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Sing, sing, sing. Analysis and use of songs featured in Austrian English textbooks

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Table of contents

1. Acknowledgements	1
2. Introduction.....	2
3. Literature review	5
3.1. Effects of singing, and songs not included in textbooks on vocabulary and grammar learning	6
3.1.1. Positive influences of singing on vocabulary learning	7
3.1.2. Increased memory of vocabulary through songs.....	10
3.1.3. Evidence about using songs for grammar learning	14
3.1.4. Earworms and involuntary mental rehearsal	17
3.1.5. Classroom environment, emotions, and motivation connected to singing in the classroom	18
3.1.6. Songs as authentic material	20
3.2. Songs in textbooks	21
3.3. Summary	24
3.4. Excursus: Children's voice range	26
4. Research design.....	28
4.1. Aim and research hypotheses	28
4.2. Methodology.....	30
4.3. Framework for analysis	32
4.3.1. Songs in textbooks support language learning best if they.....	33
1. ...provide i+1 input.	33
2. ...support student engagement with the language.	34
3. ...are easily learned and remembered.	34
4. ...can be sung by the students healthily.	35
5. ...are well known by students.....	36
6. ...fit the lesson.....	36
7. ...are liked by the students.	37

8.	...have good (audio) quality.....	39
9.	...consist of authentic material.	39
4.3.2.	Concluding remarks	41
4.4.	Coding.....	43
4.4.1.	Vocabulary items in the unit's word list.....	44
4.4.2.	Number of vocabulary items from the unit's wordlist in the song.....	44
4.4.3.	Vocabulary from the previous unit in the song.....	45
4.4.4.	Grammatical items of this unit in the song.....	45
4.4.5.	Grammatical items from the previous unit in the song	46
4.4.6.	Unit's topic and song's topic.....	46
4.4.7.	Additional activities.....	47
4.4.8.	Rhyme.....	47
4.4.9.	Song structure.....	47
4.4.10.	Original and adapted songs.....	47
4.4.11.	Genre, instruments.....	48
4.4.12.	Singers' gender and choir.....	48
4.4.13.	Range.....	48
4.4.14.	Audio quality	49
4.5.	Reliability and Validity.....	54
5.	Results	55
5.1.	Number of songs per unit	55
5.2.	Song's position in a unit	56
5.3.	Song length	58
5.4.	Vocabulary	60
5.5.	Grammar	63
5.6.	Song's topic.....	66
5.7.	Additional activities.....	66
5.8.	Rhyme.....	70

5.9.	Song structure	73
5.10.	Original and adapted songs	74
5.11.	Genre.....	75
5.12.	Instruments	77
5.13.	Major and minor.....	82
5.14.	Singers' gender and choir	83
5.15.	Range	84
5.16.	(Audio) quality	88
6.	Discussion	91
6.1.	Provide i+1 input	91
6.2.	Support student engagement with the language	96
6.3.	Are easily learned and remembered	98
6.4.	Can be sung by the students in a healthy way	102
6.5.	Are well known by students	104
6.6.	Fit the lesson	106
6.7.	Are liked by the students	107
6.8.	Have good audio quality	109
6.9.	Consist of authentic material	111
7.	Conclusions.....	112
7.1.	Global evaluation of song-related criteria within the textbooks.....	112
7.2.	Research questions and hypotheses	115
7.3.	Limitations	116
7.4.	Implications and personal reflection	118
8.	References	121
8.1.	Textbooks	121
8.2.	Literature	121
8.3.	Pictures	127
9.	Appendix	128

9.1.	E-mail correspondence with publishing houses	128
9.1.1.	Helbling (<i>English Step by Step, More!</i>)	128
9.1.2.	Lemberger/ Cambridge University Press (<i>Cambridge Global English</i>) 128	
9.1.3.	Veritas (easy)	132
9.2.	Abstract in English.....	133
9.3.	Abstract in German	133

Table of figures

Figure 1	Vocal range and tessitura of children.....	26
Figure 2	Voice register ranges	27
Figure 3	Voice range of trained and untrained children	28
Figure 4	Framework for analysis	42
Figure 5	Word file in More! 1, Unit 5 (More! 1 Workbook 2023:48).....	44
Figure 6	Scientific and Helmholtz octave system	49
Figure 7	Average number of pages in a unit, average position of the song in a unit, and median position of the song in a unit	57
Figure 8	Song length in [mm:ss], average song length.....	59
Figure 9	Percentage of vocabulary from the unit's wordlist in the song	60
Figure 10	Vocabulary items per song	61
Figure 11	Grammatical aspects in textbooks	64
Figure 12	Songs with grammatical aspects	66
Figure 13	Additional activities by textbook.....	67
Figure 14	Additional activities in categories in all four textbooks	69
Figure 15	Categorised activities in all four textbooks.....	70
Figure 16	Number of rhyme schemes in a song by textbook.....	71
Figure 17	Rhyme schemes all textbooks	72
Figure 18	Rhyme scheme by textbook	72
Figure 19	Original and adapted songs.....	74
Figure 20	Song genres	75
Figure 21	Genres in More!.....	76
Figure 22	Genres in Cambridge Global English	76

Figure 23 Genres in English Step by Step.....	77
Figure 24 Genres in easy	77
Figure 25 Instruments overview.....	78
Figure 26 Instruments in More!; a total of nine songs.....	79
Figure 27 Instruments in Cambridge Global English; a total of ten songs	80
Figure 28 Instruments in easy; a total of eleven songs.....	80
Figure 29 Instruments in English Step by Step; a total of twelve songs	80
Figure 30 Major and minor in the textbooks' songs	82
Figure 31 Singers in More!	83
Figure 32 Singers in Cambridge Global English	83
Figure 33 Singers in easy	84
Figure 34 English Step by Step	84
Figure 35 Vocal range of all textbook songs in musical notation	84
Figure 36 Vocal range of all textbook songs graph.....	85
Figure 37 Vocal range of the songs by textbook.....	86
Figure 38 More! range	87
Figure 39 Cambridge Global English range.....	87
Figure 40 easy range.....	88
Figure 41 English Step by Step range	88
Figure 42 Song ranges of all four textbooks	102
Figure 43 68% ranges of the four textbooks	103

Table of tables

Table 1 Studies on textbook songs	24
Table 2 Analysed textbooks, their authors and publishers	50
Table 3 Number of units in Austrian English textbooks	51
Table 4 Number of units and songs, songs per unit.....	56
Table 5 Textbook, units, the position of the song in the unit and the unit's length	56
Table 6 Average song length with and without outliers	59
Table 7 Vocabulary items from the lists in a song and items per song in More! and Cambridge Global English	62
Table 8 Number of words in all songs, known words	63
Table 9 Extensive use of grammatical aspects	65

Table 10 Musicians needed in easy	81
Table 11 Overview songs provide i+1 input.....	96
Table 12 Overview songs support student engagement	98
Table 13 Overview songs are easily learned and remembered	102
Table 14 Overview songs can be sung by the students in a healthy way	104
Table 15 Overview songs are well known by students.....	106
Table 16 Overview songs fit the lesson	107
Table 17 Overview songs are liked by the students.....	109
Table 18 Overview songs have good audio quality.....	110
Table 19 Overview songs consist of authentic material	112
Table 20 Summary of analysis.....	112

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2. Introduction

When I started learning English at school, I always loved the songs – mostly because I was a musical child and loved singing, but I also realised that my classmates sang the songs included in English textbooks with great joy regardless of their musicality. The vocabulary included in the songs was often remembered by me after singing the song just once or twice. Later in upper secondary, I was disappointed to find that there were hardly any songs in our English textbooks anymore. However, my Italian teacher still used songs in her Italian lessons in upper secondary, and those songs always included some kind of grammar aspect. I was sure that the songs helped us students to remember the correct grammar (to this day I am convinced that I only know how to form the *imperfetto* because of Eros Ramazzotti's "Se bastasse una buona canzone") and I wondered why songs were not used in my English class anymore?

At university, I kept waiting for the moment when songs would be discussed as a means of language learning in English language teaching (ELT) courses, but it never came. Additionally, the introductory handbooks to language teaching methodology I mostly had to study at university hardly touch upon songs as teaching methods. Richards, for example, only mentions that songs can be used to lower anxiety levels in the classroom (Richards 2015: 156) or that songs might be used as a listening (Richards 2015: 243) or speaking activity (Richards 2015: 226). However, he does not connect these statements with any literature or explains the benefits of songs for remembering vocabulary. Interestingly, the teachers Richards quotes in his textbook do talk about using songs but he does not back up their experiences with scientific results (eg. Richards 2015: 223). Similarly, Thornbury does not mention songs in grammar learning at all (Thornbury 1999), not even in "How to teach grammar creatively", published with his colleagues Puchta and Gerngroß (Gerngroß et al. 2006), and only very briefly in his publication on vocabulary learning, stressing the advantages of songs' repetitiveness and occurrence of chunks (Thornbury 2002: 117–118). This limited view on songs that I got to know in my studies does not reflect my personal, much richer experience with songs.

So, when I had to decide on which topic I would like to spend the following 1.5 -2 years to work on my final thesis, I quickly settled for songs in English language teaching, as I was convinced that songs could aid students in grammar and vocabulary learning - as they have supported me in learning Italian grammar and I English vocabulary. Now that I have been an ELT teacher for three years, my motivation is also to enhance my learners' experience by teaching English via songs more than I do now.

The second reason for wanting to find out more about songs included in English textbooks was the fact that whenever I told someone about my field of interest, they immediately started singing one very famous song from my lower secondary English textbook, which had been in use in Austria from the mid-90s until around 2012, namely "What's your telephone number" from *You&Me 1* (The new you & me: 1995). My own students or colleagues younger than me, however, usually did not start singing. They are or have been learning English with a different English textbook - *More!*. I wanted to know what made the *You&Me* songs so special that even after sometimes 20 years they are remembered and looked back upon with joy and nostalgia. And what was different about the songs in *More!* that do not evoke such strong emotions and are, apparently, not remembered that well. So, the idea was born to analyse current English textbooks' songs.

The main research question resulting from this research interest is: **In how far do songs featured in Austrian fifth-grade English textbooks have the potential to support vocabulary and grammar learning?**

Of course, for me personally, it would have been interesting to juxtapose songs from current textbooks with *You&Me 1*, but, the latter textbook must not be used at schools anymore and therefore, it would have been a lot of work to analyse songs that are not in use anymore. Rather I wanted to focus on songs that are actually used so that teacher colleagues might profit from my work when deciding on textbooks for their courses or when planning their language courses to profit as much as possible from included songs. Because I am a secondary school teacher, I have focused on literature regarding students between ten and 18 whenever possible. Research on teaching languages in the primary school context has not been considered to a relevant extent.

Although there has been quite a number of studies concerned with music and songs in language learning, they mostly focus on preexisting songs (like pop songs or traditional songs) and not on songs included in textbooks (eg. Tomczak-Lukaszewska and Lew 2019; Wallace 1994; Baills et al. 2021). Often, textbook songs are songs that are composed for language learning courses and that would not be listened to outside a learning environment, but also preexisting songs can be included in textbooks. Like other materials used in language courses, also textbook songs can and need to be analysed critically to determine their potential for language teaching. Especially because they are ready to use and embedded in the books, teachers might be tempted to simply include them in their teaching. However, it might be that the songs do not keep what they seem to promise by being included in a textbook – they might not support language learning. Only if there is research on textbook materials, including textbook songs, teachers have the possibility to make informed decisions about the materials they want to include in their language courses and, thus, ensure a high quality of their teaching.

However, research on textbook songs has been scarce so far (eg. Berglund 2024: 9; Bergestuen 2022: 8; Engh 2013: 119). Because of this research gap, connected questions, such as: What are criteria for useful songs? Are songs featured in textbooks in accordance with criteria for useful songs? Which effects do songs have in an English classroom? are not yet sufficiently researched and answered. In this thesis, therefore, a framework for the analysis of songs included in English textbooks is designed, and subsequently, put to use in the case of four approved Austrian English textbooks for fifth grade (first year of English instruction). This framework for analysis is meant to aid teachers in the decision of which textbook to use for their language course and how the songs can be used most efficiently. Additionally, publishing houses might make use of this thesis' results when developing new textbooks featuring songs as well.

The present thesis is divided into five main parts: First, current literature on songs and music in English vocabulary and grammar teaching is reviewed to find out which benefits songs might generally have, which features successful and ineffective songs have and how songs should be used so that they are successful in aiding grammar and vocabulary learning. Second, on the basis of these insights, a framework for analysis of English textbooks' songs is devised. The chapter

encompasses the framework for analysis itself, as well as coding strategies for the four analysed English textbooks to which the framework is later applied. Third, the analysis' results based on the newly devised framework are presented and, fourth, discussed. Finally, the thesis' overall results are summarised in the last chapter and their possible implications for teachers and publishing houses are provided.

3. Literature review

For this thesis' literature review, it is important to distinguish between research on the effects of singing generally on vocabulary and grammar learning, and the effects of using songs that are included in textbooks on vocabulary and grammar learning for the learners working with said textbook. Studies, for the first body of research concerned with singing generally might use (short) songs that are specifically developed for a study (e.g. Ludke et al. 2014, Schön et al. 2008, Ludke 2018), pop songs, or traditional songs. The studies belonging to this category are numerous (eg. Alisaari and Heikkola 2017, Vishnevskaja and Zhou 2019, Baills et al. 2021, Kahraman 2009, Tegge 2017, Tomczak-Lukaszewska and Lew 2019, Wallace 1994, Feninger 2015). The second body of research is concentrated on songs that are included in textbooks, and it is analysed in how far they support language learning.

In this thesis, both bodies of literature – research on singing generally, and textbook songs - are of relevance because they can be used for different areas. On the one hand, it is important to establish how and why singing can generally be beneficial in English grammar and vocabulary learning. For this, from the first body of literature can be drawn. On the other hand, it is also vital to determine in how far songs that are included in textbooks are beneficial for language learning and what scholars have found out about this area of research in previous studies. The number of studies in this field, unfortunately, is quite small. This fact highlights the need to rely on both bodies of research to answer this paper's research questions: research focusing on textbook songs, but also research on general benefits of singing for vocabulary and grammar learning.

Additionally, textbook songs and other songs, might be listened to and sung in class. Therefore, research on both listening to (Wallace 1994; Ludke 2010; Baills et al. 2021), and singing songs (Baills et al. 2021; Ludke et al. 2014; Schön et al.

2008) are included in this literature review in both parts to do justice to different kinds of song use in the EFL classroom.

In the first part of this literature, the first body of research is included which is concerned with the effects of singing on grammar and vocabulary learning in general. The second part of the literature review focuses on research on songs included in textbooks and their analysis, so that previous insights can be taken into consideration in later chapters.

After the summary, an excursus on singing with children and children's voice range is provided, as knowledge about this topic is required to interpret and understand the results later in this thesis.

3.1. Effects of singing, and songs not included in textbooks on vocabulary and grammar learning

Since the 1960s there has been research on the influence of music and songs on language learning in various fields of study, such as cognitive science, anthropology, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, first language acquisition (FLA), and second language acquisition (SLA). Songs and music have also been used in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom for a long time, and recently more research on the effects of music on language learning has been conducted (Engh 2013: 113). Although some authors and researchers still criticise the lack of research on songs in language learning (eg. Zhou 2016), there has been quite an ample body of research on various aspects of singing and songs in the EFL classroom in the last 25 years. The foci of the available scientific research are multifaceted and span from the acquisition of certain language skills to motivation, from team building to an extension of the attention span, and from enthusiasm for learning to benefits for incidental learning (Engh 2013).

Although there is quite a lot of research on singing in language teaching, the studies exhibit a great variety of foci and participant groups, as well as research designs which makes it difficult to compare them. Additionally, even though a lot of material can be found, there are many publications that do not suffice the quality standards of this paper, eg. some are not peer-reviewed or lack citations. To illustrate the number of studies: Lee and Schreibeis (2021) identified 34 experimental or quasi-experimental studies between 2001 and 2019 that use music

as treatment to increase the participants' language performance, from which only ten met the set criteria for their review article (using music as treatment, providing empirical evidence, being peer-reviewed) (Lee and Schreibeis 2021: 235).

The main goal in the first part is to establish in how far singing can aid vocabulary and grammar learning. These findings will become the basis for this thesis' research design. Therefore, literature directly focusing on these two aspects connected to singing is presented. Additionally, aspects that are positively affected by singing, and influence learners' ability to study grammar and vocabulary successfully are included, which are the ability to remember vocabulary, and "Din" or involuntary mental rehearsal. The third cluster of aspects discussed in the literature review concerning singing generally is connected to affective facets of a language class that are affected by singing: classroom environment, students' emotions, and motivation. The last aspect in this first part of the literature review is about authentic materials, since pop or traditional songs can be regarded as authentic language examples which can again increase the motivation to learn and provide authentic examples of vocabulary and grammar use, thus, benefitting vocabulary and grammar learning.

3.1.1. Positive influences of singing on vocabulary learning

Songs can be viewed as an opportunity for vocabulary learning, as several studies suggest (eg. Alisaari and Heikkola 2017: 233; Ludke et al. 2014: 41; Sevik 2011: 1029). Both incidental and intentional vocabulary learning can be of relevance when using songs. Intentional vocabulary learning takes place when it is the goal of an exercise to improve students' vocabulary. In incidental vocabulary learning, students are engaged in meaning-making activities, usually connected to one of the four skills listening, reading, speaking or writing, without any specific focus on the vocabulary in the task. Also relevant is the information if the vocabulary is going to be tested because if that is the case, students usually pay more deliberate attention to the language and it is more likely that intentional vocabulary learning takes place (Kahraman 2009: 2–3).

Incidental vocabulary learning is vital to becoming a proficient language user because there is simply not enough time during the lessons of any language course to explicitly learn all the words needed to get to that stage of language learning,

therefore, a good part of vocabulary learning has to be incidental (Thornbury 2002: 22). For incidental learning to take place, a vocabulary item has to be encountered several times by the learner. Other factors apart from the number of occurrences greatly influence incidental vocabulary learning, too, such as individual differences (eg. age, gender, proficiency, motivation, working memory, background knowledge), word characteristics (imageability, concreteness, cognateness, number of letters or syllables) and text characteristics (length, genre, keyness of the word for comprehension) (Uchihara et al. 2019: 6).

Conducting a meta-study of 26 different single studies between 1978 and October 2018, Uchihara, Webb and Yanagisawa found that low-proficiency learners and older learners profited more from a higher number of occurrences of a word than high-proficiency learners and younger learners (Uchihara et al. 2019: 22). Up until 20 encounters, a prominent frequency effect remained, yet after 20 encounters, word learning was not significantly improved anymore (Uchihara et al. 2019: 24). Thornbury suggests that learners have to meet a word seven times over spaced intervals to be able to keep it in their long term memory (Thornbury 2002: 24). The difference between those two numbers can be explained by looking at the authors' intentions. Uchihara, Webb and Yanagisawa analyse at which point rereading a word does not affect acquiring it anymore. This does not mean that it is necessary to encounter words very often to be able to remember them and use them in a sentence. Thornbury on the other hand gives a practical number of encounters that is realistic for an English course. The actual number of needed encounters might be different for every language learner and also depend on other factors like a word's length or similarities to a word in the L1 (first language) it might have.

Other aspects, next to repetition that can support vocabulary learning are retrieving a word often (eg. in exercises), distributed memory work (over a longer period of time), cognitive depth (the more decisions learners have to make about a word, the better they learn it), personalised learning, imagining a word, using a word, motivation, attention to a word, and affective depth ("words that trigger a strong emotional response [...] are more easily recalled") (Thornbury 2002: 24–26). Especially recycling words in different contexts and variations, and over a longer period of time is of great importance for long-term acquisition of vocabulary items

(Thornbury 2002: 27), as well as conscious attention to and noticing of words and their meanings (Thornbury 2002: 109).

Additionally, learners need to engage with a word: “The more a learner engages with a new word, the more likely they are to learn it” (Schmitt 2008: 338). The widely used PPP model highlights exactly this: The practice and production phase after the presentation are decisive for a student to actually acquire a word’s concept. Similarly, the discovery, consolidation and use concept by Gerngroß, Puchta and Thornbury stresses the personalised use: “Language is only memorable when it has been ‘owned’, that is, when it has been appropriated and put to use for the learner’s own particular purposes” (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 7–8). Thornbury also highlights the need for restructuring, that is, to incorporate new information into the existing and to connect a new structure with actual situations in which it can be used. Again, restructuring can be achieved by exercises that engage the students (Thornbury 2002: 94).

Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) subsumed aspects like engagement with vocabulary or noticing in their involvement load hypothesis. They define involvement as consisting of three steps: the need for a word, searching for it in a dictionary or asking a teacher, and an evaluation of a word’s meaning, for example by deciding which synonym best fits into a gap. They assume that “words which are processed with higher involvement load will be retained better than words which are processed with lower involvement load” and tasks with high involvement load are, overall, more effective (Laufer and Hulstijn 2001: 14–17). Tasks that support vocabulary learning, therefore, create a need for a word in the student, ask them to look up a word and make evaluative judgments about it.

In Uchihara, Webb and Yanagisawa’s meta-analysis, data showed that if students engaged more with vocabulary, they needed fewer repetitions because the engagement with the words in question “might override the effect of the repeated encounter” or the intentional and increased focus resulted in better processing of target words (Uchihara et al. 2019: 24).

To summarise, research has shown that vocabulary learning has to be incidental to a great extent (Thornbury 2002: 22) and that students require several encounters until they know a word (Uchihara et al. 2019: 22). The number of

encounters can be reduced when students interact with vocabulary they want to (or have to) learn (Uchihara et al. 2019: 24). Interaction can take place, for example, via personalised learning ('owning' words (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 7–8)), cognitively and affectively deep exercises (Thornbury 2002: 24–26), engaging with a word (Schmitt 2008: 338), restructuring, recycling words (Thornbury 2002: 94), putting effort into finding its meaning, and making evaluative judgments about it (Laufer and Hulstijn 2001: 14–17). Song lyrics can be seen as a (authentic) source for vocabulary that might be inviting for students to engage with. Interaction, such as listening to and singing a song, combined with accompanying exercises can increase the involvement load and the focus vocabulary might be remembered faster and / or for a longer period of time.

3.1.2. Increased memory of vocabulary through songs

Although songs in the EFL classroom have many emotional benefits, like increased motivation, enthusiasm or a feeling of community (Engh 2013: 113 – 114), which might increase the time spent on a task, some studies show that singing and songs per se can increase the ability to remember language.

Some of the most often cited results are those of Wallace's experiments. She conducted four experiments in which she showed that listening to a song resulted in a better written text recall (delayed and immediate) and more awareness of structural elements, like rhythm and line breaks, than spoken presentations (Wallace 1994: 1475) or rhythmically spoken presentations of the same text (Wallace 1994: 1476). This means that students may be able to retrieve vocabulary presented in songs better than vocabulary presented in spoken form. The rhythmic information in the song paired with rhymes seemed to have positively influenced the participants concerning remembering language and meta-information about the presented language; since the participants in the sung and rhythmically spoken presentation could also indicate better how many syllables there were missing in their written texts, and where line breaks were (Wallace 1994: 1475). Since the sung presentation also yielded better results than the rhythmically spoken presentation, it can be concluded that a melody has additional properties apart from a rhythmic component that help remember a text. Wallace suggests that the melody might accentuate particular components of a text which are then remembered more easily (Wallace 1994: 1475).

Wallace also experimented with different melodies and found that hearing three verses with three different melodies resulted in a worse text recall than pairing different verses with just one melody (Wallace 1994: 1479). However, when participants only heard a single verse of the song, the verbatim text recall was better for the spoken presentation. She concluded that songs that support text learning need to be sufficiently learned otherwise the music could even distract the students (Wallace 1994: 1478). As for the reasons why music supports verbatim text recall, Wallace suggests that a melody can support chunking a text into melodic phrases, assist in positioning and sequencing textual units, provide additional information on how much text needs to be retrieved (eg. eight syllables) and improve the chances of guessing a forgotten word because additional information, like the number of syllables, is stored as well.

Wallace also suggests that melodies should be simple (without complex rhythm, or large interval sizes), symmetrical, and there should be a close match between text and melody so that both can be easily learned. Features of a close match between melody and text include nearly the same number of syllables and notes, stress in the melody where there is stress in the text, and no mismatch between the intonation pattern of the text and the rise and fall of a melody. Additionally, the stimulus tape must be clear and easily understandable, as pretests indicated (Wallace 1994: 1481–1483).

For her doctoral thesis, Karen Ludke conducted an experiment in which three groups received audio input of phrases in Hungarian: one received spoken, one sung and one rhythmically spoken input. In four of the five Hungarian tests afterwards, the singing group outperformed the others (Ludke 2010: 84). To exclude the factor of variable duration of the input of spoken delivery and sung delivery, the phrases were recorded at such velocities that they were equally long across all three learning conditions (Ludke 2010: 52). Summarising other studies' outcomes, Ludke attributes her findings to the fact that music and language are stored in different hemispheres of the brain and, therefore, more pathways for memory retrieval are available. She also argues – similar to Wallace – that musical structures in songs might support learners by allowing them to chunk language into phrases rather than individual words and make phrases more easily retrievable. Additional information, like rhyme, rhythm, pitch or melodic structures can provide

an additional 'hook' by which phrases are more easily retrieved from memory. Finally, she suggests that additional musical elements aligned with syllables and words allow an improved initial memory encoding (Ludke 2010: 307–308).

A similar experiment was conducted by Ludke, Ferreira and Overy some years later. They conducted a study with a randomised, controlled, experimental design with L1 speakers of English in which they randomly assigned 60 adult participants to one of three listen-and-repeat groups: singing, rhythmic speaking, or speaking. After a 15-minute language training session, the singing group outperformed the other groups in Hungarian language tests. According to the authors, the pitch and syllable pairing might help language learners to distinguish between syllables more easily as two pieces of information are attached to one syllable. As a result, the melody leads to a quicker word segmentation of a sound stream, which is especially helpful at the beginning of learning a new language to distinguish words more easily (Ludke et al. 2014: 41). Additionally, the authors found that “pairing each verse with the same melody during the learning process led to the highest verbal memory performance on several different analyses of verbatim written text recall”. If different verses were paired with different melodies, training was less effective than listening to the spoken version, as the music might be a distraction to the learners (Ludke et al. 2014: 42). To enhance vocabulary recall, songs used in class should be simple and exhibit a repetitive melody pattern.

In a study conducted by Baills et al, 108 Chinese students tried to learn 14 French words in two experiments. In the first one, one group listened to a song and the other to the same words in rhythmic speech; and in the second experiment, one group just listened to the song and the other group listened and sang to the song. The sound file was repeated three times in the first, and four times in the second experiment, leading to a duration of the training session of four, and a bit more than five minutes respectively. Again it was controlled for the presentation rate in both experiments (Baills et al. 2021: 380–381). In the first experiment, accentedness was better by students in the song group, which Baills et al interpret as support for the claim that “the phonological mnemonic effect of songs arises not only from their rhythmic properties but also from the melodic changes and the structural melodic regularities that are present only in songs” (Baills et al. 2021: 399). The second experiment showed no significant differences between the singing and just

listening groups (Baills et al. 2021: 399). However, the training session with the goal to learn a song in a foreign language and actually sing it was very short (only 4-5 minutes) - from my experience as a music teacher, it takes students approximately 3-4 run-throughs to learn a song in such a way that they can mostly sing it with written lyrics in front of them in a language they at least basically understand when the song is learned in a call-and-response way, – so that they have time to listen before they sing – and the tempo is reduced for difficult passages. None of those simplifying measures were taken in the experiment, which could have resulted in a longer learning time for the song according to my experience. In this study, the participants might not have been able to learn the song because they had to listen to and sing to the song at the same time which is incredibly hard in a foreign language one has no knowledge of. Although the training session was of the same duration for both groups, studies have shown that music can also be a distraction in specific settings (Wallace 1994: 1481), which might have been the case in this study.

In summary, Wallace, Ludke et al, and Ludke suggest that singing compared to speaking results in a better text recall (Wallace 1994: 1475; Ludke 2010: 84; Ludke et al. 2014: 41). They all partially attribute their findings to the extra information, like rhythm and melody, a song provides that structures the input, compared to a spoken text. Music seems to help with structuring a text into chunks that can be retrieved more easily (Wallace 1994: 1481; Ludke 2010: 307; Ludke et al. 2014: 41). The most valuable insight of Baills et al's work might be their result that in the context of a very short training session, participants who were trained with music and those who were trained without music did not show any significant differences in French vocabulary gain (Baills et al. 2021: 399). This means that in future recommendations on how to work with songs it needs to be specified that the training session must be of adequate length so that the students can learn the song. Also, used melodies should be simple, symmetrical and exhibit a close match between lyrics and melody. Furthermore, the recording should be easily understandable (Wallace 1994: 1481–1483) and each verse should have the same melody (Ludke et al. 2014: 42).

3.1.3. Evidence about using songs for grammar learning

Research on grammar learning through songs is scarcer than on other areas of language learning, such as vocabulary, pronunciation or emotions in connection to singing. To illustrate this point: in Lee and Schreibeis' compilation of empirical research on using music for language learning between 2001 and 2019 mentioned before, there are ten studies that fulfilled their set quality criteria, none of which focused on grammar learning, while seven examined the improvement of the participants' vocabulary, two of their pronunciation and one of their writing skills (Lee and Schreibeis 2021: 245).

One study published later than Lee and Schreibeis' considered period was conducted by Busse, Hennies, Kreutz, and Roden who divided their eight- to ten-year-old participants into three groups: singing, speaking, and control. Each group learned body vocabulary (head, hands, toes...) and present tense questions (Does she have a head? – Yes, she does.) in their respective learning condition. Concerning grammatical learning, the singing group and the speaking group made significant learning progress while the control group did not. Although no significant difference between the singing and speaking group could be detected in the post-test, the follow-up test several weeks later showed that the singing group could maintain progress, while the speaking group's results had decreased. Additionally, the researchers measured the students' emotions. They found that the singing group had higher positive affect than the other groups (Busse et al. 2021: 9).

Another study was conducted in Romania in 2011 with 34 participants in 7th grade who were divided into one experimental group that was taught grammar with songs over the course of 15 weeks with 50 minutes of instruction per week, and one control group. The control group received the same amount of instruction by the same teacher but without the songs (Alinte 2013: 12). Unfortunately, it is not stated which grammar item(s) the participants learned. The researcher gathered data via pre- and post-tests, field notes and questionnaires (Alinte 2013: 13). The post-tests showed a better result for the experimental group, but the results were not significantly better than in the control group (Alinte 2013: 19).

In Ludke's quasi-experimental exploratory study, the singing group outperformed the second group (art interventions) concerning grammar, listening

comprehension, speaking skills, and intonation. However, there are several methodological limitations to Ludke's study, as there was no control group, the two groups had different teachers and there was a whole range of different activities for both groups, so it is difficult to say, which activity supported grammar learning, which did so only to a lesser extent, and if the results can be attributed to the different approaches or the different teachers (Ludke 2018: 377).

Although high-quality empirical studies on grammar learning with songs are rather rare, there is an abundance of literature on the use of existing songs for grammar learning. In this body of literature, songs for grammar learning are collected and their use for teaching English grammar is explained, for example, on the websites eslsongs.com (ESLSongs | A collection of song lyrics to teach English vocabulary and grammar in the ESL classroom 2022) or sandraheyersongs.com (Heyer 2016), or on teaching resource websites like Eduki ([grundschulteaching](http://grundschulteaching.com) 2023). There are also a lot of resources available that include songs that were composed explicitly for teaching. Some of the are free, for example, the Youtube Channel "Silly School Education" on which lots of songs on various grammar topics can be found (Silly School Education), some have to be paid for, for example, the book "More! Grammar songs & raps" by the same authors as the More! textbook series Herbert Puchta, Günter Gerngroß, Christian Holzmann and Mathew Devitt (Puchta et al. 2012), or the website grammarsongs.com which both compile songs for grammar learning with accompanying activities (Corbett 2025). Another online resource for grammar learning is provided by Hancock who composed 18 songs for students from ten to 18 each with a grammatical focus. He then developed additional exercises that provide more practice and a more thorough understanding of the grammatical structure in focus for his students (Hancock 2000: 7). However, to the author's knowledge, there has been no empirical research on the efficiency of the materials presented. The wide use of songs and singing in can also be an indicator for their value in grammar teaching, even though empirical studies are rather rare.

Although literature on grammar learning through singing or songs is scarce, it can be argued that songs can be very valuable for acquiring and understanding grammar. First of all, songs can be understood either as a listening comprehension or as a reading comprehension exercise. It is clear that students need grammar for both reading and listening and that students also practice grammar in both kinds

of exercises, since they encounter grammatical structures in several different contexts, thus contributing to the acquisition of the multiple aspects a grammatical pattern usually entails. By analysing language in songs, students can focus as much on grammar, as on other aspects, such as vocabulary, form, or content (Hancock 2000: 7).

Secondly, following the lexico-grammatical approach to language learning, in which lexis and grammar are not seen separately from each other, it is not possible to teach vocabulary without grammar and vice versa (Sardinha 2013). This becomes especially apparent with chunks. For both, grammar and vocabulary acquisition, chunks, or formulaic sequences, are of utmost importance. They are ready-made phrases or word sequences with which students can form parts of sentences or whole sentences without having to string together words in the correct sequence and with correct grammar, but they can be sure that the chunk in itself is correct. Of course, chunks can also be applied in socially inappropriate ways, or they can be combined in ungrammatical manners but generally, a formulaic expression can give an L2 student the chance to express themselves without having to think about every single word in a sentence. Thus, chunks are very useful for achieving fluency (Thornbury 1999: 93). Another reason for the usefulness of chunks is that many students not only prefer holistic methods of learning grammar – as is done with teaching chunks – but often students also struggle to produce correct grammar structures, although they understand them. Chunks allow those students to rely on these ready-made language patterns before they have to produce their own phrases (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 5).

Chunk learning can be supported by rhythmic patterns and melodic contours “inherently structured in the songs” (Zhou 2016: 166). Moreover, pop songs are usually very rich in chunks and can, therefore, be a valuable resource for language teaching (Thornbury 2002: 118). Thornbury also puts forward that phrasal verbs might best be learned on an item-by-item basis anyways, since there is hardly any structure behind them, and they should preferably be learned in “short contexts that demonstrate their syntactic behaviour” (Thornbury 2002: 125). Songs, therefore, make the perfect short contexts because they are usually limited in length and very rich in chunks and thus, can be very efficiently used.

In summary, the few empirical studies there about grammar learning through songs suggest positive results. On the long run, grammar learning with songs might be more sustainable (Busse et al. 2021: 9), however, these results have to be treated with caution as other studies did not find significant differences (Alinte 2013: 19) or methodological limitations overshadow the positive results (Ludke 2018: 377). More research is needed in this field, even though practitioners frequently use songs for grammar learning and report positive results.

3.1.4. Earworms and involuntary mental rehearsal

First, it might seem that earworms do not relate to vocabulary and grammar learning. However, two of this thesis' underlying questions are "What properties should textbook songs have?" and "What properties do textbook songs have?". If relevant vocabulary and grammar is now woven into songs that can be remembered easily (earworms), a valuable textbook song is constructed.

What happens when we have an earworm, is that verbal or musical material seems to be "stuck" in the auditory short-term store (Ludke 2010: 15), also known as the phonological loop – one of two parts of the working memory (Ludke 2010: 12). In that case, input is repeated and repeated – sometimes for hours and not necessarily directly after having heard speech or music, but sometimes even years later (Ludke 2010: 15). As the name involuntary mental rehearsal suggests, the mental repetition of input can, in fact, be additional practice. Furthermore, it is usually not only one single word that is repeated but one or several phrases. This means that they are stored together as chunks in the memory and learners can draw on these ready-made complete and (usually) correct phrases in their language production. Ludke (2010: 28) compiled typical attributes of earworms from existing research:

- 1) The song's structure is simple and predictable.
- 2) "The melody line is symmetrical, often consisting of a rise in pitch, followed by a fall".
- 3) "The end of the song or phrase leads naturally back to the beginning."
- 4) An existing rhyme scheme can facilitate recall.
- 5) The song is aesthetically appealing and evokes enjoyment. (Ludke 2010: 28)

There is a similar phenomenon concerning language which was described by Krashen citing linguist Elisabeth Barber's experience with it and adding his own. Krashen named the sounds, words and phrases you hear involuntarily after long language input the 'Din' (Krashen 1983). He hypothesised that "Din is set off by comprehensible input" and the "input needs to contain significant quantities of the acquirer's $i+1$ " (Krashen 1983: 43). $i+1$ are structures "the acquirer has not yet acquired but is 'ready' for" (Krashen 1983: 43). He also suggests that a longer input – preferably aural – of several hours starts Din and learners start to hear words and phrases from the target language in their inner ear and an eagerness and longing for interactional practice occurs. Din, therefore, can be very useful in L2 acquisition since it provides additional input.

However, Krashen also states that Din only occurs with beginner and intermediate learners, not with very advanced learners, since those generally receive less input containing their $i+1$ (Krashen 1983: 43). This is where a difference between Krashen's Din and Ludke's description of an earworm can be detected, since an earworm according to Ludke and also from one's own experience does not necessarily have to contain $i+1$ content.

Summarising, it can be said that textbook songs should feature typical properties of earworms, such as a simple and predictable structure, a symmetrical melody, an ending that leads back to the beginning, a rhyme scheme, an aesthetic appeal and the possibility to evoke enjoyment (Ludke 2010: 28). Linguistically, lyrics should consist of $i+1$ input to set off a linguistic earworm called Din (Krashen 1983: 43).

3.1.5. Classroom environment, emotions, and motivation connected to singing in the classroom

Singing in the EFL classroom can strengthen the sense of community because all students (and ideally also the teacher) are included in the activity and share an experience – that of creating music. In this experience, the feeling of self is reduced, and an emotional state is shared (Mithen 2007: 215). Additionally, it is argued that songs enhance social harmony (Huy Le 1999), and trust and cooperation are created by taking part in group singing (Anshel and Kipper 1988). A sense of community and mutual trust all build towards a positive classroom

environment – an important factor (Richards 2015: 197), one might even say, the basis for learning.

A widely accepted theory concerning classroom emotions is that of the Affective Filter by Krashen. The Affective Filter can be regarded as a mental block which is switched on when students feel negative emotions, such as stress or anxiety, during learning. When the Affective Filter is up, learning is impeded, when it is low, learning can take place:

“[...] we acquire best when the pressure is completely off, when anxiety is zero, when the acquirer’s focus is entirely on communication; in short, when the interchange or input is so interesting that the acquirer ‘forgets’ that it is in a second language” (Krashen 1983: 43).

Research suggests that music can lower the Affective Filter by relaxing students and can, thus, support learning (Engh 2013: 117). Additionally, it was shown that music can also increase students’ confidence in L2 speaking (Ludke 2010: 311).

Emotions are also insofar of interest to language teachers, as the likelihood that input is processed and stored in the long-term memory is higher when strong emotions are involved (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 7; Ludke 2010: 35). If a song is well-liked and the students enjoy singing it together, it evokes strong emotions, and it can be expected that the song and the language it contains will be remembered.

Motivation not only concerns students’ affective states but also their attitudes, which both impact how much effort a student expends to learn a new language (Engh 2013: 117). Thornbury states, “The only difference a strong motivation makes is that the learner is likely to spend more time on rehearsal and practice, which in the end will pay off in terms of memory” (Thornbury 2002: 25). Research shows that motivation is, in fact, a good indicator for the prediction of successful learning (Ludke 2010: 189). Examples of increased motivation through singing are ample: For instance, in his paper about the implementation of his Contemporary Music Approach (CMA), Anton describes that nearly all of his students enjoyed learning with his songs and also played the songs for family and friends. Half of the students also listened to the recorded songs at home (Anton 1990: 1169) – all of which are indicators for an increase in motivation and an increase in time spent on

and with the learning material. More recently, Schön et al also suggested that music could be motivational in the EFL classroom (Schön et al. 2008: 982).

To summarise, songs and singing in the EFL classroom can result in positive emotions, social harmony, trust and cooperation (eg. Huy Le 1999; Richards 2015: 197). As a result, the Affective Filter might be lowered which can support language learning (Krashen 1983: 43), because strong emotions can facilitate input storage in the long term memory (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 7).d

3.1.6. Songs as authentic material

English songs can function as authentic material that is “potentially culturally rich” (Engh 2013: 115). They can not only be used to boost the students’ motivation, as is true for most authentic material in general (Richards 2015: 458), but songs – if well chosen – can also serve as a source to learn about the target language’s culture, either through its text, a story it might tell, the information it might contain, vocabulary and grammar that is used or the topic that is discussed; or through the singing itself, especially the accent or variety of the singer(s). Students can get into contact with different varieties of English that might not appear in the textbook’s listening comprehensions, like the African American Vernacular English (Zhou 2016: 169–170). Additionally, students have the chance to learn informal language (Engh 2013: 115), which is especially useful in interactions with L1 speakers.

Because songs’ lyrics are usually quite short and the language of songs is more similar to spoken discourse with a lower vocabulary demand than written genres (Tegge 2017: 10), this might be a chance especially for beginner learners to interact with authentic texts that are comprehensible for them. Songs can then be used as listening activities, or the lyrics can serve as reading practice. Additionally, the presentation rate in pop songs is usually lower than in conventional speech which means that students have more time to comprehend a text’s meaning (Murphey 1992: 772). This, paired with a high number of repetitions, renders these authentic texts comprehensible while still allowing students to engage with authentic material.

Including songs in the EFL classroom is also in so far authentic, as listening to, singing and discussing songs is an authentic cultural practice L1 speakers engage

in, too (Engh 2013: 117). Therefore, singing and listening to songs in the EFL classroom pose authentic L1 speaker behaviour and culture.

To summarise, English songs can serve as authentic material, as well as authentic cultural practice (Engh 2013: 115–117) that contain language as it is used by L1 speakers in a low presentation rate (Murphey 1992: 772) and a lower vocabulary demand than written texts (Tegge 2017: 10) which makes them also suitable for beginner learners. A result of employing songs as authentic material is an increased motivation, which can climax in additional time spent with learning materials (Richards 2015: 458).

3.2. Songs in textbooks

As mentioned before, analyses of songs included in textbooks are quite scarce (eg. Berglund 2024: 9; Bergestuen 2022: 8; Engh 2013: 119). Still, some relevant examples could be included in this literature review.

One example of a study analysing textbooks is Bergestuen's Master's thesis in which she analysed the songs in four Norwegian English course textbook series for first grade (primary school): *Quest* (Lien, Pritchard, Skjellin 2020), *Explore* (Edwards, Flognfeldt, Moen 2020), *Engelsk* (Johansen, Vestgard 2019) and *link* (Mezzetti, Myrset, Oddvik, Stuvland, Szikszay 2020). The aim of her study was to find out to what extent Norwegian English coursebooks for first grade include songs, the kind of songs and their purpose (Bergestuen 2022: 8), differentiating between songs for learning and thematic songs (Bergestuen 2022: 25). She distinguished between 'traditional' and 'static' songs; the latter being composed explicitly for learning. Additionally to these two categories, she introduced two more categories for in-between cases: 'static with traditional melody', and 'in-between static and traditional' songs. Into the latter category, Bergestuen sorted altered traditional children's songs that do not have a completely new text but are largely based on the original lyrics. Songs, like pop songs, that do not fit in any of the four mentioned categories were sorted into 'other' (Bergestuen 2022: 22–24). Furthermore, she distinguished different song types according to the purpose of the song, resulting in two groups: learning songs, and thematic songs which were "not directly connected to learning aims". One of her main findings was that the majority of songs included in textbooks and the accompanying material to those

textbooks (such as teacher's guides or digital resources) were traditional songs (36 in total), followed by static with traditional melody (23), static songs (13), in-between static and traditional songs (8) and finally other songs (1). Categorising the songs according to purpose, 59 of the songs were learning songs and only 23 were thematic songs (Bergestuen 2022: 58–59).

Another study from 2014 by Trummer also analysed songs in textbooks. In her Diploma thesis, Trummer compared eight Austrian English textbook series (English to go, Friends, More!, New Highlight, Red Line, Smart, The New You & Me, Your turn) with six Austrian French textbook series (A Plus, Bien Fait, Decouvertes, Feu Vert, Realites, Tous Ensemble). Her interests were the number of songs in each series and for each year, as well as their labelling as obligatory or facultative, their position within a unit, the use of known or unknown grammar and vocabulary in the songs, the use of traditional and original songs, included genres, and the songs' function (Trummer 2014: 24–96). This study, however, lacks a thorough description of how the analysed categories were determined, and on what theoretical basis a song was included in one and not in another category. The most important insights of this study are that songs in English textbooks are usually labelled as obligatory and they are embedded within a unit with the aim of practising grammar or vocabulary. Furthermore, Trummer identified many different musical genres in English textbooks and pointed out that the songs are often employed as energizers (Trummer 2014: 124–126).

Gortan-Carlin and Dobravac studied songs in Croatian English textbooks for first grade (primary school) concerning their musical appropriateness for young children, their contribution to intercultural competence and their contribution to “the development of values defined by the cross-curricular themes” (Gortan-Carlin and Dobravac 2021: 168). For the musical analysis the following aspects were researched: choice of vocal performers, pitch range, movement of the melody line, tonality, dynamics, rhythm, tempo, mood and appropriateness with respect to the analysed variables. The analysed songs are mostly appropriate in these areas, except for range. Nearly three quarters of the songs included notes that were too low for children that age (below a) (Gortan-Carlin and Dobravac 2021: 171). This is one of the few examples for a musical analysis of textbook songs, however, the context within it is conducted is not related to vocabulary or grammar.

The last study discussed in this section examines the songs included in six Swedish EFL textbooks for 5th and 6th grade (Viewpoints 1 and 2, Solid Gold 1 and 2, Blueprints A Version 3.0, Blueprints B Version 2.0). In his study, Berglund researched how songs are introduced to students, their accompanying tasks and functions (Berglund 2024: 2). He found that the songs purposes are facilitating practice of vocabulary, information searching, and interpretation, as well as establishing connections with societal and emotional issues, and motivation. It is pointed out that the number of songs included in the textbooks is quite low, which “communicates a distrust toward their inherent pedagogical value” (Berglund 2024: 28).

The available studies that analyse songs in textbooks do so with a variety of foci, for example, concerning number of songs in a textbook, traditional or original songs, genres, songs’ purposes, their position in a unit, cross-curricular potential, accompanying tasks, grammar, or vocabulary. To illustrate the studies’ different foci and relevance for this thesis, the following table (

Table 1) has been created. Often musical aspects are not taken into consideration in studies (eg. Berglund 2024; Bergestuen 2022; Trummer 2014), but rather aspects which are concerned with lyrics or how a song is embedded in a textbook. None of the studies presented in this thesis link vocabulary and grammar learning with musical aspects. Moreover, the question, in how far textbook songs can support language learning does not seem to be researched intensely.

Table 1 Studies on textbook songs

Author(s)	Berglund	Bergestuen	Trummer	Gortan-Carlin, Dobravac
year	2024	2022	2014	2021
publication	thesis	master's thesis	diploma thesis	paper in anthology
textbook grade	Swedish grade 5, 6 = upper secondary	1 st grade	5 th -8 th grade	1 st grade
focus	songs' introduction, accompanying tasks, functions (vocabulary)	traditional/ original songs,	genres, vocabulary/grammar included, genres, original/traditional songs, songs' functions, obligatory/facultative	intercultural competence
musical aspects	no	no	no	vocal performers, pitch range, melody, tonality, dynamics, rhythm, tempo, mood

One reason for this research gap concerning musical aspects of textbook songs and their effects on grammar and vocabulary learning might be the interdisciplinary knowledge needed to analyse songs in textbooks. On the one hand, researchers must have a deep understanding of musical theory, genres, instrumentation, children's voices etc and on the other hand, they have to be able to rely on a broad knowledge of second language acquisition and English language teaching for such a study to yield relevant results. This combination within one researcher or research teams seems to be rare. To help close this gap in the research, this present study is conducted.

3.3. Summary

The fact that songs can generally be very valuable in language learning has been confirmed in empirical studies, as well as review studies (see for example Engh 2013; Degraeve 2019 and Zhou 2016). Differences between the studies' findings can partly be ascribed to the differences in their research designs. Factors like duration of the training, usage of a real or artificial language, participants' age, use of existing songs or particularly designed melodies, a lack of consistent research tools to measure individual differences and personal variables (such as musical

ability or intelligence), missing definitions of “rhythmical speaking” and different post-test formats can influence research outcomes considerably and are not consistent throughout the studies. Therefore, it is still difficult to reach firm conclusions about singing and songs in the classroom, because each study seems to measure different aspects of songs and language learning or, if the research goals are similar, employ diverging research designs.

Despite the variety of research designs, some conclusions can be drawn from the included literature. Songs and singing in the EFL classroom can

1. improve students’ ability to retrieve vocabulary items (Wallace 1994: 1475, Ludke 2010: 84, Baills et al. 2021: 399).
2. increase students’ grammar learning (Busse et al. 2021: 9, Ludke 2018: 377).
3. support chunk learning (Zhou 2016: 166).
4. serve as authentic input, especially for young learners (Engh 2013: 115).
5. enhance social harmony (Huy Le 1999) and lower the Affective Filter (Krashen 1983: 43).
6. boost students’ motivation (Anton 1990: 1169, Schön et al. 2008: 982, Richards 2015: 458).
7. lead to Din and, therefore, increase involuntary mental rehearsal (Ludke 2010: 15.).

These findings collected from previous research strongly suggest that songs and singing can support L2 learning in various ways. Now that this is established, the next step is to design a framework for analysis that helps to determine, if particular songs can indeed keep their promise of L2 learning support. For this, the question is posed which properties textbook songs must have to support vocabulary and grammar learning best. Drawing on study’s results as well as their methodologies concerning features useful songs should have, the framework for analysis will be developed.

As this thesis’ aim is to describe textbook songs that support vocabulary and grammar learning, the focus in the following will lie on aspects from the literature review that are directly connected to useful songs’ features. Those include Krashen’s *i+1* hypothesis, Laufer and Hulstijn’s involvement load hypothesis, as

well as Thornbury's (2002) and Gerngroß et al's (2006) research on the benefits of interaction concerning vocabulary learning. Furthermore, song features described in experimental studies, eg by Ludke 2010, Baills et al. 2021, and Wallace 1994 will be taken into consideration. To determine if songs can be sung in a healthy way, Mohr's findings (2017) will be of use.

3.4. Excursus: Children's voice range

To understand some of the aspects discussed later in this paper, it is beneficial to have knowledge about a child's voice range in general. It seems most effective to explain basic concepts of singing with children in a structured manner and in the beginning of the thesis, so all references to theory on children's singing voices later are clear. As this chapter contains a general overview of musical and physiological presuppositions for singing and not literature on the use of songs in English textbooks or English grammar and vocabulary learning, the form of an excursus has been chosen.

What is important for the singability of a song is the range from the lowest to the highest note in it. Generally, it is believed that untrained children from age ten to their vocal mutation have a range of about two octaves from a-a² (Figure 1, I). However, their tessitura, the musical range where they can sing comfortably is between d¹ and d² according to Perdue and Campbell (2020: 62) (Figure 2, II) and between f¹ and f² according to Mohr (2017: 5) (Figure 1, III).

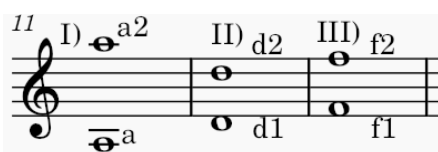


Figure 1 Vocal range and tessitura of children

Pitch alone is not the only relevant aspect of singing to determine if students can sing a song easily and healthily. There are four vocal registers with which a musical note can be produced: chest voice, head voice, a mix between chest and head voice, and the whistle voice. The chest voice is usually the voice in which we also speak. The vocal folds vibrate fully which results in a strong and loud sound. When using the head voice, the vocal folds only vibrate at their edges which results in a much softer sound, but the range of notes that can be sung with the head voice is much bigger (as high as about c³) compared to the pure chest voice, where the

limit is at about e1¹ (Figure 2). Above c3, the whistle voice can be used to produce sounds that resemble more a whistle than a singing voice.² The mixed voice is produced when not only edges of the vocal folds resonate but also not the whole mass of them, but a mixture of both vibrating patterns. The mixed voice, like the head voice, can be used for the whole possible pitch range (Figure 2) (Mohr 2017: 5–6). This is the way of singing that is considered healthy and strong and can be learned by imitation.

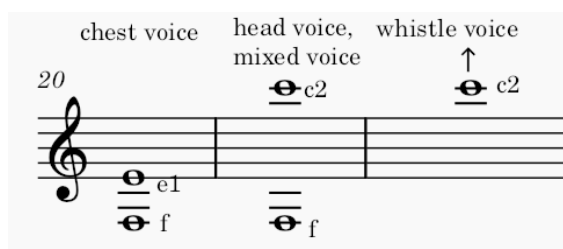


Figure 2 Voice register ranges

Using the chest voice for notes that are above around e1 often results in a shouting sound and can lead to strain, pain or long-term pathologies. For children to learn how to access their healthy middle or head register, they must sing with role models who also use their voice healthily. Unfortunately, many families do not sing together and in preschools and schools the music teachers' knowledge and skills are limited, resulting in a too-low pitch range in songs because the teachers cannot sing as high as would be appropriate for children's voices, even if they sing themselves in the middle register because they are not trained enough (Mohr 2017: 8). Children then are likely to use their chest voice undiscovered for the majority of the song, even when it is too high for a healthy use, and they are not prompted to develop their middle register which they then cannot access when their chest voice finally fails them.

How does the children's preferred singing register now relate to textbook songs? As mentioned before, songs should be in a comfortable register for students, which is believed to be somewhere between about d1 and f2 and can go as low as a in the chest register. However, as explained in the previous paragraph, children might not be able to use their mixed voice because they are not used to it. But if the

¹ Trained singers can also sing higher with their chest voice, for example Adele, Beyonce, or Freddy Mercury. This requires a special technique known as belting.

² Not everyone can access their whistle register. Famous examples for whistle note singers are Ariana Grande or Mariah Carey.

students solely rely on their chest voice, which some might do, their vocal range is very limited to a range of about a to e1 (Figure 3). As a result, textbook songs might not be in a comfortable range for those students.



Figure 3 Voice range of trained and untrained children

The textbook song writers now have to decide: should they create songs in a comfortable but limited vocal area for very untrained children who cannot access their mixed voice, support this current system in which children do not learn how to sing healthily and risk that minimally musically trained children might not be able to sing comfortably and healthily in that range. Or should they cater their songs towards children with minimal musical training and risk that non-trained children might not be able to sing along healthily but give untrained children the chance to try out their healthy mixed register?

4. Research design

4.1. Aim and research hypotheses

As already established in the literature review, there is a good range of research on using songs in EFL and ELT which can inform research about songs used in textbooks. The specific features of these, though, have hardly been researched so far: neither is there empirical research on the practice of using songs included in textbooks, nor on textbooks' approaches to choosing and embedding songs. This research project aims at assisting to close this research gap.

The main research question for this thesis is the following: **In how far do songs featured in Austrian fifth-grade English textbooks have the potential to support vocabulary and grammar learning?**

Within this general area, I would like to especially look at the following sub-questions:

1. What songs are chosen for Austrian fifth-grade ELT textbooks and what features do they have?
2. How are they embedded in those textbooks concerning vocabulary and grammar learning?

The chosen focus on grammar and vocabulary is due to the fact that those two systems compose a language, next to discourse and phonology. Without grammar or vocabulary, communication is extremely limited or not possible at all (Thornbury 1999: 13, Thornbury 2002: 13). Additionally, especially in the first year of learning a language, these are the basic language systems students are concerned with; discourse and phonology are of course important for the ability to communicate, but the basis still remains vocabulary and grammar. Also, the four skills can only be learned and practised when students know at least some grammar and vocabulary, otherwise, they would not be able to comprehend or produce any English utterances. Thus, grammar and vocabulary can and have to be taught very early on for students to be able to communicate. Songs can play a vital role here because they can be regarded as an age-appropriate input (for ten- to eleven-year-olds) that cannot only be read but also sung. This active engagement with language as well as the music and its features, such as rhythm and melody, combined with a structured text full of rhyme and repetitions can foster language learning on various levels (eg. Engh 2013; Ludke et al. 2014).

It is hypothesised that the songs included in Austrian English textbooks cannot be considered as substantial basis for learning vocabulary and grammar because from the author's experience the songs are included but not integrated in the units: Often the unit's vocabulary occurs in a song, but the unit's focus grammar is not included, and in the very common English textbook series "More!", there are no tasks for the students connected to a song. This means that a song can be sung, but the students are not expected to work with the language it contains. If students engage with the language provided in a song, the learning output is expected to be higher. In other words: if songs contain meaningful language and accompanying tasks that ask students to work with the songs' lyrics in a meaningful way, then the songs have the potential to support language learning. From the author's experience, this is might not be the case in the textbooks currently available and, therefore, will be analysed with scientific methods in this thesis.

4.2. Methodology

Textbook analysis has been part of ELT research for around 100 years now, and during this time, there have been various foci, methods, and interests. Vitta states that this abundance of different approaches to textbook analysis in ELT leads to missing “definitions and [a] bounded scope of textbook analysis investigations” (Vitta 2023: 858–859). However, he identifies two features, existing textbook analysis seem to have in common: Textbook analysis are conducted as a “principled quality control check to judge the usefulness of the textbook in supporting English proficiency attainment” and “they assume a legalistic view of the ELT space and present somewhat objective observations that can have implications to the broader ELT material production process.” (Vitta 2023: 859). The aims of this present thesis can be located within both principles, as its goal is to describe textbooks songs’ usefulness for vocabulary and grammar learning – one part of English proficiency attainment - as well as to present data that English teachers and publishers might find useful in choosing and adapting textbooks to improve their language courses.

Similarly, Weninger states that the aim of textbook analysis is either that of evaluation in relation to their objectives or those of their target group, or to lay bare the “meanings textbooks communicate through their content and design”, for instance, with a focus on representation of genders, ethnic groups, or cultures (Weninger 2013). As there are so many different goals of textbook analysis, a great variety of methods can be detected in previous studies. One of them is content analysis, which has been developed to “study diverse forms of human communication” (Weninger 2013). In this method, first, units for analysis are defined, then they are coded based on a priori criteria, condensed to quantifiable data, and in the end, inferences about the results’ significance are attempted (Weninger 2013). This approach is followed in this study.

In accordance with content analysis (Weninger 2013), the data in the present study was gathered in the following way: The first step of the analysis was to obtain the textbooks. Some of the textbooks could be borrowed from the school where the author works (More!, easy). To receive the other two textbooks, an email was sent to the publishing houses Helbling and Lemberger to ask for free textbooks for research purposes. In exchange, it was offered to send the study’s results to the

publishing house, but only Helbling accepted the offer. Then, a matrix was designed in Microsoft Excel in which the data could be noted during the analysis.

The analysis process of a single song was the following: First, the song's name, its length, the page number on which it can be found, the number of pages of the unit and the song's position in the unit (if it is on the first, second, ... page in the unit) were noted. Second, the song was listened to for the first time with Bluetooth headphones. The songs were obtained from the ebook versions of the textbooks and could be played on the computer. While listening, the instruments, the genre, major or minor, the singers' gender, the use of a choir, and the song's structure were filled into the matrix. During the second listening, the first notes were checked and the song's range was analysed. For this, the lowest and highest notes in the song were identified by ear and the same note was searched for on a piano app so that the note's name could be found out. In a third listening, all data was checked again. If there were uncertainties, then the song would be listened to more than three times. In the end, it was decided if the song was traditional or original, and if there were any quality issues, which were noted down in keywords.

Data for the rest of the categories could be gained from the textbooks themselves, as they provide the songs' lyrics, vocabulary lists and grammar explanations. With the help of the textbooks, the rhyme scheme was identified as well as the unit's vocabulary topic(s), the number of words from the current and previous wordlist used in the song, the number of grammatical items of the current and previous unit included in the song, and the kind of accompanying activities. These data were condensed into quantifiable data (Weninger 2013). More information on coding strategies and criteria what kind of data was included or excluded see Coding on page 43.

In the beginning, it was planned to also analyse rhythm and melody, but because sheet music for the songs could not be obtained, the songs would have to have been transcribed by ear. This process is not only very time consuming but also prone to mistakes which are difficult to detect and eradicate. This is why rhythm and melody are not analysed in this study.

After data was obtained, it was grouped into subfolders in Excel so that only relevant data for one topic (eg. vocabulary, grammar, song structure) was to be

found in one subfolder. On the basis of the provided data, basic calculations, such as arithmetic means, percentages, and sums, were performed. Before the results were described and discussed in the paper, visualisations were created using, again, Excel.

4.3. Framework for analysis

In the literature review, it has been shown that songs and singing can have positive effects on various aspects of language learning. However, as the literature has shown as well, it is relevant what kind of songs are used to reach the best effects (Ludke et al. 2014: 41–42, Wallace 1994: 1479). In this following chapter, nine conclusions are drawn from the literature that outline what features songs should have and how they should be integrated into EFL lessons to support vocabulary and grammar learning best. From research designs of previous studies described in the literature review, for example, Ludke 2010, Ludke et al. 2014, Baills et al. 2021, some features of songs that support grammar and vocabulary learning could be obtained. Other criteria for songs that are useful in grammar and vocabulary learning can be detected in Krashen's (1983), Thornbury's (2002), Gerngroß et al.'s (2006), Uchihara et al.'s (2019) and Laufer and Hulstijn's (2001) research.

Because of the aforementioned lack of research on textbook songs, a new framework for analysis has to be developed. The foundation for these nine statements was an intensive literature research, as presented in chapter 3. After various studies on the potential of songs for language learning and research on grammar and vocabulary learning had been read and summarised, statements that are concerned with features of songs that have potential for grammar and vocabulary learning were extracted. Consequently, these nine statements form the basis for the framework for analysis of four Austrian English textbooks in the subsequent chapters. The figure on page 42 provides an overview of the criteria for this framework (Figure 4). After said criteria are presented, they will be put to use in an analysis of the four textbooks *More!*, *easy, English Step by Step* and *Cambridge Global English*. The results from this analysis will be presented in chapter 5. Results, and related to literature and the framework for analysis in chapter 6. Discussion. How criteria are determined and analysed in textbook songs is explained in subchapter 4.4 Coding.

4.3.1. Songs in textbooks support language learning best if they...

1. ...provide i+1 input.

As described in the previous chapter, it is important for language learning that input consists of already known language (i) and new language the student is ready to learn (+1) (Krashen 1983: 43). This balance is crucial for the students' language development, since too much new language can result in the student not understanding the text. It can be assumed that the students should know at least 95% of the vocabulary so they can comprehend a text (Bergström et al. 2022: 2). At this rate, students can learn vocabulary implicitly by guessing its meaning from the context (Kahraman 2009: 2–3). On the other hand, if nearly 100% of words and structures in a text are known, the exercise does not pose enough of a challenge for students and the effects on their language development are minimal or non-existent. Therefore, a balance between new and known input supports language learning best. This balance should also be considered when deciding whether a song should be used in the EFL classroom or not. Additionally, the i+1 input might set off Krashen's Din, which can provide additional input and support practising and remembering a song's lyrics (Krashen 1983: 43).

Previous research on songs' potential to learn grammar and vocabulary in Austrian English textbooks was conducted by Trummer. However, she did not include a description of her methodology on how she decided which unit contains grammar or not (Trummer 2014: 49). In the present study, the vocabulary occurring in the song is going to be compared to the **vocabulary in the unit's wordlist**,³ as well as the **previous unit's wordlist** to find out, if a song's lyrics support the acquisition of the current unit's vocabulary or recycle the previous unit's vocabulary, or none of both. However, also the **position of a song in a unit** can be revealing. If a song is the first task in a unit, it can be regarded as an introductory task and might try to attract the students to the unit's topic. If it is in the middle of the unit, the song might serve as a vocabulary or grammar revising exercise. Therefore, also a song's position in the unit is going to be analysed.

A similar approach is going to be taken when analysing the song's support for grammar learning. The **grammatical items** in a song are counted and compared

³ The analysed categories' names are bolded and can also be found in the figure on page 31.

to the grammatical focus of **the same** and **previous unit** to gather information about the song's support for grammar learning.

2. ...support student engagement with the language.

Like any other language task, songs have to engage students to stimulate language learning (Schmitt 2008: 338). Singing along is a quite natural form of engagement. But to facilitate vocabulary or grammar learning, attention has to be drawn to these two aspects of language learning in tasks involving the song. Ideally, a song should invite students to notice grammar or vocabulary items (Thornbury 2002: 109) and then offer tasks with a high involvement load and engagement (Laufer and Hulstijn 2001: 14–17) that ask for cognitive depth, personalised learning, using the word, affective depth (Thornbury 2002: 24–26) and restructuring (Thornbury 1999: 94). Gerngroß, Puchta and Thornbury, furthermore stress the importance of “owning” vocabulary – that is when it is used by the learner in a personal way and “for the learner’s own particular purposes” (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 7–8). Engaging with vocabulary can also decrease the number of encounters with a word needed to learn it (Uchihara et al. 2019: 24).

In this thesis, therefore, the **additional activities** provided by the textbook are going to be analysed. A song’s purpose usually becomes evident when looking at the accompanying tasks, for instance, if the task says “Circle the feelings from the song that can be found in the drawing”, the task aims at vocabulary learning. A task that says “Now write your own verse” caters towards the development of writing skills and vocabulary gain.

3. ...are easily learned and remembered.

There are a few characteristics that make a song memorable and easy to learn. It should have a repetitive rhythm with only few rhythmic patterns and variations. The same is true for the melody: it should be repetitive and feature only small interval steps (subsequent notes should be nearly next to each other, and not a very high next to a very low note) (Ludke et al. 2014: 42). The melody should also support the text by mimicking the text’s intonation pattern and both, melody and rhythm, should trace the text’s stress patterns by putting stressed syllables of the text on stressed metric positions and highlighting important words through the melody (Kavanagh 2016: 183; Wallace 1994: 1482; Ludke 2010: 307–308). This can be

done, for example, by inserting a pause before the highlighted note or by putting the **stressed word** on a higher note. Additionally, the same melody should be used for all the verses which showed the best memory rate (Wallace 1994: 1481) and the song itself should have a repetitive structure with a recurring chorus.

The recurring chorus and singing a song more often also supports vocabulary learning, since target words and structures have to occur several times to be acquired (Uchihara et al. 2019: 6). As established in the literature review, a word needs to be met seven up to 20 times until it is learned (Thornbury 2002: 24, Uchihara et al. 2019: 24).

In this thesis, the **rhyme** scheme, and the song's **structure** are going to be analysed. These aspects are meant to yield information about the difficulty of learning and remembering the song. A repetitive song structure, as well as a simple and repetitive rhyme scheme help to learn a song fast and easily. Although analysing the songs' melodies and rhythmical patterns would also help to determine a song's memorability, it would exceed this thesis' scope.

4. ...can be sung by the students healthily.

Students normally have a mixed voice tessitura of about d1 to f2. If the students are not musically trained at all and mainly use their speaking voice for singing, their range is very different and does not exceed e1 (Mohr 2017: 5–6). Finding a middle ground between those two groups is challenging. It can be suggested to use songs that are not higher than d2, but not to primarily use songs that cater towards students' chest voice. Speaking as a music teacher, contrary to a first assumption, it is often better to sing songs that start outside the students' chest voice altogether because then they have to use their mixed or head voice from the beginning of the song and are not tempted to drag their chest voice up to unhealthily high regions. Gradually, the mixed voice can be developed in students– also by non-music teachers.⁴

In this thesis, the **range** of the songs is going to be determined to find out if it is within the students' tessitura and, moreover, if the students are likely to be able to sing the songs easily and healthily. The recordings' singers also play an important

⁴ Additionally, it can be useful to ask the students to sing softer, because then they are also more likely to use their mixed voice.

part, since they serve as **role models**. If they sing in an unhealthy way or in such an artistic manner that an untrained child's voice cannot copy it healthily, then the students might develop unhealthy singing habits.

5. ...are well known by students.

A song that is known to the students (**adapted** song) already fulfils its purpose: the students know the lyrics. If such a song contains i+1 input it can be sung in the classroom to relate the song to the topic at hand and to remind the students that they already know useful language. If not the whole song is known, there is also the possibility that the students know the melody, either because there is an L1 version of the song or because the melody is already known from previous lessons or (social) media and is now introduced with a new text. One advantage of this scenario is that the students already know the melody and can easily learn the new lyrics because they already know rhythmical cues, such as, how many syllables there are in a line, similar to the researched case when parts of the text have been forgotten (Wallace 1994: 1482).

Even if the song or melody is not already known by the students, it can be beneficial to introduce a new song (possibly an **original** song) into the language classroom if it fulfils other criteria for language learning. In this case, the song has to be studied well so that the students can sing it well in the end. In the literature, it is indicated that a too short training does not result in improved memorability of the song's lyrics (Baills et al. 2021: 399). This means that a new song has to be practised well for it to lead to the required effects. Often there are included audio files and **playback tracks** that can support learning the song.

6. ...fit the lesson.

Something that does not have to be repeated to experienced teachers does not occur in the literature, but is nonetheless important and should not be missing in this list: the song has to fit the lesson. Either the teacher chooses a song that fits the topic, or a set of lessons around a song is created. If the song's topic does not entirely fit the lesson but its structures support the acquisition of the current grammatical focus, then the link between the song and the lesson might have to be made apparent to the students.

Because it is highly individual how a song is introduced and even short remarks and explanations can make the song seem fitting to the students, it cannot be determined in this thesis, whether the song fits the lesson in the end. For this, other data, such as lesson plans or videotaped lessons, would have to be analysed rather than the raw material for an English course that can be and is altered in many ways during planning and conducting the final lesson. It can only be analysed if the **unit's topic fits its song's topic** and, therefore, if a song could theoretically be included in a lesson within the unit without having to give additional input or adapt the materials provided.

7. ...are liked by the students.

Literature has shown that songs and singing can enhance social harmony and establish a positive classroom environment that enables students to learn (Richards 2015: 197). Of course, this effect can only reach its full potential if the students actually like the song and enjoy singing it. Then the “acquirer's focus is entirely on communication”, as Krashen puts it, and the Affective Filter is lowered. As a result, learning can take place (Krashen 1983: 43). Additionally, strong emotions – especially positive ones, like enjoyment, surprise or relaxedness – make the target language more memorable (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 7; Ludke 2010: 35). If the song is aesthetically appealing and evokes enjoyment, it might also get stuck in the students head, creating involuntary mental rehearsal, which can provide additional practice, and support retrieval (Ludke 2010: 28).

If students like a song, they might be motivated to listen to it more often than absolutely necessary and to learn it by heart. As a result, the students spend more time on the learning material (Thornbury 2002: 25). That songs might have this effect has been described by Anton, who recounts instances where his students played his learning songs for friends and family, resulting in more time spent on and with the learning materials (Anton 1990: 1169). Ludke (2010: 28) also identified songs that are “aesthetically appealing” and “evoke[s] enjoyment” more likely to become an earworm and, thus, more likely to be remembered. That songs increase students' motivation is suggested by Berglund's analysis of textbook songs in the Swedish context as this is one of his findings (Berglund 2024: 28).

To find out if students like the songs, it would, of course, be best to ask them. Language teachers in their classes have this opportunity and should make use of it. In this analysis, however, it is tried to approximate a song's like-factor by analysing its **genre**, and **instruments**, as well as the **singer's gender** and if the song is in a **major or minor** key.

Important factors for enjoying a song are the genres themselves, as well as a diverse range of genres because a wide range of genres can reach the widest possible audience, compared to only very few genres that might or might not be liked by students (Kahraman 2009: 10). Also, variety ensures that the students are continuously kept interested and motivated to engage with the provided materials (Hancock 2000: 7). Additionally, the song's lyrics, just like any other ELT text, should be of relevance to the students, because if the students can identify themselves with the song, it increases their motivation (Feninger 2015: 33).

The singer's gender can influence the students' motivation for singing and enjoyment of the song because if all songs are performed by a female singer, the boys in the class might not be able to identify with the songs as much and the other way around.

The major or minor key are vital to know because a major key in music is associated with joy and happiness and a minor key with sadness – not just by musicians but by non-musicians as well (Amon 2015: 313–314). The associated emotion is also prone to influencing the students' mood and attitudes towards a song. A variety of emotions and fitting keys must be put to use, because again, the students need to identify with the songs, and the variety is likely to increase their motivation.

Genres and instruments can give a hint on how modern a song is perceived and with which situations it is associated. If a song uses similar instrumentation to well-liked songs from the recent charts, it is likely that students will perceive it as modern and cool, and might like it more than a song with outdated instrumentation. Of course, some songs have been well-liked for decades, and many young people also enjoy songs that were released years before they were born, so whether a song might be liked by students or not is primarily based on assumptions and can only yield tentative results in this thesis, since students cannot be asked.

8. ...have good (audio) quality.

The lyrics of a song have to be easily comprehensible, otherwise, students might not succeed in understanding the text (Wallace 1994: 1481–1483). Of course, it also does not make sense to try and introduce a language item that cannot even be identified by students since the lyrics are not comprehensible (Kahraman 2009: 10). Thus, the text should be enunciated clearly, and the band should be soft enough for the text to be understood.

Also, the recording itself and the singing should be of quality. Live recordings or songs in videos often do not fulfil quality standards for listening comprehension because there might be too much background noise like clapping, laughter or talking, and the musicians might not intonate well. Depending on how distracting such quality issues might be perceived, a recording can still be used or should be discarded.

Although this aspect is stressed in the literature about using pop songs, it is usually not so relevant for textbook songs, since they are usually professionally recorded explicitly for the language classroom and the **audio quality** is normally very good. However, it might be the case that the recorded singers are not native speakers which diminishes the opportunity to practise pronunciation which is one aspect of vocabulary learning (**accent**). The **singers** might also not intonate perfectly, or take liberties with the melody's rhythm. These aspects can also be regarded as quality issues that have two effects: on the one hand, it might be more difficult to learn the song when rhythm and pitch is not discernible and, on the other hand, a badly sung song might reduce the students' enjoyment and motivation to learn it. Another quality issue can be a mismatch between the **stress pattern of the text and the rise and fall of the melody** (Wallace 1994: 1481–1483). The text is harder to learn, and the mismatched intonation might result in the students learning the wrong intonation pattern.

9. ...consist of authentic material.

On the one hand, authentic material can increase motivation (Richards 2015: 458), on the other hand, it consists of and gives the students access to authentic language. Lyrics are often similar to spoken discourse and have a lower vocabulary demand than written genres (Tegge 2017: 10). Especially chunks, often prevalent

in authentic speech and songs (Thornbury 2002: 118), are useful in the beginner's state of language learning, since the grammar itself might not be understood but with the support of chunks, students can still express themselves (in a limited way) (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 5). Additionally, chunks reduce the energy needed to form sentences and enable the students to express themselves in a more native-like, fluent way (Thornbury 1999: 93). What also supports young L2 learners is the slower presentation rate in songs (Murphey 1992: 772). This means that students have more time to think about and comprehend the presented language. Paired with the high number of repetitions in a song, even young students might understand and profit from authentic songs quite early on.

Authentic songs can also bring students into contact with language varieties apart from American and British English (Zhou 2016: 169–170), as well as informal language (Engh 2013: 115). For these reasons, the opportunity should be taken to introduce original songs into the classroom. After all, the language level is usually low in songs, and therefore, also original songs can normally be used in beginner language courses (Tegge 2017: 10; Murphey 1992: 772).

Therefore, in the subsequent chapters, it will be analysed if the songs included in the textbooks are **original or adapted** from already existing songs. Original songs are composed specifically for the textbook, while adapted songs already exist and are used in a textbook. There are various subcategories for adapted songs: The song might not be changed at all but just recorded anew; the lyrics or the melody might be changed. All three kinds will be subsumed under the term adapted song since they are (more or less) adapted for the language classroom.

In her master's thesis, Bergestuen used the five terms 'static songs' for songs created explicitly for learning, 'traditional songs', 'static with traditional melody', 'in-between static and traditional songs', which are to some extent adapted, and 'other' (Bergestuen 2022: 22–23). This terminology is not going to be used in this master's thesis. First of all, it has not appeared anywhere else, so it cannot be widely accepted already. Second of all, the terms are neither straightforward nor understandable without explanation. Third of all, traditional is a musical genre or style which might not correspond to the actually adapted song's genre. It might therefore be confusing to denominate a song like "Another one bites the dust" by

Queen as a traditional song, which it is not genre-wise. The term adapted describes much better what the song's origin and purpose is, without evoking genre-specific images.

4.3.2. Concluding remarks

To be considered a song with potential for grammar or vocabulary learning, not all of the nine statements have to be fulfilled. Students might, for example, enjoy a song very much they have never heard before and, therefore, learn and remember its lyrics very quickly, which supports vocabulary learning. Or students really like a song that provides $i+1$ input but is very difficult to sing. It might still be beneficial to use that song in the classroom because it motivates the students, allows language development and the musical outcome does not have to be perfect. However, if none of the statements are fulfilled, the teacher should ask himself/herself if it might not be more useful for the student's language acquisition to spend the time that would be reserved for the song in a different way.

Out of the nine guiding criteria for song selection, two cannot be analysed in this thesis comprehensively: It cannot be determined whether a song is well-known by the students or if it fits the lesson. These two criteria depend on the concrete classroom context in which they are used, that is the students themselves or on the way the songs are integrated into a lesson by an individual teacher. A song that perfectly fits into the unit's topic can be used in such a way that the students do not see the connection. Likewise, a song that does not thematically fit, can be made to highlight one certain aspect of grammar that occurs in a unit. Similarly, it depends on the students if they know a song, and on the teacher if they practise the song often enough for the students to learn it if they do not know it. It can only be approximated if a song might be already known because it is adapted, and if the song's topic generally fits the unit's topic. In summary, these two aspects of song selection criteria are much more dependent on the individual students and teacher and cannot be analysed fully and in a pleasing way with this thesis' data. Nonetheless, they are deemed important and, therefore, must not be ignored.

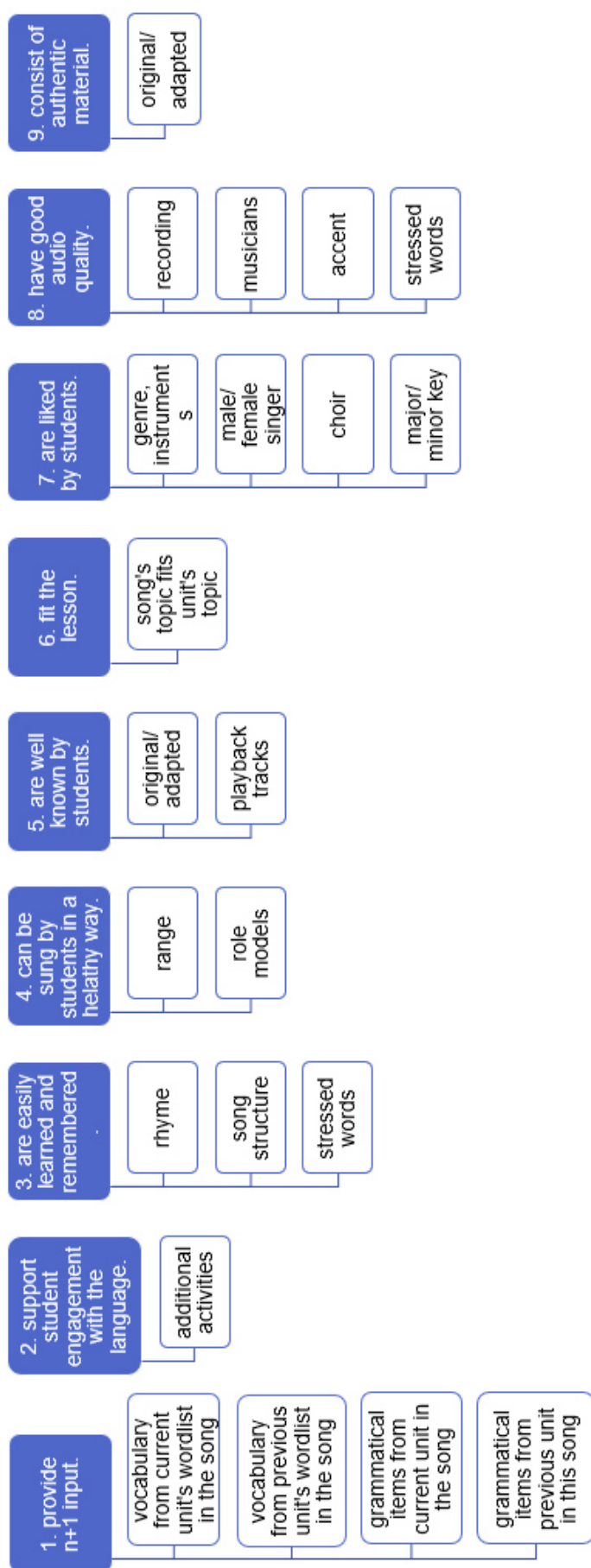


Figure 4 Framework for analysis

4.4. Coding

Textbook songs and the accompanying task descriptions are understood as texts in a broad definition in this thesis. Therefore, content analysis is employed, which means that numerical data (such as frequencies) are extracted from word-based data (Cohen et al. 2013: 563), also understanding musical notation as word-based data. Essential features of content analysis according to Cohen are “breaking down text into units of analysis; undertaking statistical analysis of the units, [and] presenting the analysis in as economical a form as possible” (Cohen et al. 2013: 564). Content analysis relies on codes. Codes can be defined as “a label that the researcher gives to a piece of text that contains an idea or a piece of information”, making sure that “the same code is given too an item of text that says the same think or is about the same thing” (Cohen et al. 2013: 559).

For developing coding categories, a mixture of an inductive and a deductive approach is applied, as Cohen points out, “pre-existing categories may need to be modified” (Cohen et al. 2013: 573). Some categories, for example, a song’s vocal range, the number of entries in the unit’s wordlist, the number of words from the unit’s wordlist in the song’s lyrics, the distinction between original and adapted song, its length, additional activities, and grammatical occurrences from the song’s and the previous unit were fixed from the beginning of the analysis, since it was clear that those categories would be needed to understand a textbook’s approach towards its included songs. These categories were observed in the literature on textbook songs (see below for more detailed explanations).

Other categories were developed or adapted when the first textbook was analysed, such as a distinction between male and female lead singer, the song’s position in the unit, the rhyme scheme, the accordance of the unit’s and the song’s topic, or the used instruments. The pre-existing categories were not seen to sufficiently describe the textbook songs. It was perceived that these additional categories would be needed to mirror the textbooks’ songs’ variety and, later, to answer the research questions in the most comprehensive way possible.

In total, there are 22 categories, most of which have been already mentioned in the previous chapter (see 4.3 on page 32). Additionally to the categories introduced, some basic information about the songs was gathered: in which textbook the song is included, how many songs there are, in which unit a song occurs, its title, the unit’s

vocabulary focus, the unit's grammar focus, which song was adapted if applicable, a song's length, the page number on which it can be found in the textbook, how many pages there are in a unit, on which page of the unit the song occurs (eg. on the third page of that unit), and notes.

The coding strategies and procedures for the remaining categories are explained more thoroughly in the following to ensure reproducibility.

4.4.1. Vocabulary items in the unit's word list

For this category, the vocabulary items in the unit's word list are counted. They might consist of words and phrases, but in this thesis, the entries are counted, regardless of their type. Additionally, the words in different presentation formats, such as drawings, are also included, since they are also part of the focus vocabulary in a unit (Figure 5).



Figure 5 Word file in *More! 1*, Unit 5 (*More! 1 Workbook* 2023:48)

The vocabulary lists are obtained from the second parts of the textbook series, which is called *Workbook* in the *More!* and *English Step by Step* series and *Activity Book* in *Cambridge Global English*. The *easy* series provides an extra book named *vocab & sounds* which only contains vocabulary lists and one to three vocabulary exercises per unit.

4.4.2. Number of vocabulary items from the unit's wordlist in the song

For this category, the song's lyrics are analysed to see which vocabulary items from the unit's general wordlist also occur in its song. Items that are found more than once are also included more than once, because encountering a word more often leads to a better retrieval (Uchihara et al. 2019: 24).

4.4.3. Vocabulary from the previous unit in the song

To see if the textbook recycles previously learned vocabulary, in this category, the number of vocabulary items from the previous unit that occur in a song is counted. As mentioned before, meeting words more than once is key to remembering them (Thornbury 2002: 24). Again, the included vocabulary lists in the second parts of the textbooks provide the key vocabulary for the analysis. However, to calculate reliable numbers, the textbooks' last units' vocabulary lists have not been included, since they cannot be recycled in a song in the next unit. Therefore, the total number of vocabulary items is reduced by the number of items in the last units' lists.

4.4.4. Grammatical items of this unit in the song

To evaluate the songs' possible support for grammar learning, the unit's grammar items mentioned in the songs are identified and counted. Only items that are part of the song's unit's grammar focus (as obtained from the grammar explanations in the unit) are included. For example, in *More!* unit 1, the aspects of plural nouns, irregular plurals, imperatives and questions are taught. Of those four aspects, only one (imperatives) is part of unit 1's song's lyrics "I want more". The others are not used. To make sure that the aspects are really included deliberately in the lyrics to reinforce their practice, only aspects that occur at least five times in the lyrics are counted.

Each item is counted separately, this means that in the example below, each possessive adjective is counted (6). But because the chorus (cursive) is sung three times, its possessives are added two more times resulting in ten items. Both numbers are of interest because for grammar learning grammar patterns must be encountered in different contexts and sentences. By eliminating the recurring chorus with its recurring contexts, it can be analysed in how many different contexts a grammar item can be met in the song.

*When the drummer gets going
and the band starts to rock,
it's time to move **your** body
and dance around the clock.
Yeah, music, music, music – Music is **our** life.*

Hear the beat – it's so cool.

There's music here at **our** school.
Shake **your** arms and shake **your** feet.
Swing in line with the beat!

When the drummer gets going...
Forget the texts – have some fun.
Enjoy the music, everyone!
Move **your** body, left and right.
Dance and sing, day and night!

When the drummer gets going...
(More! 1 Student's book 2023: 40)

4.4.5. Grammatical items from the previous unit in the song

The opportunity for recycling grammar is, furthermore, analysed by counting how many grammatical items there are from the previous unit's grammar focus. Again, there are two numbers: one that includes the items of the songs with all the choruses and one that includes the items of the song with just one single chorus to be able to analyse the different contexts. Concerning the previous unit's grammar, the different aspects are not counted individually but all mentioned aspects are counted together. So, if there are three different grammatical aspects in the previous unit, and examples for each occur three times in the song, then the total number of nine can be found in the graph, because to recycle grammar, only meeting one item is enough, while learning new grammar requires many repetitions. For the same reason, there is also no minimal number of previous grammatical aspects to be analysed in this thesis.

4.4.6. Unit's topic and song's topic

In this category, the song's topic is analysed and it is determined if the song is logically implemented in the unit topicwise. If the song's major keywords and word families are related to the unit's major keywords and word families, then the song fits the unit. It can also be the case that a song serves as an input text for learning how to spell which is also regarded as fitting in this context, as the song then still fits the lesson's topic (spelling), even though it might be the case that it does not entirely fit the overall unit's topic.

4.4.7. Additional activities

The activities that put the song or its vocabulary or grammar to use, are linked thematically to it, and are in close proximity to the song, are determined as additional activities related to the song. If there are additional activities that directly relate to the song, the prompt is written down. Then the activities are subsumed into categories according to their language system or skill focus.

4.4.8. Rhyme

The rhyme scheme is indicated with letters, as is customary in literary studies. Only the general rhyme scheme is included in the analysis table, therefore, if a song has three verses with one rhyme scheme (eg. abab) and the chorus has another rhyme scheme (eg. aabb), each scheme is written down once, although it might be found more than once in the song. It is of interest in this thesis if the lyrics rhyme in the first place and if there are systematic rhyme patterns or not, because recurring patterns improve the probability of remembering lyrics (Ludke et al. 2014: 42).

4.4.9. Song structure

A song's structure usually consists of verse, chorus and bridge. The chorus is the part of the song that is repeated without change, each verse usually has the same melody but different lyrics. The bridge is a part with a new, contrasting melody and a new text that often provides another point of view on the song's topic. Instrumental introductions are not indicated, except when they are extremely long and vital for singing the song. The same is true for instrumental interludes. The songs' structure is determined by listening closely to the song, as well as analysing the given lyrics. Unfortunately, the songs' sheet music could not be obtained.

4.4.10. Original and adapted songs

Original songs are those that have been composed specifically for the textbook. They do not exist outside of a learning environment, such as school or a language course. Adapted songs in this case are songs that exist in the English-speaking world, either as children's or traditional songs, or as pop, jazz, or classical songs. They might be altered to fit the purpose of language learning, for example, by simplified lyrics or left out verses. They are also often adapted in the sense that they are recorded for the textbook and, therefore, the music might be different to the original (if there is one).

Because of copyright issues, pop songs are usually not included in textbooks and because songs should be enjoyed by most of the students, also classical and jazz

songs are usually not an option since they would only cater towards a rather small group of students. This is why, usually, children's or traditional songs are employed by textbooks. Another reason is that those are usually rather simple to sing and the text is not complex, relying on simple vocabulary and grammar.

4.4.11. Genre, instruments

It is tried to define the genre, but since musical genres in popular music are not always clear cut and unambiguous, there might be diverging results by other raters. Therefore, the instruments are analysed, too, because they often yield additional information about a musical genre. Still, the information about the genre has to be treated with caution, because it cannot be coded unequivocally. The author listens to the songs with headphones several times and writes down the instruments that are heard. From listening to the song, the genre is determined. Unfortunately, the sheet music is not available.

4.4.12. Singers' gender and choir

If a significant proportion of a song is sung by one male or female person alone (for example one whole verse or chorus), this is indicated in the analysis table. Of course, one verse can be sung by a man and the other can be sung by a woman, and therefore, not one singer's gender per song is identified, but more may be also possible. Similarly, a song's chorus might be sung by a choir, while the verses are sung by soloists. Therefore, one, two or all three options (male, female, choir) can be true for one single song. In this thesis, the song is coded as having a choir when more than two singers sing parts of the song without one being the lead singer, but with a balanced choir sound.

4.4.13. Range

The range is stated in the Helmholtz octave system (see below). If a male singer sings in his voice range, which is usually about an octave lower than that of a child or woman, the song's range is still given within the children's range. In call and response singing in a choir the melody is usually not repeated loco – exactly the pitch range the precentor sang – but within one's own range. For example, if a bass precentor sings an A (pitch range is 110 Hz) which is a low note for a bass, a female choir singer would not sing exactly the same A, because it is (usually) not possible for her, but she would sing her low a which would be a (220 Hz). Usually, students automatically sing within their voice range, even though they are actually an octave higher than the precentor.

Because of missing sheet music, similar to the genre and instruments, the vocal range is determined by listening to the song, extracting the highest and lowest note and checking what note it is on the piano.

In this master's thesis, the Helmholtz number system for octaves is used. This means that the middle c is called c1, not C4 like in the scientific system. The reason for this is the Austrian context in which this master's thesis is embedded and where the in Europe more commonly used Helmholtz system is prevalent. The following figure (Figure 7) will help to understand the differences. Note: because of better readability c'' is written as c2.



Figure 6 Scientific and Helmholtz octave system

4.4.14. Audio quality

The audio quality of the songs is generally assumed to be very good. Should there be issues, they are noted and subsumed into subcategories that concern the singers' intonation, the singers' accent, the singers' fitness for being considered a singing role model (eg using their voice healthily), the musical quality and the quality of the recording itself. Because quality is usually a matter of discussion with very personal opinions and preferences, only tentative opinions will be voiced without denying differing opinions and arguments.

Corpus: General overview over the four textbook series For the school year of 2024/25, four English textbook series are available for 5th grade (the first year of learning English in a focused way compared to a more playful approach in 4th grade) in Austria: *Cambridge Global English 1*, *easy 1*, *English Step by Step 1* and *More! 1*. The textbooks could either be obtained via the school where the author teaches, or the publishers provided the textbooks free of charge. It was offered to send the final results of the analysis in exchange for the textbooks to the publishers, but only one of them

accepted the offer (Helbling). All of the analysed textbooks are in line with the new curriculum of 2023 and approved for middle school (MS), as well as grammar school (AHS) for the academic year of 2024/25 (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung 2024c: 43–44, 2024b: 39–40). The following table (Table 2) provides an overview of the analysed textbooks and the respective publishing houses.

Table 2 Analysed textbooks, their authors and publishers

Textbook	Authors	Publisher
<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	Linse, Caroline Schottman, Elly Dokalik-Jonak, Elisabeth Whitfield, Michelle	Lemberger
<i>Easy</i>	Larcher, Teresa Preedy, Ingrid	Veritas
<i>English Step by Step</i>	Puchta, Herbert Holzmann, Christian Lewis-Jones, Peter Biggs, Gavin Chris, Jory	Helbling
<i>More!</i>	Puchta, Herbert Holzmann, Christian Lewis-Jones, Peter Biggs, Gavin Chris, Jory	Helbling

It can be seen in the table that currently there are only three teams of textbook authors in Austria: Elisabeth Dokalik-Jonak and Michelle Whitfield wrote *Cambridge Global English* at Lemberger publishing house; for Helbling there are Herbert Puchta, Christian Holzmann, Peter Lewis-Jones, Gavin Biggs and Chris Jory who together wrote the textbooks *English Step by Step* and *More!*. Teresa Larcher and Ingrid Preedy work for Veritas and authored *easy*.

The four textbook series each encompass at least two textbooks: *More!* and *English Step by Step* include a *Student's book* and *Workbook*, respectively, *Cambridge Global English* works with a *Learner's* and an *Activity book*, and *easy* features the *book* and the books *vocab and sounds* and *pad*. The songs are all in the textbooks that are meant for classroom work: the *Student's books* (*More!*, *English Step by Step*), the *Learner's book* (*Cambridge Global English*) and the *book* (*easy*).

There is just one exception: there is one set of exercises about a song in the *easy* pad (*easy* pad 2022 - 65-66). It is not included in the analysis, because there are a few differences to the regular songs. First of all, the song's lyrics are not printed, second, its audio track is not part of the textbook series but can be accessed online on the British Council's website (British Council 2024), and third, unlike the other songs, this one is meant as a listening exercise not as a song to be sung, since there is never the invitation to sing along. One reason for this might be that, fourth, the exercises about the song are not meant to be completed in the plenum of the classroom, but as homework. Fifth, it is the only song that is not included in the textbook meant for classroom work but only in the exercise part of the series. Because of these differences, the song is regarded as an outlier and not part of the analysis.

The textbooks are all similarly structured into thematic units with one or more additional grammar foci. *easy* has the most units (17) including the introductory unit 0 and the extra unit "My summer", *More!* is directly behind *easy* with 15 units, while *Cambridge Global English* only has ten – nine regular units and one unit 0 that is meant to revise what should have been learned in primary school. *English Step by Step* is between the others with twelve different units (Table 3).

Table 3 Number of units in Austrian English textbooks

Textbook	Number of units
<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	10
<i>Easy</i>	17
<i>English Step by Step</i>	12
<i>More!</i>	15

Helbling's textbooks offer rather concrete topics in their units, such as "What's the time?" (*More!* Students' book 2023: Unit 11), "Emotions" (*More!* Student's book 2023: Unit 4) or "Music" (*English Step by Step* 2022: Unit 2). *Cambridge Global English* has more abstract and bigger topics that encompass several smaller themes. For example, in the unit "Ready, steady, go" (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: Unit 3) the students learn about action verbs, body parts, numbers, birds, and feelings. Additionally to the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, the textbook also features cross-curricular references with other subjects like Geography, phonics, and exercises for critical thinking and developing values (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 4-5). This may be the case because the textbook was developed by Caroline Linse and Elly Schottman for Cambridge University Press for international use, and only adapted for

the Austrian context. A more international audience means that the textbook has to find and teach common values and cater towards issues in different cultures while also making them understandable for members of other cultures and citizens of other countries.

Veritas' *easy* uses a different concept: the students follow the witch Mira and her friends on their journeys through life. The textbook tries to relate to the students' personal life by incorporating the pronoun *my* into the units' and topics' names, for instance, "My school things" (*easy* 2022: Unit 2) or the recurring pages "My new words" for vocabulary pages, "My page" for vocabulary exercises and "My new grammar" for grammar explanations.

Each of the textbooks features songs. A song in the context of this thesis is a piece of music with lyrics and a sung melody. Raps, chants or other variations of rhythmical speaking are not included in the analysis because such forms of music do not encompass pitch values. Those, however, transmit vital information to the students, as could be gathered from the literature (Wallace 1994: 1483), therefore, rhythmical speaking and songs would have to be examined separately, which would exceed the scope of this thesis.

The four textbook series follow different approaches to what kind of songs they include and how they were produced. *More!*'s and *English Step by Step*'s authors wrote the lyrics themselves and then hired the Austrian musician Gregor Bischops from Graz to compose the songs and record the playbacks. The singing voices were recorded by the London-based production studio *The Soundhouse* with native speakers. According to a spokesman of Helbling, the singers' names are not known to them (Helbling 2024)⁵. This professional approach can be heard when listening to the songs. The sound quality is very good: there is just one instance where the intonation is not perfect (Where are my pets: *English Step by Step* 2022: 41), there are, of course, no instances of Austrian accents, and the instrumental playback is of great musical quality.

The lyrics to *easy*'s songs were written by Andrea Klein with the help of Maria Büchner and Iris Santa (*easy* 2022: 171) and sent to Fritz Jerrey, an Austrian composer and producer, who then composed the music (Hofbauer and Jerrey 2020). Four singers recorded the songs: the composer, Fritz Jerrey, himself, as well as Rebecca Anouche

⁵ Find the email correspondence in the appendix.

Llewellyn, Theresa Chorinsky and Jacqueline Kimeu (veritas 2025).⁶ Only one of the singers, Rebecca Anouche Llewellyn, is a verified English L1 speaker, one is Fritz Jerrey, an English L2 speaker, and for the two other singers, no reliable information could be obtained. Their names are not on display for the students but are only available in the imprint of the teacher's E-book version of *easy*. Fritz Jerrey is not an English L1 speaker as he states on his LinkedIn profile (Sprachen | Fritz Jerrey | LinkedIn 2025). Theresa Chorinsky seems to be an English teacher from Graz who also works as a singer (Theresa Chorinsky | LinkedIn 2025), but this information cannot be verified since, although only one Theresa Chorinsky could be found on the internet that could fit the singer's profile and name, and it fits that she is based in Graz where also Fritz Jerrey works, there is still a chance, it is not the same person who recorded the songs. In her LinkedIn profile, there is no mention of her being an English native speaker, which would be valuable information for possible clients who are looking for an English teacher, so it does not make sense for her not to include it if she, in fact, were an English L1 speaker. Unfortunately, nothing could be found out about Jacqueline Kimeu. The only singer who is an English L1 speaker without doubt is Rebecca Anouche Llewellyn. She grew up in London and Paris according to her website (Biographie | Rebecca Anouche 2025), and also a spokesperson of veritas confirmed this piece of information (veritas 2025). Furthermore, no playback tracks are available and the music often seems to heavily rely on computer-generated and sampled sounds rather than actual instruments (see 5.12 Instruments on p. 77).

It is rather difficult to find out more about the music in *Cambridge Global English*, because, although there is some information in the acknowledgements, it does not lead very far (*Cambridge Global English* 2022: 170). The song "Opposites" is written by *The String Beans* and is also acknowledged as such. The other songs are said to be "reproduced from Primary Music Box" by Cambridge University Press (*Cambridge Global English* 2022: 170). However, the contents of the book Primary Music Box do not contain all the songs that are also part of *Cambridge Global English*. "The Green Grass Grew All Around", "If You're Happy and You Know It", and "We've Got the Whole World in Our Hands" can be found in Primary Music Box, but "Numbers Are Great", "I Am", "Alphabet song", "This book is my window", "A cricket on the floor", and "Sleeping Beauty" are not part of the book (Will and Reed 2010). The question arises where these

⁶ Find the email correspondence in the appendix.

songs come from, and who wrote and recorded them. The adapter of the Austrian version of *Cambridge Global English*, Elisabeth Dokalik-Jonak, could be reached via email, however, she only referred to the original publisher Cambridge University Press (CUP). CUP answered the author's email very vaguely and they could not provide any definitive information who composed or recorded the songs that were not credited. They wrote that "Most other songs would have been written by the Global English series author [...]" and that they "have no idea who would have produced the recordings" (CUP 2025). Additionally, neither *Cambridge Global English* nor Primary Music Box lists any singers or musicians who were part of the production. What can be assumed is that the singers are English L1 speakers in the Primary Music Box, since the book has been produced in Cambridge for the Cambridge University Press. It also sounds as if the singers in *Cambridge Global English* are English L1 speakers, but this assumption cannot be verified to this point.

4.5. Reliability and Validity

The data used in this study are of quantitative (eg. Pitch range, song length) and qualitative nature (eg. Rhyme, audio quality).

Cohen interprets the term validity in qualitative research as understanding: "we, as researchers, are part of the world that we are researching, and we cannot be completely objective about that, hence other people's perspectives are equally valid as our own, and the task of research is to uncover these" (Cohen et al. 2013: 180–181). Internal validity – high, if the researched event is accurately described by data – in qualitative research can be improved by using peer examination of data (Cohen et al. 2013: 184). Therefore, for this study, another student of the English teachers' programme at the University of Vienna was asked to code about 10% of the songs. After a short instruction on how to use the categories, they coded the provided material independently. The colleague found the categories useful and sensible and also the results of both ratings were nearly identical. There were just minor differences in the number of grammar items from the current unit since there were some ambiguous items in the songs. Overall, both ratings were extremely similar and, thus, rater reliability could be ensured. The validity of the categories was discussed with said colleague, and the thesis supervisor and could partly be ensured by relying on previous research (see 4.3 Framework for analysis on page 32).

External validity – the degree to which the results can be transferred to other contexts – is often problematic in qualitative research and has to be treated with caution as qualitative research is very dependent on the situation, participants and other environmental and social factors which might be different in other contexts. It is recommended to provide sufficiently rich data for fellow researchers to enable colleagues to decide whether and to what extent one's own research can be transferred to other contexts (Cohen et al. 2013: 187). This approach is followed in this thesis.

Concerning validity in quantitative research, the subcategory most relevant for this research is instrumentation (Cohen et al. 2013: 184). The instruments – for example headphones for listening to songs – were the same throughout the data collection. The calculations were all carried out in Microsoft Excel.

The possibility and nature of reliability – the replicability of a study resulting in the same data - in qualitative research is debated by scholars. In qualitative research, usually naturally occurring phenomena are observed that cannot be observed again in the exact same way. Thus, reliability in qualitative research may be understood as “a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched” (Cohen et al. 2013: 202). Again, a rigorous description of data and their analysis is needed to achieve reliability.

Reliability of quantitative data should “be controllable, predictable, consistent, and replicable” (Cohen et al. 2013: 201). In this study, it is tried to follow Cohen's suggestions for improving reliability: “minimising external sources of variation” by “standardising and controlling the conditions under which measurement take place” (Cohen et al. 2013: 201). The issue of inter-rater reliability is of concern in this study, as there was only one rater.

5. Results

5.1. Number of songs per unit

Although all of the textbooks feature songs, the number of songs per unit is not the same in each textbook (Table 4).

Table 4 Number of units and songs, songs per unit

Textbook	Number of units	Number of songs	Songs per unit (average)
-----------------	------------------------	------------------------	-------------------------------------

<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	10	10	1
<i>easy</i>	17	11	0.64
<i>English Step by Step</i>	12	12	1
<i>More!</i>	15	9	0.6

Table 4 highlights that in *easy* and *More!* only about two-thirds of the units feature songs, while in *Cambridge Global English* and *English Step by Step*, there is on average one song per unit. However, in *Cambridge Global English*'s unit zero and unit one, there are two songs each, but in units four and five there are no songs – at least none with a melody: In unit five there is an exercise labelled as a song, however, there is no melody, therefore, it could better be described as chant or rap (*Cambridge Global English* learner's book 2023: 72). When looking at Table 4 it appears on first sight that *More!* does not rely on music a lot, since only nine out of 15 units include songs. However, there are also five grammar chants (units two, five, eight, twelve and 15), three of which are in units without songs. Adding the grammar chants to the songs only leaves units seven, 13 and 14 without music and renders *More!* much more musical than the first impression might suggest.

5.2. Song's position in a unit

In some textbooks, the number of pages each unit encompasses is consistent throughout the textbook, for example, in *English Step by Step*, each unit has ten pages and on the fourth page of the unit, there is always a song. *easy*'s units mostly have ten pages, except for the first and last units, which are shorter. The song in this textbook is usually on page six (median), but in two units it is on the eighth page of the unit and once on the fifth page. In the short first and last units, the song is on the second page in each of them. Nearly all the units in *Cambridge Global English* have 14 pages, but the songs are not always in the same position. In *More!*, the unit's length is inconsistent, as is the song's position in the unit (Table 5).

Table 5 Textbook, units, the position of the song in the unit and the unit's length

Textbook	Unit	Position of a song in the unit	Length of unit [pages]	Textbook	Unit	Position of a song in the unit	Length of unit [pages]
<i>More!</i>	Unit 1	1	8	<i>Easy</i>	Intro to book	2	2
	Unit 3	5	6		Unit2	5	10
	Unit 4	5	7		Unit 2	8	10
	Unit 5	3	5		Unit 3	6	10
	Unit 6	3	5		Unit 4	6	10
	Unit 9	3	7		Unit 7	8	10
	Unit 10	3	5		Unit 8	6	10
	Unit 11	6	8		Unit 10	6	10

<i>English Step by Step</i>	Unit 15	3	4	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	Unit 12	6	10
	Unit 1	4	10		Unit 13	6	10
	Unit 2	4	10		My summer	2	8
	Unit 3	4	10		Unit 0	1	10
	Unit 4	4	10		Unit 0	5	10
	Unit 5	4	10		Unit 1	5	14
	Unit 6	4	10		Unit 1	9	14
	Unit 7	4	10		Unit 2	12	14
	Unit 8	4	10		Unit 3	6	14
	Unit 9	4	10		Unit 6	5	14
	Unit 10	4	10		Unit 7	5	14
	Unit 11	4	10		Unit 8	8	14
	Unit 12	4	10		Unit 9	5	14

In the following figure (Figure 7), the average number of pages per unit, and the average and the median position of a song in a unit are presented. It can be seen that the songs are usually added in the middle of the unit, not exclusively at the beginning or end.

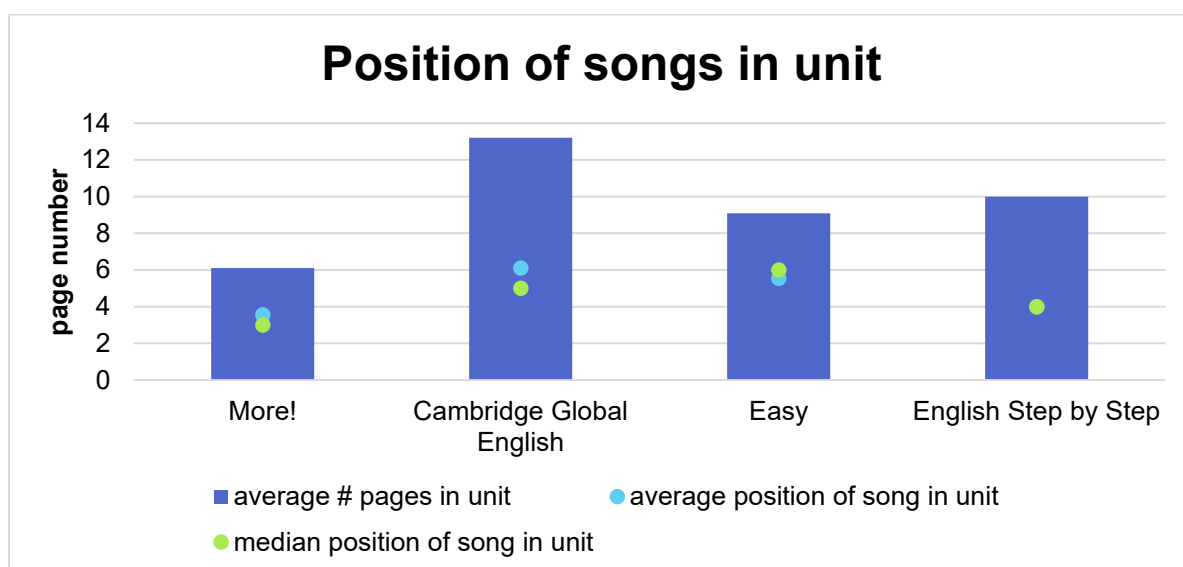


Figure 7 Average number of pages in a unit, average position of the song in a unit, and median position of the song in a unit

An exception is the first unit: In *More!*, *Cambridge Global English* and *easy*, the very first song of the textbook introduces the students to the textbook and the subject of English as a test subject. This very first song can be found on the first (*More!*, *Cambridge Global English*) or second (*easy*) page of the first unit. This is why both median and average are included, because outliers, such as the first unit, do not influence the median. By starting the textbook with a song, the authors show the students that English is fun and that a lot of activities await them that have nothing to do with (deemed as) boring grammar and copying vocabulary. This serves to boost the students' motivation. At the same time, literature has shown that students remember sung chunks and words more easily (Wallace 1994: 1475). Therefore, it is likely that

the students not only have fun in their first English lesson at their new school⁷ but also already experience the success of remembering the song's lyrics right in their first lesson.

English Step by Step does not break with its pattern of including the unit's song on the fourth page of each ten-page unit. This pattern is consistent throughout the textbook, which is the reason why the median and average position of the song are both four and, therefore, the blue and green dots in Figure 7 are congruent.

What can be seen in the bar chart above (Figure 7) is that the songs are not exclusively used as introductions to topics on the first page, or as optional extra exercises at the end of a unit, but rather in the middle. It can be speculated if their purpose is solely that of entertainment and motivation, or if grammatical or lexical aspects are foregrounded. The results of the analysis of the complementary exercises are expected to shed light on this question.

5.3. Song length

The songs in the four textbooks are rather short – no song is longer than 2:30 minutes. Although pop songs have been getting shorter and shorter since the 90s, the average song length in the Billboard Hot 100 in the 2020s is still 3:15 minutes (Chen 2024), which is more than one minute longer than the average song length of the songs in the four textbooks (Table 6). In the table, two sets of data are included: the average song length with and without outliers. As can be seen in Figure 8, there are two outliers in *easy* with just 0:31 (song 2) and 0:46 minutes (song 3), and one outlier with 0:43 minutes (song 3) in *Cambridge Global English*. The averages of the respective textbooks increase considerably without outliers; however, they are still much lower than the average pop song length of 3:15 from the Billboard Hot 100.

⁷ In the Austrian school system, the students are in primary school for four years (6-10), then go to middle or grammar school for four years (11-14) and then they decide for the completion of the compulsory 9th school year (Polytechnical School) to either attend a vocational school with five more years (15-19) or a general education school for four years (15-18). The vocational schools and general educational schools allow the students to finish with their A-level exams.

Table 6 Average song length with and without outliers

Book	Average song length with outliers [m: ss]	Average song length without outliers [m:ss]
<i>More!</i>	01:43	01:43
<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	01:59	02:07
<i>Easy</i>	01:27	01:36
<i>English Step by Step</i>	01:56	01:56

Most of the songs in the textbooks are original songs, which means that it is probable that the songs are kept short on purpose. This has various implications for teaching: it takes a relatively short time to teach the songs, and the students may remember the lyrics more easily. The longer a song and the more lyrics there are in a longer song, the harder they are to fully remember.

What is striking about the average song lengths is the fact that the difference between the numbers is quite big. While *easy*'s songs are only 1:36 minutes long, *Cambridge Global English*'s songs (without outliers) are 2:07 minutes long, which is a difference of nearly half a minute. The other two textbooks, *More!* (1:43) and *English Step by Step* (1:56), can be found in between the numbers of *easy* and *Cambridge Global English*.

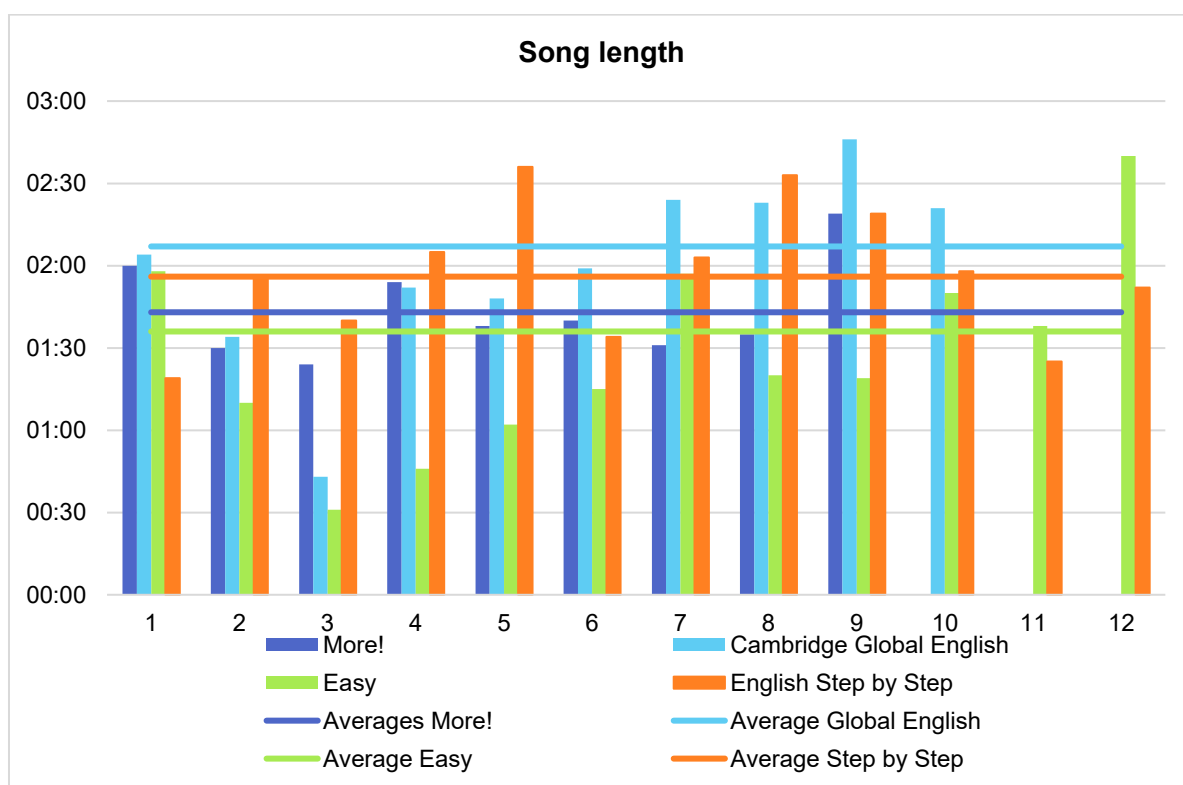


Figure 8 Song length in [mm:ss], average song length

The chart above (Figure 8) shows the length of every song in the four textbooks in vertical bars and the average length with horizontal lines in the respective colours. It

can be seen that *easy*'s songs are much shorter than the others: more than half of the songs are shorter than 1:30 minutes. Also the aforementioned outliers in *easy* (songs two and three) and the one outlier in *Cambridge Global English* are visualised.

5.4. Vocabulary

The percentage of vocabulary items from the unit's wordlist that are used in the same unit's song is between 2.5% and 21% in all four textbooks (Figure 9). The lowest percentage can be found in *Cambridge Global English*. Only a total of 44 out of 1783 vocabulary items in all the units' lists are integrated into the songs. *More!*'s number of vocabulary from the lists used in its songs is 33 out of 510 vocabulary items in the textbook's wordlists in total. This corresponds to 6.47%. In *easy*, 78 of 570 words from the wordlists are included in the songs – a total of 13.68%. And the highest number of words that can be found in the vocabulary lists and the songs of the corresponding unit is 143 out of 672 words in *English Step by Step*, which totals in 21.28%. This means that more than one-fifth of the words from the wordlists of a unit are used again and practised in the unit's song.

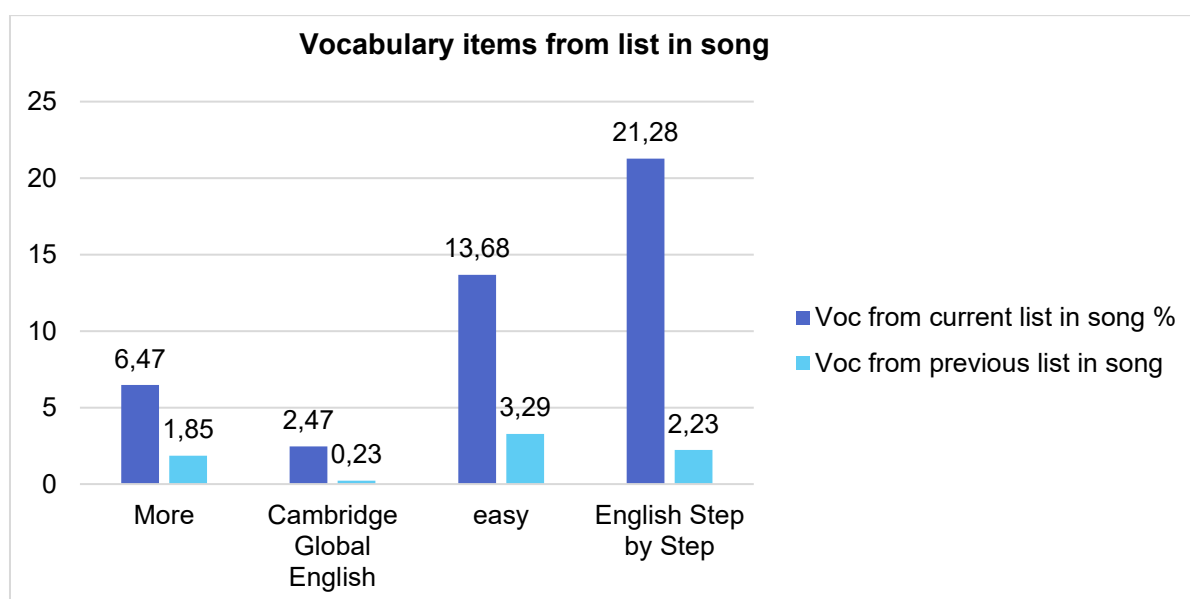


Figure 9 Percentage of vocabulary from the unit's wordlist in the song

Concerning recycled vocabulary from the previous units in a song, only between 0.23 and 3.29% of the lists' vocabulary items are met again. *Cambridge Global English* has the lowest number of recycled vocabulary items with only four out of 1710 vocabulary items in total (not counting the last unit that cannot be recycled, for further information see chapter Vocabulary from the previous unit in the song on page 45), the other

textbooks' songs recycle between around two and three per cent of the previous units' vocabulary.

Looking at the vocabulary items from the word list per song, it is immediately striking that there are more words from the current than from the previous units included in the songs (Figure 10). By dividing the number of vocabulary items from the wordlist included in the songs by the number of songs, the average number of vocabulary list items per song can be calculated. Of course, for the number of words from the previous unit, the first song has to be excluded, since there is no previous unit's vocabulary list. Again, *English Step by Step* and *easy* are the two textbooks with the highest number of current unit's words per song. However, it is interesting, that *Cambridge Global English* overtook *More!* in this ranking, but did not do so concerning words from the previous unit.

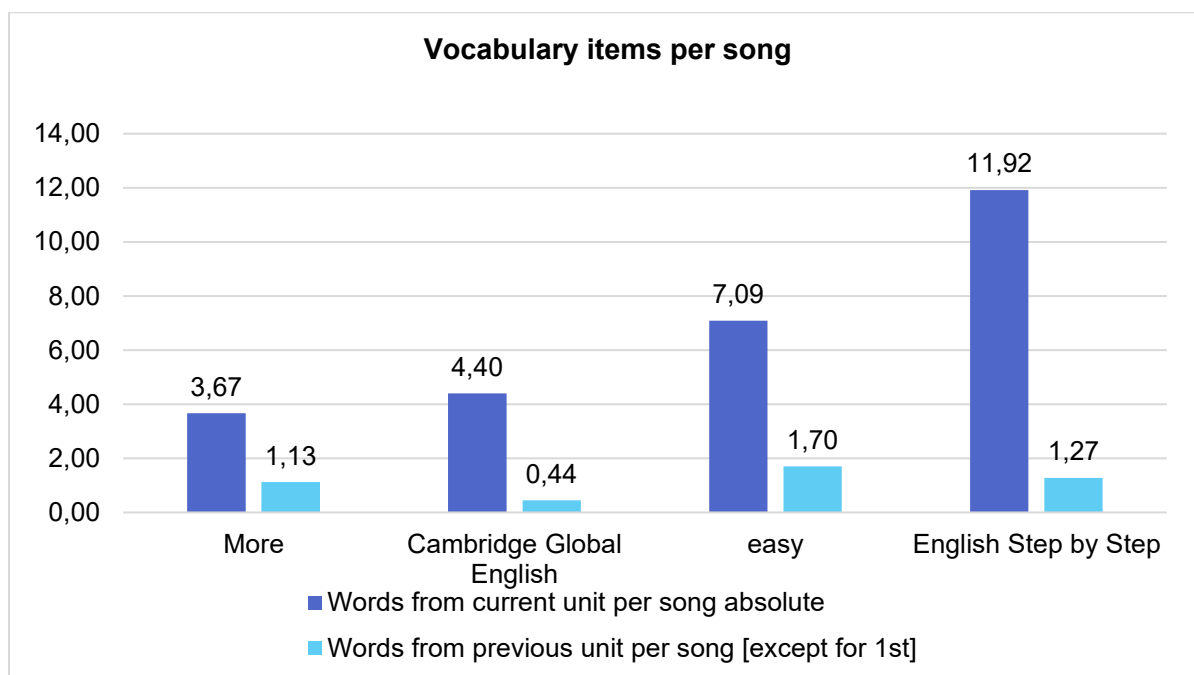


Figure 10 Vocabulary items per song

The reason for this change is the way the results were calculated. Because *Cambridge Global English* includes more than three times the number of words in its wordlists compared to *More!* but the difference between the two textbooks' vocabulary items integrated into the songs in absolute numbers is only eleven, *More!* has a higher ratio between the number of vocabulary items in the list and the song than *Cambridge Global English*. However, the difference in the number of songs between the two textbooks is only one. The higher number of recycled vocabulary in *Cambridge Global*

English combined with nearly the same number of songs in both textbooks, results in a higher number of vocabulary items per song (Table 7).

Table 7 Vocabulary items from the lists in a song and items per song in *More!* and *Cambridge Global English*

	Vocabulary items in the word lists	Vocabulary items included in the songs	Songs	Vocabulary items from the list in the song	Vocabulary items per song
<i>More!</i>	510	33	9	33/510=6.47%	33/9=3.66
<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	1783	44	10	44/1783=2.47%	44/10=4.4

Both numbers have their relevance. On the one hand, it is important to analyse how many of the words that should be learned are practised in songs. On the other hand, it is useful to know how many words from the wordlist are included in one song on average. Both numbers can yield information about how well the songs might support vocabulary learning and how much focus is placed on revising the units' vocabulary with the help of songs.

Additionally, it has been calculated how high the percentage of known words in a song is on average. In Table 8 it can be seen that the average number of words per song is much higher in *Cambridge Global English* than in the other textbooks. The reason for this is the lack of choruses (see Song structure on page 73) in *Cambridge Global English's* songs which results in more and/or longer verses which, as a consequence, have more words. The verses in *Cambridge Global English* are generally highly repetitive which makes them easy to learn despite their high number of words. To calculate the average percentage of known words in a song, the number of choruses or verses does not influence the results, because each chorus is only counted once, as it does not make any difference if a word is known or not to determine how often it occurs in one song.

The other three textbooks have roughly the same average number of words per song, ranging between 85 and 100. The most interesting number in this table is the percentage of known words in a song in the last column. Here the percentage of words that are **not** included in the vocabulary list, and which are, therefore, considered as already known, are calculated to find out how well the lyrics are comprehensible for the students without pre-teaching vocabulary or if the lyrics pose enough challenge to be relevant for vocabulary learning. As can be seen in the table below, the songs with the lowest percentage of known words, and thus the most difficult songs, are the ones

included in *English Step by Step* with only around 87% known lyrics. The textbook with the highest number of known words in its lyrics is *Cambridge Global English* with 97.5%.

Table 8 Number of words in all songs, known words

Textbook	Total number of words in all songs	Average number of words per song	% of known words in a song
<i>More!</i>	772	85.78	95.73
<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	1584	176	97.50
<i>easy</i>	1108	100.73	92.96
<i>English Step by Step</i>	1078	89.83	86.73

5.5. Grammar

In the graph (Figure 11) it can be seen that in all textbooks, only a small fraction of the grammatical aspects taught in the units including the songs is also part of the corresponding song. In none of the textbooks, more than one-third of the aspects are part of the songs' lyrics – if each song's chorus is only considered once. If all the choruses are included, then more aspects manage the hurdle of being mentioned more than four times: between 30% and 60% of the aspects are included in the song of the same unit in which the grammar aspect is taught. The highest number of grammatical aspects mentioned in the song's unit is *easy* with 33% without and 60% with all choruses. The lowest percentage is that of *More!* with only 25% without and 30% with all choruses. In between, there is *Cambridge Global English* with 31% for songs without, and 37% with all choruses, and *English Step by Step* with 29% without, and 41% with all the choruses.

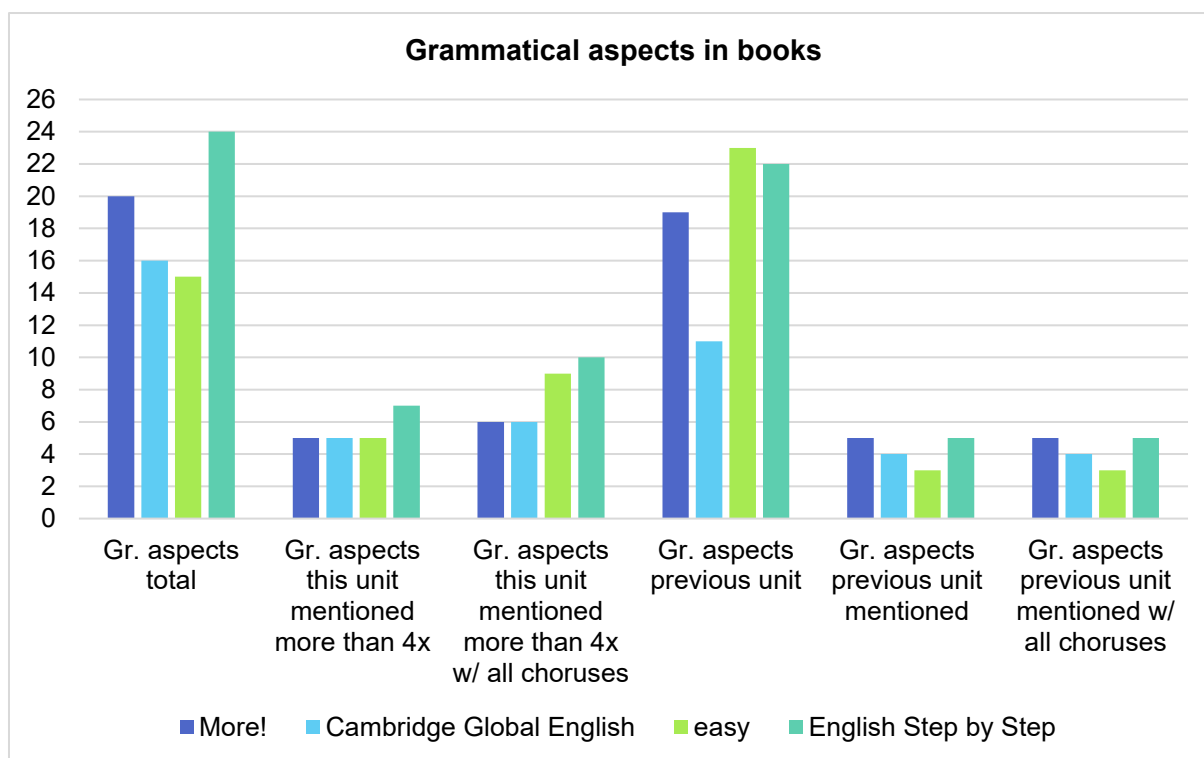


Figure 11 Grammatical aspects in textbooks

The results are even lower for the songs' corresponding previous units' grammar. Regardless if one counts all choruses or not, not more than 36% of the grammatical aspects of the corresponding previous unit of a song are used. In other words: with or without all the choruses, a maximum of five mentions of aspects learned in the previous unit occur in all the songs' lyrics. All four textbooks have in common that for the analysis, it does not matter if all choruses or just one chorus are included because the numbers are the same. The highest percentage of recycled grammar can be found in *Cambridge Global English* with 36%. Next are *More!* with 26% and *English Step by Step* with 22%. Last by a margin of nearly ten per cent points is *easy* with only 13%.

The number of mentions of grammatical aspects learned in the current or previous unit is generally very low - especially, considering the simplicity and high frequency of the aspects learned in the first year of L2 acquisition. Such aspects in *English Step by Step*, for example, include: there is/there are (Unit 1), definite/indefinite article (Unit 2), have got/ has got (Unit 4), adverbs of frequency, present simple (Unit 5), object pronouns (Unit 6), can/can't, imperative (Unit 8), present continuous (Unit 9), past simple (Unit 11), and telling the time (Unit 12).

Although the number of grammatical aspects practised in the songs is not very high, the number of grammatical items of one aspect can be very high, once that aspect is

in focus. The following table (Table 9) shows the number of grammatical aspects that are used more than ten times in one song.

Table 9 Extensive use of grammatical aspects

	10+ uses per aspect w/ all choruses
<i>More!</i>	5
<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	5
<i>easy</i>	3
<i>English Step by Step</i>	5
Total	18

In total, 18 grammatical aspects are mentioned more than ten times each in one song. This result suggests that once the lyricists decide to highlight one certain grammatical aspect, this aspect receives attention and is used excessively throughout the song. Thus, this song could be considered to have a grammar focus which supports the students' understanding and acquisition of said aspect of grammar. In each textbook, except for *easy*, five grammatical aspects are excessively used in one song.

So far, only the number of grammatical aspects occurring in songs has been analysed, ignoring their distribution over the songs. Now the single songs are considered and it is analysed if at least one grammatical aspect is in its focus. In the graph below (Figure 12) it can be seen that there are between two and five songs per textbook with no grammatical focus at all, which means with no grammatical aspect – of the current or previous unit – used more than four times. This is a total of 36% (15 songs) of the 42 songs. Of the remaining 64%, 23 songs indicate a focus on grammar from the current unit, and eleven on previous grammar (with all choruses), double counts are possible.

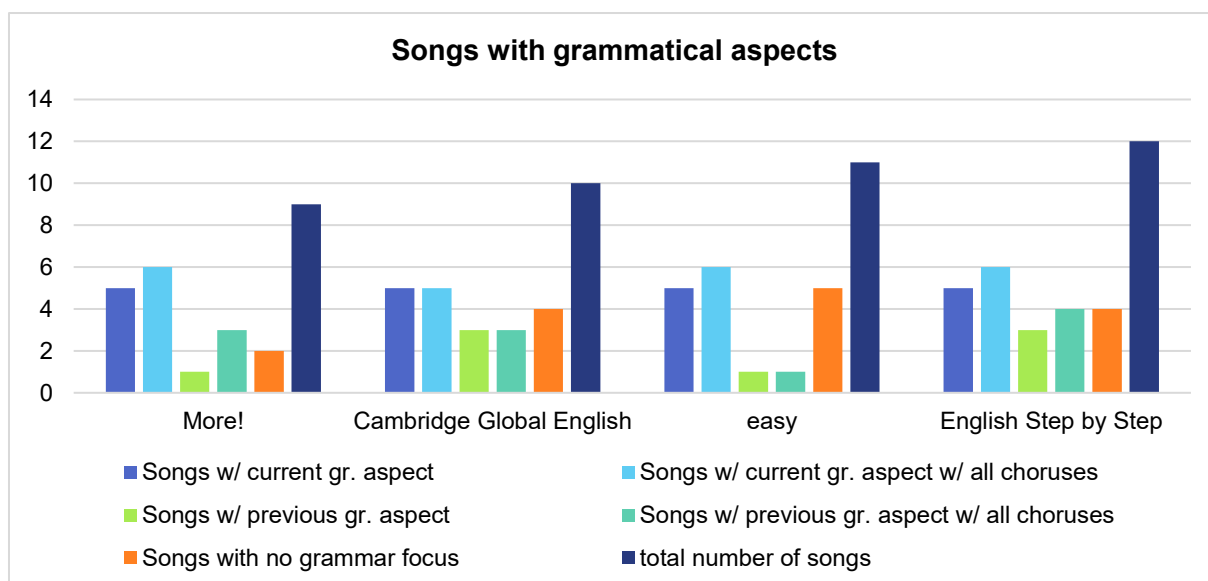


Figure 12 Songs with grammatical aspects

5.6. Song's topic

The songs' topics and their relation to the units' topics might provide an approximated answer to the question if a song fits its lesson. As already mentioned, it is highly individual how a teacher implements a song in their lesson, because the possibilities are endless, and the way a teacher uses the content of a provided textbook cannot be predicted. It can, however, be analysed if a song fits a unit's topic at least theoretically and without providing any additional input. Because the way a song is used by a teacher in the end is so specific and individual, the analysis of the relation between the unit's topic and the song's topic in this thesis is very general. Overall, looking at the word fields and keywords of the units and songs, there is a relation between every single song and its unit. For example, in "Luke's café" (*English Step by Step* 2022: 61) the word field consists of food words (chicken, steak, ice creams, cake, crisps, burgers, sausages, chocolate, tea, water) and simple verbs connected to food (eat, love, like, hate, order, drink, meet at). The unit's overall topic is food and, therefore, the song fits the unit. Similar overall analyses have been conducted for all of the songs and, all in all, every song is connected to its unit.

5.7. Additional activities

One major difference between the four analysed textbooks is the way the songs are embedded in the units through activities. While in *More!* all the songs stand for themselves and no activities for the songs are offered, there are tasks in *Cambridge*

Global English, easy and *English Step by Step* that relate to the songs and make further use of them.

Figure 13 shows the various activities offered by the textbooks. In total, there are 21 different kinds of activities. The favoured activity types include identifying words from the lyrics in a picture or a set of words, gap-fill exercises, (re-)writing your own verse for the song, asking questions and answering them, matching words with pictures or other words,, and writing sentences about the song's topic. Each of the three textbooks with additional activities uses different kinds of activities. This result is highlighted in the graph by the fact that most of the activity types only show one bar at one textbook and not several bars. For example, Ask and answer activities are only used in *English Step by Step* but not in other textbooks, as is suggested by the single turquoise line. The activities chosen for *easy* seem to be quite popular among the textbook authors, because the bars can be found exclusively on the left side of the figure, while *English Step by Step* and *Cambridge Global English* also employ exercises that are more rarely used – in many cases only once (right side).

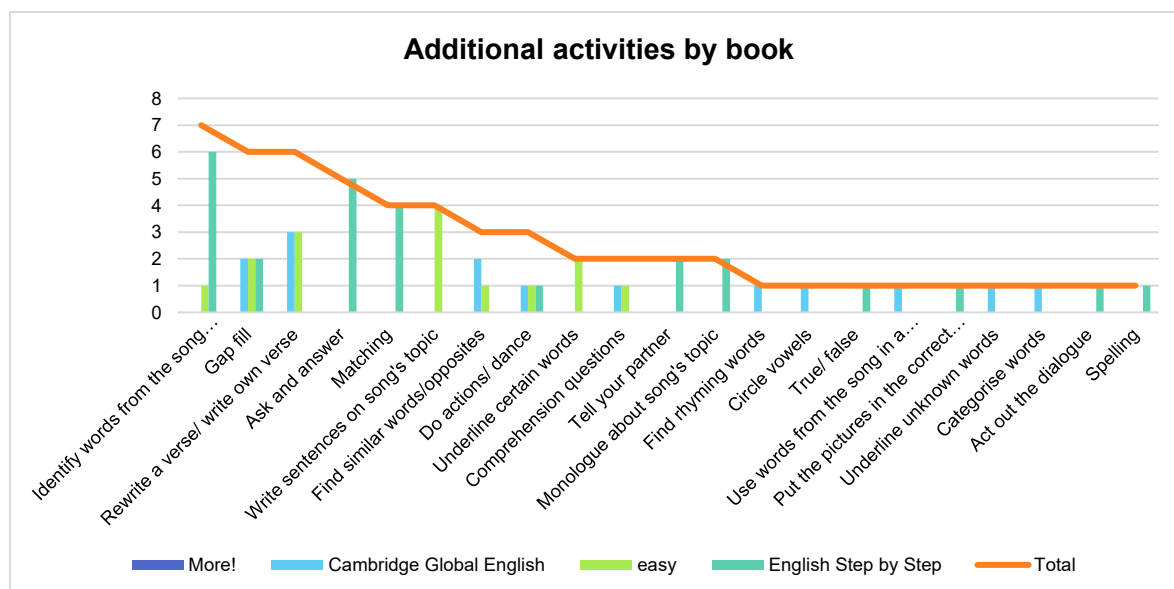


Figure 13 Additional activities by textbook

The 21 types of activities can be sorted into eight categories. The following list provides an overview of these categories together with the (kind of) activities that were identified and coded within each category:

1. vocabulary activities:
 - a. Identify words from the lyrics in a picture or a set of words.
 - b. Match words with, for example, pictures.

- c. Find similar words.
 - d. Underline certain words.
 - e. Underline unknown words.
- 2. writing activities:
 - a. Rewrite a verse or write your own verse.
 - b. Use words from the song in a text.
 - c. Write sentences about the song's topic.
- 3. speaking activities:
 - a. Ask and answer questions.
 - b. Tell your partner, for example, about your own experiences related to the song's topic.
 - c. Hold a monologue about the song's topic.
 - d. Act out a dialogue.
- 4. listening activities:
 - a. Fill in the gaps.
- 5. comprehension checking activities:
 - a. Answer the comprehension questions.
 - b. Answer the true/false questions.
 - c. Put the pictures into the correct order.
- 6. phonological activities:
 - a. Categorise words from the song according to their sounds.
 - b. Find rhyming words.
 - c. Circle vowels in the lyrics.
- 7. kinaesthetic activities:
 - a. Put the song's lyrics into action.
- 8. spelling activities:
 - a. Spell other words for your partner.

Of course, not all categories can be differentiated from one another in a clear way but overlap. To give two examples: spelling and phonology are also part of vocabulary learning, and for any writing activities you also need vocabulary. However, sorting activities into categories allows one to observe underlying foci and preferences in the textbooks' activities.

The category with most codings is vocabulary (Figure 14). Of the 55 activities in the four textbooks, 17 focus on improving the students' vocabulary. Of the four main skills - writing, listening, reading and speaking – three are employed in the offered activities. There are no activities connected to the songs that focus on grammar or reading practice. The latter can be explained by the fact that the source of input is audio input for which the students have to listen, so that it makes sense to mainly rely on one input source. Moreover, since the text is also given in the textbooks, the lyrics can be read and the students have to read them to complete some of the exercises anyway. However, reading itself is not explicitly trained. For post activities it is sensible not to provide new input by letting the students read a text but by providing productive activities in which the students can practise and produce the language on their own. Comprehension checking and listening are seen as two categories because a listening exercise could also involve solely reproducing what has been heard without being able to understand the underlying meaning, while comprehension exercises obligate the students to not only hear but also understand what has been said. There are only three or fewer phonologic, kinaesthetic, and spelling activities in the four textbooks.

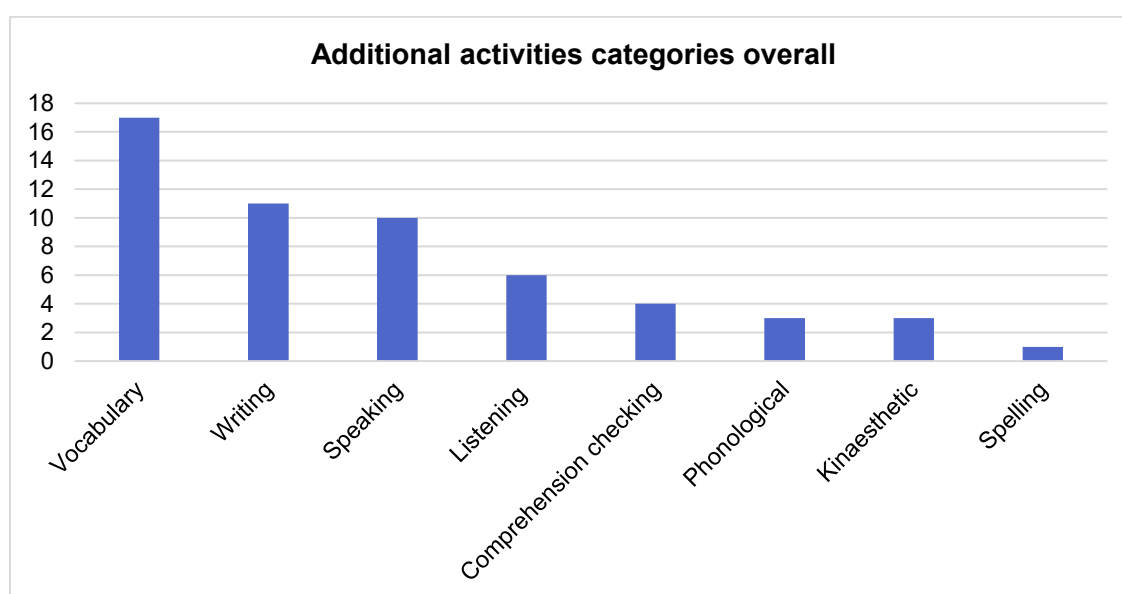


Figure 14 Additional activities in categories in all four textbooks

Figure 15 allows a closed look at the textbooks' preferences for certain categories. It can be observed that only *English Step by Step* employs song-related speaking activities – and quite amply so. There are ten speaking activities connected to the twelve songs in the textbook (Figure 15). *English Step by Step* is also the only textbook that provides a spelling activity and the only one that does not include writing activities connected to its songs. Next to speaking, the second main focus seems to be on

vocabulary as there are also ten vocabulary activities. Listening, comprehension and kinaesthetic activities are only included once or twice. *easy*'s main focus seems to be on vocabulary and writing exercises: eleven of the fifteen activities practise these two aspects of English. Furthermore, there are two listening, one comprehension checking and one kinaesthetic exercise. *Cambridge Global English* is the only textbook that also provides phonological exercises, which are the most prevalent categories next to vocabulary and writing activities. Additionally, there are two listening, one comprehension checking, and one kinaesthetic activity.

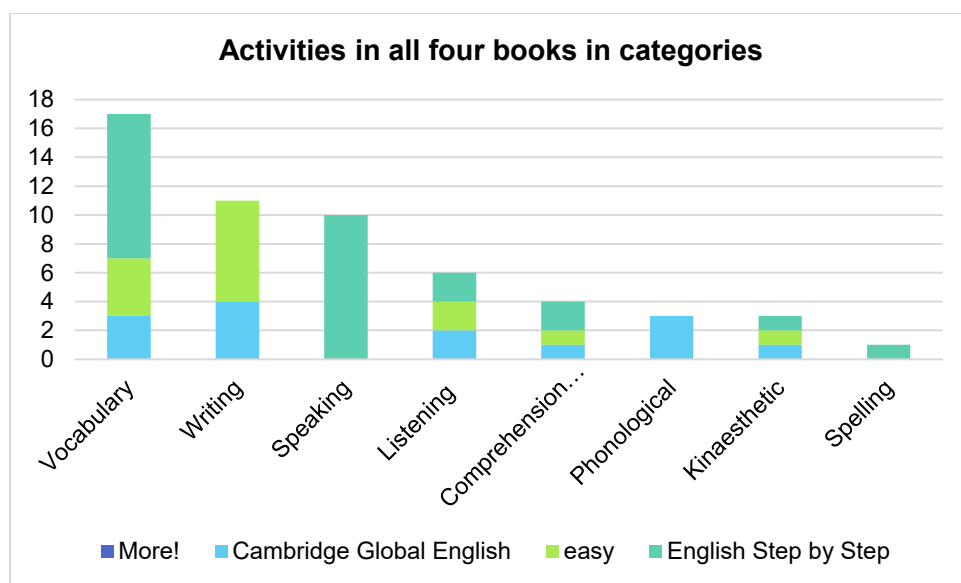


Figure 15 Categorised activities in all four textbooks

The textbook with the most activities is *English Step by Step* with 26 activities, followed by a large margin by *easy* with 15 and *Cambridge Global English* with 14 activities in total. As mentioned above, *More!* does not provide any accompanying activities.

5.8. Rhyme

Nearly all the songs in the four textbooks are rhymed in various ways. There are only five songs without rhyme, four of them are in *Cambridge Global English* and one is in *English Step by Step* (Figure 16). One song in *Cambridge Global English* (“ABC song” 2023: 20) and one song in *English Step by Step* (“The alphabet rock” 2022: 21) are alphabet songs whose lyrics do not rhyme. In these songs, the lyrics consist of the alphabet and since the alphabet does not rhyme, the songs’ lyrics do not rhyme either. Another two of the songs without rhyme use other ways to organise their lyrics: In “We’ve got the whole world in our hands” (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 41), every single line ends with “in our hands”. “The green grass grew all around” (*Cambridge*

Global English 2023: 104) is an accumulative song, in which a line is added to the song each verse. This makes a rhyme scheme impossible, but the lyrics still follow a certain system which makes them memorable. There is one song left that is not an alphabet song or uses other ways to organise its lyrics: “I am”. This song can be found in *Cambridge Global English* and the song’s lyrics have already been discussed (see p. 70). The conclusion was drawn that the “song” might better be described as a grammar chant because the text only consists of variations of the verb *to be* together with subject pronouns (“I say / I am, I am, I am. / What about you?”). Moreover, and relevant to this chapter – they also do not rhyme. In *easy* and *More!* all the songs are rhymed.

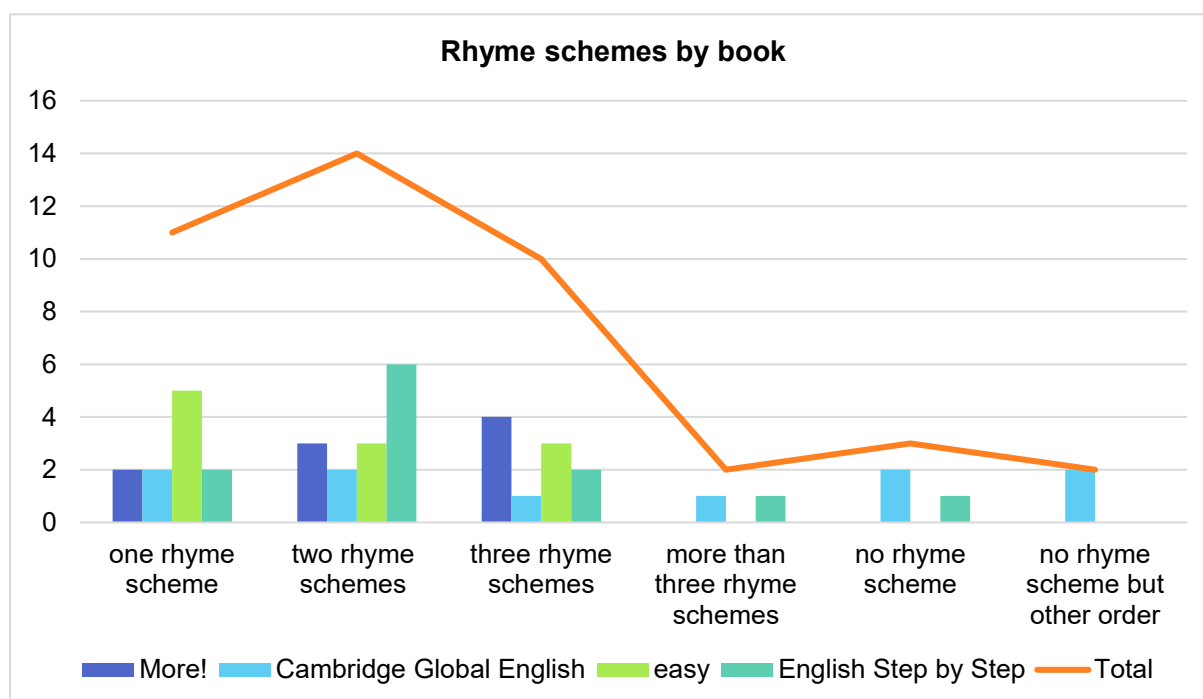


Figure 16 Number of rhyme schemes in a song by textbook

Most of the songs apply one to three rhyme schemes, more than three is less common. Observing the number of rhyme schemes per textbook, it is striking that *More!* and *easy* do not use more than three rhyme schemes or no rhyme schemes at all. The songs in *English Step by Step* very commonly apply two rhyme schemes, while *easy* most frequently uses one rhyme scheme.

In the songs in all textbooks, there are a total of 23 rhyme schemes, but 15 of them only occur once (right circle). The most frequent number of lines per stanza or chorus is four. The five most common rhyme schemes all have four lines. Combined they make up more than 70% of the occurring rhymes (Figure 17).

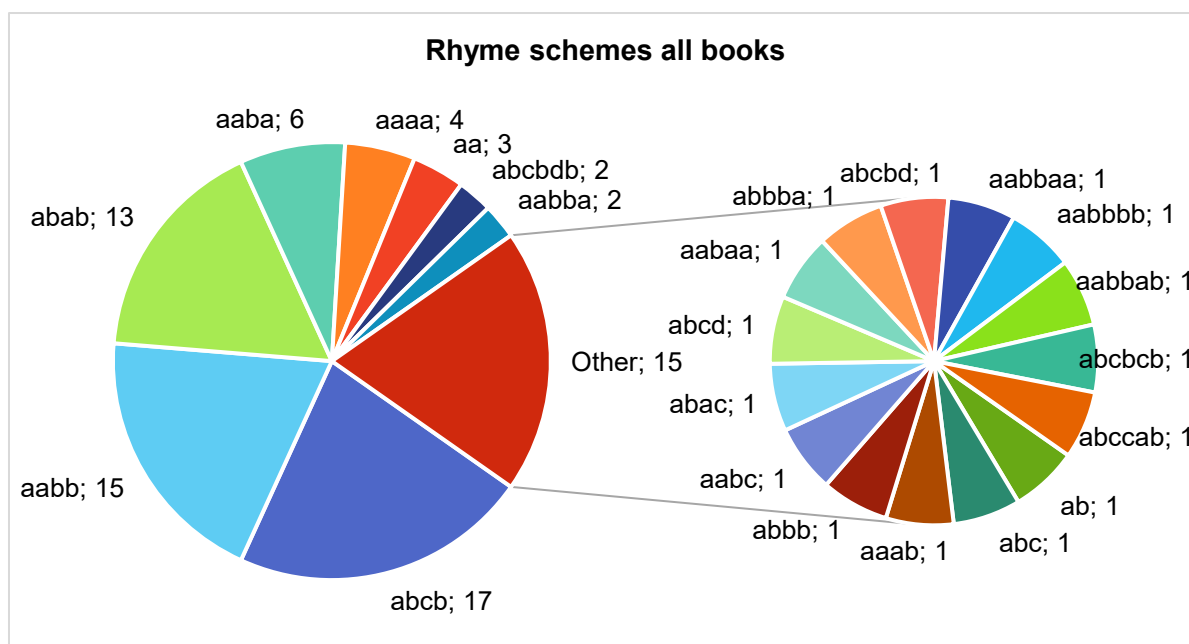


Figure 17 Rhyme schemes all textbooks

In the following graph (Figure 18), the rhyme schemes that only occur once are excluded from the analysis to be able to focus on the most relevant details. The textbooks *More!*, *English Step by Step* and *easy* seem to focus strongly on the most common and simple rhyme schemes abcb, aabb and abab. *Cambridge Global English*, in contrast, hardly ever employs those patterns.

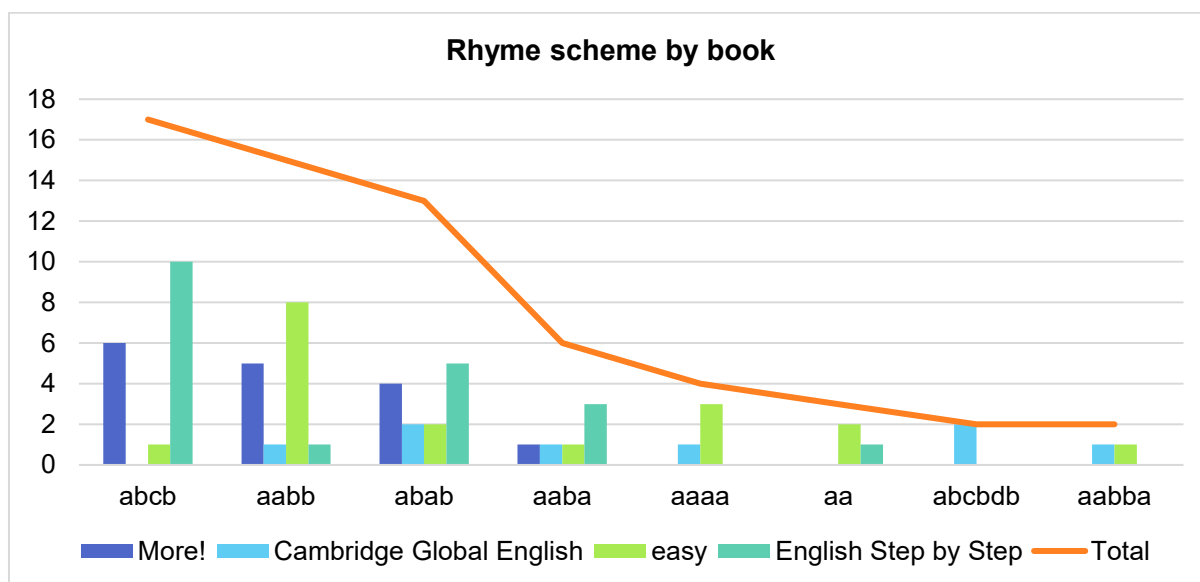


Figure 18 Rhyme scheme by textbook

Looking at the accumulated number of occurrences per rhyme scheme, it can be deduced that the three most frequent rhyme schemes are undoubtedly favoured over the others, since the fourth scheme is only used half as often as the third (Figure 18).

5.9. Song structure

The songs' structures in the four textbooks are mostly similar. None of the songs has a bridge. This might be due to the relative shortness of the songs (see p. 58). If you try to compose a longer song, just iterating verses and chorus might be perceived as boring and nobody would like to listen to it. Therefore, usually, a bridge with new musical material and a new text is introduced after the second chorus. After the bridge, the chorus and maybe more verses can be repeated without it being perceived as boring. Because the songs in the textbooks are all very short anyway, there is no need for a bridge.

It has already been mentioned that the songs in *easy* are especially short, which can also be observed here. The mean number of verses per song is 2.64 and the mean number of choruses is 1.73. This means that one song has 2.64 verses and not even two choruses. An average pop song often has two or three verses, four or five choruses and one bridge. Although none of *easy*'s songs have a lot of parts, there are two songs that are especially short because they only consist of one or two verses without any chorus (song three and four). The same songs have already been identified as outliers in the section song length (see p.58). Song number three is a melodised alphabet and song number four is the popular song "If you're happy and you know it" which does not have a chorus. Of course, these two songs influence the average number of verses and choruses to a great extent.

In *Cambridge Global English*, six songs consist only of verses. Those are children's songs that often do not have a chorus in the first place. Again, the lack of choruses in these six songs reduces the average number of choruses (1.33) a lot. There seems to be a general focus on verses in *Cambridge Global English* because no song ever starts with a chorus even if there is one. *More!* and *English Step by Step* rely more on choruses in their songs. In *English Step by Step*, there are on average even more choruses than there are verses.

The songs in *More!* and *English Step by Step* have significantly more parts per song (*More!*: 6; *English Step by Step*: 7.17) than the other two (*Cambridge Global English*: 4.89; *easy*: 4.36). The reason is that *easy* has very short songs, where there is not much space for many song parts and in *Cambridge Global English*, the single parts are often quite long compared to the other textbooks. In *More!* and *English Step by Step* the verses and choruses usually have only four lines (eg. "Call Groans" in *More!*

2023: 48; “Family and friends” in *English Step by Step* 2022: 71) with around five to nine syllables each (“Call Groans”: four to six; “Family and friends”: five to nine), while in *Cambridge Global English*, the parts often have more lines (eg. “A cricket on the floor”: five lines per verse) and the lines often have more syllables (eg. “A cricket on the floor”: between six and ten). If the song has shorter parts, there can be more parts in the same amount of time compared to songs with longer parts.

5.10. Original and adapted songs

Analysing the number of original and adapted songs in the four textbooks, there seems to be a preference by Helbling’s authors for original songs, since they exclusively use those (Figure 19). *easy* includes two adapted songs: the song “If you’re happy and you know it” (*easy* 2022: 37) and the melody of the popular children’s song “Head and shoulders”. The text of the song has been adapted and now the song’s new lyrics focus on colours (*easy* 2022: 29). *Cambridge Global English* not only includes some adapted songs, but more than two-thirds of all the textbook’s songs are adapted.

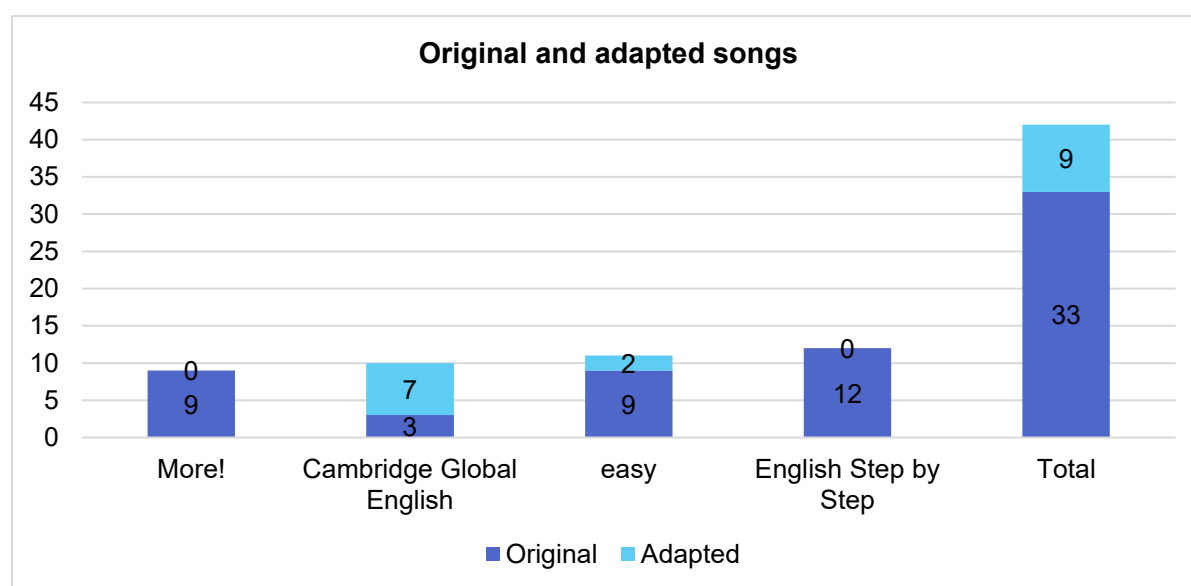


Figure 19 Original and adapted songs

“If you’re happy and you know it” (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 49) is even featured twice: once with its original text and once with a new text and a slightly adapted melody in the song “There’s a cricket on the floor” (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 90). Also the song “Twinkle, twinkle” has been adapted for this textbook. It is included with a new text by Kathryn Harper and is called “This book is my window” (*Cambridge Global English* 2023:24). The other adapted songs are “Old Mac Donald” (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 20), “We’ve got the whole world in our hands” (*Cambridge Global English*

2023: 41), and “The green grass grew all around and around” (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 104). The song “We’re opposites” is by the American band *The String Beans* who devote their musical career to writing and performing songs for pre-school to elementary school children (The String Beans 2024). The song was not recorded again by other singers but is featured in its original version.

Generally, all of the adapted songs included in the textbooks are children’s songs; there are no pop songs that are referenced. It is likely that the reason for this situation is that with children’s songs, there are no copyright issues that have to be taken care of. In Austria, a song can only be used without having to get permission from the composer and lyricist or their heirs 70 years after the originators have died (AKM / austro mechna 2024). Often high fees have to be paid in exchange for being allowed to use a piece of music.

5.11. Genre

In total, 18 different genres are applied in the four textbooks. Because there are five genres that can be regarded as subgenres to Pop (Pop Funk, Pop Doo Wop, Jazz Pop, Trap Pop, Dance Pop), they are subsumed under Pop as can be seen in Figure 21: the right circle shows the subgenres of Pop and the main genre Pop which are together summarised in the red slice of the right circle. In the right circle, there are two slices of Pop (Pop gen and Pop sub). Pop sub stands for subcategory and Pop gen means Pop generally; the first one stands for Pop as a subcategory, and the latter

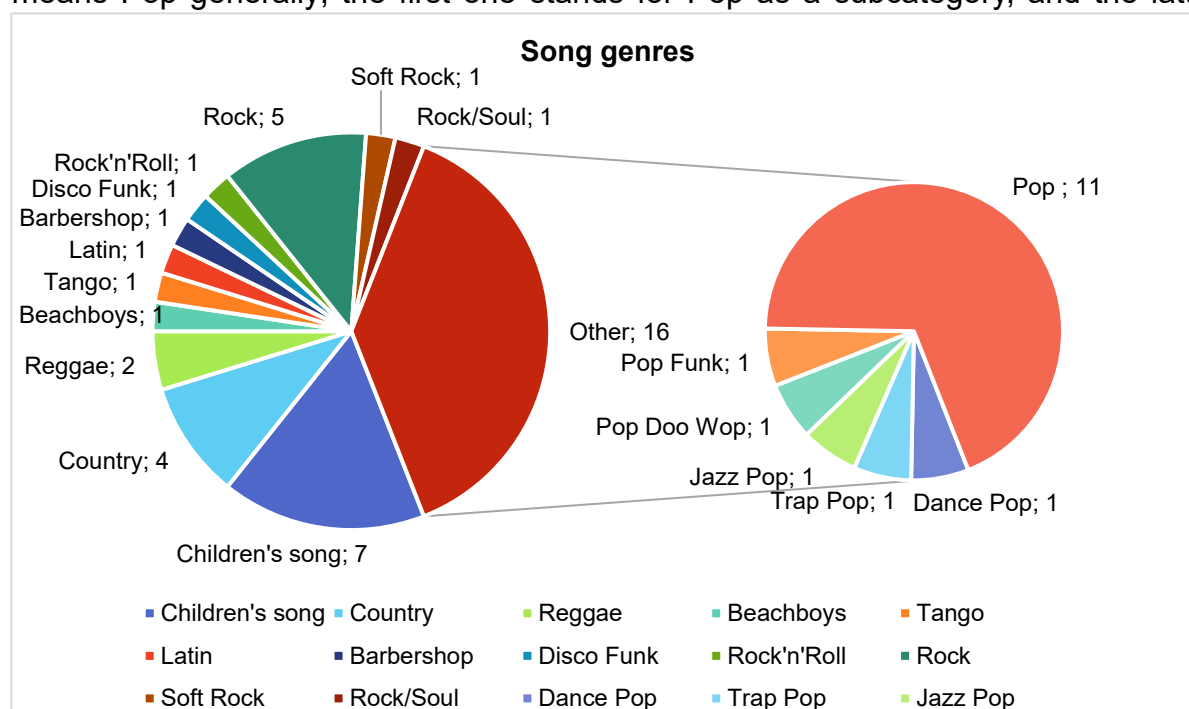


Figure 20 Song genres

encompasses all different Pop genres that occur in the textbooks. Because Pop music subcategories are not always clear-cut and unambiguous, this differentiation was made. There are often no definitions for certain subgenres that are accepted by a wide community and so, sometimes it does not make sense to find a subcategory for every single song. Every song (usually) sounds different even within a genre and influences of other genres and new tendencies can be found in most songs. Therefore, to arrive at any genre, some differences have to be ignored and subsumed under Pop. The five subgenres of Pop that are taken into account here stand out from the songs labelled as just Pop. Even an unskilled listener would notice that those five songs are different to the eleven songs in the Pop (sub) category.

The fact that 18 genres are only heard once stands for the great variety of genres that are used in the textbooks. The biggest slices are pop songs with 16 (38%), and children's songs and Rock songs with seven out of a total of 42 songs (16%). Similar to the Pop genre, there are also subcategories for Rock; in the textbooks there is one Soft Rock and one Rock/Soul song. Of all the 18 genres, there are only two genres—

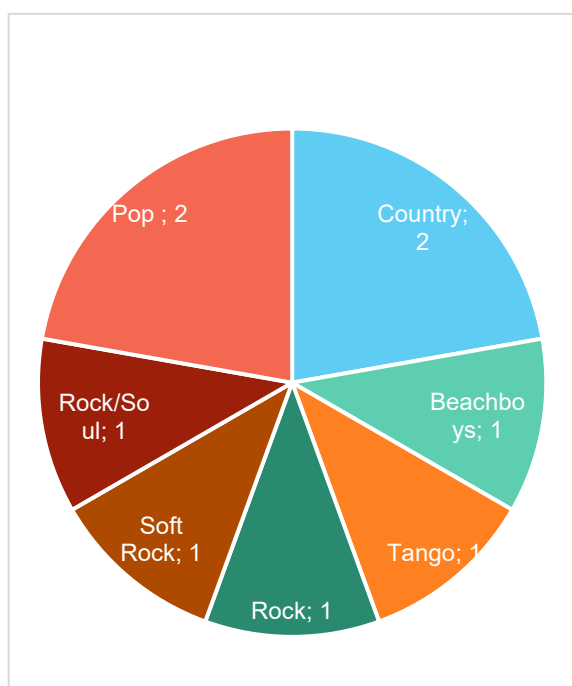


Figure 21 Genres in More!

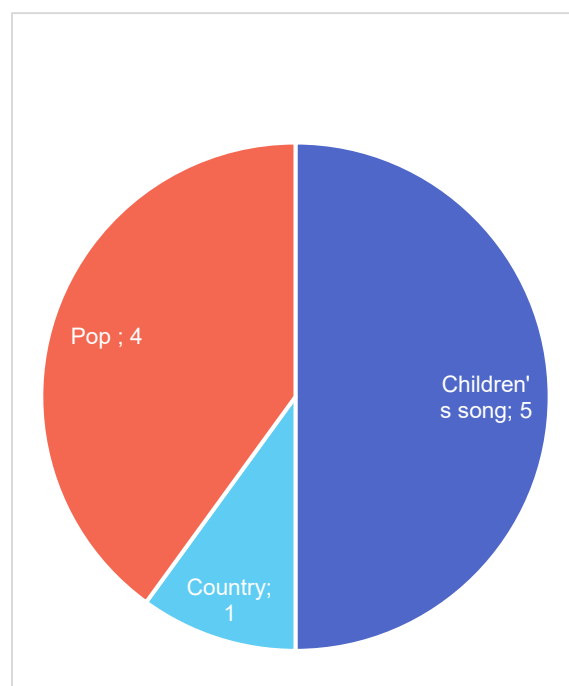


Figure 22 Genres in Cambridge Global English

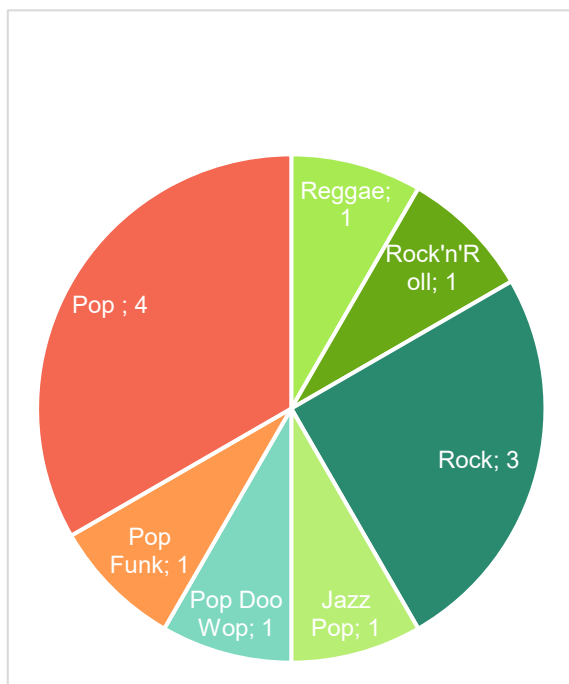


Figure 23 Genres in *English Step by Step*

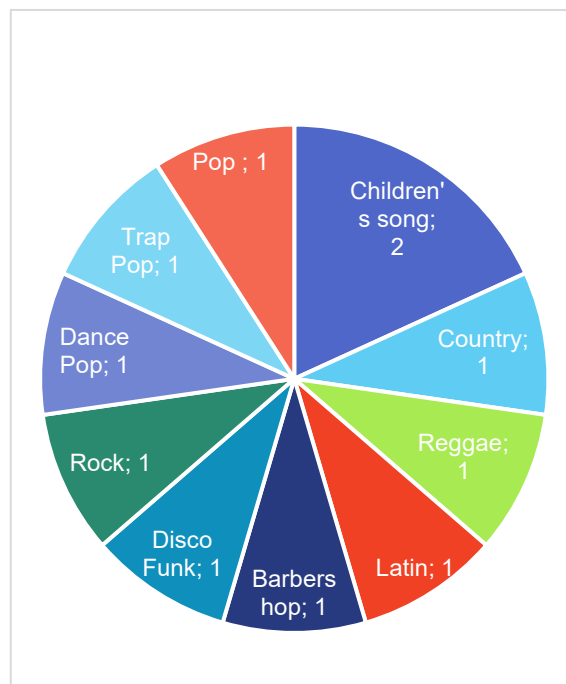


Figure 24 Genres in *easy*

apart from Pop, Rock and children's songs – that appear more than once: Country and Reggae. Country can even be found in all of the textbooks except *English Step by Step*, and there is one Reggae song each in *easy* and *English Step by Step*.

Observing the genres in each textbook more closely, it can be seen that not all the textbooks are equally diverse. In *easy* and *More!*, nearly every single song is of a different genre (Figure 21), although in *More!* there are three Rock songs in different subcategories. *English Step by Step* exhibits a focus on Pop and Rock songs, especially, if one counts Pop Funk, Pop Doo Wop and Jazz Pop towards Pop. The result is seven Pop songs, three Rock songs, one Reggae, and one Rock'n'Roll song in *English Step by Step* (Figure 23). The textbook with the least variation is *Cambridge Global English* with only three kinds of genres. Half of the songs are children's songs, there is one country song and the rest are Pop songs (Figure 22).

5.12. Instruments

To be able to produce the specific sound of certain genres, certain instruments are needed. For example, in country music usually a banjo is used but no drums. The vast majority of the songs rely on the basic band instruments drums, electric bass, electric guitar and piano, although not always in the combination of all four instruments (Figure 25). Next to the electric guitar, the acoustic guitar and the banjo are used quite frequently (in eleven and six songs respectively). Interestingly, the Hammond organ is

also employed in ten songs, although it is generally not such a widely used instrument in Pop/Rock music. The rest of the instruments are all used in fewer than five songs. Among them are synthesizer, clap, background choir, digital vocal effects, (artificial) trumpet, acoustic bass and extras.

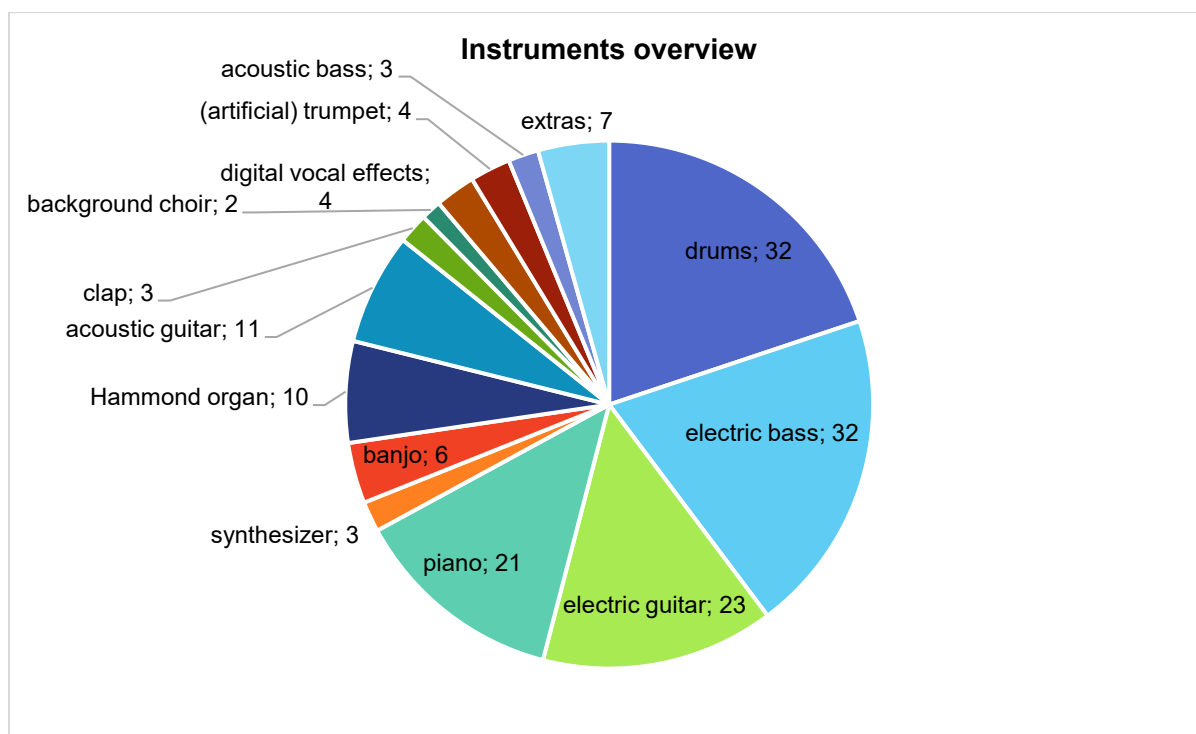


Figure 25 Instruments overview

Although digital vocal effects are no instrument, they are still included in this chart, since they are as genre-specific as specific drum patterns or the lack or use of certain instruments. In this context, digital vocal effects are only considered when they are very noticeable. Of course, digital vocal effects may have also been used in more cases, but then they are not meant to be perceptible, unlike actual instruments, and therefore, not included in this analysis.

Those instruments that only appear once are subsumed under the category extras and include the instruments artificial strings, timpani, whistling, an a cappella ensemble, glockenspiel, artificial flute, accordion, and tambourine. The instruments labelled as artificial are very noticeably not played by actual musicians on actual instruments but the melodies are devised with the help of computer programs, which often does not sound quite natural. Such quality issues are usually due to financial constraints: paying qualified musicians for their time and skills is more expensive than using prefabricated sounds from sound libraries.

Concerning instrumentation in the individual textbooks, some interesting findings could be made. In the charts below, the four main instruments can be found in the left circle. They are part of most of the songs. All the instruments apart from the piano, the electric guitar and bass, and the drums are visualised in the left circle in the slice other and in the right circle, where a more detailed observation is possible.

The four main instruments are used in similar proportions by all textbooks, except for *English Step by Step*. In this textbook, there are drums in every single song and also the electric guitar and bass are used in more than 80% of the tracks. Additionally, there are only ten instances of other instruments– in the other textbooks between 13 and 15 instances can be found. Concerning those other instruments, Helbling’s textbooks *More!* and *English Step by Step* are quite similar again. The Hammond organ plays a major role in these two textbooks with four songs in which it is included each. In *Cambridge Global English* it occurs twice and not at all in *easy*. The acoustic guitar is used in three songs in *More!*, but only once in *English Step by Step*. In both textbooks, there is only one song with extra instruments: in *More!* there is one song with a tambourine (*More!* 2023: 34) and in *English Step by Step*, artificial strings and body percussion are used in one song (*English Step by Step* 2022: 81).

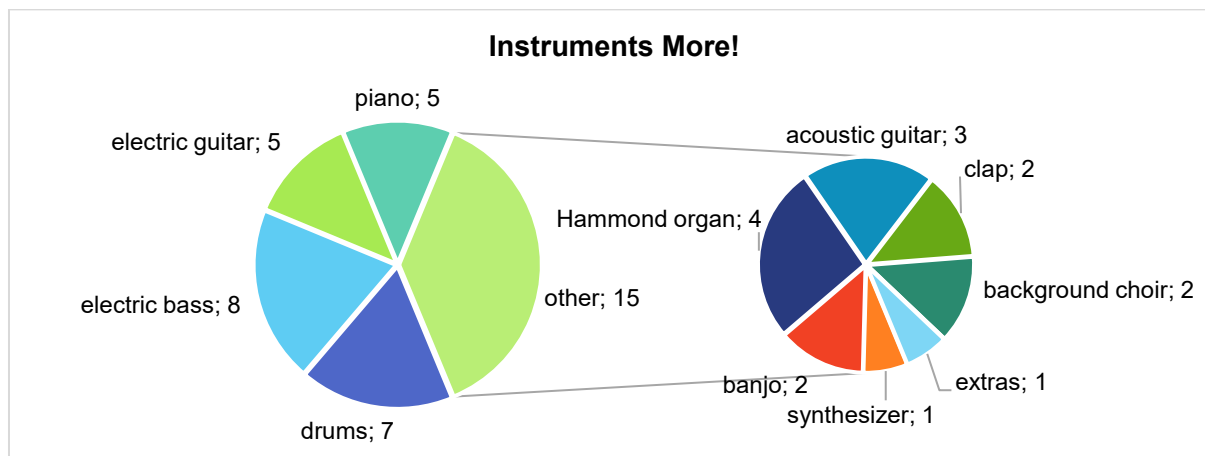


Figure 26 Instruments in *More!*; a total of nine songs

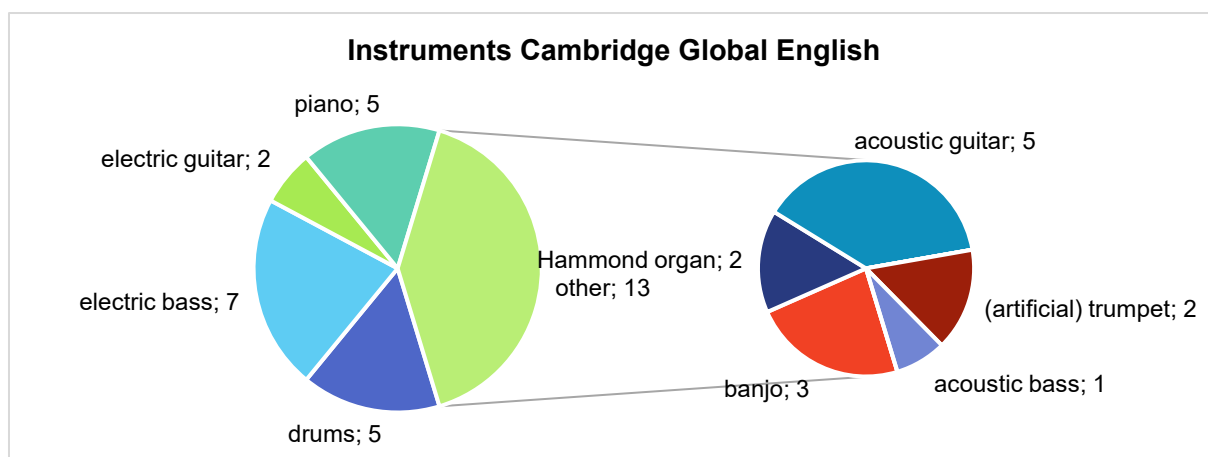


Figure 27 Instruments in Cambridge Global English; a total of ten songs

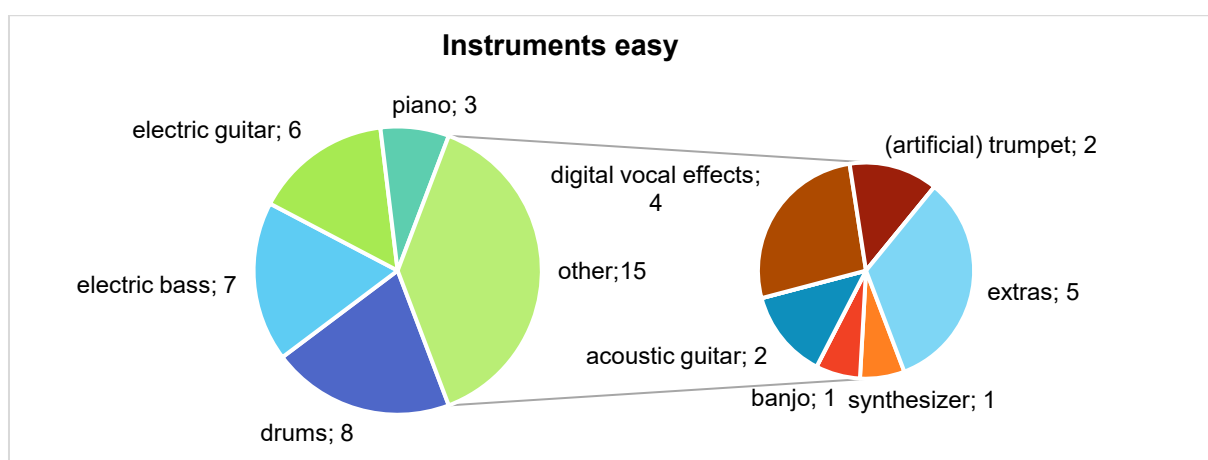


Figure 28 Instruments in easy; a total of eleven songs

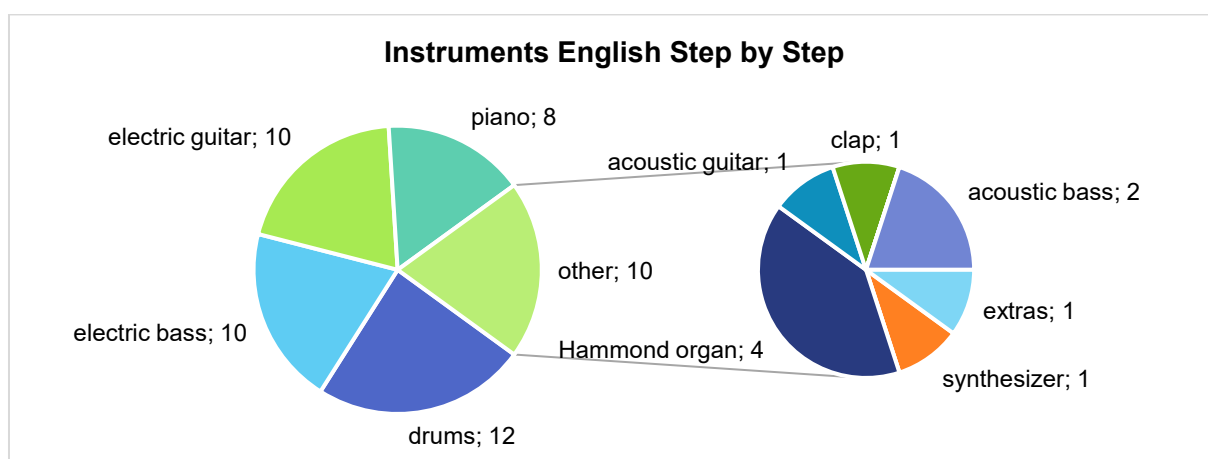


Figure 29 Instruments in English Step by Step; a total of twelve songs

In *Cambridge Global English* the fewest instruments occur apart from the typical band instruments. In contrast to the songs in other textbooks, the acoustic guitar can be heard more often (five times) than the electric guitar (two times) (Figure 27). There seems to be a focus on guitar instruments, since next to the electric and the acoustic

guitar, there are also three songs with a banjo. Apart from those instruments, the Hammond organ and a (probably) artificial trumpet occur twice and an acoustic bass can be heard once.

Unlike in *Cambridge Global English* where no extra instruments (that only occur once in the corpus) are used, *easy* is the textbook with the most songs with extra instruments (Figure 28). Again, extra instruments are most often artificial instrument sounds, for example, a string pizzicato⁸ or flute sound. But there are also instruments that are either actual instruments or very good sounds, for example, timpani, a glockenspiel and an accordion. In the song “The monster’s body shop” an a cappella⁹ ensemble sings the whole song without instruments, and only one musician whistles. An interesting sound choice in *easy* is the use of digital vocal effects in some of the songs, because *easy* is the only textbook in which they occur. The other textbook songs exhibit a clear and clean voice that sounds very natural. *easy* by contrast employs effects that are usually known from Hip Hop or Rap music, which make the songs sound very modern, also because such effects have been in mainstream fashion only for about ten years. All the digital tools like artificial instruments and digital voice effects together indicate that the songs for *easy* have been produced digitally to a great extent.

Overall, it can be observed that only a few musicians are needed to play the instruments that are used in the textbook songs, so that the producers do not have to find and pay a great number of different musicians. In the table below (Table 10) the instruments one musician can usually play are listed. Because the tracks are recorded and not performed live, one musician can record several takes on several instruments that are combined later, thus, one musician can play several instruments in the same song. As shown in Table 10 below, for all the instruments occurring in the four textbooks’ songs, only four musicians, singers and the producer are needed.

Table 10 Musicians needed in *easy*

keys player	drummer	guitarist	bass player	singers	producer
piano	drum set	electric guitar	electric bass	background choir	digital vocal effects
synthesizer	tambourine	banjo	acoustic bass	whistling	(artificial) trumpet

⁸ A sound that is created by not using the bow but by picking the string with the fingers. Often, this way of playing string instruments is employed by double bass players in Jazz bands.

⁹ A cappella means that singers sing a song without any instruments.

Hammond organ	glockenspiel	acoustic guitar	body percussion	clap
(artificial) trumpet	timpani		lead vocals	artificial string pizz
artificial pizz	string	body percussion		artificial flute
artificial flute				artificial accordion
(artificial) glockenspiel				body percussion
artificial harmonica				glockenspiel
				artificial timpani

5.13. Major and minor

In total, nearly three-quarters of the songs in the four textbooks are in a major key. *Cambridge Global English* is the textbook with the fewest songs in a minor key with only one single song. *English Step by Step* and *More!* both have three minor songs. In *easy* nearly half of the songs are in a minor key (Figure 30).

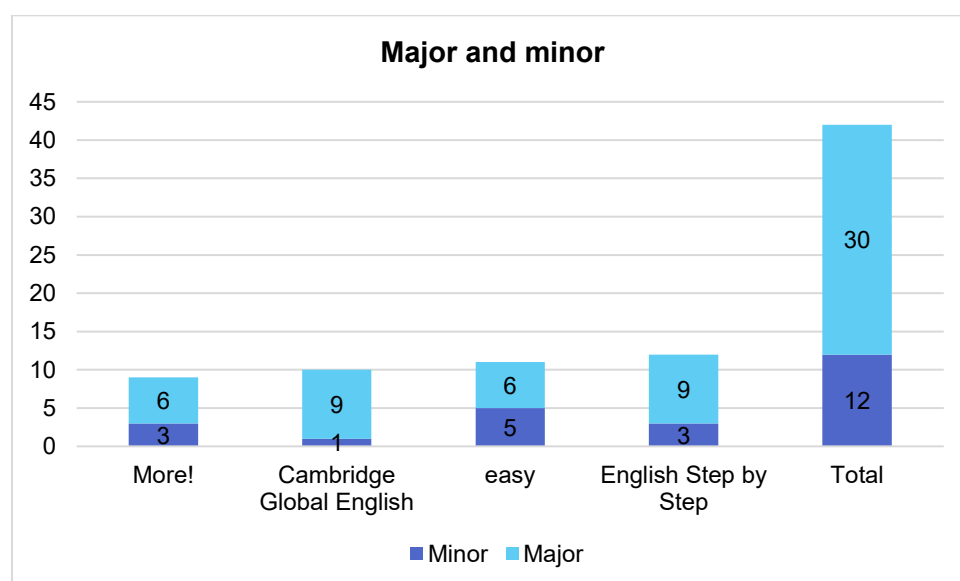


Figure 30 Major and minor in the textbooks' songs

The reason for the vast majority of songs being in a major key might be the fact that songs in a major key sound happy to listeners and minor songs instil sadness (Amon 2015: 313–314). In the literature, it is recommended that the students should have positive feelings to be able to learn well (Richards 2015: 155) and upbeat, positive, happy songs can create a relaxed atmosphere, whereas sad songs might remind the students of sad situations in their lives and render them unhappy as a result. However, just happy songs might be perceived as boring, which is why including a few sad or

melancholic songs results in a more varied song selection. Moreover, this variety can lead to more student motivation and also sad songs can be motivating when the students can relate to them (Richards 2015: 182).

5.14. Singers' gender and choir

The following charts indicate clear preferences for the employment of either male *or* female singers *or* a choir. The two textbooks by the publishing house Helbling do not employ songs where a choir sings without soloists (Figure 31, Figure 34). The same is true for *easy* (Figure 33). In *Cambridge Global English* three songs are performed by a choir without solo singers (Figure 32).

The ideas of what good textbook songs are seem to be quite fixed for each of the textbooks: In *More!* and *English Step by Step*, most songs are sung by male and female singers and a choir, and no song is sung without a choir. In *Cambridge Global English*, the songs are either sung by a choir, or by singers of either gender, except for one song which is performed by both. There is no mix of solo and choir within this textbook's songs. *Easy* is the only textbook that does mix the two forms of singing: there is one song that is sung by a man without a choir, and four that are sung by a man with a choir, and there are two songs sung by a woman without a choir and one that is sung by a woman with a choir (Figure 33).

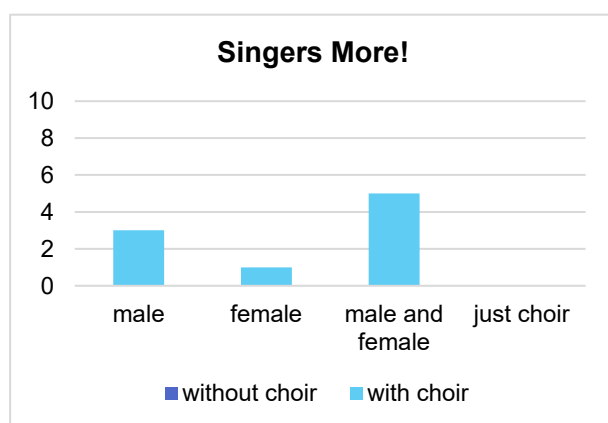


Figure 31 Singers in *More!*

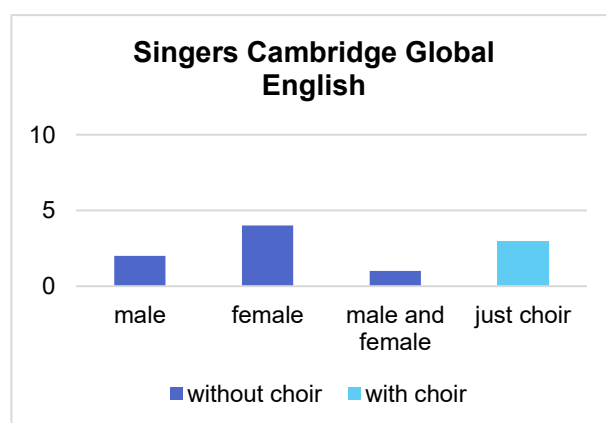


Figure 32 Singers in *Cambridge Global English*

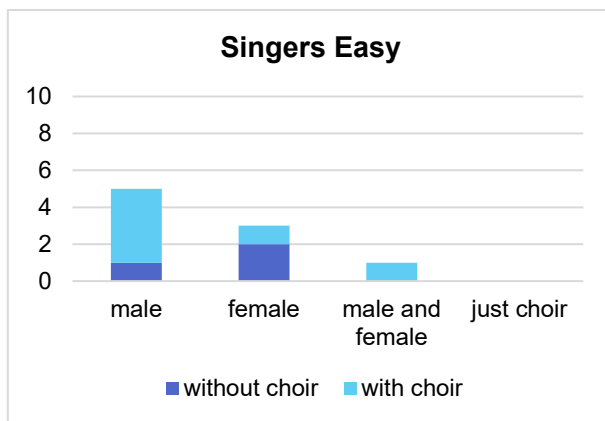


Figure 33 Singers in easy

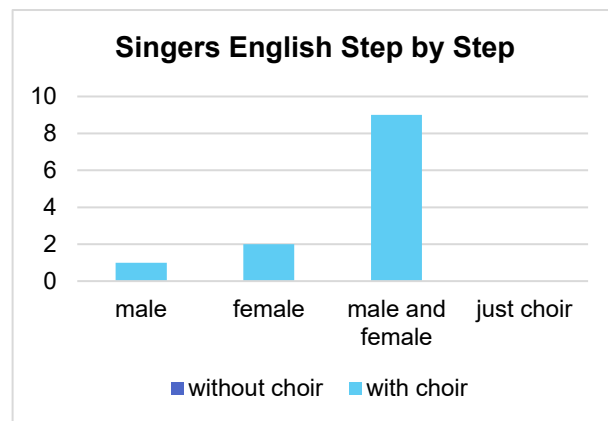


Figure 34 English Step by Step

Cambridge Global English shows signs of trying to imitate First Language Acquisition (FLA) by focusing on adapted songs (see page 74) and imitating how L1 speakers learn songs – in groups and low-effort settings with only a small number of instruments and preparation (see page 77). The other textbooks orient themselves towards pop songs where there are often lead singers for the verses and a small group of singers – eg. the other band members – for the chorus. Sometimes there are background vocals that repeat or comment on what the lead singer has just sung. This trend – one or several lead singers plus a (small) choir – can be observed in Helbling’s textbooks *More!* and *English Step by Step*, where all the songs feature a choir. In *easy*, the majority of the songs implement a choir, but there are also three songs out of the eleven that are sung by just one singer (one male, two female). Additionally, the choir could be perceived as inviting to sing along, since the students can join in as *another* voice and do not have to bulge into a solo.

5.15. Range

The vocal range in the four textbooks spans from c to e2 (Figure 36, Figure 35), which is more than two octaves. To put the notes into perspective: the lowest note, c, is usually part of the bass register, and the highest note is comfortable for soprano singers and can also be reached by most altos.

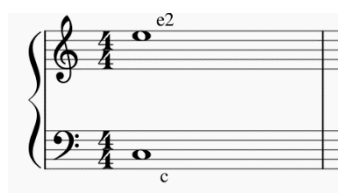


Figure 35 Vocal range of all textbook songs in musical notation

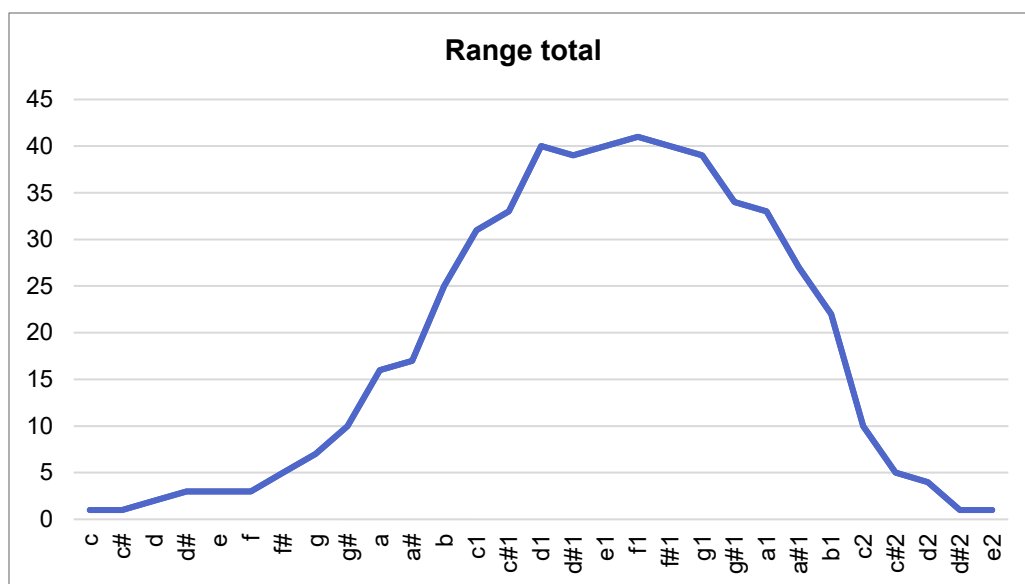


Figure 36 Vocal range of all textbook songs graph

In the graph (Figure 36) the occurring range of semi-tones can be found on the x-axis, while on the y-axis the number of songs that include the observed note within its range is applied.

When observing the four textbooks individually, it can be seen that the songs in *easy* and *More!* have the biggest vocal range spanning 27 semitones (piano keys), while *English Step by Step* only spans 16. *Cambridge Global English* is in the middle of these two extremes with 21 semitones. The highest notes are in a quite small corridor of just five semitones between c2 and e2 (Figure 37). The lowest notes, however, show a greater variation. For *English Step by Step*, the lowest note is an a, one-third below is f#, *Cambridge Global English*'s lowest note. *Easy*'s and *More!*'s songs reach the very low d and c.

There are two outliers in *More!* which include very low notes: "The pirate song" (*More!* 2023: 26) and "Clever Jolly" (*More!* 2023: 79). Both songs are sung by men and span from c to a# ("The pirate song") and from d# to b ("Clever Jolly") which is both comfortable for bass singers, but not for children. "The pirate song" could be sung an octave higher from c1 to a#1, but this has to be initiated by the teacher, otherwise the students might not be able to find the right notes. If the teacher has a low voice themselves, they might not think of singing the song higher. In *easy*, there is also a song that spans from d to a1 ("It's hobby time"; *easy* 2022: 137). This song and "Clever Jolly" cannot be sung an octave higher by students so that it would be within their range, because the highest notes would then be outside a comfortable range again.

All in all, these three songs might pose difficulties when they are sung in the classroom because of their general low range. This aligns with findings by Grotan-Carlin and Dobravac who analysed Croatian English textbooks and also concluded that their range was too low and therefore not appropriate for the focus group of 1st graders (Gortan-Carlin and Dobravac 2021: 168).

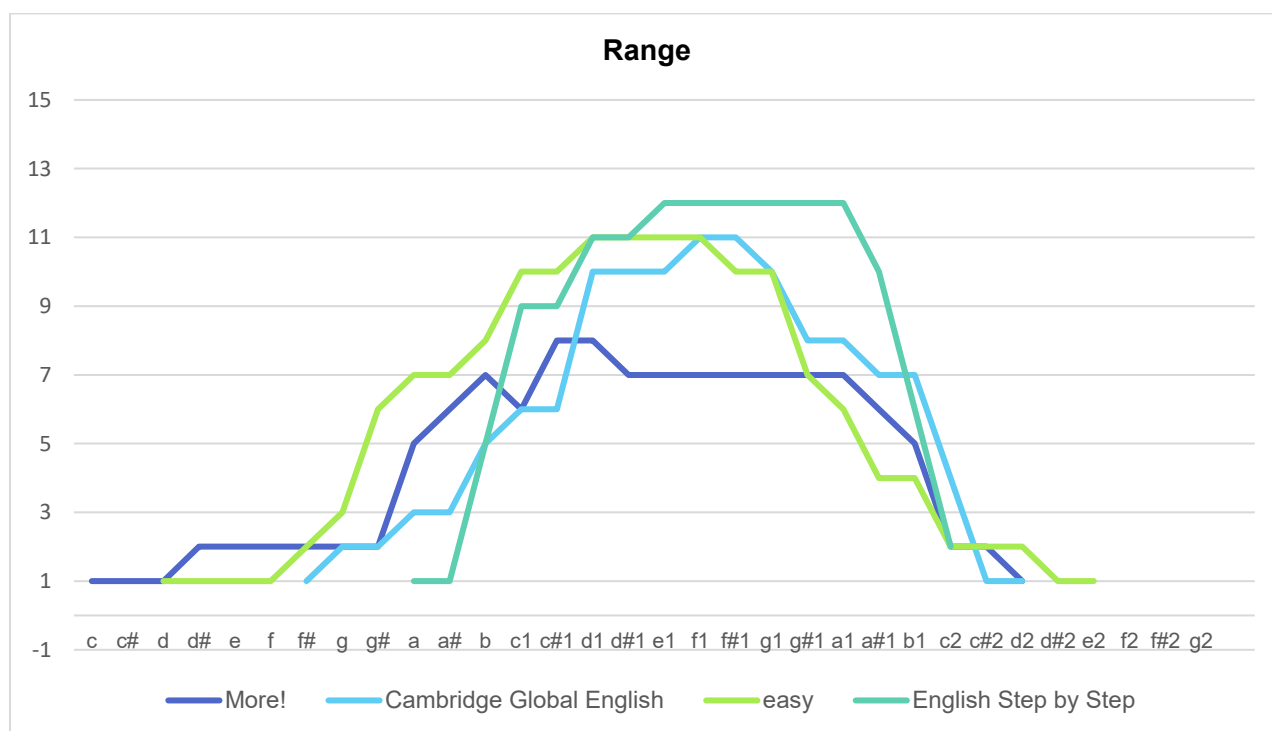


Figure 37 Vocal range of the songs by textbook

Not only do the textbooks' songs' vocal ranges differ from each other, but also the occurring notes' distribution. *English Step by Step* has a smaller range and uses the notes within more often, which results in a higher graph in this presentation (Figure 37). In contrast, *More!* has a wider vocal range and also the notes' distribution is wider and more regular, which results in a quite flat line. *easy* and *Cambridge Global English* approximate a Gaussian Bell Curve – their songs mostly stay in a middle register and only more rarely do songs with higher or lower notes occur.

In the following four figures, the differences within the ranges' distribution can be observed. The line once again represents the songs' vocal range distribution across songs – a high line indicates that a note is within many songs' range. The coloured area beneath the line encompasses 68% of the notes within the songs' ranges of one textbook. It can be seen that *More!* not only has a bigger range than the other textbooks but also the main area in which 68% of the ranges' notes are is bigger, spanning from

f# to a#1, which is much wider than the range of the other textbooks. *easy* and *English Step by Step* have quite similar main ranges, spanning from b to g#1 (*English Step by Step*) and from a# to g#1 (*easy*). *Cambridge Global English*'s main range is much smaller, spanning only from d1 to a#1, and also a bit higher than the other textbooks' ranges.

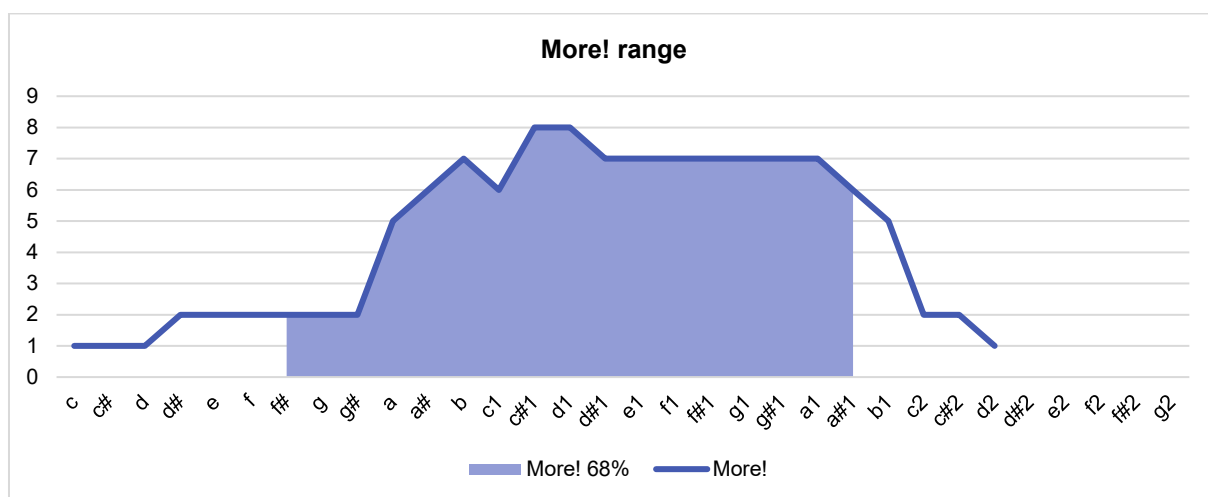


Figure 38 *More!* range

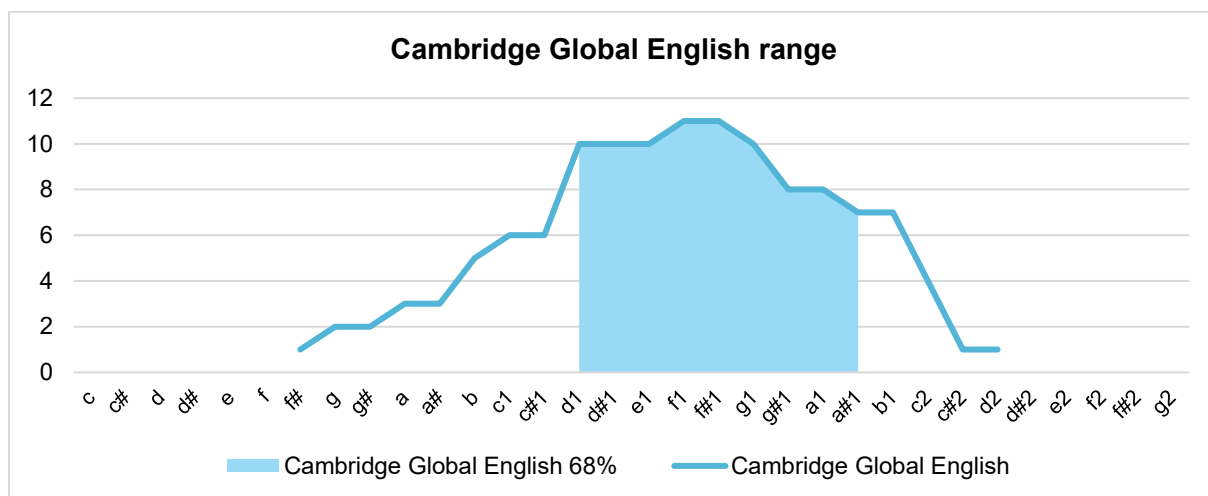


Figure 39 *Cambridge Global English* range

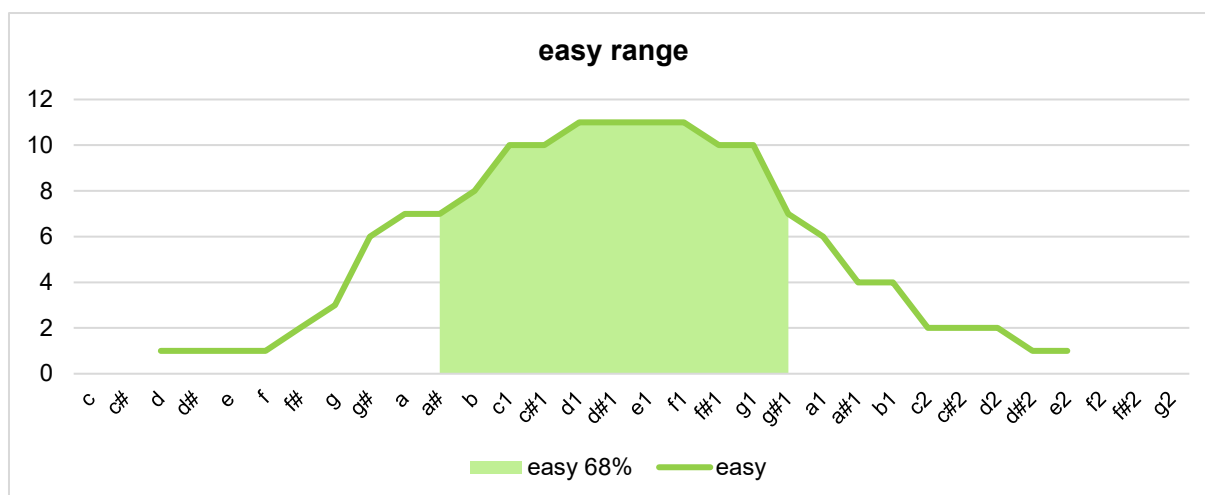


Figure 40 easy range

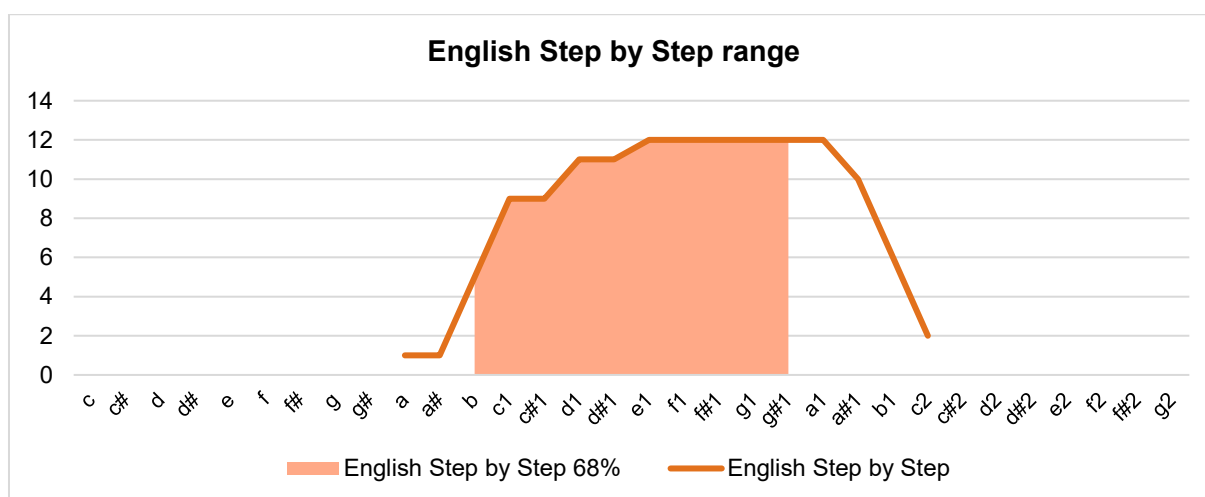


Figure 41 English Step by Step range

5.16. (Audio) quality

Under audio quality, several aspects are subsumed. On the one hand, the quality of the song's features and musical performance with aspects like intonation, timing, text meaning and instruments are analysed; on the other hand, if the song can be sung in lessons in various ways – with playback and in the original version.

The two textbooks by Helbling show similar results. The songs are recorded with real instruments and native speaker singers. There are no quality issues in *More!* and only two small details in *English Step by Step*: In the song "Where are my pets" (*English Step by Step* 2022: 41), there are some intonation issues with the singer, and in "A great weekend" (*English Step by Step* 2022: 111), the word stress is on the wrong syllable in the words *feather* and *clever*. In the future, the students might have difficulties acquiring the words' correct pronunciation, if they hear it wrong several

times. The singers' accents, however, are native and can support the students' pronunciation. The music itself is of quality: it is produced with real instruments by skilled musicians. The two textbooks' songs can also be sung by the students alone because playback tracks are available.

In *Cambridge Global English*, three songs have room for improvement. The "Alphabet song" (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 20) is sung by a singer with an extremely airy voice, which is not a good and healthy example for the students' voice development. In unit three, the students have to write their own verses for the song "If you're happy and you know it" (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 49), but they cannot sing them with music, since no playback tracks are available for this textbook's songs. Thus, the students would have to sing their own verses without music – which can be quite intimidating and also the students might enjoy singing with musical accompaniment more. The last song with quality issues is "I am" (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 10). In this song several quality issues can be detected. Firstly, the singer intonates very poorly – at the beginning of the song, it is not even clear if the song is major or minor. Secondly, the timing is not exact which makes it hard to sing along. Thirdly, there is no logical structure of verse or chorus to the song, but it is more an accumulation of grammatically correct examples of subject pronouns. And fourthly, the text does not make any sense:

I say
I am, I am, I am.
What about you?
What about you?

I say
You are, you are, you are
What about her?
What about her?

I say
She is, she is, she is.
What about him?
What about him?

I say
He is, he is, he is.
What about me?
What about me?

I say
I am, I am, I am.
What about it?
What about it?

I say
It is, it is, it is.
What about them?
What about them?

I say
They are, they are, they
are.

What about us?
What about us?

I say
We are, we are, we are.

What about you?
What about you?

I say
I am, I am, I am

(*Cambridge Global English 2023*:
10)

The lack of meaning in the lyrics reduces the whole song's quality drastically. Also, the lyrics are quite difficult to remember, since the personal pronouns and their forms of be all have one syllable and are, therefore, interchangeable. From a rhythmical standpoint, it would be as possible to sing "I say, you am, you am, you am. What about them? [...] I say he is [...]" as the original text. However, then the connection between the personal pronouns, and between the personal pronouns and the verbs would be lost. All in all, this song is more like a grammar chant without much meaning than a song.

easy's songs' music is mostly devised by digital instruments and it sounds like hardly any, if any, real musicians recorded the music on actual instruments. On the one hand, this leads to a cold and impersonal sound, on the other hand, some finer musical aspects like getting slower towards the end or letting the instruments ring after having played the last chord, are nearly impossible to imitate. This might be the reason why several songs end very abruptly, for example, "Mira's magic school bag" (*easy 2022*: 27), "If you're happy and you know it" (*easy 2022*: 37) and "Monsters' hide and seek" (*easy 2022*: 87). Also, in the latter, there are five verses in the textbook, but only two are sung. And because there is no playback version, the students cannot choose which verses they want to sing. The reason for the additional verses is not entirely clear. In "The monster's body shop" (*easy 2022*: 47) timing is not exact and the intonation of the whistling is not on point.

But the most salient problem with the songs in *easy* is that they are not recorded by English native speakers. There are some major pronunciation mistakes in the songs, such as missing aspiration in plosives and voiced instead of unvoiced sounds, for example, "bool" instead of "pool" ("A crazy day", *easy 2022*: 107), "burble" instead of

“purple” (“The monster’s body shop”, *easy* 2022: 47), or “chazez” instead of “chases” (“A crazy day”, *easy* 2022: 107). On other instances, a consonant should be voiced and it is pronounced unvoiced, for example in “frogs” (“Mira’s magic school bag”, *easy* 2022: 27). Additionally, /æ/ is often pronounced as /e/, for example in “cat” or “bat” (“Parrots like carrots”, *easy* 2022: 79). Moreover, the singers try to imitate an American accent with some words and a British one with others within the same song, resulting in a mix of accents; for example in “The monster’s body shop” the word “body shop” is pronounced with an American accent and the word “arms” with a British one (*easy* 2022: 47).

6. Discussion

For a better overview of the criteria established in the framework of analysis, they are summarised in a table at the end of each subchapter in this discussion. If the criterion is fully fulfilled, the field in the table is marked in green, if it is partly fulfilled, it is orange, and if it is not sufficiently fulfilled, it is red. With this colour coding, a clear and quick overview of this study’s results is provided. Additionally, an overview of all the criteria and their fulfilment is provided in the Conclusions

on page 112.

6.1. Provide i+1 input

The areas in focus in this thesis are, on the one hand, vocabulary and, on the other hand, grammar. The input provided is, of course, a song with its lyrics. In this section, it is discussed in how far this input provides i+1 grammar and vocabulary so that students are not overwhelmed, but also stimulated enough to be able to learn (Krashen 1983: 43).

Concerning vocabulary, the results show that *English Step by Step* included the most vocabulary items from the current unit’s wordlist, with a total of 21.28% of the wordlists’ items occurring in the songs. The lowest number here is 2.5% in *Cambridge Global English*.

All four textbooks focus more on the current unit’s vocabulary list than on the previous one, as in all four textbooks, more vocabulary items from the current than from the previous unit occur in the songs. The lowest number, again, is exhibited by *Cambridge Global English*. Only less than one per cent of the previous unit’s vocabulary items are included in the song of the following unit. A number this low might even be attributed

to chance rather than a deliberate inclusion of certain vocabulary items. However, also the remaining textbooks' numbers of recycled vocabulary from the previous units are very low, ranging between around two and three per cent of the previous vocabulary lists.

The number of vocabulary items from the current and previous vocabulary list per song might highlight the low number of recycled vocabulary items more clearly: In *More!* and *Cambridge Global English* on average only around four words from the current unit's vocabulary list are included per song. In *easy* and *English Step by Step*, the number is quite high with seven and twelve recycled words. The number of vocabulary items from the previous unit, however, is drastically low for every analysed textbook with just around one single vocabulary item from the previous unit's wordlist on average. As shown in the literature, vocabulary that is sung, leads to a better text recall, and more awareness of structural elements of a text, for example, its rhythm and line breaks, compared to spoken vocabulary (Wallace 1994: 1475). Additionally, songs support learners to chunk language into phrases which can be retrieved more easily (Ludke 2010: 307). However, of course, this only works if the vocabulary is actually included in songs. In the four analysed textbooks, the numbers of recycled vocabulary are extremely and, thus, the songs' potential for vocabulary learning and revising is not realised.

Even if vocabulary items are included deliberately in the songs, and this can be doubted since the numbers are extremely low, it can be said with near certainty that there was not an intentional *focus* on recycling vocabulary from the previous unit by the textbooks' authors. The songs, thus, only serve as a very limited source for recycling previous units' vocabulary, although encountering vocabulary items over spaced intervals is key to being able to store them in long-term memory (Thornbury 2002: 24).

The lack of focus on previous units' vocabulary might be explained by the fact that one unit usually revolves around one overall topic and, especially in the first year of learning, learned vocabulary consists to a great extent of nouns, and more specifically, of vocabulary needed to communicate about topics students are familiar with, as is specified in the Austrian curriculum for AHS concerning all four skills. It is specifically mentioned that key topics should involve content clusters, such as family, friends, daily routines or school (Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung

2024a: 65–66). As a consequence, students learn words and phrases, especially nouns (for example food: sausage, cabbage, milk, honey...) from one word family in one unit. The next unit's topic might be different with hardly any vocabulary overlap, for example, the topic school with words and phrases, such as teacher, Maths, English, lesson, subject, or break. At the language level the textbooks under scrutiny are, it is difficult and also not necessary to combine such topics with one another. As a result, vocabulary from the previous unit might not fit logically into a song, because the topics might be too different. However, there are also other word classes, such as adjectives, verbs, or adverbs that can be used more flexibly and that could potentially be integrated into a broad range of songs. These chances, again, are not taken by any of the textbooks. It would make quite a lot of sense to learn such words that can be used in a broad variety of contexts with songs, as singing improves memory considerably (Ludke 2010: 84). The learners' ability to express themselves could be increased considerably by learning such flexibly usable words fast and well.

To analyse if the songs in the four textbooks provide $i+1$ input, it is calculated how high the number of known words in the songs is on average or, in other words, how high the percentage of the lyrics is that are not included in the vocabulary list, since the new vocabulary can be found in the vocabulary list, while the vocabulary that is thought to be known is not included there. *More!*, *Cambridge Global English* and *easy* range between 93% (*easy*) and 97.5% (*Cambridge Global English*) with *More!* in the middle with around 96% of words in the lyrics that the students are familiar with. *English Step by Step*'s lyrics include a lot more unknown words than the other textbooks, resulting in a percentage of 86.73 of known words in a song on average. If these numbers are compared to the proposed number of 95% of words of a text students should be familiar with to be able to comprehend a text (Richards 2015: 318), it is clear that *English Step by Step* is nearly ten per cent points below that goal. This means that the lyrics of *English Step by Step*'s songs are not comprehensible for the students without learning at least some new vocabulary items that occur in the song first. *easy* includes several words that are not known to the students, as well, which makes preteaching necessary to foster the students' understanding of the lyrics.

The high number of unknown vocabulary items, however, can also be seen positively. It means that the song works with the unit's focus vocabulary and gives students a chance to revise it. Since the songs are never on the first page in the textbooks, but in *English Step by Step* the unit's song is on each unit's fourth and in *easy* mostly on the

sixth page out of ten, they are not meant to be sung at the beginning of the unit without any preparation, but in the second, third or fourth lesson of a unit, when the students usually have already worked with some key vocabulary and do not have to learn the unit's vocabulary items from scratch. The song might be meant to function as a vocabulary revision and mnemonic that helps students to learn the vocabulary more thoroughly. This strategy only works if there is enough focus vocabulary in the song, though, otherwise, the students might understand it well, but the learning goal of vocabulary revision cannot be fulfilled.

In *Cambridge Global English* more than 97% of the lyrics are known to the students which makes the lyrics very easy to understand. On the other hand, this means that it could be argued that the lyrics in *Cambridge Global English* might not be challenging enough for the students to support vocabulary learning, because nearly all of the words are known beforehand. If the goal is not exclusively comprehension but also a gain in vocabulary knowledge, it is clear that not all vocabulary should be known, but there should be some new vocabulary items that the students have the chance to learn or revise. If this is not the case and the students know all the vocabulary items in a song beforehand, the song only supports vocabulary recycling, but not vocabulary learning.

Summarising the data from the results section concerning grammar learning, it can be said that in all songs in all four textbooks, not nearly all grammatical aspects learned in the units are mentioned in the corresponding songs. The highest number of 33% of grammatical aspects from the current unit mentioned without and 60% with all choruses in the songs is exhibited by *easy*, the lowest percentage is that of *More!* with 25% without and 30% with all choruses. This means that even when regarding the highest number of 60%, there are still 40% of grammatical aspects that are not mentioned in the song of the unit in which they are introduced to the students. The chance for revising new grammar and providing the students with correct examples of the new grammar aspect is, thus, not fully realised. This can be considered a missed opportunity since the literature suggests that grammar learning can be facilitated by songs and singing (Busse et al. 2021: 9). These results are not satisfying, especially as often it would not be too difficult to include basic aspects, like present simple, plural nouns, indefinite articles or adverbs, that are taught in the first year of learning English.

The chance of revising the previous unit's grammar is not realised by the textbooks, either, since not more than about one-third of the grammar aspects from the previous

units are mentioned in the songs. In *easy*, even as much as 87% of grammatical aspects from the previous units remain unmentioned in the next units' songs. Interestingly, the data also show that if a grammatical aspect is in focus in a song, then it is mentioned excessively – often more than ten times. This could be understood as a deliberate inclusion of said aspects with the intended goal of practising it. In every textbook, there are five such aspects, except for *easy* which only includes three aspects in such a high frequency in its songs. Although a maximum of five aspects means that fewer than half of the songs seem to include a grammar focus, one must also consider that other aspects of language learning can and should be practised with songs, such as vocabulary. The idea might be that some songs might, therefore, focus more on grammar, while others may support vocabulary learning.

In total, it can be said that the casual inclusion of the unit's and previous unit's grammatical aspect is not yet fully realised by any of the textbooks, even though there are also songs, in which one grammatical aspect is in focus and excessively practised. However, about one-third of the songs do not include any grammar focus, neither from the current nor from the previous unit. This indicates that songs' potential for grammar learning that is suggested by Busse et al (2021: 9) and Ludke (2018: 377) compared to learning grammar in other ways is not fulfilled in the four analysed coursebooks.

The table below (Table 11) shows that songs are not yet regarded as valuable sources for vocabulary as well as grammar learning in Austrian English textbooks. Especially in *More!* and *Cambridge Global English* songs' potential for grammar and vocabulary learning is seemingly not taken into consideration, since they mostly consist of grammar and vocabulary that have been learned at least two units before and items of both categories from the current or previous unit are not included in a number worth mentioning. *easy* focuses mostly on the current unit's grammar and vocabulary and offers a sensible percentage of known input that supports learning and revising vocabulary. A similar approach is followed by *English Step by Step* which also provides a sensible number of vocabulary items for revision in its songs, and also includes a relatively high number of the current unit's vocabulary list. It seems that the textbooks do not realise the chance to include vocabulary and grammar that needs to be learned or revised in the units' songs, although it has been found in research that vocabulary and grammar are more easily learned in learning settings that involve songs (eg. Ludke 2018: 377; Wallace 1994: 1478).

Table 11 Overview songs provide $i+1$ input

	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Current unit's wordlist	✗	✗	—	✓
Last unit's wordlist	✗	✗	✗	✗
% known input	—	✗	✓	✓
Current unit's grammar	✗	✗	—	✗
Previous unit's grammar	✗	—	✗	—

6.2. Support student engagement with the language

How songs are embedded into unit varies considerably in different textbooks. Because in *More!* there are no additional activities for the songs whatsoever, the only way students are meant to be engaged is by asking them to sing along. However, there are no activities that would invite the students to engage further with the song's vocabulary or grammar, nor are there any suggestions for training skills, such as speaking or writing. The songs in *More!*, thus, might serve for incidental, but, not for intentional vocabulary or grammar learning. Moreover, they might not even be fit for that, considering the fact that the students might have already practised the song's vocabulary in other vocabulary exercises, since the songs are, except for the first unit, never on the unit's first page. As such, the songs might pose more of an incidental vocabulary *revision*. Because there are no exercises at all, there are also no exercises in connection to the songs that could nudge students towards paying attention to and noticing vocabulary items, or that invite students to cognitively engage with them, which would facilitate vocabulary learning (Thornbury 2002: 24-27, 109)). Students are not given the chance to personalise vocabulary in focus, although this is of utmost importance, as Gerngroß, Puchta and Thornbury state (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 7–8). Interestingly, Gerngroß and Puchta are co-authors of the first edition of *More!*, and Puchta is still part of the updated version of the textbook, but they did not invite the students to “own” the vocabulary and put it into personal use in connection to the songs in their textbook (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 8). This does not mean that vocabulary learning generally is neglected in *More!* since there are several other vocabulary exercises, but

it could be said that the *songs*' potential for vocabulary learning has not been fully exhausted.

The other textbooks contain in total between 14 and 26 activities connected to the songs per textbook, each with a focus on various skills that ensures that the students engage with the vocabulary in various meaningful and personalised ways, eg. "Describe two people using as many opposites as possible" (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 132). The students are also asked to pay attention to the lyrics' features, eg. "Circle the letters with a long o sound." (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 105). Additionally to incidental vocabulary learning that might occur without the teacher's or textbook's deliberate focus, intentional vocabulary learning is supported by providing appropriate exercises, such as, "Find these things [drawings below] on the feelings boat" (in the drawing provided) (*English Step by Step* 2022: 31). Other exercises oblige the students to engage cognitively more deeply, and connect the vocabulary to personal preferences (Thornbury 2002: 24), eg. "Write your own hobby time song about the hobbies you like" (*easy* 2022: 137). Thus, vocabulary learning can be supported and the words can be retrieved more easily (Thornbury 2002: 24–26). Activities like these also have a high involvement load, which according to Laufer and Hulstijn results in better retaining rates (Laufer and Hulstijn 2001: 14–17).

Each textbook, except for *More!*, employs different additional activities with various foci. *English Step by Step* mostly focuses on vocabulary and speaking but there are no writing tasks; *Cambridge Global English* mostly uses vocabulary, writing and phonological exercises but there are no speaking tasks; and *easy* focuses on writing and vocabulary. However, none of the textbooks include grammar tasks connected to songs, which is why they are coloured orange in the table below (Table 12). Again, similar to vocabulary learning, it can be argued that the students can *implicitly* learn and revise grammatical structures by singing songs since between 30% and 60% of the unit's grammatical aspects are included in the same unit's song, and between 13% and 36% of the previous unit's grammatical aspects can be found. Although these aspects are part of the songs' lyrics, they are not readopted in any additional activities, and thus, the opportunity for a deeper understanding and thorough explicit practice of grammatical structures in connection to songs is not given by any of the textbooks.

In summary, it can be said that the textbooks under scrutiny except for *More!* make use of the songs to support student engagement with the vocabulary in various, sensible

ways, with different focus points, however, none of the textbooks realise the chance of practising grammar through songs.

Table 12 Overview songs support student engagement

	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Additional activities				

6.3. Are easily learned and remembered

The songs in the four textbooks all follow a repetitive structure, as Wallace recommended (1994: 1481). Most songs apply the typical verse-chorus structure in which verse and chorus are sung in turn. This is the structure that most pop songs employ and with which students are familiar. Only some songs in *Cambridge Global English* do not have a chorus. They are well-known children's songs that create repetition in other ways, for example, by lyrics that only minimally change from verse to verse (see underlined words).

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.

If you're happy and you know it,

And you really want to show it,

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.

If you're excited and you know it, shout 'Hurray!'.

If you're excited and you know it, shout 'Hurray!'.

If you're excited and you know it,

And you really want to show it,

If you're excited and you know it, shout 'Hurray!'.

[...] (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 49)

The fact that none of the songs has a bridge – a contrasting third song part beside verse and chorus that is usually just sung once – is connected to their limited length. On the one hand, short songs do not necessarily need a bridge because the listeners do not know the chorus and verse well enough from hearing them two or three times to become bored of them already, on the other hand, a missing bridge makes the songs

shorter. Their shortness renders the songs quickly learnable and it also reduces the amount of song parts and text a student has to learn to be able to sing the song. Without the bridge, the song only consists of verses and choruses. So in total, the students have to learn two melodies – one for the verse and one for the chorus, - the chorus' lyrics and the verses' lyrics, but not an additional melody and text for the bridge. Especially the choruses are designed to be learned quickly since they occur unchanged several times in a song – on average between 1.33 (*Cambridge Global English*) and 3.75 times (*English Step by Step*) a song. In *English Step by Step*, the chorus is on average not only sung more often than all verses together, but in three-quarters of all cases, the song starts with the chorus, which highlights it and makes it even more memorable.

Both approaches, focusing on the chorus of a song and repeating it more often, or stressing the verses with repetitive lyrics, have different implications. If the chorus is repeated often, and it is the part the song begins with, then it might stick in the students' heads better and they might remember the chorus' lyrics well because the same vocabulary is repeated several times (Thornbury 2002: 24). In the same amount of time, more language can be introduced to the students in verses than in choruses (since the chorus usually has the same lyrics throughout the song), but they might need more repetitions to know the whole or parts of the song by heart. A song that focuses on verses rather than choruses, thus, might take the students longer to learn but also might incorporate more language the students then know well or even by heart.

Also, the rhyme scheme can facilitate learning a text. Similar to rhythm, a rhyme scheme offers additional information that can aid students in recalling a word. If a student, for example, knows the first part of a line but forgets the last word, they might remember said word once they realise it should rhyme with another part of the text they can recall (Wallace 1994: 1475).

In *More!* and *easy* all the songs follow a rhyme scheme and especially *easy*'s lyrics have to be highlighted because five of the eleven songs only focus on one rhyme scheme, while in the other textbooks, there are only two songs each that have one single rhyme scheme. The fact that only one rhyme scheme is applied indicates that the songs' lyrics can easily be learned because the rhyming pattern is never broken (Ludke 2010: 307). Most songs break their main rhyme scheme at some point, which

results in two or three rhyme schemes within one song. This can be a sign of carelessness, but it can also indicate the desire to include certain vocabulary items that might break the pattern. On the one hand, this means that more language, and especially focus vocabulary, might be included in a song, but on the other hand, the broken pattern might make it more difficult for students to remember said vocabulary item.

The rhyme schemes generally are mostly kept short and easy: the five most used schemes all have four lines and show very typical patterns: abcb, aabb, abab, aaba and aaaa. Together they make up more than 70% of the occurring rhymes. This simplicity and straightforwardness supports text learning because the patterns can be understood without having to think about them (Ludke et al. 2014: 42). In three of these schemes, there are no unrhymed words: aabb, abab and aaaa. The two patterns abcb and aaba, also include words that are not rhymed (a and c in the first pattern, and b in the second one). The reason might be that again a compromise between vocabulary inclusion and memorability had to be found. The unrhymed words enable the lyricists to include the unit's vocabulary even if some words cannot be included in the rhyme scheme sensibly. However, the unrhymed word might be more difficult to retrieve because there is no additional information through rhyme connecting this word to the verse's other words (Ludke 2010: 307). *Cambridge Global English's* rhyme schemes are often more complex and, thus, more difficult to remember. Also, in said textbooks, there are some songs that do not rhyme at all, but are organised in another way.

Longer stanzas, consisting of five or more lines, might be perceived as unusual because, in the European classical context, music is perceived as harmonic and logical if it is structured in fours and eights: eight bars often form a sentence or a period, consisting of four bars question-phrase plus four bars answer-phrase. Those eight bars then are connected to the next eight bars in a similar manner (Amon and Gruber 2011: 510–515). Because this is how we are musically socialised, our brain recognises the way music is organised and is, therefore, satisfied. Because five stanzas do not fit into the musical patterns of fours and eights, the music has to be accommodated which might result in musical tension. This kind of musical tension is often needed to make a song interesting, but it can also have the effect that it is perceived as strange because our brain does not realise how the music is organised. The recognised organisation of music does not only regulate liking or disliking but more importantly, the ability to

remember it (Amon and Gruber 2011: 547). Lyrics with four rhymed lines might, therefore, be more easily memorable, which is more often the case in *More!*, *easy* and (partly) *English Step by Step*.

All in all, the important indicator for determining if the lyrics are well learnable is *if* the song rhymes and only to a lesser extent how many rhyme schemes there are. Therefore, the songs in *easy* and *More!* can be seen as easily learnable because the lyrics are always rhymed. Also, *English Step by Step* exhibits mostly rhymed songs except for the alphabet song (see p. 70). *Cambridge Global English* shows the most songs with no rhyme scheme, which might then be the most difficult to learn, but still, it does exhibit rhyme schemes.

Concerning word stress and sentence stress, there are no limitations in *More!*, *Cambridge Global English* and *easy*. In *English Step by Step*, however, two words are stressed on the wrong syllable in the song “A great weekend” (*English Step by Step* 2022: 111). The words *feather* and *clever* are stressed on the second, rather than on the first syllable to make them fit the text’s iambic pattern. According to Wallace (1994: 1481–1483) the stress pattern of the text should be in line with the rise and fall of the melody. This is the case, but the correct word stress is a presupposition for learning new vocabulary (Richards 2015: 337). Richards even goes as far as to say that comprehension can break down if the word stress is on the wrong syllable (Richards 2015: 378). Comprehension should, of course, be maximised concerning song features that can be controlled, such as sound quality or accent. Especially in the students’ first year of learning English, they are only expected to understand the target language under perfect-like conditions. Incorrect stress patterns, therefore, should be prevented as much as possible.

To summarise, the songs’ structure is simple and supports vocabulary and grammar learning in all textbooks. All songs apart from a few exceptions are rhymed. Cambridge Global English’s lyrics do not necessarily always rhyme and additionally, the rhymes are more complex than in the other textbooks. Word stress is generally correct most of the times, but there are some instances in *English Step by Step* in which the word stress is incorrect. Although this only occurs in one song, the corresponding field in the table is still marked orange, as there should not be any mistakes in learning material. Otherwise, students might be confused or hindered from learning the correct pronunciation of said words.

Table 13 Overview songs are easily learned and remembered

	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Rhyme	✓	—	✓	✓
Song structure	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stressed words	✓	✓	✓	—

6.4. Can be sung by the students in a healthy way

The most important criterion for determining if students can healthily sing a song is its vocal range. As mentioned before, it is quite difficult to determine a child's possible and healthy vocal range, because there are great differences between children who are trained singers, who sing regularly, and children who hardly ever sing. The more children sing, the bigger their vocal range. Students who can access their mixed voice have a tessitura of about d1 to f2, but can also access their chest voice as low as a. Minimally trained children might only sing in their chest voice ranging from a to e1. As mentioned in the framework for analysis, a middle ground could be to only use songs that do not exceed d2 to not strain untrained children too much (Mohr 2017: 5–6).

Figure 42 shows that the textbooks' songs are much lower than a child can healthily sing. The lowest notes are included in *More!* (1.), followed by *easy* (3.), *Cambridge Global English* (2.) and *English Step by Step* (4.). *English Step by Step* is the only textbook whose songs are all within a healthy vocal range of children on the lower side, all the others are partly too low to be sung by children. On the higher side of the range, the songs fit the range of trained children nicely with none of the songs being higher than can be sung by children. Also, the range of a-d2 is only exceeded by *easy* by two semitones.

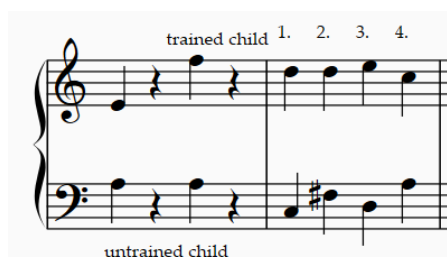


Figure 42 Song ranges of all four textbooks

To exclude outliers and only rarely used notes, also the main singing area has been analysed, in which the middle two-thirds of each song's range is included. In the results section it was shown that 68% of the songs' ranges of *More!* span from f# to a#1 (1.), that of *Cambridge Global English* from d1 to a#1 (2.), that of *easy* from a# to g#1 (3.) and that of *English Step by Step* from b to g#1 (4.) (Figure 43).

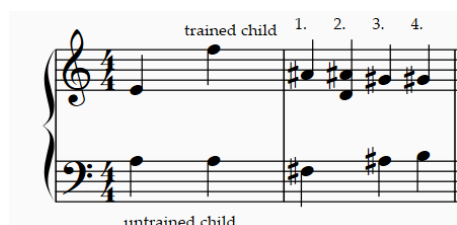


Figure 43 68% ranges of the four textbooks

In Figure 43 it can be seen that the lower ends of the 68%-ranges are too low in *More!*, but not in *Cambridge Global English*, *easy* and *English Step by Step*. The upper sides of the 68% ranges are all within the range of a trained child and also within the compromised range of a to d2.

Summarising, it can be said that all textbooks but *English Step by Step* include songs that are too low for 10-11-year-old students to sing. Similar results were also reported by Gortan-Carlin and Dobravac in their textbook analysis. Also in the textbooks they observed in their study, the songs were too low for the target learners' age (Gortan-Carlin and Dobravac 2021: 171). Especially *More!*'s songs are very low, as they also surpass the lower limit of a in the 68% range, not only in the general range. Concerning untrained children, it can be said that none of the textbooks' songs fit their range. But it might not be sensible to set the goal that even children with zero training can sing all songs, because then other vital aspects of language teaching, such as variety that motivates students (Hancock 2000: 7) might be neglected. Also, a very low range might get into conflict with other aspects of the framework for analysis developed in this thesis: students might not like songs that do not exhibit a reasonable range. It might also be difficult to find authentic songs that are enjoyed by students in exactly this voice range. The lesser evil of the two options – including songs that not every student can sing well, or only including songs with a very limited range – seems to be to include songs with a wider range that students enjoy singing, even though they might not succeed in doing so in an artistic way, but some notes have to be left out as they are too high or low for the students. As long as the students use their voices healthily, they can only profit from the challenge.

This healthy use, however, has to be demonstrated by teachers and the singers on the audio tracks. In *More!*, *easy* and *English Step by Step*, the songs' and singers' performances are of high musical quality and can function as good examples (Table 14). In *Cambridge Global English* there is one song sung by a singer with a very airy voice ("Alphabet song", *Cambridge Global English* 2023: 20) which cannot function as a role model, as it does not show the students the need to support their voices with their bodies in order to sing clearly, reasonably loudly and well intonated.

Table 14 Overview songs can be sung by the students in a healthy way

	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Within a healthy vocal range				
models				

6.5. Are well known by students

It is vital that students know a song well, as a song that has not been sufficiently learned might negatively influence vocabulary learning (Baills et al. 2021: 399). To prevent such negative effects, a song used in English lessons should be known well. There are two aspects to students knowing a song. Either they know the song before it is used in the ELT classroom or they get to know it well during the English course. Both approaches result in the students knowing the song well in the end, and them being able to sing it and, as a result, profit from it.

Although knowing a song well is one of the key aspects of being able to remember its lyrics and, thus, its vocabulary and grammatical structures (Baills et al. 2021: 399), it is only partly possible to analyse this aspect theoretically in textbooks. Simply looking at what is included in textbooks does not tell us anything about how the materials are used in the ELT classroom. However, what can be gathered from the textbooks is, if the songs could theoretically be known to the students, since only adapted songs can, in fact, be known prior to learning English at school, since original songs are usually not played on radio stations or found on streaming platforms. Original songs, therefore, must be practised more thoroughly, if students should be able to sing them well because they have no prior knowledge of them.

More! and *English Step by Step* both do not include adapted songs. Most students, therefore, will not know the songs before their English education at school. *Easy* includes the famous children's songs "If you're happy and you know it" (*easy* 2022: 37) and the melody of "Head and shoulders" (*easy* 2022: 29). Both are not only popular in English-speaking countries but are also well-known in Austria. When teaching these two songs, teacher can already build on prior knowledge of the melody and probably of the lyrics. This way, time can be saved and chances are higher that the students will learn the song to such an extent that they can remember its vocabulary and grammar structures. The rest of the eleven songs, however, is original and must, therefore, be learned from scratch.

In *Cambridge Global English*, the majority of songs are adapted; only three of the ten songs are original. But not all songs might be known to the students. "There's a cricket on the floor" (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 90) has never been encountered by the author before, as well as "The green grass grew all around and around" (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 104). This can be regarded as an indicator of the two songs' unpopularity in Austria. The song "We're opposites" is adapted, yes, but it is a pedagogical song which means that it is usually not heard anywhere in public or private. As a result, for learning some of the songs in *Cambridge Global English* the teachers cannot draw on prior knowledge, although the songs are adapted.

In all four textbooks, the vast majority of the included songs is most probably not known to students in Austria which means that they have to learn the lyrics as well as the melody well to be able to benefit from the music and lyrics. It is then the teacher's responsibility to practise a song often enough for the students to be able to profit from it. The textbooks, however, can support learning the song by providing playback tracks. On these tracks, the lead singers are omitted and the students have to show that they can sing the song themselves. Playback tracks are included in *More!* and *English Step by Step* but not in *easy* and *Cambridge Global English*. Although tracks with just the musical accompaniment are not necessary to learn a song, they can function as an extra students might enjoy. Furthermore, they might feel motivated to master the challenge of singing a song without the lead singers' help and to show that they can sing it on their own.

To sum up, *Cambridge Global English* includes the most adapted songs, since all but three songs are adapted (Table 15). *easy* also implements two adapted songs. Both

textbooks, however, do not come with playback tracks, unlike *More!* and *English Step by Step*. The two latter textbooks, in contrast, do not feature any adapted songs. All in all, the songs in *Cambridge Global English* might, therefore, be learned the fastest, followed by *easy*. *More!* and *English Step by Step* do feature playback tracks, but those are not necessary for learning a song in the first place, but might mostly motivate students to sing a song. These results differ from a previous textbook analysis study by Bergestuen. In the first grade (primary school) Norwegian English textbooks she analysed the majority of songs was traditional. Only 14 of the included 81 songs did not have any connection to traditional songs (Bergestuen 2022: 58–59). One reason for this difference might be the textbooks' target groups. While the textbooks studied by Bergestuen were focused on first grade students, the textbooks analysed in this study are targeted at 5th grade students. There might be a tendency to include more traditional songs in textbooks for younger students, as older students might be more interested in singing 'cool' and modern songs, while younger ones might not care for modernity so much.

Table 15 Overview songs are well known by students

	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>Easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Adapted/ original				
Playback				

6.6. Fit the lesson

As stated previously, it is highly individual in what way a teacher uses a song in a lesson. Because of that, the only criterion in this thesis is if the unit's topic is reflected in the song, all other aspects are within the teacher's responsibility.

In all of the textbooks, the songs do indeed fit the unit's topics and can, therefore, without a lot of adaption be implemented into the lesson (Table 16). In the end, however, it is still the teacher's responsibility to use the song sensibly, for example, not to let the students sing a song with no or a different grammatical focus in between grammar drilling exercises. The song might, then, still serve as a relaxation exercise or to lower the students' Affective Filter (Engh 2013: 117), but the vocabulary or grammar that does occur in the song might not be noticed, let alone be learned if not

enough time and focus are devoted to it. The song's potential in such a case might not be fully realised.

Table 16 Overview songs fit the lesson

	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>Easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Song's topic fits the unit's topic				

6.7. Are liked by the students

Several factors could be identified that influence if students like a song. They are a variation of music genres and instruments, the singers' gender and whether the songs are in a major or minor key. It is important for students to like a song as they will only be willing to engage with the language if they like the input (Engh 2013: 117). Engagement, however, is one of the key aspects to learning vocabulary and grammar (Laufer and Hulstijn 2001: 14).

The greatest variety of music genres can be found in *easy*. There is only one genre (children's song) that is used twice, all others only occur once. This is followed by *More!* which exhibits five different music styles, if Rock and Pop genres are considered as general terms with subcategories, and *English Step by Step* with four main genres used. *Cambridge Global English* uses only three genres, namely Country, children's songs and Pop. This textbook also stands out because no subgenres of Pop or Rock can be found here. The songs within one genre are quite similar to each other, whereas in the other textbooks, there are various subgenres, like Pop Funk, Pop Doo Wop, Dance Pop, Trap Pop, Soft Rock or Rock/Soul, which render the songs more interesting and also more diverse from each other. The genres themselves fit the student's age and interests. The children's songs might be perceived as childish by some students, especially if they are juxtaposed with more modern Pop and Rock songs. Therefore, half of the songs in *Cambridge Global English* might be – being children's songs – found childish by some students.

Cambridge Global English is also the textbook that uses the fewest instruments. Apart from the band instruments electric guitar, electric bass, piano and drums, five other instruments can be heard. Among those, a focus is on string instruments, since there

is an acoustic guitar, a banjo and an acoustic bass. The instruments in *Cambridge Global English* are reminiscent of traditional songs, children's songs and rhythmic church music and, combined with the genre analysis results, it can be concluded that the songs in *Cambridge Global English* are quite traditional and could even be perceived as old-fashioned. However, what is positive in *Cambridge Global English* is the fact that nearly all instruments are recorded by actual instruments and not computer-generated.

easy exhibits a wide variety of instruments with a range of extra instruments that do not occur in other textbooks. This variety ensures that the songs remain interesting for the students. However, most of the instruments are not recorded by actual musicians on actual instruments, but digital sounds are used. This is an issue that diminishes the songs' overall quality since digital sounds cannot produce truly musical and affective melodies. Especially the abrupt endings reduce a song's quality.

English Step by Step relies on band instruments for most of their songs. There are only two songs in which there is no electric guitar and electric bass and in all of the songs there are drums. The remaining instruments consist of key instruments like Hammond organ and synthesizer, as well as string instruments, such as acoustic guitar and acoustic bass. There is also one extra instrument and a clap in one song. All in all, the variety seems fitting for the twelve songs, although the instrumental basis is mostly the same for all of the songs.

In *More!* in addition to the instruments mentioned for *English Step by Step*, there is also a banjo and a background choir in two songs. *More!*, thus, has the biggest variety of instruments.

In all of the four textbooks, there are both major and minor songs, but to different extents. Only one of the ten songs in *Cambridge Global English* is in minor, while in *easy* nearly half of the songs (five out of eleven) are in a minor key. In *English Step by Step*, one-fourth is in minor, and in *More!* one-third. This means that the vast majority is in a major key and only less than one-third in total is in a minor key. A change in keys brings variety and the songs differ more clearly from each other. Because the songs should instil positive emotions and motivation in the students (Richards 2015: 197) – a prerequisite for learning - it is clear that not too many of the songs should be in a minor key, because then they might be found depressing or too sad. This is why one-fourth

or third of the songs in a minor key can be regarded as enough to add variety without being perceived as sad or demotivating.

The four textbooks' songs each follow one specific ideal of how their songs should sound concerning the singers' gender and the use of a choir. Helbling's textbooks only use female and male soloists together with a choir, while *Cambridge Global English's* songs employ either female or male soloists or a choir. Only in *easy*, both patterns can be found. As already mentioned, the pattern of verses sung by soloists and the choruses by a choir invites the students to sing along, and follows the typical modern Pop song pattern. The other pattern, either soloists or a choir, can be regarded as more traditional. Especially a song just sung by a (children's) choir might give the students a feeling of being part of a children's choir, as being part of a common activity (Mithen 2007: 215), although, maybe they want to orient themselves more towards teenage Pop culture and distance themselves from "childish" primary school methods. In all the textbooks the songs are sung by male and female singers and no focus on one gender can be detected. Therefore, male and female students should be able to identify with the singers in the songs and feel invited to sing along.

Table 17 Overview songs are liked by the students

	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Genres	✓	—	✓	✓
Range of different songs/genres	✓	—	✓	✓
Instruments	✓	—	—	✓
Major/minor	✓	—	✓	✓
Gender	✓	✓	✓	✓
Choir	✓	—	✓	✓

6.8. Have good audio quality

The recordings are all professionally made in professional studios and are of high quality in general. However, in *easy* it can be heard that a lot of computer-generated digital sounds are used. This can be regarded as a quality issue, since it renders the music cold and impersonal as well as less flexible, for example at the end of a song.

Usually, the reason for the employment of purely digital sounds rather than recordings of actual musicians is a financial one. Of course, paying trained musicians to practise and record music usually costs more than using prefabricated digital sounds.

In regard to intonation, there are small but still perceivable issues in *English Step by Step* and *Cambridge Global English*. The latter contains the song “I am” (*Cambridge Global English* 2023: 10) which exhibits several quality issues, such as the lyrics, the singer’s intonation, timing and the general logic of the song. Additionally, in *Cambridge Global English*, there is one song sung by a singer with an extremely airy voice that does not make a good role model for singing. All in all, the singers in *Cambridge Global English* are not perfect but their performance is improvable. Also in *easy* there are some issues with timing and intonation concerning whistling but only minor ones and only in the song “The monster’s body shop” (*easy* 2022: 47). Those can be neglected. In *More!* there are no such issues.

The most important quality issue that can impede vocabulary learning is the singers’ accent. In *easy* there are a lot of pronunciation mistakes that derive from a lack of native speaker singers. Students who listen to a song with pronunciation mistakes might subconsciously imitate the problematic sounds and learn a word’s incorrect pronunciation. If songs can improve a student’s pronunciation, they can also worsen it by setting bad examples (Will and Reed 2010; Baills et al. 2021).

All in all, the songs’ quality is generally very high, but there are some minor issues in *Cambridge Global English*, *easy* and *English Step by Step*. The only textbook that does not exhibit any signs of lack of quality is *More!*.

Table 18 Overview songs have good audio quality

	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Recordings	✓	✓	✓	✓
Musicians/singers	✓	—	✓	—
Accent	✓	✓	—	✓
Instruments	✓	✓	—	✓

6.9. Consist of authentic material

The songs in *More!* as well as in *English Step by Step* are all composed specifically for the textbooks and none of the songs included are commonly known. Therefore, there are no authentic songs in both textbooks by the publisher Helbling. This is why they are both marked red in the table. Of course, this does not mean that the songs themselves are not good or might not have advantages in other areas, but if a teacher wants to use songs as a source for authentic language and authentic practices, then *More!*'s and *English Step by Step*'s songs are not an ideal choice.

Of *easy*'s eleven songs, two are adapted and therefore authentic songs from the English-speaking world. The songs are "If you're happy and you know it" (*easy* 2022: 37) and the popular children's song "Head and shoulders". The lyrics of the latter song have been adapted and now revolve around colours (*easy* 2022: 29). Although the vast majority of the songs are still original songs that are not authentic, an effort has been made to include at least two songs that are part of an English-speaking child's familiar world. *Cambridge Global English* includes not only the most songs among the four textbooks but there are also just two songs that are not authentic, as seven of the nine songs are adapted.

Authentic material can often be considered culturally rich (Engh 2013: 115) and songs in particular do not only provide an authentic text but also involve authentic behaviour because children from the English-speaking world might sing the same song in their childhood. Thus, the learners are immersed in the English culture. They do not only listen to or read the texts but they also produce the sounds when singing and engage in a meaningful and authentic activity. Furthermore, the songs in *Cambridge Global English* and *easy* can boost the students' motivation (Richards 2015: 458) since they know they are performing an authentic song and they might feel happy to be able to act like an L1 speaking child. *More!* and *English Step by Step* do not make use of the benefits of authentic materials concerning songs, *easy* does so in a limited fashion. Only *Cambridge Global English* provides the students with an authentic L1 experience by including an ample amount of authentic songs.

Table 19 Overview songs consist of authentic material

	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>Easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Original/ adapted				

7. Conclusions

7.1. Global evaluation of song-related criteria within the textbooks

In contrast to the tables in section 6, Table 20 provides an accumulated visualisation of the results for all criteria and all textbooks analysed. The colour-coded fields provide a visual overview of each textbook indicating the textbook's strengths and weaknesses in using and embedding songs. Their overall performance is calculated as a mean number in the following way: each red field is counted as three, each orange one as two, and each green field as one. The lower the mean number at the bottom of the table, the higher the textbook's performance.

English Step by Step with a total mean score of 1.48 is the textbook that supports vocabulary and grammar learning best concerning the criteria discussed in this analysis. It is followed by *easy* with a score of 1.60 and *More!* with 1.68. *Cambridge Global English* with a score of 1.84 is fourth in this ranking. The colours were distributed in the following way: 1-1.67 is green, 1.68-2.33 is orange, 2.34-3 is red. When considering only the categories regarding grammar and vocabulary input (Provide i+1 input) the ranking stays the same with the best results for *English Step by Step*, but the mean numbers are considerably lower. This means that there are many categories in which the four textbooks' songs can be regarded as useful for learning, but not concerning input for grammar and vocabulary learning.

Table 20 Summary of analysis

Statement	Criterion	<i>More!</i>	<i>Cambridge Global English</i>	<i>easy</i>	<i>English Step by Step</i>
Provide i+1 input	Current unit's wordlist				
	Last unit's wordlist				
	% known input				

	Current unit's grammar				
	Previous unit's grammar				
Support student engagement	Additional activities				
Are easily learned and remembered	Rhyme				
	Song structure				
	Stressed words				
Can be sung in a healthy way	Within a healthy vocal range				
	Rolemodels				
Are well known	Adapted/ original				
	Playback				
Fit the lesson	Song's topic fits unit's topic				
Are liked by students	Genres				
	Range of different songs/genres				
	Instruments				
	Major/minor				
	Gender				
	Choir				
Have good audio quality	Recordings				
	Musicians/singers				
	Accent				
	Instruments				
Consist of authentic material	Original/adapted				
Mean Total		1.68	1.84	1.60	1.48

					
Mean		2.8	2.8	2.2	2
Provide i+1 input					

It can be said that although *Cambridge Global English* provides the most authentic songs, they do not provide extended support for vocabulary and grammar learning, because the current and last unit's vocabulary as well as grammar is not included in the songs' lyrics enough for that. Also, its songs are quite traditional and might be perceived as childish by more advanced students, which is why they might not be well-liked by students.

More! also does not realise songs' potential for vocabulary and grammar learning, which is due to a lack of the current and previous unit's grammar and vocabulary. Additionally, the songs are not within a 10-year-old child's voice range and, therefore, difficult to sing healthily for students. One of the most salient points for *More!'s* approach to songs: there are no activities provided that make use of the songs apart from singing along. All in all, the songs and their lyrics are not seen as a language resource that provides input, but more as a motivation tool. This insight differs from Berglund's findings that the songs' purposes in the Swedish textbooks he analysed were of various kinds. Motivation was only said to be one of several, among which there are practice of vocabulary, information searching and interpretation (Berglund 2024: 28). Again, one reason for these differences might be the textbooks' target groups. The textbooks analysed by Berglund are meant for students that are nearly finished with school, while the textbooks analysed for this thesis are targeted at 10-11-year-olds: Older students might not feel as motivated by songs as younger ones.

easy includes quite a high number of the unit's vocabulary and grammar in its songs, although the potential is not fully realised yet. *easy's* drawback is the singers' non-native accents and the artificial sounds it uses in its songs. Therefore, the songs' quality is not as high as that of the other textbooks, even though the modern sound might appeal to some students.

English Step by Step is the textbook whose songs support vocabulary and grammar learning best, although there is still room for improvement, especially concerning the inclusion of the current unit's grammar focus. Even though the textbook provides

activities related to the song and its lyrics, these mostly focus on vocabulary or the four skills and do not support grammar learning. This area can be expanded so that the songs' potential for vocabulary *and* grammar learning is realised.

7.2. Research questions and hypotheses

To answer the research questions posed from the beginning of this thesis, the textbooks under scrutiny are generally not well-equipped to support vocabulary and grammar learning. Especially grammar learning is not supported enough, as in most cases the unit's key grammar is not included in the lyrics, and because the accompanying activities do not focus on grammar, but rather on the four skills or vocabulary. The songs' potential for grammar learning does not seem to be realised. Concerning vocabulary, the textbooks' support is generally better, since there are more additional exercises focusing on vocabulary and more vocabulary of the vocabulary lists is included.

Songs' features that support grammar and vocabulary learning more generally, such as that the songs are well-known to students, liked by students or easily learned, receive a much better overall rating than the songs' support for vocabulary and grammar learning. Aspects like these are not only important for the development of the four skills and the language systems vocabulary and grammar, but also to boost the students' motivation for and by singing and listening to the songs. This aspect is still prevalent in the discussion of songs in the literature, although songs can also be used to support language learning more directly, as described above. The focus on such general aspects in the literature might be why the textbook authors focused more on those than on grammar and vocabulary learning.

The songs used for Austrian lower secondary ELT textbooks are usually composed for textbooks and are not generally known in the English-speaking world. The only exception in this case is *Cambridge Global English*, which includes several authentic songs. The songs mostly sound like modern songs that could also be played on the radio, because their main instruments are the band instruments drums, electric guitar, electric bass and piano. One key aspect of the songs' production is that the songs can be played by only a small number of musicians who play several instruments in several takes which are then combined. This keeps production costs low. *easy* also saves money by including computer-generated sounds rather than music played by actual musicians.

The songs' lyrics usually rhyme and exhibit an simple structure consisting of verses and choruses without additional parts, such as a bridge. Male and female singers usually take turns singing the lead voice, and often a choir can be heard.

The songs are embedded in the units in two ways concerning vocabulary and grammar: on the one hand, the unit's key vocabulary and grammar focus might be used in the song lyrics, and on the other hand, there might be activities connected to the songs that provide further possibilities to strengthen the students' acquisition of grammar and vocabulary. Especially *More!* and *Cambridge Global English* do not make use of either the unit's vocabulary or its grammar. Also, the previous unit's vocabulary and grammar are not included in the songs in a way that would suggest a deliberate choice to do so. *easy* and *English Step by Step* do include the current unit's vocabulary list and grammar focus in a limited way, but the previous unit's grammar and vocabulary are mostly not recycled in the following unit's song. Unfortunately, there are no activities in all four textbooks connected to the songs that focus on grammar. Vocabulary is the most prominent focus of the additional exercises. Especially, *English Step by Step* often provides exercises connected to the songs that support vocabulary learning. *More!* has to be excluded in the discussion of additional exercises, since there are none in the whole textbook.

The hypotheses from the beginning of this thesis could partly be confirmed. *More!* does, indeed, not include any exercises connected to the songs and is also found to be the textbooks that supports grammar and vocabulary learning the least. The other three textbooks, however, do incorporate exercises connected to their songs. Concerning vocabulary and grammar inclusion in the songs, it could be detected that particularly the focus vocabulary from the previous unit and grammar in general is not a substantial part of the lyrics.

7.3. Limitations

There are some limitations to this thesis that have to be kept in mind. First, the songs' sheet music was not available to the author. This means that some musical features had to be obtained by listening closely, eg. the highest and lowest note of a song. While the author feels sufficiently trained to obtain such information from listening only, mistakes might be possible and could be minimised by checking back with the official sheet music.

Second, because of the unavailability of the sheet music and because of the thesis' scope, the two criteria, rhythm and melody, could not be analysed in greater detail, although they might yield more interesting information on how easily the songs can be learned and remembered. Features like the rhythm's repetitiveness and/or melody might make a song more or less memorable, as suggested, for example, by Wallace (Wallace 1994: 1475).

Third, the present thesis only compared vocabulary lists and grammar explanations with the songs' lyrics. In further research, a song's lyrics might be compared to the contents of all of a unit's texts, tasks, videos and listening exercises. The results could then determine if the song recycles vocabulary from the task right before, or from a task at the beginning of a unit, or maybe a song's vocabulary is not featured in the rest of the unit in any way, which means the song is the essential task which contains the list's vocabulary. Recent developments in the field of artificial intelligence might be of aid here.

Fourth, to this point, the teachers' use of the featured songs has not been analysed. As also mentioned in this thesis, teachers are fairly free in the way they use the textbook – they can leave out certain parts, substitute others, or use available exercises differently (Sevik 2011: 1033). This means that although songs and additional tasks might have limitations or work fine, teachers who work with the songs might improve or disprove them in a way that supports vocabulary and grammar learning more or less. It is, therefore, necessary to also research how teachers actually use the songs featured in the textbooks.

Fifth, similarly it can be of interest how well the teachers and students like the songs featured in the textbooks, since this also determines how often they listen to them (Anton 1990: 1169) and how well they remember them (Gerngroß et al. 2006: 7). As a result, a song's support for grammar or vocabulary learning is increased or decreased (Thornbury 2002: 25).

Sixth, it would be interesting to put this thesis' results into practice by designing a research outline that compares students' vocabulary and grammar gain results between those who have been taught using songs and those who have been taught without songs. Then this thesis' theoretical considerations and implications could be tested and compared to practical results.

7.4. Implications and personal reflection

As is often the case in textbook analysing studies (Vitta 2023: 859), there are several implications from the present study for different stakeholders.

Textbook authors may make use of the developed framework for analysis when they develop new songs for future textbooks. At the moment, it seems that in current textbooks some criteria overshadow others that are equally or even more important. Especially the criteria “Provide i+1 input”, “Support student engagement with the language”, and “Can be sung by students in a healthy way” should be taken more seriously, as those are the ones that were identified as wanting in the analysed textbooks. As textbook authors often write the lyrics for their textbooks songs (Hofbauer and Jerrey 2020), they should be more aware of the opportunity to include the current or previous unit’s grammar and vocabulary so that songs provide an added value for language learning *while* being enjoyable and motivating, and are not *solely* enjoyable and motivating. Similarly, more grammar exercises could be included in connection to songs, as the potential regarding grammar learning is not fully realised yet. Lastly, composers have to keep in mind that children usually have higher voices than they themselves and also often higher voices than the singers’ booked for the recordings (Mohr 2017: 5). If more attention was paid to this issue, then students might be able to sing the songs more healthily. Again, textbook authors and/or publishers can pay attention to this prerequisite and request songs within a comfortable children’s range.

Teachers who are knowledgeable of the advantages of songs and singing in the EFL classroom can exploit them by motivating their students to sing, by singing with their students themselves, and by pointing out positive aspects of singing for language learning so that the students understand the point of singing in English lessons. Also, teachers can use the developed framework to analyse potential textbooks and base their decisions which to use in their courses on them. Additionally, it has been shown that some songs’ potential (Laufer and Hulstijn 2001: 14) is not fully realised because, for example, accompanying exercises are missing in textbooks (eg. More!). Here, teachers might add their own tasks so as not to waste a valuable opportunity for language learning. If exercises are shared with colleagues, the workload can be reduced – as teachers often work under a strict time regime.

For me personally, the importance and implications of engagement with the language for learning (Thornbury 2002: 24–26; Schmitt 2008: 338; Laufer and Hulstijn 2001: 14) were especially interesting, and the extent to which interaction with language can foster language learning is now much clearer. Concerning music, singing and songs, many findings confirmed based on research what I had already assumed before, for example, the fact that singing increases the memory for vocabulary (eg. Ludke 2010: 84) and grammar (eg. Busse et al. 2021: 9). Other aspects were new and surprising, for example, the lack of textbook research on featured songs and the low number of experimental studies on grammar learning through singing. In my own research, the sometimes considerable differences between the textbooks' approaches towards songs was unexpected for me. For instance, while there were no additional tasks for songs in *More!*, there were high numbers in the other three textbooks. Also, the different types of activities in each book came as a surprise. Only *English Step by Step*, for example, contained speaking tasks, while phonological tasks could only be found in *Cambridge Global English*.

Since I am an active teacher, I myself will try to implement the implications identified for teachers generally. This means that now that I have gained knowledge about the potential of music for language learning, especially for vocabulary and grammar learning, it is my duty as a professional to put it into practice. For example, in my research, I have come across several resources that list songs for certain grammar aspects (eg. ESLSongs | A collection of song lyrics to teach English vocabulary and grammar in the ESL classroom 2022), which I will be able to use from 7th grade to 12th grade because no songs are included in the textbooks we employ at my school in these classes, and of course, additionally to the given songs in 5th and 6th grade. Also now, that I have gained scientific evidence on the potential of songs in the EFL classroom (eg. for remembering vocabulary: Ludke 2010: 52; for long time memory recall of grammar: Busse et al. 2021: 9; on motivation: Engh 2013: 117), I will be able to employ them more frequently, as I can confidently justify their value for language learning to myself, students, colleagues, and parents. Concerning my own research, I have observed sometimes quite substantial differences between the analysed textbooks, as mentioned before. This has shown me that it is vital to closely analyse and evaluate a textbook before putting it to use, as these differences can have substantial effects on one's way of teaching and on one's own EFL classroom. For instance, the textbook choice either enables or disables students to sing a song healthily, or it allows students

to gain new or practise vocabulary and grammar through their songs or it limits it. My own teaching experience has taught me that once a textbook is in use at a school, it takes years until another one is adopted. This renders a close study of a textbook concerning all kinds of aspects, such as songs and music, beforehand even more necessary.

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8.3. Pictures

Figure 7: Scientific and Helmholtz octave system: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Octave> (19.08.2024)

Figure 45: Word file in More! 1, Unit 5 (More! 1 Workbook 2023:48).

9. Appendix

9.1. E-mail correspondence with publishing houses

9.1.1. Helbling (*English Step by Step, More!*)

Sehr geehrtes Team von Helbling,

ich schreibe gerade meine Masterarbeit an der Universität Wien, bei der ich Songs aus approbierten Englisch Schulbüchern analysiere. Bei Ihren beiden Büchern *More!1* und *English Step by Step 1* ist mir aufgefallen, dass die Komponist*innen, Sänger*innen und Musiker*innen der Songs nirgends zu finden sind. Diese Informationen wären für meine Analyse von großer Wichtigkeit, denn natürlich ist es relevant, wer die Songs geschrieben hat oder welche Erstsprache die Sänger*innen der Songs haben. Daher meine konkreten Fragen:

1. Wer hat die Songs in den Büchern *More!1* und *English Step by Step* komponiert?
2. Wer sind die Musiker*innen und Sänger*innen, die auf den Tracks zu hören sind? Sind es English native speaker?

Ich hoffe, Sie können mir bei der Beantwortung dieser Fragen behilflich sein. Im Gegenzug kann ich Ihnen gerne die fertige Analyse ca im Dezember zukommen lassen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Sehr geehrte Fr. Huber*!

Die Songs von MORE 1 und Step 1 wurden von den Autoren geschrieben. Komponiert und eingespielt hat sie Gregor Bischops (Graz). Die SängerInnen sind Native speakers aus Großbritannien, die im Tonstudio The Soundhouse (London) die Songs eingesungen haben. Die Namen der Sänger wissen wir nicht.

Mit den besten Grüßen

9.1.2. Lemberger/ Cambridge University Press (*Cambridge Global English*)

Sehr geehrter Herr Lemberger,

vielen Dank für die schnelle Auskunft zu Clover.

Könnten Sie mir eventuell auch meine anderen Fragen zum Buch *Cambridge Global English* beantworten oder mich an jemanden verweisen, der das könnte? Ich kopiere sie hier noch einmal hin:

Laut Acknowledgements am Ende des Buchs (S. 170) wurden die Songs von Primary Music Box reproduziert. Das scheint laut Internet ein Sammelband von verschiedenen Songs und Übungen der Autoren Sab Will und Susannah Reed aus dem Cambridge University Press Verlag zu sein, deren Songs teilweise auch im Global English Buch wiederzufinden sind (The green grass grew all around, If you're happy and you know it, We've got the whole world in our hands). Andere hingegen scheinen im Inhaltsverzeichnis der Primary Music Box nicht auf (Numbers are great, I am, Alphabet song, This book is my window, A cricket on the floor, Sleeping beauty).

Daher meine Fragen:

1. Woher stammen diese anderen songs?
2. Von wem wurden sie komponiert, getextet, eingesungen, musiziert, produziert?
3. Ist mit "Primary Music Box" überhaupt jenes Buch von Sub Will und Susannah Reed gemeint?

Diese Informationen würden bei der Analyse und anschließenden Einordnung der Songs sehr helfen. Vielen Dank bereits im Vorhinein für Ihre Zeit und Auskunft! Ich wünsche Ihnen einen schönen Tag!

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Veronika Humer

Answer by the author Elisabeth Dokalik-Jonak:

Liebe Fr. Humer,

vielen Dank für Ihre Anfrage. Beim Schulbuch *Cambridge Global English* handelt es sich um eine Lizenzwerg des Lemberger Bildungsverlags.

Ihre Fragen richten sich primär an die Ersteller*innen des Originalwerkes von CUP.

Als Autorin habe ich mit Primary Music Box leider keinen Kontakt.

Für die österreichische Fassung gibt es manche Lieder, die auf der Liste stehen nicht mehr.

Ich hoffe, ich konnte Ihnen diesbezüglich weiterhelfen.

Alles Gute für Ihre Arbeit. Sollten Sie noch Fragen haben, können Sie sich trotzdem jederzeit an mich wenden.

Beste Grüße

Elisabeth Dokalik-Jonak

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am currently writing my Master's thesis in the teacher education programme at the University of Vienna, in which I analyse the songs included in Austrian English textbooks. Your textbook "*Cambridge Global English*" is also being analysed in its Austrian version and some questions have come up. I hope you will find the time to answer them.

According to the Acknowledgements at the end of the book (p. 170), all the songs have been reproduced from the Primary Music Box. I looked this term up and it seems to be the name of a collection of songs and exercises by the authors Sab Will and Susannah Reed published by CUP. Some of the songs included in *Cambridge Global English 1* can also be found in Primary Music Box (The green grass grew all around, If you're happy and you know it, We've got the whole world in our hands), but not all of them (missing: Numbers are great, I am, Alphabet song, This book is my window, A cricket on the floor, Sleeping Beauty).

Now, the following questions arise which I hope you will be able to answer:

1. Is the "Primary Music Box" mentioned in the Acknowledgements really the collection of songs by Sab Will and Susannah Reed?
2. Where are the other songs that cannot be found in Primary Music Box from?
3. Who composed, wrote the lyrics, sang, produced and recorded all the songs?

I have already asked the adapter of the Austrian version of *Cambridge Global English* 1 about the origin of those songs, but she replied that she used the material that was originally included in the original version of *Cambridge Global English*.

I hope you can shed light on this matter and that you will find the time to respond to my request. It would really help me to write my thesis.

Yours sincerely,

Answer by Cambridge University Press

Dear Veronika,

I hope you're having a lovely day.

I'm reaching out regarding your inquiry about the Cambridge Global English Digital Learner's Book 2 (1 Year) - 9781108969161 for your research.

My sincerest apologies for the delayed update, as I've just received a response from our editor. Please see their response to your questions below.

1. Is the "Primary Music Box" mentioned in the Acknowledgements really the collection of songs by Sab Will and Susannah Reed?

Answer: "Yes, Primary Music Box is the Cambridge (English) publication by Sab Will and Susannah Reed – the songs we used are all traditional, they weren't written by those authors."

2. Where are the other songs that cannot be found in Primary Music Box from?

Answer: "Most other songs would have been written by the Global English series authors, unless otherwise credited within the Acknowledgements pages of the particular resource Veronika is looking at."

3. Who composed, wrote the lyrics, sang, produced and recorded all the songs?

Answer: "The traditional songs taken from Primary Music Box are unattributed lyrics and music that have adapted over time (hence, traditional). Any other songs written by our authors I think were set to traditional tunes. I have no idea who would have produced the recordings – that sort of thing would have commissioned by Cambridge to a recording studio of some sort, but I can't help with any more specific details."

I hope that this information helps.

Please let me know if I can help you with anything else.

Wishing you a wonderful day.

Kind regards,

9.1.3. Veritas (easy)

Sehr geehrte Frau Humer,

wir sind ganz transparent, alle Details stehen im Impressum:

Alle easy Musiker:innen/Sänger:innen arbeiten im internationalen Umfeld.

- Fritz Jerrey ist in Österreich lebender Komponist/Produzent, der seit Jahrzehnten international Projekte umsetzt.
- Rebecca ist English native.
- Die Staatsangehörigkeit der anderen beiden Sänger:innen kenne ich nicht.

Sämtliche Hörübungen (in book, pad, sounds), von denen es im Verhältnis zu den Songs weitaus mehr gibt, wurden mit English (fallweise: American) natives aufgenommen, die eine Sprecher:innen- und/oder Schauspielausbildung haben.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Liebe Frau Humer,

so steht's im Impressum:

Studio: Fritz Jerrey / Hizz Media Group, Graz
Songs (Musik): Fritz Jerrey, Graz
Songs (Texte): Andrea Klein, Graz; unter Mitarbeit von: Maria Büchner, Iris Santa
SängerInnen: Fritz Jerrey, Rebecca Anouche Llewellyn; Theresa Chorinsky; Jacqueline Kimeu

Studio: speak low, Berlin
Regie: Harald Krewer
Aufnahme, Schnitt, Montage, Mischung, Mastering und Sounddesign: Valentin Kahl
Komposition: Peter Imig
SprecherInnen: Iona Buchanan, Harriet Barnard, Louie Betton, Laura Cameron, Sirian Cook, Oskar Foerster, Saskia Glück, Melissa Holroyd, Jaqueline Macaulay, Benjamin Posener, Judith Shoemaker, Kelly Simon, Dulcie Smart, Lawrence Smith, Joshua Spriggs, Dilly Srebrny, Simon Srebrny, Steve Taylor, Joshua Wunder

9.2. Abstract in English

Songs have been part of Austrian English textbooks at school for a long time now, but their potential for learning has not been researched so far. On the basis of recent literature on the topic of music and singing in English language teaching (ELT), a framework for the analysis of songs included in English textbooks has been developed and tried out on the four Austrian textbooks for 5th grade *More! 1*, *English Step by Step 1*, *easy 1* and *Cambridge Global English 1*. The research question in how far the songs included in the textbooks have the potential to support vocabulary and grammar learning is at the centre of the study. On the whole, the songs in the different textbooks exhibit different approaches concerning eg. instrumentation, genres and the inclusion of original or adapted songs. The results of the analysis in this thesis indicate that vocabulary and grammar learning are not the main goal of the analysed songs, as focus vocabulary and grammar is often not included in the relevant songs and exercises that ask the students to engage with vocabulary or grammar included in the songs' lyrics are missing. The textbook that supports vocabulary and grammar learning best according to this analysis is *English Step by Step*, followed by *easy*, *More!* and *Cambridge Global English*.

Keywords: ELT, songs, textbook analysis, vocabulary learning, grammar learning

9.3. Abstract in German

Lieder sind in schon seit langem Bestandteil österreichischer Englischlehrbücher, ihr Lernpotenzial wurde jedoch bisher nicht erforscht. Auf der Grundlage aktueller Literatur zum Thema Musik und Gesang im Englischunterricht (ELT) wurde ein Werkzeug für die Analyse von Songs in Englischlehrbüchern entwickelt und an den vier österreichischen Lehrbüchern für die 5. Schulstufe, *More! 1*, *English Step by Step 1*, *easy 1* und *Cambridge Global English 1*, ausprobiert. Im Zentrum der Untersuchung steht die Frage, inwieweit die in den Büchern enthaltenen Lieder das Potenzial haben, das Vokabel- und Grammatiklernen zu unterstützen. Insgesamt weisen die Lieder in den verschiedenen Lehrbüchern unterschiedliche Ansätze auf was z.B. die Instrumentierung und die Genres der Lieder, sowie die Einbeziehung von Original- oder adaptierten Liedern betrifft. Die Ergebnisse der Analyse in dieser Arbeit deuten darauf hin, dass das Erlernen von Wortschatz und Grammatik nicht das Hauptziel der analysierten Lieder ist, da Schwerpunkt-wortschatz und -grammatik oft nicht in den entsprechenden Liedern enthalten sind und Übungen fehlen, die die Schüler

auffordern, sich mit dem Wortschatz oder der Grammatik der Liedtexte zu beschäftigen. Das Buch, das das Lernen von Wortschatz und Grammatik am besten unterstützt, ist nach dieser Analyse *English Step by Step*, gefolgt von *easy*, *More!* und *Cambridge Global English*.