I.” This course consists exclusively of women – their attitude to dancing was positive so I was not surprised they were willing to talk about it. They were also interested in the picture description. Although they needed to be helped with some vocabulary, they were able to describe the picture and answer all my questions. Nevertheless I had to introduce the phrase *there is / are* and explain how we use it. It was also necessary to explain that we use present continuous when describing a picture and to help them with sentence formation. The next activity was listening to the song. Students were asked to replace several words highlighted in bold type which they were completely capable of understanding. But during the listening it became clear, as I had expected, that the tempo of the song was too fast for them and they were not able to replace all the

words. During the second listening I had to stop the recording after each word in bold to give students some time to write the correct word. This activity proved to be successful – not only did it create a pleasant atmosphere, but in the end students also managed to cope with it successfully.

The last activity – reading – turned out to be the most difficult and problematic. Although students mastered the past simple tense before, they were not able to form the past tense of certain irregular verbs and they needed my help. Unfortunately and in spite of my expectations it turned out that the text was too difficult for the students since they did not understand it without my help. As in the first lesson plan one possible solution is to pre-teach target words and prepare a vocabulary activity which should make the text comprehension easier. During the last activity students required my assistance again – I had to revise question formation with the auxiliary verb *did*.

### **3.4.3 LESSON PLAN 3 (I NEED YOU): REFLECTION**

The first activity of the third lesson plan is again a speaking warm-up. Its aim is to find out about students' ability to communicate about a given topic. This activity is directly followed by listening to the song *I Need You*, which also serves as a basis for clarifying grammar points which are revised once more in a reading activity.

This lesson plan was used in the “Conservative Course”. Students were asked to come up with possible titles for the song. As I had expected students were ready to engage in a conversation and willing to answer all my questions. However it was necessary (as I had anticipated) to translate the word *adore* into L1. Students seemed interested in this activity and offered a wide range of possible names for the song.

During the first listening students had to identify incorrect words in a couple of sentences from the lyrics. Most of them seemed pleased and they were able to guess whether the sentence was correct or not. Since the tempo of the song is rather slow, students were perfectly able to detect incorrect words and cross them out. Thus we did not come across a problem of revealing the words.

For the next activity I presented adverbs of frequency and students needed more time than the estimated 15 minutes. They completed the task in 20 minutes and needed my help in writing down the sentences. Students were able to name some of the adverbs of frequency but although I explained how to use them, they still produced mistakes. It is thus inevitable to revise this grammatical issue in the following lessons.

The next reading activity proved the most difficult. Students, divided into groups, were not able to come up with a solution how to arrange the strips. They also insisted on literal translations. Thus the aim of skimming for an overall idea of the text was not met. Once again, I suggest to pre-teach unknown vocabulary or to insist on an all-English activity. Another possible solution is making the text easier or replacing it with another text that would reflect students' language level. Additional questions were surprisingly answered in complete sentences which had a motivating effect for the following work.

Since the previous task was so time-consuming, the next activity was assigned for homework. Once more I explained how we use adverbs of frequency and provided several examples.

#### **3.4.4 LESSON PLAN 4 (LET IT BE): REFLECTION**

The first aim of the fourth lesson plan is to make students talk while describing and comparing two pictures. The picture description is also used to fulfill a grammatical aim – practising present continuous tense. In the first picture students can see Beatles recording their song *Let it Be* which is also used for a listening activity which puts special emphasis on target words. Students also come across the name of this song in the reading activity which is once again aimed at general comprehension.

I used this lesson plan in my “New Headway” course for which I also prepared my first lesson plan a while ago. As in the previous lesson students seemed interested in the activity and willing to communicate. Just as I had expected I had to revise

formation of the present continuous tense and I had to help students to form sentences in this tense. They often used present simple tense instead but usually, when the mistake was identified, they were able to correct themselves. After a while it became clear that students are not sure which preposition we use when describing a picture. I had to explain and demonstrate that we use the preposition *in*. I didn't realize this fact when designing the lesson plan and therefore I suggest to include this information for future use. On the other hand I was surprised that in the next activity students were able to effectively compare and contrast the two pictures using simple sentences. However, I had to help them with some vocabulary and I also had to write a few introductory sentences on the board.

The next activity, which was closely related to the listening task, proved to be the most difficult and more time-consuming than estimated. Students were told to try and match 9 words from the lyrics to their definitions. They needed more than 5 minutes I had suggested. For some students this exercise was too demanding, they were not able to match the words with their definitions. They repeatedly asked for my help and insisted on translating some of the words. Nevertheless, during the listening the majority of students were able to complete the missing words from the preceding activity. They were even willing to sing the song which created pleasant atmosphere.

The last activity was aimed at general comprehension of a text. The follow-up was a discussion in which students were asked to solve a problem presented in the text. I told them that it was not vital to understand every single word. Once again we had to face the problem of unknown words and once more I suggest to pre-teach target vocabulary. In the end this text turned out to be adequate and with my occasional help students were able to manage the task successfully. With only 5 minutes left we decided to replace individual presentations with a collective solution to the problem solving task.

### 3.4.5 LESSON PLAN 5 (ALL MY LOVING): REFLECTION

The first objective of this lesson plan is to create relaxed atmosphere for a free-speaking activity and to introduce the song *All My Loving* – at first through a picture, later through the recording itself. Another aim is to present future tense *will/won't* and its use for predictions. The next section of the lesson plan combines listening practice with a grammatical aspect. The future form *will/won't* is further practised in a role play. Finally it is contrasted with past and future tenses.

I used this lesson plan in my “New Headway” course again, since it is designed to suit beginners and elementary students. I had assumed that the speaking activity would appeal to the students and that they would be willing to speak as they were in the previous lesson. The first activity, a warm up, was started by showing a picture of a heart. I asked students two questions of which they were able to answer only the first one. It turned out that the picture I had chosen was not the most appropriate, since students were not able to deduce the song’s title. On the other hand they tried to predict several words from the song lyrics.

The following activity was met with greater success. Students were able to comprehend grammar points I had explained to them and with my support they even used them correctly. Slight problems were caused only by irregular verbs. However, they did not understand how to modify time expressions. For future use of this lesson plan I suggest to pre-teach the issue before including the exercise.

Since the song’s tempo is rather slow and the interpreters are easy to understand, most students managed to distinguish between the contracted and full forms of *will*. Students used the second listening merely to check and confirm their answers.

The next activity was a role play. Unfortunately, I consider this task the major failure of the lesson plan. Students did not understand my instructions and therefore did not know what to do. As a possible solution I suggest to replace this task by another activity. As an inspiration I include a link to a web page I found after the lesson had finished - <http://edition.tefl.net/ideas/grammar/will-for-predictions/>. A variety of exercises to practise predictions can be found there.

The last activity was *Jukebox*. Students were asked to work in pairs and although they did not understand all song titles, they were able to put most of them in correct places. Nevertheless, I had to help them from time to time.

Instead of estimated 90 minutes, the lesson took us only 70 minutes to finish.

### **3.4.6 LESSON PLAN 6 (EIGHT DAYS A WEEK): REFLECTION**

The first aim of the last lesson plan is again to create pleasant atmosphere and to make students cooperate in groups. As a warm up I use a picture description. The picture was chosen to match the title of the song and the activity is thus directly linked to the forthcoming listening task. The next aim is to revise prepositions of time and their use. All four skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking – are included in this lesson plan. Reading is practised to a lesser extent, since it consists only of reading the song lyrics and a story students are told to write at the end of the lesson.

I used this lesson plan in Company course II. Half of the learners in this course are among the weakest of all students I teach (see graph 17). I had assumed that some of the students would be at a loss during certain activities and my assumptions proved right. Nevertheless, their effort and willingness to cooperate with their colleagues were pleasing and with their and my help they managed to finish most of the exercises. My concerns that the students might be too passive to cooperate with each other were not fulfilled.

For the warm up I had selected a photo of a diary and students seemed excited of the idea of having an extra day in the week. While designing the lesson plan I did not realize that some of the students would not be able to understand and therefore respond to conditional questions with *would*. Therefore I had to slightly modify the questions. For possible application in beginner courses, I suggest the same solution (elementary and pre-intermediate students are expected to be able to answer both types of questions). The first question was altered to *Do you think it is a good idea to have an extra day?* The question with *would* was thus changed into a question

with the auxiliary verb *do*. The second sentence was also simplified – instead of *would* I used modal verb *can*: *What can you do on this day?* After these alterations students were able to answer my questions and I was happy that almost everyone came up with interesting ideas. They were also able to answer all my additional questions.

The next activity was related to the use of time prepositions which proved useful since students had produced mistakes in the previous exercise. They had also had problems selecting correct prepositions when talking about days (*on*). I asked them to write down seven or eight sentences. During the activity I had to help them and correct some of the prepositions they used in their sentences. Therefore I find it necessary to focus on prepositions again in one of the following lessons.

For a pre-listening activity I told my students to put jumbled strips of song lyrics into right order. To my surprise students did not insist on literal translation and they even used dictionaries to look up unknown words. Nobody was able to complete the lyrics before the listening which was however not the aim of this activity. The lyrics were completed after the second listening during which I had to pause the recording after each stanza. Contrary to the lesson plan students did not insist on the third listening and therefore we got few extra minutes for the next activity.

For the post-listening activity I selected retelling the story. I had assumed that students would need help with vocabulary so I wrote some introductory words and a few sentences on the board.

The last activity was writing a story. It turned out that the time limit of 15 minutes was insufficient and therefore students had to finish the task at home. Next time it would be advisable to do a pre-writing preparation at school and set the writing task for homework.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The intention of this thesis was to assess the situation among adult learners of English who attend several types of language courses in terms of their specific needs and wishes. The work is based on the use of existing theoretical knowledge and a survey of particular conditions in the courses. As an end product I wanted to provide a particular result which would be available for any teachers who would like to enrich their lessons with attractive tasks and intensify the role of listening.

On the basis of theoretical preparation I decided to focus on the use of songs and strengthening the role of listening in my classes. I calculated with a hypothesis that I did not devote enough space to listening activities. This hypothesis, however, was not quite confirmed by the survey as more than half of the respondents were satisfied with the amount of listening in the lessons. On the other hand, the vast majority expressed an interest in including songs in their learning process and considered them very helpful.

While working on the practical part of the thesis, I also realised that songs could be used as a starting point for preparing a comprehensive lesson plan where all language skills would be developed in a balanced way. Although I have to admit that I was not able to meet this objective in all of my lesson plans, they are still varied enough to accommodate the needs of different learners and make the whole teaching process more effective.

## **SUMMARY**

In my diploma thesis “Developing Skills through Songs” I have focused on the possibilities of developing the four major language skills through songs at language schools. In the theoretical part I deal with the individual skills (namely listening, speaking, writing and reading), describe their specific traits and suggest ways in which songs can be used to cultivate them. I further focus on the issues of teaching adults and heterogeneous classes and I also include chapters on motivation and methodology (of which I direct my attention to the communicative approach). In the practical part I present my findings in the form of questionnaire results, the evaluation of students’ needs and suggestions for making the lessons more varied and effective. The thesis is supplemented by six lesson plans which are at the disposal of any teacher who is interested in balanced lessons involving exercises oriented on all four skills.

## **RESUMÉ**

Ve své diplomové práci „Developing Skills through Songs“ se zaměřuji na možnosti rozvíjení čtyř základních jazykových dovedností pomocí písní na jazykových školách. V teoretické části se zabývám jednotlivými dovednostmi (jmenovitě poslechem, mluvením, psaním a čtením), popisuji jejich specifické rysy a navrhuji způsoby, jimiž je můžeme rozvíjet pomocí písní. Dále se zaměřuji na problematiku vyučování dospělých a vyučování v heterogenních třídách. Tato část práce rovněž obsahuje kapitoly o motivaci a metodologii (z ní svou pozornost upírám především na komunikativní přístup). V praktické části práce předkládám výsledky dotazníku, který jsem distribuovala ve svých kurzech, evaluaci potřeb studentů a návrhy pro zefektivnění jednotlivých lekcí. K diplomové práci je přiloženo 6 propracovaných materiálů k výuce angličtiny, které jsou k dispozici každému učiteli se zájmem o vyvážené lekce, zaměřené na rozvoj všech čtyř jazykových dovedností.

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## APPENDIX 1 - LESSON PLANS 1 - 6

### Lesson Plan 1: P.S. I Love You

**Target group:** Adults

**Level:** Elementary – Pre-Intermediate

**Time:** 90 minutes

#### Preparation and materials:

- Brief introduction of *the Beatles* and its history – a photo of the band (Appendix 1a) + Worksheet 1 for each student
- *P.S. I Love You* lyrics – listening and vocabulary activities – Worksheet 2 for each student
- The recording of *P.S. I Love You* + CD player
- Board + marker

#### Aims:

- To introduce the band, its members and the beginning of their career
- To practise question formation (WH words, past simple interrogative sentences)
- To develop students' ability to guess vocabulary from the context
- To practise listening skills with special emphasis on target words
- To practise writing skills (free discourse composition)

#### Assumptions:

- Students have certain knowledge of the topic
- The attractive contents of the lesson should raise students' interest
- Students are able to guess the meanings of unknown words from the context
- Students have mastered the technique of question formation

#### Possible problems:

- Students will probably not know how to form the passive question ('What is . . . called?')
- Problems with the distinction between subject and object questions may arise
- Students have trouble catching the particular words from the song
- Students have little or no experience with letter writing

#### Solutions:

- The teacher will pre-teach the formation of 'What is . . . called?' question
- The teacher will revise the use of an auxiliary in WH questions
- The teacher will explain key listening strategies for students to concentrate on target information
- The teacher will provide students with some tips on how to write an informal letter

**Procedure:**

<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Aids:</b>
5'	<b>Warm-up</b> Ask students about their favourite style of music, singers, and bands. Show the photo of the band. Ask students if they know the band and elicit their attitudes.	Appendix 1a
20'	<b>Introduction</b> Divide the class into pairs – student A and student B. Give each student one worksheet. Tell students not to show their copy to their neighbor. Give students time to prepare the questions. Demonstrate the activity. Ask one pair to ask and answer question 1 from each set, ( <i>When did the history of the Beatles start?; Where did the history of the Beatles start?</i> ). Students work with a partner and interview each other. Monitor and help where necessary.	Worksheet 1
5'	<b>Vocabulary work</b> Distribute the worksheet to students. Explain the activity. Students are supposed to choose one word from two given on the right side. Give students time to guess the right word. Go through the words provided and check understanding if necessary.	Worksheet 2
5'	<b>First listening</b> Tell students they are going to listen to the song for the first time. Give them some key listening strategies by explaining they do not need to understand every word as the purpose is to catch only a few of them. Remind students to listen carefully and tell them to tick the word they will hear. Play the CD. Let them check if their choice was correct. Get students into pairs or groups of three to compare and check their answers.	Worksheet 2 CD player + song record
5'	<b>Second listening</b> Play the CD for the second time. Stop the CD after each missing word and check students' answers. Ask students if they would like to listen again and suggest that the class could sing along.	Worksheet 2 CD player + song record
10'	<b>Introduction and writing tips</b> Ask students what kind of a text the lyrics remind them of ( <i>a love letter</i> ). Ask students who wrote the letter and who it is for and elicit that there are probably two people in love. Ask them if they write love letters to their partners or if they have received any love letters and how they felt. Elicit what parts a letter usually has. Create a sample framework of an informal letter on the board. Highlight that informal letter	Board + marker

	begins <i>Dear</i> + the name and ends <i>Best wishes</i> or <i>Love</i> + the name. You can mention that P.S. ( <i>Post scriptum</i> in Latin) is used when the writer has forgotten or wants to add something to the end of a letter.	
25'	<b>Answering a letter</b> Tell students to imagine someone wrote this love letter to them. Tell them to write a short reply. Monitor and help.	
10'	<b>Optional reading</b> Ask two or three students to read their letters aloud. Give positive feedback on the contents and style of the letters.	

## Worksheet 1

### STUDENT A

The history of the Beatles started in Liverpool in..... (When?); a teenager John Lennon formed a band called the ..... (What?) with a few of his friends. Soon after that, John heard .....(Who?) play the guitar and asked him to join his band the Quarrymen and about a year later George Harrison was invited to join them too. They changed their name to ..... (How?) in 1960. Although the band played a lot in various ..... or ..... (Where?) in England and also in Hamburg, Germany they did not make any big success till 1962 when ..... (Who?) joined them as a drummer and the Beatles were complete.

Their first album was called .....(What?) and it was recorded during unbelievable nine hours in .....(When?). This album was their first big success and went to number one in England.

### STUDENT B

The history of the Beatles started in ..... (Where?) in 1957; a teenager ..... (Who?) formed a band called the Quarrymen with a few of his friends. Soon after that, John heard Paul McCartney play the guitar and asked him to join his band the Quarrymen and about a year later ..... (Who?) was invited to join them too. They changed their name to the Beatles in ..... (When?). Although the band played a lot in various clubs or coffee bars in England and also in ..... (Where?) they did not make any big success till ..... (When?) when Ringo Starr joined them as a drummer and the Beatles were complete.

Their first album was called *Please Please Me* and it was recorded during unbelievable .....(How many?) hours in January 1963. This album was their first big success and went to number one in England.

(Kubjátová 2006)

## Worksheet 2

<b>P.S. I Love You</b>	
As I write this ____ (1), Send my ____ (2) to you, Remember that I'll always, Be in love with ____ (3).	1) message / letter 2) love / kiss 3) her / you
Treasure these few ____ (4) 'til we're together, Keep all my ____ (5) forever, P.S., I love you. You, you, you.	4) lines / words 5) love / dreams
I'll be coming ____ (6) again to you, love, And 'til the day I do, love, P.S., I love you. You, you, you.	6) back / home
As I write this ____ (7), Send my ____ (8) to you, Remember that I'll always, Be in love with ____ (9).	7) message / letter 8) love / kiss 9) her / you
Treasure these few ____ (10) 'til we're together, Keep all my ____ (11) forever, P.S., I love you. You, you, you.	10) lines / words 11) love / dreams
As I write this ____ (12), (Oh oh oh) Send my ____ (13) to you, (You know I want you to) Remember that I'll always, (Yeah) Be in love with ____ (14).	12) message / letter 13) love / kiss 14) her / you
I'll be coming ____ (15) again to you, love, And 'til the day I do, love, P.S., I love you. You, you, you. You, you, you. I love you.	15) back / home

<http://www.sing365.com>

## Worksheet 1 – Answers

The history of the Beatles started in **Liverpool** in **1957**; a teenager **John Lennon** formed a band called the **Quarrymen** with a few of his friends. Soon after that, John heard **Paul McCartney** play the guitar and asked him to join his band the Quarrymen and about a year later **George Harrison** was invited to join them too. They changed their name to **the Beatles** in **1960**. Although the band played a lot in various **clubs** or **coffee bars** in England and also in **Hamburg**, Germany they did not make any big success till **1962** when **Ringo Starr** joined them as a drummer and the Beatles were complete.

Their first album was called “*Please Please Me*” and it was recorded during unbelievable **nine** hours in **January 1963**. This album was their first big success and went to number one in England.

(Kubjátová 2006)

## Worksheet 2 – Answers

1. letter; 2. love; 3. you; 4. words; 5. love; 6. home; 7. letter; 8. love; 9. you;  
10. words; 11. love; 12. letter; 13. love; 14. you; 15. home.

## Appendix 1a



<http://www.eskimo.com/~bpentium/beatles.gif>

## Lesson Plan 2: I'm Happy Just to Dance with You

**Target group:** Adults

**Level:** Elementary – Pre-Intermediate

**Time:** 90 minutes

### Preparation and materials:

- A photo of a dancing pair (Appendix 1b)
- *I'm Happy Just to Dance with You* lyrics – listening and vocabulary activities – Worksheet 1 for each student
- The recording of *I'm Happy Just to Dance with You* + CD player
- A paragraph of the Beatles' enormous success - Worksheet 2 for each student
- Board + marker

### Aims:

- To practise speaking skills (describing a picture)
- To practise listening skills and to develop students' ability to hear the right word from the song
- To practise reading skills and students comprehension of the text
- To practise past simple forms of regular and irregular verbs

### Assumptions:

- Students are able to use picture description strategies (eg. the present continuous verb tense, the phrase *there is / are* etc.)
- Students will enjoy sharing their experience with dancing
- Students are able to catch the right words from the song
- Students have already learned how to form the past simple tense
- Students are able to comprehend the text (the vocabulary is adequate for beginners)

### Possible problems:

- Students will have difficulty with forming the past simple tense
- Students may have a problem catching the right word from the song – it may be difficult for them to keep up or they may not understand the natural speech accompanied by the music

### Solutions:

- The teacher will revise the use of regular - *ed* endings and irregular verbs in the past tense
- The teacher will pre-teach the use of the auxiliary verb *did* in questions and how to make negatives in the past simple tense
- The teacher will explain students to listen carefully and concentrate on replacing the wrong words in **bold**

**Procedure:**

<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Aids:</b>
15'	<b>Warm-up</b> Show the photo of the dancing pair. Ask students to describe the photo. Remind students of using the preposition <i>in</i> the picture. Students describe what they can see in the photo. Help them with the vocabulary (clothing), e.g. <i>She is wearing a skirt. He is wearing trousers.</i> Ask students if they like dancing. Elicit their attitudes. Why do they like or dislike dancing? Possible questions: <i>Where do you go dancing? How often do you go dancing? Where can you dance? How do you need to be dressed? Do you prefer going to the disco or to the ball? Are there any differences in clothing?</i>	Appendix 1b Board + marker
10'	<b>Introduction</b> Introduce the song. Distribute the worksheets. Give students time to go through the text on their own. Provide help if needed. Go through the words in <b>bold</b> and check the meaning.	Worksheet 1
5'	<b>First listening</b> Give students the initial instruction to listen and follow the lyrics. Tell students that the words in <b>bold</b> are changed. Point out the repetition of some words.	Worksheet 1 CD player + song record
10'	<b>Second listening</b> Tell students to listen carefully and replace the words in <b>bold</b> with the words they will hear and write them on the right side. Play the CD for the second time. Let students compare their answers with a partner.	Worksheet 1 CD player + song record
10'	<b>Grammar revision</b> Revise the formation of the past simple tense. Give and write a few examples of regular ( <i>started, lived...</i> ) and irregular verbs ( <i>went, had...</i> ) on the board. Remind students that these forms are only used in affirmative sentences. We use the auxiliary verb <i>did</i> in forming questions or negatives.	Board + marker
30'	<b>Reading a text</b> Introduce the reading activity. Give each student a worksheet. Tell them that they are going to read a text about the second year of <i>the Beatles</i> . Tell them to underline the unknown words. Ask one student to demonstrate the activity. The student will read the first sentence with the example as well as the second sentence. Give students time to complete the paragraph on their own. Get students into pairs and ask them to check their partner's answers. Go	Worksheet 2

	through the paragraph sentence by sentence checking students' answers. Explain the vocabulary where needed.	
10'	<p><b>Comprehension check</b></p> <p>Ask students a few comprehension questions <i>How many people watched the first show on TV? When did they manage to make their first black and white feature film?</i> etc.</p> <p>Get students into pairs again. Ask them to prepare two or three similar questions and respond to these questions with a partner. Monitor and help. If there is enough time some pairs may say their questions in front of the class.</p>	Worksheet 2

## Worksheet 1

<b>I'm Happy Just to Dance with You</b>	
Before this <b>song</b> is through	1 _____
I think I'll <b>miss</b> you too	2 _____
I'm so <b>lucky</b> when you <b>sing</b> with me	3 _____, 4 _____
I don't want to kiss or hold your <b>finger</b>	5 _____
If its funny try and understand	
There is really nothing else I'd rather do	
'cause I'm <b>lucky</b> just to <b>sing</b> with you	6 _____, 7 _____
I don't need to hug or hold you tight	
I just want to <b>sing</b> with you all <b>day</b>	8 _____, 9 _____
In this world there's nothing I would rather do	
'cause I'm <b>lucky</b> just to <b>sing</b> with you	10 _____, 11 _____
Just to <b>sing</b> with you	12 _____
Is everything I need	
Before this <b>song</b> is through	13 _____
I think I'll <b>miss</b> you too	14 _____
I'm so <b>lucky</b> when you <b>sing</b> with me	15 _____, 16 _____
If somebody tries to take my place	
Let's pretend we just can't see his <b>head</b>	17 _____
In this world there's nothing I would rather do	
'cause I'm <b>lucky</b> just to <b>sing</b> with you	18 _____, 19 _____
Just to <b>sing</b> with you	20 _____
Is everything I need	
Before this <b>song</b> is through	21 _____
I think I'll <b>miss</b> you too	22 _____
I'm so <b>lucky</b> when you <b>sing</b> with me	23 _____, 24 _____
If somebody tries to take my place	
Let's pretend we just can't see his <b>head</b>	25 _____
In this world there's nothing I would rather do	
I discovered I'm in love with you	
'cause I'm <b>lucky</b> just to <b>sing</b> with you	26 _____, 27 _____

<http://www.sing365.com/>

## Worksheet 2

**Complete the paragraph with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.**

By working hard they (1) recharged (recharge) the old continent but also the U.S. Their first visit to the U.S. (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (start) with two famous Ed Sullivan Show TV appearances in 1964. Both these shows (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) unpredictably huge successes. About 73, 000, 000 people (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) the first show TV. This show (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (start) off the tour of America. In the same year they (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (manage) to make their first black and white feature film called "*A Hard Day's Night*". The same title was also used for the song and the whole album. Ringo Starr (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (say) about the title: "We went to do a job, and we'd worked all day and we happened to work all night. I (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (come) up still thinking it (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) day I suppose, and I (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (say), 'It's been a hard day...' and I (11) \_\_\_\_\_ (look) around and (12) \_\_\_\_\_ (see) it (13) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) dark so I (14) \_\_\_\_\_ (say), '...night!' So we (15) \_\_\_\_\_ (come) to 'A Hard Day's Night.'"

(Kubjátová 2006)

### **Worksheet 1 – Answers**

1. dance; 2. love; 3. happy; 4. dance; 5. hand; 6. happy; 7. dance; 8. dance; 9. night;  
10. happy; 11. dance; 12. dance; 13. dance; 14. love; 15. happy; 16. dance; 17. face;  
18. happy; 19. dance; 20. dance; 21. dance; 22. love; 23. happy; 24. dance; 25. face;  
26. happy; 27. dance.

### **Worksheet 2 – Answers**

2. started; 3. were; 4. watched; 5. started; 6. managed; 7. said; 8. came; 9. was; 10.  
said; 11. looked; 12. saw; 13. was; 14. said; 15. came.

### **Appendix 1b**



[http://farm1.static.flickr.com/22/26340226\\_1227a584be.jpg](http://farm1.static.flickr.com/22/26340226_1227a584be.jpg)

## Lesson Plan 3: I Need You

**Target group:** Adults

**Level:** Elementary – Pre-Intermediate

**Time:** 90 minutes

### Preparation and materials:

- A photo (Appendix 1c)
- *I Need You* lyrics – listening and grammar activities (adverbs of frequency) – Worksheet 1 – one copy per student
- The recording of *I Need You* + CD player
- Board + marker
- Strips of a paragraph – Worksheet 2 – one copy per student

### Aims:

- To develop students' ability to discuss their initial ideas
- To practise listening skills with special emphasis on target words
- To practise reading skills (skimming for an overall idea of the text & reading aloud for complete comprehension)
- To present adverbs of frequency
- To practise adverbs of frequency in context

### Assumptions:

- Students are willing to interact in the speaking activity
- Students are able to follow the lyrics while listening to a song
- Students are able to name a few examples of adverbs of frequency
- Students are willing to cooperate in pairs
- Students are able to comprehend a text without understanding all vocabulary

### Possible problems:

- Students will probably not know how to use adverbs of frequency
- Students may disagree on the correct order of the strips in the reading activity
- Students have trouble detecting the extra words from the song

### Solutions:

- The teacher will introduce adverbs of frequency by explaining their use and position in a sentence and give a few examples
- The teacher will give students a chance to cooperate with their partner
- The teacher will give students enough time to complete the task

**Procedure:**

<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Aids:</b>
15'	<p><b>Warm-up</b>            Show the photo (appendix 1c) and ask students if they understand all the written words in the photo. If necessary, teach the meaning of <i>adore</i> (<i>adore</i> = to love or like somebody/something very much). Focus on the photo and ask a few questions, e.g. <i>Why do you think some of the written words are crossed out? What do you think today's song will be about?</i> Elicit and accept all their suggestions.</p>	Appendix 1c
5'	<p><b>Introduction</b>            Give each student a worksheet and introduce the song. Explain that an extra word, which is not sung, was added to almost every line but not to all lines.</p>	Worksheet 1
5'	<p><b>First listening</b>            Give students instructions to listen and decide if the sentence is correct or incorrect. Tell them to put tick or cross in each line during first listening.</p>	Worksheet 1 CD player + song record
5'	<p><b>Second listening</b>            Tell students to listen again and try to cross out an extra word. Give students time to check with their partner. Check the answers.</p>	Worksheet 1 CD player + song record
15'	<p><b>Grammar – Adverbs of frequency</b>            Ask students to tell you all the extra words from the song. Write a line on the board. Put <i>always</i> at the beginning and <i>never</i> at the end of the line. Ask students how they would order the rest of the adverbs (<i>always, usually, often, sometimes, seldom, rarely, never</i>) and write them on the board. Check if the meanings of these adverbs are clear. Explain that these adverbs of frequency are used either before the main verb (e.g. <i>I always wake up at 6 o'clock.</i>) or after the verb <i>Be</i> (e.g. <i>We are often late.</i>). Give students time to write down seven sentences and use all these adverbs. Monitor and help. Get them into pairs and let them check their sentences. Students may read a few sentences aloud.</p>	Worksheet 1 Board + marker
10'	<p><b>Reading activity</b>            Divide students into three or four groups. Each group receives four strips of an article. Give them instructions to put the strips in the right order. Monitor and help if needed.</p>	Worksheet 2
20'	<p><b>Comprehension check</b>            Read the whole text and help with the vocabulary. Ask the</p>	Worksheet 2

	<p>whole class additional questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>How many people became heroes?</i></li> <li>2. <i>What kind of music did they change?</i></li> <li>3. <i>Who the songs were written to?</i></li> <li>4. <i>What were the initial lyrics full of?</i></li> <li>5. <i>Who wrote most of the Beatles songs?</i></li> <li>6. <i>What is the name of their famous song?</i></li> <li>7. <i>What happened in 1965?</i></li> </ol>	
10'	<p><b>Additional reading</b></p> <p>Tell students to go through the text again and put the adverbs of frequency from the board where appropriately possible. Monitor and help. Let students read the rewritten sentences aloud.</p>	Worksheet 2

## Worksheet 1

<b>I Need You</b>	
You don't usually realise how much I need you.	1 _____
Love you all the time and never leave you.	2 _____
Please come on back to me.	3 _____
I'm lonely as can be. I seldom need you.	4 _____
Said you had a thing or two to always tell me.	5 _____
How was I to know you would rarely upset me?	6 _____
I didn't usually realise as I looked in your eyes...	7 _____
You never told me.	8 _____
Oh yes, you never told me, you don't want my lovin' anymore.	9 _____
That's when it often hurt me.	10 _____
And feeling like this, I just can't go on anymore.	11 _____
Please remember how I sometimes feel about you, I could never really live without you.	12 _____
So, come on back and see just what you mean to me.	13 _____
I seldom need you.	14 _____
But when you never told me, you don't want my lovin' anymore.	15 _____
That's when it often hurt me.	16 _____
And feeling like this, I just can't go on anymore.	17 _____
Please remember how I sometimes feel about you.	18 _____
I could never really live without you.	19 _____
So, come on back and see just what you mean to me.	20 _____
I need you. I need you. I seldom need you.	21 _____

<http://www.sing365.com/>

## Worksheet 2

A

Later on their songs started to be deeper and included their own feelings and experience. The more they worked the better songs they produced. One of the most famous songs, “*Yesterday*”, became the most covered song in the world with more than three thousand different versions. It was released on the “*Help!*” album that appeared in 1965.

B

No wonder that they still have a lot to say to new young generations of listeners. Their songs were written for young people. Their initial lyrics were full of love, hope, tears and words that impressed millions of people in the whole world.

C

Paul McCartney and John Lennon wrote most of the Beatles songs. They had so many ideas that they also wrote for other singers. The first songs were in the spirit of love. They wrote especially about themes such as: “she loves him”, “he loves her”, “they love her”, and “I love her too”.

D

The Beatles were four boys that became heroes of one generation for which they played and sang. Four people who changed the music world, especially Rock-n-Roll.

(Kubjátová 2006)

## **Worksheet 1 – Answers**

1. usually; 4. seldom; 5. always; 6. rarely; 7. usually; 8. never; 9. never; 10. often; 12. sometimes; 14. seldom; 15. never; 16. often; 18. sometimes; 21. seldom.

## **Worksheet 2 – Answers**

The Beatles were four boys that became heroes of one generation for which they played and sang. Four people who changed the music world, especially Rock-n-Roll. No wonder that they still have a lot to say to new young generations of listeners. Their songs were written for young people. Their initial lyrics were full of love, hope, tears and words that impressed millions of people in the whole world.

Paul McCartney and John Lennon wrote most of the Beatles songs. They had so many ideas that they also wrote for other singers. The first songs were in the spirit of love. They wrote especially about themes such as: “she loves him”, “he loves her”, “they love her”, and “I love her too”. Later on their songs started to be deeper and included their own feelings and experience. The more they worked the better songs they produced. One of the most famous songs, “*Yesterday*”, became the most covered song in the world with more than three thousand different versions. It was released on the “*Help!*” album that appeared in 1965.

(Kubjátová 2006)

Appendix 1c



<http://www.sexiluv.com/iNeedYou.html>

## Lesson Plan 4: Let it Be

**Target group:** Adults

**Level:** Elementary – Pre-Intermediate

**Time:** 90 minutes

### Preparation and materials:

- The photos of *the Beatles* – one copy for a pair (Appendix 1d)
- *Let it Be* lyrics – listening and grammar activities (present continuous) – Worksheet 1 – one copy per student
- The recording of *Let it Be* + CD player
- A paragraph of the Beatles' last album – Worksheet 2 – one copy per student
- Board + marker

### Aims:

- To practise picture description (comparing and contrasting pictures)
- To practise speaking skills (solving a problem, discussion)
- To improve students' presentation skills
- To practise listening skills with special emphasis on target words
- To practise grammar (present continuous for picture description)
- To practise reading skills (a general comprehension of a text)

### Assumptions:

- Students have mastered the technique of forming sentences using present continuous
- Students are able to compare and discuss the photos
- Students are happy to share their opinions
- Students are able to distinguish between different parts of speech

### Possible problems:

- Students do not form and use present continuous automatically, there may be frequent mistakes
- Students may not have sufficient vocabulary to compare and contrast the photos
- Students will probably have problem with matching the words and their definitions – they are not used to the technique of paraphrasing unknown words
- Students have problems understanding the text without knowing all vocabulary

### Solutions:

- The teacher will revise formation of present continuous
- The teacher will provide some tips on how to compare photos
- The teacher will explain parts of speech and elicit a few examples from the students (eg. *cloud* – noun, *cloudy* – adjective; *answer* – both noun and verb)
- The teacher will go through the text with students

**Procedure:**

<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Aids:</b>
10'	<p><b>Warm-up</b>            Show students two photos. Ask them what they can see in both photos separately. Introduce that we use present continuous when describing a photo/picture. Give and write an example of the present continuous (e.g. <i>He is singing</i>) on the board. Ask students a few questions, e.g.: <i>What is this man doing?</i> (pointing to the second picture to a man with a guitar). <i>What clothes are the people wearing? What are the people on the roof doing? What is this man doing?</i> (pointing to the first picture to a man in the bottom left-hand corner). Students answer in the present continuous tense.</p>	Appendix 1d Board + marker
20'	<p><b>Describing a picture</b>            Get students into pairs. Distribute the photos to each pair. Ask them what these photos have in common. Ask them to compare and contrast the photos. Help them with the vocabulary e.g. <i>whereas, on the other hand, the main difference between...</i>, etc. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both recording methods (recording a song outside and inside the studio). Elicit their opinion. Give positive feedback.</p>	Appendix 1d
5'	<p><b>Vocabulary work</b>            Explain parts of speech and elicit a few examples from the students (eg. <i>cloud</i> – noun, <i>cloudy</i> – adjective; <i>answer</i> – both noun and verb). Distribute the worksheet and explain the activity. Students are asked to match the words with the definitions. Give an example. Help with the vocabulary if needed.</p>	Worksheet 1
5'	<p><b>First listening</b>            Introduce the song to students. Give them instructions to listen and complete the missing words from the previous exercise. Get students into pairs and let them check their answers with a partner.</p>	Worksheet 1 CD player + song record
15'	<p><b>Second listening</b>            Play the CD again. Check answers. If students like the song, play the song again to sing along.</p>	Worksheet 1 CD player + song record
20'	<p><b>Problem solving task</b>            Distribute Worksheet 2. Give students time to read the text. Ask students to underline all the unknown words. Go through the text and help with the vocabulary. Check comprehension. Divide class into two or three groups. Present the problem solving task. Students are asked to</p>	Worksheet 2

	<p>imagine that they are in Paul McCartney's situation and they need to do everything they can to keep the band together. Give them time to work on that. Tell students to make notes. Tell them they will present their solutions later. Monitor and help.</p>	
10'	<p><b>Presentations</b> Students present their suggestions about how to keep the band together.</p>	

## Worksheet 1

### 1. Match the words (A-I) to the definitions (1-9).

A) Wake up	1. The opposite of sunny
B) Whisper	2. A problem, a thing that we worry about
C) Darkness	3. Phrasal verb, the first activity that everyone does in the morning
D) Wisdom	4. The opposite of lightness
E) Chance	5. To produce light
F) Trouble	6. Luck or fortune
G) Cloudy	7. The ability to make good decisions because you are clever and experienced
H) Shine	8. Every question has its .....
I) Answer	9. To speak very quietly

### 2. Listen and complete the song with the words from 1

<p><b>Let it Be</b></p> <p>When I find myself in times of _____ (1)          Mother Mary comes to me          Speaking words of _____ (2), let it be.          And in my hour of _____ (3)          She is standing right in front of me          Speaking words of _____ (4), let it be.          Let it be, let it be.          Let it be, let it be.          _____ (5) words of _____ (6), let it be.</p> <p>And when the broken hearted people          Living in the world agree,          There will be an _____ (7), let it be.          For though they may be parted there is          Still a _____ (8) that they will see          There will be an _____ (9), let it be.</p> <p>Let it be, let it be.          Let it be, let it be.          Yeah, There will be an _____ (10), let it          be.          Let it be, let it be.          Let it be, let it be.          _____ (11) words of _____ (12), let it          be.</p>	<p>Let it be, let it be.          Let it be, let it be.          _____ (13) words of _____ (14),          let it be.</p> <p>And when the night is _____ (15),          There is still a light that shines on          me,          _____ (16) until tomorrow, let it          be.</p> <p>I _____ (17) to the sound of music,          Mother Mary comes to me,          Speaking words of _____ (18), let          it be.</p> <p>Let it be, let it be. Let it be, let it be.          There will be an _____ (19), let it          be.          Let it be, let it be. Let it be, let it be.          _____ (20) words of _____ (21),          let it be.</p>
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<http://www.sing365.com/>

## Worksheet 2

In 1969 Paul McCartney tried to keep the Beatles together. It turned out to be as almost an impossible mission. Nevertheless, they somehow managed to film and record the “*Let it be*” project. It turned out to be very exhausting as the Beatles wanted to *Get Back* to the roots of Rock ‘n’ Roll and make a “fair” live studio album without playbacks. In the end they gave it up, left it unfinished and asked the record producer George Martin, who is often called the fifth Beatle, to collaborate with them again in the usual way. The result of this collaboration was their last album, “*Abbey Road*”. Another important event that Paul McCartney did not want to accept and was strongly against it happened later that year: Allen Klein, an American businessman, becomes the Beatles manager. This was probably the fatal break point in their relationship from which there was a straight way leading to the break-up.

(Kubjátová 2006)

## **Worksheet 1 – Answers**

### **Exercise 1**

A 3; B 9; C 4; D 7; E 6; F 2; G 1; H 5; I 8.

### **Exercise 2**

1. trouble; 2. wisdom; 3. darkness; 4. wisdom; 5. Whisper; 6. wisdom; 7. answer;  
8. chance; 9. answer; 10. answer; 11. Whisper; 12. wisdom; 13. Whisper; 14.  
wisdom; 15. cloudy; 16. Shine; 17. wake up; 18. wisdom; 19. answer; 20. Whisper;  
21. wisdom.

## Appendix 1d



<http://www.beatles.com/core/films/letitbe/1.jpg>



<http://www.geocities.com/jamsbrics/images/19660413beatles-studio.3.jpg>

## Lesson Plan 5: All My Loving

**Target group:** Adults

**Level:** Elementary – Pre-Intermediate

**Time:** 90 minutes

### Preparation and materials:

- A photo of a heart (Appendix 1e)
- *All my Loving* lyrics – listening and grammar activities – Worksheet 1 for each student
- The recording of *All my Loving* + CD player
- Worksheet 2 *Jukebox* for each student
- Board + marker

### Aims:

- To present simple future tense – *will/won't* and explain its use for predictions
- To practise future tense – *will / won't + making predictions*
- To practise listening skills with special emphasis on verbs
- To revise grammatical tenses (the distinction between the past, present and future tense)
- To practise expressing students opinion

### Assumptions:

- Students have mastered the technique of forming past simple and present simple (*the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular*)
- Students have sufficient vocabulary for participating in the task
- Students are able to come up with their own ideas and express them in simple language

### Possible problems:

- Students will have problem to change target words into required form
- Students may have a problem with making negatives
- Students will have difficulty with making predictions

### Solutions:

- The teacher will revise formation of past simple and present simple
- The teacher will pre-teach formation of simple future tense (*will* and *will not*)
- The teacher will explain students to listen carefully and concentrate on replacing the underlined words in the song
- The teacher will help the students to create several examples of future predictions and put them on the board. S/he will also monitor and help during the role-play activity.

**Procedure:**

<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Aids:</b>
10'	<p><b>Guessing the name of the song</b>            Show the photo (appendix 1e) and ask students two questions: <i>What do you think today's song is about?</i> (About love) and <i>Can you guess its name?</i> Elicit their answers and ask more questions. After two minutes write the name of the song (<i>All My Loving</i>) on the board. Ask students to predict words that they think will appear in the song and write them on the board.</p>	Appendix 1e  Board + marker
20'	<p><b>Will / Won't - explanation</b>            Write a sentence (e.g. <i>I live in a big city.</i>) on the board and ask students what tense is it (<i>present simple</i>). Pre-teach <i>will</i> = 'll and explain that it is the same in all persons. Write down few examples (e.g. <i>Tomorrow I will go to the cinema. Tomorrow she will go to the cinema.</i>) Explain that these are examples of the future tense. Pre-teach forming the negative (<i>won't, will not</i>). Elicit examples.</p>	Board + marker
10'	<p><b>Will / Won't – formation practice</b>            Distribute worksheet 1. Tell students that their task is to change the past tense into future tense using <i>will</i>. Students change all the underlined words and time expressions and write the right form on the right side of the worksheet. Let them check with their partner.</p>	Worksheet 1
5'	<p><b>First listening</b>            Introduce the song. Tell students that the contraction 'll is more frequently used than the full form. Tell them that the full form is only used four times. During first listening their task is to detect the four full forms in the song. (7, 10, 17, 19). Check the answers.</p>	Worksheet 1  CD player + song record
5'	<p><b>Second listening</b>            Play the song for the second time. Let students listen and check over the answers again.</p>	Worksheet 1 CD player + song record
15	<p><b>Role play</b>            Tell students that we use <i>will</i> to make predictions. Give them a few examples. Get students into pairs (<i>A</i> and <i>B</i>) and let them prepare a role play. Write on the board the instructions: <i>A</i> is a flower shop assistant and <i>B</i> is a customer. <i>A</i> wants flowers for a wedding – roses. <i>B</i> has many kinds of flowers but no roses. Monitor and help with the vocabulary if necessary. If there is enough time students may play the roles in front of the class.</p>	Board + marker

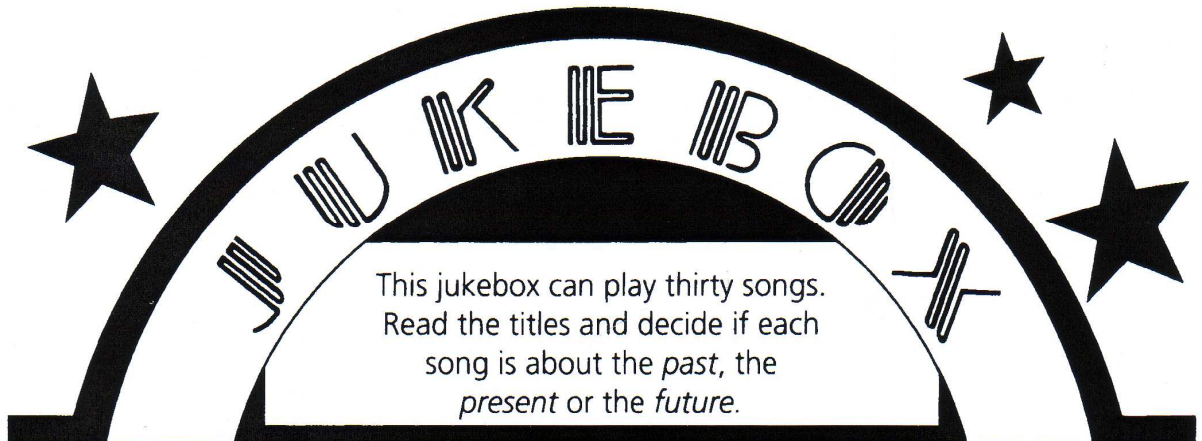
25'	<b>Jukebox</b> Tell students to work in pairs. Distribute the sheet, one for each pair. Introduce that there are 30 songs by the Beatles. Read the instructions and explain the activity. Tell students to write the numbers of the songs into given discs. Read the example and ask one student to do next number. Monitor and help with the vocabulary. Tell students to use dictionary if necessary. Check the answers. Make students explain their choice every time.	Worksheet 2
-----	--	-------------

## Worksheet 1

<b>All My Loving</b>	
Close your eyes and I <u>kissed</u> (1) you,	1) _____
<u>Yesterday</u> I <u>missed</u> (2) you;	2) _____
Remember I _____ always <u>was</u> (3) true.	3) _____
And then while I'm away,	
I <u>wrote</u> (4) home ev'ry day,	4) _____
And I <u>sent</u> (5) all my loving to you.	5) _____
I <u>pretended</u> (6) that I'm kissing the lips I am missing	6) _____
And hope that my dreams _____ <u>came</u> (7) true.	7) _____
And then while I'm away,	
I <u>wrote</u> (8) home ev'ry day,	8) _____
And I <u>sent</u> (9) all my loving to you.	9) _____
All my loving I <u>sent</u> (10) to you.	10) _____
All my loving, darling I _____ <u>was</u> (11) true.	11) _____
Close your eyes and I _____ <u>kissed</u> (12) you,	12) _____
<u>Yesterday</u> I _____ <u>missed</u> (13) you:	13) _____
Remember I _____ always <u>was</u> (14) true.	14) _____
And then while I'm away,	
I _____ <u>wrote</u> (15) home ev'ry day,	15) _____
And I _____ <u>sent</u> (16) all my loving to you	16) _____
All my loving I _____ <u>sent</u> (17) to you.	17) _____
All my loving darling I _____ <u>was</u> (18) true.	18) _____
All my loving All my loving ooh	19) _____
All my loving I _____ <u>sent</u> (19) to you	

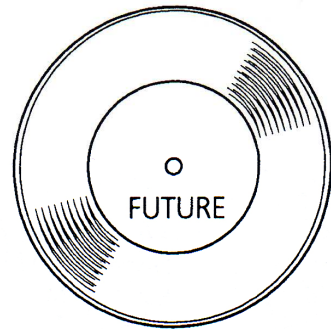
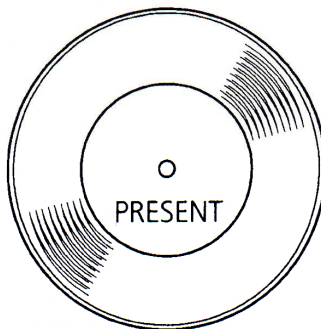
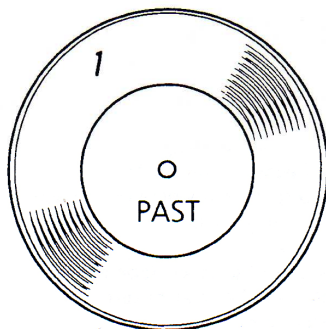
<http://www.sing365.com/>

Worksheet 2



<b>1</b> I Saw Her Standing There	<b>2</b> Things We Said Today	<b>3</b> When I'm sixty-four	<b>4</b> I'll Cry Instead	<b>5</b> I've Just Seen a Face	<b>6</b> She Loves You
<b>7</b> P.S. I Love You	<b>8</b> Till There Was You	<b>9</b> Your Mother Should Know	<b>10</b> Baby You're a Rich Man	<b>11</b> She Came in through the Bathroom Window	<b>12</b> I'll get you
<b>13</b> What Goes on	<b>14</b> You Won't See Me	<b>15</b> You're Going to Lose That Girl	<b>16</b> You Really Got a Hold on Me	<b>17</b> She Said, She Said	<b>18</b> Yesterday
<b>19</b> I'll Follow The Sun	<b>20</b> I'm Happy Just to Dance With You	<b>21</b> When I Get Home	<b>22</b> I Will	<b>23</b> I don't Want to Spoil the Party	<b>24</b> Cry Baby Cry
<b>25</b> It Won't Be Long	<b>26</b> Ask Me Why	<b>27</b> I'm a Loser	<b>28</b> You can't Do That	<b>29</b> The Night Before	<b>30</b> You'll Be Mine

Write the numbers of the songs here:



## Worksheet 1 – Answers

### All My Loving

Close your eyes and I'll kiss you,  
Tomorrow I'll miss you;  
Remember I'll always be true.  
And then while I'm away,  
I'll write home ev'ry day,  
And I'll send all my loving to you.

I'll pretend That I'm kissing  
the lips I am missing  
And hope that my dreams will come true.  
And then while I'm away,  
I'll write home ev'ry day,  
And I'll send all my loving to you.

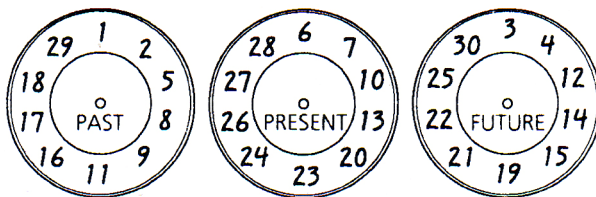
All my loving I will send to you.  
All my loving, darling I'll be true.

Close your eyes and I'll kiss you,  
Tomorrow I'll miss you:  
Remember I'll always be true.  
And then while I'm away,  
I'll write home ev'ry day,  
And I'll send all my loving to you

All my loving I will send to you.  
All my loving darling I'll be true.  
All my loving All my loving ooh  
All my loving I will send to you

<http://www.sing365.com/>

## Worksheet 2 – Answers



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

**Appendix 1e**



[http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2291/2248927436\\_cf40ea641c.jpg](http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2291/2248927436_cf40ea641c.jpg)

## Lesson Plan 6: Eight Days a Week

**Target group:** Adults

**Level:** False Beginners - Elementary

**Time:** 90 minutes

### Preparation and materials:

- The photos of a week planner book (Appendix 1f)
- *Eight Days a Week* lyrics – listening and vocabulary activities – Worksheet 1 for each student
- The recording of *Eight Days a Week* + CD player
- A paragraph of the Beatles' taking drugs + Worksheet 2 for each student
- Board + marker

### Aims:

- To practice speaking skills – expressing opinions
- To develop and practise listening skills – general understanding
- To practise working in groups
- To revise the use of time prepositions (*in, at, on*)
- To practise writing (*writing a story*)

### Assumptions:

- Students are willing to interact
- Students are used to work in pairs and they are able to communicate in English on the elementary level
- Students have sufficient vocabulary for participating in the task
- Students know how to form a sentence with prepositions (*in, at, on*)

### Possible problems:

- Students may be too passive to participate
- Students may not be confident and will not cooperate
- The tempo may be too fast for the students to follow the lyrics

### Solutions:

- The teacher will try to motivate students – give positive feedback on each idea or answer and show interest in their opinions
- The teacher will stop the recording after each line/stanza during the listening activities

**Procedure:**

<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Aids:</b>
10'	<p><b>Warm-up</b></p> <p>Show students the first photo (Appendix 1f) and ask them what they can see (<i>a diary</i>) and if there is something strange in the photo. Elicit that there is an extra day (<i>someday</i>). Show the second photo and ask a few questions, e.g. <i>Would you like to have an extra day? What would you do on this day?</i> Elicit and accept all their answers. Ask additional questions based on the students' ideas.</p>	Appendix 1f
20'	<p><b>Vocabulary work – Prepositions</b></p> <p>Revise the use of prepositions <i>in, at, on</i>. Write on the board days of a week (<i>e.g. Monday, Tuesday, . . .</i>) months (<i>e.g. January, February, . . .</i>) years (<i>e.g. 1975, 2009</i>), seasons (<i>spring, summer, autumn, winter</i>), time expressions (<i>e.g. 9 o'clock, 6.15, night, etc.</i>). Ask students to tell you the right preposition in each case. Explain that we say <i>in April</i> but <i>on 25 April, in the morning</i> but <i>on Monday morning</i> etc. Tell students to take a piece of paper. They have time to make 7 or 8 sentences with the words given. Give an example. Monitor and help. Get students to read their sentences with a partner and then everyone can read one or two sentences aloud.</p>	Board + marker
20'	<p><b>First listening</b></p> <p>Divide students into groups of three or four. Introduce the song. Distribute the strips of a song and ask them to try to put these jumbled strips back into right order before the first listening. Give students time to go through the strips. Students may write numbers 1-11 on the strips. Tell students that they are now going to listen to the song and their task is to check and reorder if necessary the stanzas.</p>	Worksheet 1 CD player + song record
10'	<p><b>Second listening</b></p> <p>Play the recording for the second time, pausing after each line. Check the answers. Let students read the lyrics line by line in turns. Help with the vocabulary if necessary. Explain <i>I ain't</i> = I haven't. Ask students if they would like to hear the song again and if they would like to sing along, play it to them one more time.</p>	Worksheet 1 CD player + song record
15'	<p><b>Retelling the song</b></p> <p>Tell students to try to summarize or retell the lyrics in turns. Say the first sentence: <i>There are two people who are in love</i>. Ask students to continue the story and use present simple. All students should speak and add one or more sentence. If the students seem to be lost for words, you may give them</p>	Board + marker

	some extra support on the board, eg. <i>The boy . . . ; He needs . . . ; He hopes . . . ; She is always . . .</i> etc. They should be able to complete these sentences.	
15'	<b>Writing a story</b> Ask students to write a story similar to one they have just retold. Tell them to use present simple tense. The story should be about two people in love. Monitor and help. If there is enough time students may read their story aloud.	

## Worksheet 1

---

Ooh I need your love babe,  
Guess you know it's true.  
Hope you need my love babe,  
Just like I need you.

---

Hold me, love me, hold me, love  
me.  
I ain't got nothin' but love babe,  
Eight days a week.

---

Love you ev'ry day girl,  
Always on my mind.  
One thing I can say girl,  
Love you all the time.

---

Hold me, love me, hold me, love  
me.  
I ain't got nothin' but love girl,  
Eight days a week.

---

Eight days a week  
I love you.  
Eight days a week  
Is not enough to show I care.

---

Ooh I need your love babe,  
Guess you know it's true.  
Hope you need my love babe,  
Just like I need you.

---

Hold me, love me, hold me, love  
me.  
I ain't got nothin' but love babe,  
Eight days a week.

---

Eight days a week  
I love you.  
Eight days a week  
Is not enough to show I care.

---

Love you ev'ry day girl,  
Always on my mind.  
One thing I can say girl,  
Love you all the time.

---

---

Hold me, love me, hold me, love  
me.  
I ain't got nothin' but love girl,

---

Eight days a week,  
Eight days a week,  
Eight days a week.

---

## Worksheet 1 – Answers

Ooh I need your love babe,  
Guess you know it's true.  
Hope you need my love babe,  
Just like I need you.  
Hold me, love me, hold me, love me.  
I ain't got nothin' but love babe,  
Eight days a week.

Love you ev'ry day girl,  
Always on my mind.  
One thing I can say girl,  
Love you all the time.  
Hold me, love me, hold me, love me.  
I ain't got nothin' but love girl,  
Eight days a week.

Eight days a week  
I love you.  
Eight days a week  
Is not enough to show I care.

Ooh I need your love babe,  
Guess you know it's true.  
Hope you need my love babe,  
Just like I need you.  
Hold me, love me, hold me, love me.  
I ain't got nothin' but love babe,  
Eight days a week.

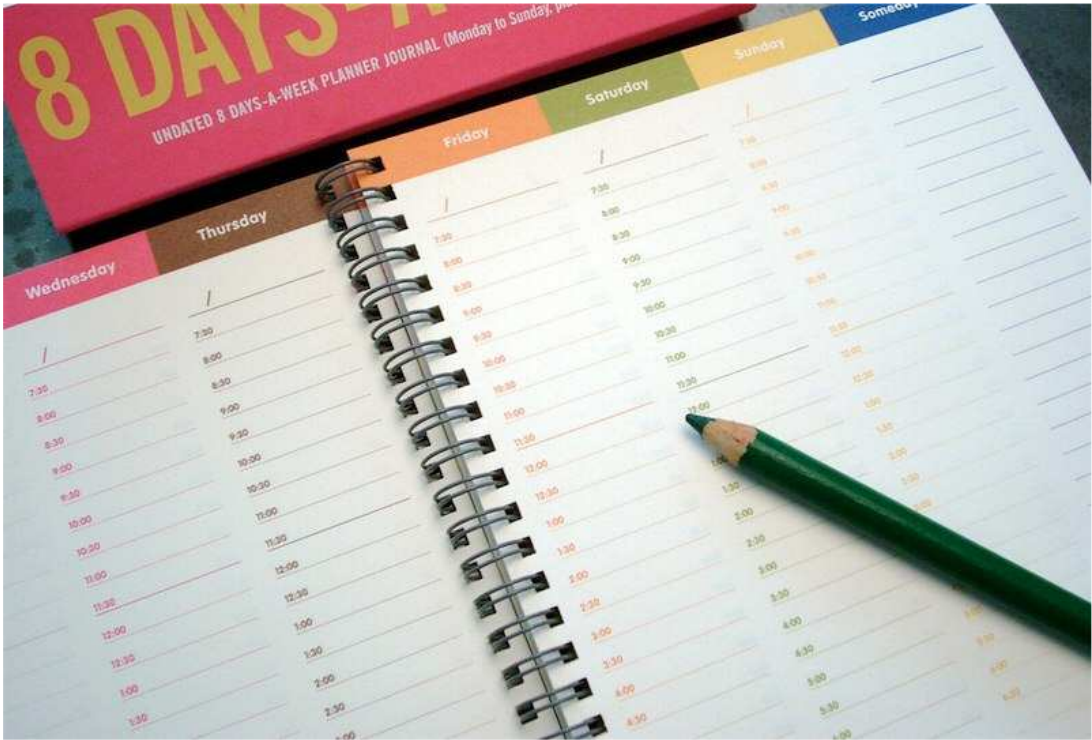
Eight days a week  
I love you.  
Eight days a week  
Is not enough to show I care.

Love you ev'ry day girl,  
Always on my mind.  
One thing I can say girl,  
Love you all the time.  
Hold me, love me, hold me, love me.  
I ain't got nothin' but love girl,  
Eight days a week,  
Eight days a week,  
Eight days a week.

<http://www.sing365.com/>

**Appendix 1f**

**Picture 1**



[http://www.blackinkboston.com/store/system/0000/0034/8days\\_1.jpg](http://www.blackinkboston.com/store/system/0000/0034/8days_1.jpg)

**Picture 2 - Eight Days a Week Planner**



<http://www.seejanetwork.com/ProductCart/pc/viewPrd.asp?idproduct=518>

## APPENDIX 2 – THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### 1. Why do you study English?

- a) Studies / Exams
- b) Travelling
- c) Communication
- d) Career / Job
- e) Others

*Specify:* .....

### 2. Which skill do you preferably need to focus on? (*Circle more if you need*)

- a) Listening
- b) Reading
- c) Speaking
- d) Writing

### 3. Which of these language skills is the easiest for you?

- a) Listening
- b) Reading
- c) Speaking
- d) Writing

### 4. Which of these language skills is the most difficult for you?

- a) Listening
- b) Reading
- c) Speaking
- d) Writing

### 5. Which of these language skills do you use most often?

- a) Listening
- b) Reading
- c) Speaking
- d) Writing

### 6. How difficult is listening to English for you?

- a) Very easy
- b) Easy
- c) Quite difficult
- d) Difficult
- e) Very difficult

**7. Is there enough listening in your English lessons?**

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I don't know

**8. What would you like to listen to?**

- a) Songs
- b) Stories
- c) TV news / radio news
- d) Others

*Specify:* .....

**9. What are the causes for NOT understanding the listening text?**

- a) Fast speed
- b) My limited vocabulary
- c) The length, The text is too long and I cannot concentrate
- d) Others

*Specify:* .....

**10. How much do you listen to music?**

- a) I do not listen to music at all
- b) Up to 1 hour a day
- c) 1-3 hours a day
- d) More than 3 hours a day

**11. Why do you listen to songs?**

- a) I like the melody
- b) I like the lyrics
- c) I like the band/singer
- d) Others

*Specify:* .....

**12. Do you sometimes listen to songs to improve your English?**

- a) Often
- b) Sometimes
- c) Seldom
- d) Never

**13. Do you know the Beatles?**

- a) Yes
- b) No

**14. How much do you like the songs by the Beatles?**

- a) Very much
- b) Quite a lot
- c) A little
- d) Not at all

**15. Do you think songs can be used to teach the English language?**

- a) To a great extent
- b) To a certain extent
- c) To a lesser extent
- d) Not in the least

**16. How much could Beatles songs help you in learning English?**

- a) It could help to a great extent
- b) It could help to a certain extent
- c) It could help to a lesser extent
- d) It cannot help at all