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FAKULTA PŘÍRODOVĚDNĚ-HUMANITNÍ A PEDAGOGICKÁ

Katedra   Katedra anglického jazyka

Studijní program: Učitelství pro základní školy

Studijní obor   Anglický jazyk – Český jazyk a literatura

Rozvoj verbálního projevu využitím techniky „role play" v hodinách anglického jazyka

Developing Speaking Skills by Menas of Role Play Techniques in EFL Classes

Diplomová práce: 10-FP-KAJ-153

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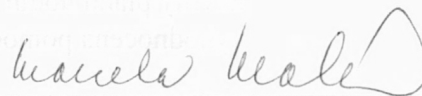
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Název DP: **Rozvoj verbálního projevu využitím techniky „role play" v hodinách anglického jazyka**

Název DP v angličtině: Developing Speaking Skills by Means of Role Play Techniques in EFL Classes

Vedoucí práce: PhDr. Marcela Malá, M.A., Ph.D.

Konzultant:

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Název DP:	ROZVOJ VERBÁLNÍHO PROJEVU VYUŽITÍM TECHNIKY „ROLE PLAY" V HODINÁCH ANGLICKÉHO JAZYKA
Vedoucí práce:	PhDr. Marcela Malá, M.A., Ph.D.
Cíl:	Diplomová práce zahrnuje akademický výzkum a praktické ověření teorie, která se týká využití techniky„role play" k rozvoji verbálního projevu žáků v hodinách anglického jazyka.
	Cílem je prokázat, že zařazením zajímavých „role play" aktivit v hodinách anglického jazyka je možné odbourat stres a prvotní ostych z mluveného projevu. Pomocí „role play" aktivit si žáci mohou vyzkoušet a nacvičit běžné situace, se kterými se setkají v reálném životě.
	Zpracování praktického projektu, analýza a interpretace výsledků v uvedené diplomové práci prokáží porozumění metodám analýzy teoretických východisek a jejich kritického zhodnocení a schopnost využití teoretických závěrů při volbě vhodných metod při výuce cizího jazyka.
	Posouzení efektivnosti teorie a zvolených metodických postupů v praxi dále ukáže schopnost využití evaluace jako nezbytné strategie hodnocení celého výzkumu.
	Specifikou uvedeného projektu je zařazení vysoce motivačních aktivit do výuky anglického jazyka a nácvik mluvních dovedností, které simulují reálné komunikativní situace.
Požadavky:	Platnost hypotézy diplomové práce bude ověřena v hodinách anglického jazyka na některé ze základních škol.
Metody:	Na základě studia odborné a metodologické literatury jsou vypracovány návrhy plánu hodin anglického jazyka, jejichž účinnost je detailně vyhodnocena pomocí metod kvalitativního výzkumu
Literatura:	LEWIS, M. Practical Techniques for Language Teching. London: Commercial Colour Press, 1995.
	LADOUSSE, G. P. Role Play. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
	HARMER, J. How to Teach English. Harlow: Longman, 1998.
	MURPHY, R.A. From Practice to Performance. Volume One. Washington : United States information agency, 1995.
	CLARK, R.C. Language Teaching Techniques, Brattleboro: Pro Lingua Associates, 1987.

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Poděkování

Tímto bych ráda poděkovala vedoucí mé diplomové práce paní PhDr. Marcele Malé, M.A., Ph.D. za odborné vedení, trpělivost a cenné rady, které mi v průběhu psaní diplomové práce poskytla. Dále děkuji Mgr. Ivetě Šimonové, která mi během mého výzkumu byla nápomocná. V neposlední řadě děkuji svým nejbližším za podporu, kterou mi po celou dobu studia poskytovali.

Anotace

Diplomová práce se zabývá využitím „role play" v hodinách anglického jazyka s cílem rozvíjet plynulost verbálního projevu a interakci studentů.

Teoretická část se nejprve zabývá mluvním projevem v anglickém jazyce a jeho významem v běžném životě, shrnuje aktivity rozvíjející mluvní projev žáků druhého stupně ZŠ a ukazuje problémy, se kterými se žáci mohou potýkat při mluvním projevu v anglickém jazyce. Dále tato část uvádí charakteristiku „role play" aktivity, její typy a vysvětluje důvody pro zařazení této aktivity do vyučování. Tato část obsahuje i samotný proces zařazení „role play" aktivity do hodin anglického jazyka. Praktická část obsahuje čtyři výukové plány, ve kterých je hlavní aktivitou „role play". Projekt byl realizován v 8. ročníku na druhém stupni ZŠ. Na základě vlastního pozorování, reflexí a dotazníku vyplněného studenty je projekt analyzován a vyhodnocen.

Celková analýza prokázala, že „role play" je vhodnou aktivitou přispívající k rozvoji plynulého verbálního projevu a interakci studentů.

Klíčová slova

„rola play", interaktivní verbální dovednosti, mluvní aktivity, plynulost mluvního projevu

Abstract

The thesis deals with the use of "role play" techniques in English lessons in order to develop oral fluency and interaction of students.

The theoretical part deals with speaking English and its importance in real life. It summarizes the speaking activities developing speaking skills of students at lower secondary school and shows the problems that the students might face when speaking English. It also presents the characteristics and types of role play and explains the reasons for using role play in English lessons. This section also includes the process of role play activities in the English lessons. The practical part includes four lesson plans in which the main activity is role play. The project was realized at 8th grade at lower secondary school. Based on my own observations, reflections and the questionnaire answered by the students, the project is analyzed and evaluated.

The overall analysis showed that role play is a suitable activity contributing to the development of oral fluency and interaction of students.

Keywords

role play, interactive speaking skills, classroom speaking activities, oral fluency

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CHAPTER I ACADEMIC

A INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the possible use of role play in EFL classes at lower secondary level as a teaching technique which helps develop oral fluency and interactive speaking skills. I hypothesize that, by using this procedure, the students will get opportunities to practice interactive speaking in concrete real life situations in the safe environment of the classroom. When simulating the situations, the students will be able to use the acquired language fluently and appropriately.

The thesis is divided into two parts, theoretical and practical. The theoretical part is further divided into theory and methodology. The first part deals with speaking and its importance for human communication. It reveals the problems students might have while speaking English and suggests how to prevent and solve the problems. It also summarizes classroom speaking activities suitable for the lower secondary level. Secondly, it shows the characteristics and types of role play and explains the reasons for using role play techniques in EFL classes. The methodology part presents the process of using role play in EFL lessons. It focuses on the features which are important for the effective use of role play: the presentation of a language, the presentation of a situation, time for students, monitoring and helping students and feedback. It also deals with the usage of props and realia and reveals the possible roles of a teacher during role-playing.

The practical part involves the professional project itself. It consists of four lesson plans in which the climax is a role play activity designed for the students at lower secondary school. The main aim of the project is to investigate whether these role play activities contribute to the development of oral fluency and interactive speaking skills and whether they are an effective technique to simulate real life situations in the classroom. Finally, by means of my own observations and reflections and students' evaluation, the outcomes are analyzed and evaluated.

B THEORY

I. Speaking

1. The importance of speaking English

Speaking is essential to human communication and is "so much a part of daily life that we take it for granted. The average person produces tens of thousands of words a day, although some people- like auctioneers or politicians- may produce even more" (Thornbury 2005:1). There are, of course, many reasons why people speak (responding to someone, asking someone in order to get some information, sustaining and maintaining good relations between people etc.) and a variety of situations where speaking is used (informal face to face communication with friends, talking to someone on the phone, formal communication during meeting at work, wedding speech etc.

Every nation in the world has its own culture, which is associated with social manners and habits and also with the usage of its own language. Nevertheless, the world has become smaller as a result of technological development; we sometimes talk about living in a "Global village"[1] as the world is connected with technology, trade and culture, too. "We are living in the time of immense technological inventions where communication among people has expanded way beyond their local speech communities" (Ellis 1997: 3).

Undoubtedly, the shift in language usage is closely connected to the global changes since such an integrated world requires a universal language which enables people from all corners of the world to communicate with each other efficiently. English is the second most widely spoken language in the world today. It seems to have the biggest impact on the whole world as it has become the standard that is commonly used in business, cultural and political exchange. No longer is English spoken only by its native speakers or people who study the language to communicate with native speakers. It is spoken by non-native speakers from a wide range of countries all over the world as a means of communication among those who do not share the same first language, too. Richards (2002: 17) compares English to a property that is not owned by the English-speaking world anymore but is "an international commodity sometimes referred to as *World English* or *English* as an *International Language*."

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[1] Global village is a term coined by Marshal McLuhan, Canadian philosopher and communication theorist. Global village describes the entire world as a single community which is served by information technology and electronic media.

It is obvious that nowadays the ability to speak at least one foreign language is a necessity. Nunan (1999: 71) claims that "language is arguably the defining characteristic of the human species and knowledge of language in general, as well as ability to use one's first and, at least one other language, should be one of the defining characteristics of the educated individual."

Learning in general tends to be the whole-life process in order to be able to keep step with the changing world and language learning is no exception. Since English is the language of globalization, its knowledge represents a common skill every person should have. The ability to communicate English fluently and efficiently may contribute to the success of an individual in his/her career. It is English that enables people to work abroad, in international companies in their country or to run their own business where they have to communicate with foreign business partners; and the knowledge of English is also needed at the most of the workplaces in the Czech Republic. The survey conducted by Profesia agency indicates that 75% of work offers require the knowledge of a foreign language (http://www.profesia.cz/cms/newsletter/rijen-2010/az-70-procent-nabidek-prace-vyzaduje-anglicky-jazyk/42897). As the graph below shows, English is the most desirable language. 70% of work offers require English; German language takes the second place with 18% and the third is Slovak language with 5%.

English- 70%
German- 18%
Slovak- 5%
French- 3%
Spanish- 1%
Russian- 1%
Italian- 1%

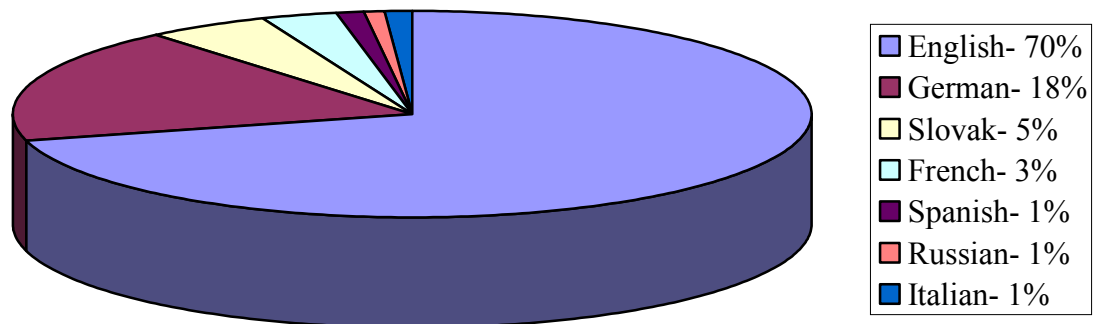Figure 1: The comparison of foreign languages required in job offers.

Speaking is one of the main goals of second language teaching and learning. "Of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as "speakers" of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing; and many if not most foreign language

learners are primarily interested in learning to speak" (Ur 1999: 120). Therefore, when teaching and learning a foreign language, speaking cannot be underestimated; and teachers ought to pay attention to this area of language in order to help their students to become well prepared, confident and independent speakers of English.

Speaking belongs to productive skills, which means that students have to produce language themselves. Speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts." (Chaney 1998: 13) It includes the processes of building messages, communicating messages and integrating with other people. Harmer (2005: 343) mentions the elements of speaking that are essential for an effective fluent oral production. Besides the knowledge of grammar rules and vocabulary, language learners have to acquire the correct pronunciation, appropriate stress and intonation patterns and they also need to be able to use connected speech. Furthermore, "speakers of English, especially where it is a second language, will have to be able to speak in a range of different genres and situations, and they will have to be able to use a range of conversational and conversational repair strategies" (Harmer, 2005: 343).

However, knowing a language does not automatically mean being able to speak it in real life. Especially unplanned communication might be a great challenge for a lot of language learners. Harmer (2005: 343-344) claims that learners have to be aware of the existence of real talk, spontaneous oral communication held outside the classroom, and they need to know what it looks like. "Teachers should give students help in using some of the more important phrases" (Harmer 2005: 344). When students are involved in such conversation, they probably need to uncover more than just the well formed questions which are commonly found in coursebooks. For instance, these questions often take no account of ellipsis, which causes unnatural repeating of what someone had just said.

A lot of different strategies and methods have been used to teach speaking. The aims of teaching speaking have been adapted in accordance with learners' needs and demands of society. Generally, the concept of language teaching has undergone a great change. It is not a long time ago; a language was considered a system of prescribed rules and structures, which learners had to follow strictly. The aim of language teaching in late 1960's was the correctness of the language structure (Nunan 1999: 246). A lot of drills and repetitions were used to fulfill the aims. Very little attention was paid to practical usage of language in real life. On the contrary, today's world requires that the aim of teaching

speaking is to communicate efficiently and to use structures of the language in real situations.

2. Problems students might experience while speaking

Speaking belongs to natural human behavior. We easily forget how it was once difficult to achieve this ability until "we have to learn how to do it all over again in a foreign language" (Thornbury 2005:2). As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, successful speaking includes a complex of elements, which have to be acquired.

Nunan classifies the features necessary for successful speaking into six points. Students have to achieve to:

- "Produce the English speech sounds and sounds patterns.

- Use words and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language.

- Select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter.

- Organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence.

- Use language as a means of expressing values and judgments.

- Use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called fluency" (1999: 53).

From the view of mental processing which is involved, there is no relevant difference between L1 and L2. "Like L1 speakers, L2 speakers also produce speech through a process of conceptualizing, then formulating, and finally articulating, during which time they are also self-monitoring" (Thornbury 2005:28). The main difference is, of course, the language itself with all its features like grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. The learners' knowledge of a foreign language is rarely as extensive or as established as their knowledge of the mother tongue.

According to Thornbury (2005:39-40) speaking difficulties can be divided into three main areas:

- "Knowledge factor": learners do not know the aspect of the language so they are not able to produce the language successfully

- "Skill factors": the learner's knowledge is not adequately automated so fluency is not ensured

- "Affective factors": these factors include for instance shyness or the lack of confidence, which can limit oral fluency

2.1. Reluctant students

According to Harmer (2005:345), to get students to speak in the classroom might sometimes be very easy. "In a good class atmosphere, students who get on with each other, and whose English is at an appropriate level, will often participate freely and enthusiastically if we give them a suitable topic and task" (Harmer 2005:345). Nevertheless, sometimes it is difficult to get students going. If students do not speak, teachers have to consider why they do not want to do so. The reasons, of course, may differ. For instance, teachers might have chosen a topic which students do not find interesting or they do not have enough knowledge about it; the mixture of the class or group work where students are asked to communicate together might not be quite right or the task can be inadequately difficult for the learner's level of English. The organization of the speaking task itself can be a possible reason as poor and chaotic instructions, the lack of teacher's preparation or the omission of pre-activity which introduces the topic to students only leads to confusion where students do not know what to do, how and why they are supposed to do the task.

However, sometimes even if all the conditions Harmer mentions are respected and fulfilled, a number of students are still reluctant to speak and to cooperate. The problem might be the students' previous learning experience. Perhaps learners are not used to speaking because they attended a very large class where they did not have a chance to practice and develop their speaking skills or the attention during teaching and learning language was paid rather on grammar than speaking. Speaking was not considered so important. The exercises focused on accuracy practice were in the centre of interest.

Every student is an individual with different needs and behavior. The learners' personality can represent the reasons for silence, too. Some learners are extroverts, who are active and talkative; they like working with others and sharing their own ideas. On the other hand, there are also students who are introverts. These students are "shy and are not predisposed to expressing themselves in front of other people, especially when they are asked to give personal information or opinion" (Harmer 2005: 345). Sometimes stronger or

more confident students tend to dominate discussions while weaker or shy students are given no chance to be an active part of it.

Many speaking activities require spontaneous responses, which can be very frustrating as students have no time for preparation. They often underestimate themselves and lack confidence in speaking. They might feel ashamed as they make mistakes while speaking or they cannot find right expressions easily. Therefore, they rather keep silence in order to prevent humiliation and derision (Ur 1999: 121).

The role of the teacher is extremely important. The teachers should try to encourage students to speak by for instance asking them questions, giving them hints and, of course, praising the students. She must be patient and always try to understand the students and their reasons for keeping silence.

2.2. Mother tongue

Ur (1999: 121) points out that this problem occurs mainly in classes where the majority of learners are speakers of the same native language. During interactive speaking activities learners tend to revert to their own language since it is sometimes easier for them to express themselves in the mother tongue. Harmer (1983: 131) explains several reasons for using the mother tongue. He claims that "the cause of this L1 use is the language required by the activity." If teachers ask students to do something which they are linguistically not able to fulfill successfully, their only possibility to say anything about the topic is to use their mother tongue. The teacher might, for instance, choose a task which requires using grammar structures or vocabulary the students are not familiar with or an inappropriate topic which the students have no or not enough information about. If we ask elementary students at lower secondary school to discuss the current political situation in the Czech Republic, or if we ask them questions like "What would you do if you were a millionaire?" we cannot expect much success. The former is probably the topic the students are not interested in and do not have enough information about and the latter requires using second conditional, which the students have probably not learned.

Another reason is that using the mother tongue is a natural thing to do. "This is because we try to make sense of a new linguistic (and conceptual) world through the linguistic world we are already familiar with" (Harmer 1983: 131). Ur (1999: 121) agrees that speaking in a foreign language with other students feels unnatural in the classroom. Harmer (1983: 131) also warns that "another cause of mother tongue use can be teachers

themselves." Teachers provide an example for students so if teachers use learners' language too often, then students will probably feel fine to do it too (Harmer 1983: 131).

To prevent using the mother tongue during English lessons, the teacher should always take into account the learners' age, language level and interests to set an appropriate task. Creating an English atmosphere in the class is also very important. Harmer (1983: 132) advices to set clear guidelines which tell the students in which situations the mother tongue use is permissible and in which situations is not allowed to use. The teacher should not forget to praise students for effort to speak English.

2.3. Vocabulary versus grammar

Vocabulary and grammar are two of the most significant features discussed in any language course. Undoubtedly, the appropriate knowledge of grammar and vocabulary forms an essential base for oral production. According to Richards (2008: 3) some students are limited in speaking due to poor grammar or vocabulary knowledge.

<u>Vocabulary</u>

According to Scrivener (2005: 228) "vocabulary is a powerful carrier of meaning." In early stages of most of the language learners, vocabulary constitutes a significant basic means to be used for communicative purpose. "Beginners often manage to communicate in English by using the accumulative effect of individual words" (Scrivener 2005: 228). Schmidt and McCarthy (1997: 5) emphasize the importance of vocabulary for speaking: "No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way."

It is important to mention the distinction between productive and receptive vocabulary. "Language learners understand many more lexical items than they actually use in everyday situations. The receptive vocabulary is a set of lexical items that we recognize and understand, but tend not to use ourselves in everyday life". (Scrivener 2005: 36). On the other hand, productive vocabulary belongs to the learner's everyday English. A good understanding of vocabulary does not guarantee that speakers will be able to use the familiar words when speaking.

The lack of vocabulary needed for common communication is for sure a serious problem as students are not able to express themselves successfully when speaking. Poor knowledge of words leads to student's failure and loss of confidence.

Nevertheless, poor vocabulary is not the only problem connected with speaking. Misunderstanding can be caused by using unsuitable words. According to Ur (1999:46) "a new item of vocabulary may be more than a single word". One item of vocabulary might carry more than one meaning and, of course, one meaning might be marked with more vocabulary items. As Harmer (1998: 44) notes, "words occur in context. Words do not just exist on their own: they live with other words and they depend upon each other. We need our students to be aware of this." Therefore, the attention while teaching and learning new vocabulary should be paid on lexical phrases or collocations rather than single words. "If we are really to teach students what words mean and how they are used, we need to show them being used, together with other words, in context" (Harmer 1998: 44). The context is essential for learning new vocabulary since it helps students to remember, understand and use the words in the utterance correctly.

Grammar

As Thornbury (2005:19-20) claims, it is theoretically possible to create short basic conversations where each utterance consists of single word or short phrase. He also provides a sample conversation where no grammar structure is needed:

A: Coffee?
B: Thanks.
A: Milk?
B: Please.

Figure 2: A conversation where each utterance consists of a single world. (Thornbury 2005:20)

In this case, the complex language is not necessary to use. Scrivener (2005: 211) places the importance of vocabulary above grammar, which is considered "not such a powerful tool." However, in order to make more sophisticated and complicated conversations, grammar needs to be included. "Grammar is concerned with the form of the language: that is, the patterns, the regularities, the nuts and bolts you connect together in different ways" (Scrivener 2005: 207). When speaking, grammar represents serious difficulties as it is a set of rules and structures to be acquired which might be different to the mother tongue (Thornbury 2005: 27). Students have to be taught grammar rules step-by-

step, from the easier rules to the most complicated ones. Scrivener (2005: 245) adds that learning grammar is a long and complex process, which includes returning "to items again and again with revision tasks." For many students, some grammar rules are extremely difficult to understand as when teaching and learning grammar, we deal mainly with abstract concepts. For instance, articles might cause problems to Czech learners as they do not exist in Czech language. Therefore, students might have problems to imagine them. "Students need to be aware of rules. The problems arise, however, when rules are complex and difficult to perceive" (Harmer 2005: 33). Unlike vocabulary understanding, where the meaning of words can usually be easily translated to L1, explained in L2 or indicated by pictures or real objects to make it clear, it is much more demanding to explain grammar successfully.

2.4. Pronunciation

In writing, words and grammar are represented through orthography whilst when speaking, "we construct words and phrases with individual sounds, and we also use pitch change, intonation, and stress to convey different meanings" (Harmer 2005: 38). Undoubtedly, besides grammar and vocabulary, proper pronunciation is needed for efficient speaking as it makes utterances understandable. Inaccurate pronunciation requires effort to understand an utterance and it might cause "a serious breakdown in communication" (Nation, Newton 2009: 80).

Brown and Yule (1983: 26) claim that "the "correctness" in terms of pronunciation is also a frequent goal in spoken language programs. The norm for those learning to speak British English is usually taken to be Received Pronunciation (RP) - that southern British, non-rhotic accent." Nevertheless, they claim that the excessive attention to precise pronunciation, which was the goal during the fifties and early sixties, is outdated. The current trend focuses on the intelligibility of the spoken language and "the aim of achieving native-like pronunciation is not only unattainable but unreasonable" (Brown, Yule 1983: 26). Harmer (2005: 248-249) also points out the significance of intelligibility as the prime goal of pronunciation. "Students should be able to use pronunciation which is good enough for them to be always understood."

It is important to mention that mother tongue affects learners' pronunciation, therefore, "students of different mother tongue have different pronunciation problems" (Baker 1992: 1). Speakers of different languages have different sounds which might be the

reason why some English sounds cause difficulties for learners to produce them (Harmer 2005: 42). Baker (1992: 4) adds that "particularly at the beginning of learning English, students often cannot hear unfamiliar sounds or the difference between some sounds" so teachers should show how the sounds are produced for example "by pointing to the parts of the mouth that are used."

According to Baker (1992: 3-4) it is important to remember that even a student who can pronounce and recognize every English sound might still "be unintelligible and unable to understand the spoken language if he/she has not mastered English stress and intonation patterns." Natural English intonation might be extremely difficult for learners to achieve. Many students find it difficult to hear changes in pitch directions or sometimes they are not able to identify which direction it is. English language uses the much wider range of intonation than Czech language does. Therefore, Czech speakers often find English intonation exaggerated and unnatural. However, intonation is an essential and significant part of spoken English which helps students to become understandable. According to Harmer (2005: 38-39) intonation is a significant factor in speaking as "it shows the grammar of what we are saying". The table below indicates the influence intonation has on grammar:

I'll arrive at eight o'clock ↘	• a statement (falling tone)
↗ I'll arrive at eight o'clock	• a question (raising tone)
I'll arrive at eight o'clock, okay ↘ ↗	• a tag question

Figure 3: The usage of intonation to change grammar in utterances (Harmer 2005: 38-39)

Intonation is also used to express attitude. Pitch tends to be higher when we are for example frightened or excited. On the other hand, low pitch might mean a lack of interest or dismissiveness. "We tend to exaggerate highs and lows of pitch change when we want to show enthusiasm or empathy" (Harmer 2005: 39).

Finally, intonation is a crucial part of spoken discourse as it "signals when speakers have finished the points they wish to make, tells people when they wish to carry on with a turn and indicates agreement and disagreement" (Harmer 2005: 39). A rise in pitch

at the end of an utterance implies continuation whereas a fall in pitch suggests completion (Thornbury 2005: 24-25).

Stress is also an important feature of spoken English. Stress is the term which describes "the point in a word or phrase where pitch changes, vowels lengthen and volume increases" (Harmer 2005: 42). If the stress is spoken language is used incorrectly, or is not used at all, the utterance might become unnatural and incomprehensible. It is, however, not easy to predict stress placement in words as the rules are complex and not very reliable. In addition, the position of the stress can change in derivation: *able [ˈeɪbᵊl]- ability [əˈbɪlɪtɪ]*. Stress placement alone can also indicate a part of speech in some words; for example a word *permit* represents a verb and a noun, too. The spelling of the word does not change; however, the pronunciation differs in terms of stress placement. Stress on the second syllable *[pəˈmɪt]* represents a verb; stress on the first syllable *[ˈpɜːmɪt]* means a noun (Skaličková 1982: 85). Harmer (2005: 42-43) claims that stress is "vitally important in conveying meaning in phrases and sentences" and shows how the stress placement might influence the meaning:

Brad wants to marry my DAUghter.	= neutral way (stress falls at the end of the phrase)
Brad wants to MARRY my daughter?	= the speaker is surprised that they want to marry
BRAD wants to marry my daughter?	= the speaker is surprised that Brad is the one who wants to marry his/her daughter

Figure 4: Stress changes the meaning of sentences (Harmer 2005: 43)

Words are not, however, pronounced separately, but they are rather linked with other words and together they make a continuous string. This linking is related to other pronunciation changes like elision, linking R, intrusive R or assimilation. "Good pronunciation does not just mean saying individual words or even individual sounds correctly. The sounds of words change when they come into contact with each other" (Harmer 2005: 263-264). Therefore, teachers should not practice the pronunciation of individual sounds or separated words for too long, but they should turn students' attention to connected speech, too.

Harmer (2005: 348) emphasizes that even if some students master the reasonable pronunciation without overt pronunciation teaching, teachers should not ignore the benefits of pronunciation teaching in lessons. Not only does pronunciation teaching make students aware of different sounds and sound features, but can also highly improve their speaking skills. "Concentrating on sounds, showing where they are made in the mouth, making students aware of where words should be stressed- all these things give them extra information about spoken English and help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibility" (Harmer 2005: 348). He adds that students need to be aware of real spoken English. They should "listen and notice how English is spoken" (Harmer 2005: 250).

2.5. Accuracy vs. fluency

Ur (1999: 100-103) explains that language proficiency can be defined in terms of accuracy and fluency. According to Hedge (2000: 261) fluency means "responding coherently within the turns of the conversation, linking words and phrases, using intelligible pronunciation and appropriate intonation, and doing all of this without undue hesitation." Accuracy is defined as learner's ability to express himself/herself grammatically correctly. Learners have mastered a language successfully if they are capable to understand and produce it both accurately and fluently (Ur 1999: 103).

As already mentioned above, vocabulary and grammar play a significant role in speaking; a lack of knowledge results in insufficient speaking skills as students are not able to express themselves at an appropriate level. This might lead to misunderstanding or even to the incompetence of communication.

On the other hand, the problem with spoken English might be more "the unavailability of the knowledge" than the poor knowledge of grammar and vocabulary (Thornbury 2005:31). Thornbury (2005: 34) attaches great importance to automaticity. He points out that even if learners know the vocabulary and grammar well, they might be limited in speaking as the knowledge "has not become sufficiently integrated into their existing language knowledge, or it has been so seldom accessed, that it is not yet easily retrievable. The process of arranging the grammar and retrieving the word is not yet automatic…the process might be complicated by a tendency to formulate the utterance first in L1 and then to translate it to L2" (Thornbury 2005:34). Therefore, students speak slowly and it takes too long to compose utterances. Moreover, pressure to be accurate often causes

that learners monitor themselves excessively in order to avoid mistakes, again with a negative effect with regards to fluency.

According to Scrivener (2005: 146-147) speaking can be learnt only by speaking. A lack of opportunities to practise it contributes to speaking failure. "And by practice is meant, not practice of grammar and vocabulary, but practice of interactive speaking itself" (Thornbury 2005: 45). Therefore, teachers have to help students to acquire this ability by giving them a chance to speak as much as possible. A friendly and safe environment must be created so that the students feel confident and comfortable and are not worried about making mistakes during speaking activities. Harmer (2005: 346) adds that a useful and effective tool to develop fluency is repetition as "each encounter with word or phrase helps to fix it in the student's memory. When students repeat speaking tasks they have already done once or twice, they first attempt is like a rehearsal for the final effort." Moreover, if students get the chance to analyze and evaluate what they have already done, they learn from it and "their performance second and third time can only get better" (Harmer 2005: 346). Students will speak more confidently and fluently. Accuracy can be also improved as students have enough time to realize grammatical mistakes and so to avoid them.

3. Classroom speaking activities

Speaking activities in the classroom build students' ability to express themselves through speech. Speaking activities should be an integral part of English lessons. A classroom is a suitable place to practice and develop speaking skills as students are mainly at the same level of English and at the same age so they more likely solve similar problems and have similar interests they can talk about. There are a lot of various activities through which speaking can be practiced and developed in the classroom. An effective speaking activity depends on many factors, which have to be considered before setting an activity. Harmer (2007: 345) claims that very important features of an effective speaking activity are a topic which students are interested in and are eager to speak about and a topic that is appropriate for the language level of students so they are actually able to talk about it. Positive and friendly atmosphere to make students feel comfortable and relaxed while speaking and students' cooperation when all get the equal chance to speak and they speak the target language as much as possible are another important features.

The following list provides the examples of classroom speaking activities suitable for lower secondary classes:

1. Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an activity where learners produce their own ideas within a time limit on a topic given by the teacher. Students can work either individually or in pairs or groups to give thoughts and ideas quickly and spontaneously. Brainstorming is a great way to open a topic we would like to talk about since students can share their own ideas and show their knowledge about the topic before the main activity. It also helps teachers to determine what students already know about the topic. However, brainstorming is used more for producing separated words or short phrases than sentences with context.

2. Speaking produced by using pictures.

Pictures are in general a useful tool in teaching languages and "can be used in a multiplicity of ways" (Harmer 2007:178). Pictures provide a great opportunity to make learners speak and so practice speaking skills. The following examples show the possible usage of pictures for practicing speaking.

a) Picture describing

"Pictures are extremely useful for a variety of communication activities, especially where these have a game-like feel, such as "describe and draw" (Harmer, 2007:178). In this activity, one student is given a picture which he/she describes and a partner draws the picture according to the description without looking at the original one. This activity also supports the learners' creativity and imagination.

b) Picture narrating

Students are asked to tell a story according to pictures. To make the activity more demanding and challenging, the criteria can be set. The criteria can include for example vocabulary or grammar structures students have to use while telling the story.

c) Find the differences

This is another game-like activity, which is not only fun for students, but also a great speaking practice. Students working in pairs are given two different pictures. Their task is to find the differences by for example describing the pictures or asking questions.

<u>d) Prediction</u>

Pictures can also be used to get learners to predict what the next stage in a lesson is going to be. This might be a very powerful usage of pictures as it makes students engaged in the following task.

<u>3) Communication games</u>

Communicative games are designed to get students talk as quickly and fluently as possible. A variety of tools and tricks are used to make fluent speaking entertaining.

<u>a) Information gap</u>

This activity is based on missing information which students try to determine by talking to his/her partner. "One student has to talk to a partner in order to solve a puzzle, draw a picture, put things in the right order, to collect pairs of cards in card, games, or find similarities and differences between pictures" (Harmer 2007:349). Not only do information gap activities practice speaking, but they also teach learners to solve problems and collect information. Moreover, each member of a pair plays a very important role as without cooperation, the task cannot be completed successfully.

<u>b) Guessing games</u>

Thornbury (2005, 84) suggests guessing games like "What is my line? Who am I?" in which a student thinks of a job/animal/famous person etc. and the other students ask "yes/no" questions to guess the secret information. However, this game is a good way to practice more grammar structures than interactive speaking as there is a lot of repetition used. Learners ask questions for instance: "*Do you* wear a uniform/ work outside/ work regular hours?" etc.

The speaking activities mentioned above can, undoubtedly, practice and develop speaking skills in the classroom. Nevertheless, students will maybe need to use spoken language outside the classroom, too. The language which is used in the classroom is usually not sufficient for situations in the real world. One of the characteristics of speech in real life outside the classroom is that the speech is usually spontaneous. Sometimes people plan and organize their speech when they are for instance asked to give a presentation, a wedding speech etc. Commonly, in everyday life people do not plan what they are going to say when communicating with other people. According to Brown and Yule (1983: 25-26) unlike grammar, vocabulary, writing, reading or listening, interactive speaking is difficult to

practice and develop individually as there must be at least one more person involved to make the communication meaningful. The classroom provides a useful place where the students might get an opportunity to practice interactive speaking skills in real life context. The language needed for the real life situations might be practiced through role play techniques.

II. Role play

1. Definition

Littlewood (1989: 46) defines role play as an activity in which "learners are asked to imagine themselves in a situation which could occur outside the classroom; to adopt a specific role in this situation; and to behave as if the situation really existed." Ments (1999: 4-5) adds that role play involves "asking someone to imagine that they are either themselves or another person in a particular situation". According to Ments (1999: 6) role play is "a type of communication that is not real, however, simulates the real world." Role play usually focuses on the interaction and communication among people. Utterances in role play are not exactly given; therefore learners can improvise and be spontaneous. Harmer (2005: 352) characterizes a role play as a speaking activity where students simulate a real life encounter like a conversation in a restaurant or a shop "as if they were doing so in the real world."

Role play belongs to a low input- high output category of language learning techniques (Ladousse 1989: 9). It means that the teacher- centred presentation phase in the lesson is short; the learners become active participants rather than passive watchers. After a brief introduction led by the teacher, students do the activity where the aim is rather accomplish the task than use the exact words or precise phrases. In these activities, students must work together to develop a plan, resolve a problem, or complete a task.

According to Ladousse (1989: 9-10) in role play activities, fluency dominates over accuracy. He also points out that the language students use in role play has to be acquired at an earlier stage (Ladousse 1989: 9). The activities before role-playing itself are based rather on accuracy.

According to Harmer (2005: 352-353) role play can be used to encourage general oral fluency, or to train students for specific situations especially when they are students of English for specific purposes (ESP). In role play students "need to know exactly what the

situation is and to get enough information about the background" (Harmer 2005: 352) so that they can do the task successfully. Teachers give the participants information about who they are, and what they think or feel. The information can be written out on role cards.

Role play is a highly flexible activity, which gives more scope for individual variations, imagination and initiative. Through role play, functional language for a number of scenarios can be activated and practiced in the safe environment of the classroom. The aim of role play activities is to prepare train students "to deal with the unpredictable nature of language" (Ladousse 1989: 5).

2. Types of role play

There are many criteria according to which the division of role play might be determined. Ladousse (1989:15) names three broad types of role play according to the situation and roles learners adopt. He states that the situation in role play can correspond to a real need in the learners' lives (at the doctor, at the restaurant). In this type of role play the students play themselves. The situation can also correspond to the events that "few learners will ever experience but which are easy to play" (Ladousse (1985:15) (the journalist) in which the students play a real person and to fantasy roles which are imaginary and have nothing to do with reality.

Role play might be further divided into the following categories according to the number of participants, the subject which is practiced and the information given to the students:

2.1. Individual versus interactive type

The division of role play can be made according to participation which is involved in the activity. Students can either work individually or in pairs or groups.

Individual role play is suitable for practicing for instance public speaking. The students might be asked to prepare and present a wedding speech or speech at the end of a school year etc. Another individual role play can be to leave a message on the answer machine. Students leave messages to their friends, parents, doctors etc. in order to go to the cinema, go to a b-day party, to make an appointment with a doctor etc.

Not only speaking, but also writing might be practiced through individual role play. Students are assigned a character and they are asked to write about the issue in a format which is appropriate to his/her character. A variety of writing forms (an informal

letter to a friend, formal letter to a customer, report, article to newspapers, job application, CV or advertisement) might be practiced through individual role play. Students can for example constitute a customer who is not satisfied with the services of a travel agency during his holidays so he is writing a complaint letter to the agency. Another scenario may be an exchange student writing a letter to his parents back home about his experiences during his stay. These two examples represent writing tasks in which students have to use language and structures appropriate for different writing types and, of course, they have to be aware of their characters, too. (http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/roleplaying/indproj.html).

According to Harmer (2005: 164) during individual work, "students develop their autonomy and promote skills of self-reliance and investigation over teacher-dependence." He also points out that this type of activity is often less stressful than working in a whole-class setting or in pairs or groups (Harmer 2005: 164). However, an individual role play activity does not encourage cooperation in which students can motivate and help each other (Harmer 2005: 164).

On the other hand, an interactive type involves cooperation among students. Students can work in pairs or small groups to fulfill the task. Students learn how to work together, discuss the problems, listen to each other, share their own opinions with the others etc. The interactive type is a characteristic form of role play. It is suitable for a successful interactive speaking practice as "grouping enables to increase the amount of speaking time" (Harmer 2005: 165). The learners' independence is promoted, too. Pairwork and groupwork, however, are often very noisy and it is not easy for teachers to monitor all students if they are doing the task.

2.2. Skills development versus exploring feelings and attitudes

According to Ments (1999: 43) role play can be used for "messages, expressing or arousing emotion, negotiation and persuasion, or for a variety of other purposes." Role play is "used in schools, colleges, youth clubs, industrial training, health and social care" as a useful technique to develop particular skills or to explore feelings and attitudes (Ments 1999: 4).

In language learning and teaching, developing skills constitutes the most important purpose of using role play. Besides the spoken language which is usually practiced and developed, students also develop certain behavioral skills. Learners might practice a variety of real- life situations (visiting the doctor, in a fast food restaurant, in a hotel, job interview

etc.) through which the functions like asking for advice, placing an order, complaining, giving personal information etc. might be practiced. Other skills like cooperation, confidence or solving problems are also involved.

Sometimes students might be asked to express their attitude and opinion through role play. According to Ments (1999:52) the example might be "an exploration of the implications of being a member of a minority group". The introduction of the role play is focused rather on describing the problem than offering a solution.

However, the main goal in language teaching and learning remains the developing of skills (Ments 1999: 44).

2.3. Structured versus unstructured type

In structured role play, the preparation and the characteristic of role play depends more on the teacher. The teacher provides suitable guidelines which the students follow. She sets the scene and determines the roles to be played. Students are often given role cards where they find the information needed for role play. The situation might be "repeated several times to learn the correct procedure" (Ments, 1999:63). The situations where this type or role play might be applied are for instance ordering a meal in a restaurant, visiting a doctor, asking for directions etc.

On the other hand, unstructured role play gives learners much more freedom. Ments (1999: 5) says that a situation does not have to be described in detail, but can be "left to the imagination of the rolepayer." The teacher provides only the framework of a situation and students themselves have to decide on the details of a situation (Tompkins http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Tompkins-RolePlaying.html).

Littlewood (1994:49-60) provides the division of role play according to the nature of the information given to the students. He suggests a scale of six types of role play, which lead from the most structured to the least structured ones. The six types are: "role play controlled through cued dialogues, role play controlled through cues and information, role play controlled through situations and goals, role play in the form of debate or discussion, large-scale simulation activities and improvisation" (Littlewood 1994:53-59). The first example is suitable for beginners as the students follow the prepared dialogue. This type do not offer much space for creativity; however, even weaker students can feel confident and practice the language successfully. The second and third type are suitable for students at lower secondary school. The examples of these three types are shown in the practical part.

The last three types are the least structured. They are suitable for advanced learners as they require a lot of creativity.

Unstructured role play is not as demanding in terms of teacher's preparation as structured one, however, it is often much more difficult for students. If the students do not receive enough information, they might feel confused, they do not know what to do or they spend long time thinking about the details. Harmer (2005: 352) claims that teachers should allow students to "be creative as much as possible, but if they have almost no information, they may find this very difficult to do."

Different types of role play need different approaches, which include "the way the role play is introduced, the description of roles, the facilitation and post-play analysis" (Ments 1999:51). The teachers must be aware of the various types of role play and choose the best ones to meet the needs of the students.

For the purpose of developing interactive speaking skills in real life context at lower secondary school, structured interactive role play which develops skills seems to be the most appropriate to use.

3. The reasons of using role play techniques in EFL classes

3.1. Motivation

One of the most important elements in a learning process is undoubtedly motivation. Motivated students are more likely to learn, they are not frustrated and stressed, and thus learning is a joy for them. Ments (1999:20) and Ladousse (1989: 6) agree that role play increases learners' motivation and involvement in the learning process. Role play activities can be a great fun and therefore they are motivating for students. They enable to learn and practice the language in a funny, interesting and lively way. Students collaborate together and they are an active part of the learning process.

Role-playing might seem more like a game than learning; however, students actually practice and learn the language spontaneously and more naturally. They share their own ideas, thoughts and opinions to solve problems set in a role play. Watcyn-Jones and Howard-Williams (2002: 8) note that role play activities "are learner-centred rather than teacher-centred," which means that learners are actively involved in the process of learning; they work independently whereas "a teacher can stand back and listen more actively, think up strategies for helping the learners increase their knowledge." Chickering and Gamson

(1987: 4) add that "learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting in a class listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves." Therefore, role play helps to build self-confidence when the learners see they completed the task successfully without a permanent help provided by a teacher. This is a highly motivating aspect since not only a teacher, but also learners themselves are responsible for their own learning.

3.2. Building cooperation

In addition, role play encourages cooperation among students as they often work in a pair or group with other peers to complete the task. They learn to work together, listen to each other, respect and help each other and they also learn from one another. "This in turn helps create a very positive learning atmosphere in class- one where learners genuinely want to work with others" (Watcyn-Jones and Howard-Williams 2002: 10).

3.3. Developing oral fluency

Role play is a communicative technique which develops the general oral fluency. According to Richard and Rodgers (2001: 124), the primary goal of communicative tasks should be fluency and acceptable language, which means that the focus is on the message rather than form. Thornbury (2000: 3) claims that fluency in speaking relates to "the learner's capacity to produce language in real time without undue pausing or hesitation." Role playing is an effective way to help students to feel confident when speaking even outside the classroom since they are given the language they need to use in certain real-life situations, they have enough time to practice and acquire the phrases in advance in a safe and friendly environment in the classroom. Therefore, learners are able to express themselves more easily and fluently in the real-life communication. Learners do not have to worry about mistakes which could cause any confusion or embarrassment in conversation because the possible errors are corrected by teacher.

3.4. Training real situations

As already mentioned above, role play trains real situations. Ladousse (1989: 11) highlights that role plays are well-established techniques for organizing controlled, pre-communicative practice. Klippel (1991: 61) claims that it is important for learners who are

studying English in a non-English speaking setting to experience real communicative situations in which they learn to express the meaning. When using the role play regularly, students are able to react appropriately without panic when they find themselves in a situation similar to the one they have practiced and learned in the classroom.

There are a countless number of topics which can be practiced through role play. Role play enables to create every real-life situation we can think of. A classroom can be easily changed in order to remind of many places for instance a restaurant, bus stop, police station, shop and many others. The environment of a classroom then provides the background appropriate for role play activities, which supports the learners' imagination and also brings the tinge of a real world to a classroom. "By bringing the outside world into the classroom like this, we can provide a lot of useful practice that would otherwise be impossible in cafés, shops, banks, businesses, streets, parties etc" (Scrivener, 1998: 363). Harmer (2007: 353) adds that "by broadening the world of the classroom to indicate the world outside, role play activities allow students to use a much wider range of language than some more task-centred activities may do." The language practiced in role play is more authentic as it relates to the real-life situations and it is also memorable more easily since it is personalized.

3.5. The elimination of shyness

Role play also helps to eliminate shyness while speaking. "Role plays allow hesitant students to be more forthright in their opinion and behaviour without having to take responsibility for what they say in the way that they do when they are speaking for themselves" (Harmer, 2005: 353). Some students may have problems to participate in conversations about themselves or in other activities dealing with their own life experience. These learners are relieved by role play since they in fact become someone else. Therefore, they no longer feel their own personality is involved, and they are given a chance to succeed in speaking. They learn and practice the structures and use them in the familiar environment of their classroom.

C METHODOLOGY

I. The procedure of an effective usage of a role play

Before setting up a role play itself, there are several points to be considered. It is important to realize that a role play is not an isolated activity. It must be integrated together with the other language learning activities into the lesson in which it is used. The teachers should not forget to start with a warm-up activity and after the role play activity has finished continue with a follow-up activity. Ments (1983: 39) claims that although the role play technique seems to be relatively simple, it must be planned and organized carefully. A role play must be relevant and enjoyable part of learning. Ments (1983: 39) points out that if running a role play inaccurately, the students might be bored, embarrassed and confused.

First the aims and objectives of the role play should fit in the whole course curriculum (Ments, 1983: 41). For instance, when teaching a unit about travelling, there are various situations that are suitable to use for role-playing. The students may practice situations like making a reservation in a hotel, choosing a trip in a travel agency, checking in at an airport or buying the tickets at a bus station. The aims and objectives should be also based on students' needs, interests and language proficiency level. The role play technique is suitable for all age groups and proficiency levels; however, it must be adapted to these facts. Beginners might need more support and help; therefore, the activities should be shorter and can be used to teach for example functions like greetings, getting to know other people etc. The situation might be simplified. The role cards provide the students with a guideline and help them to know what to say. At later stages, the students might be left to use their imagination and creativity more.

The right atmosphere is highly important. Before role-playing the students must be motivated and feel relaxed; therefore, the usage of warm-up activities is essential. Warm-up activities might be for example short vocabulary activities in which the students practice a certain vocabulary needed for the role play in a funny way, short songs, videos or games. In a more advanced class, the teacher can also get the students' attention by asking the class several questions about the topic. For instance, if the topic of the role play is "shopping", the teacher can show his/her interest in the students' opinions about shopping by asking them questions like *"Who likes shopping? Do you like shopping for clothes?"* etc. Ments (1983: 45) recommends warm-up games to be used with children. He claims that through simple

warm-up games, the students loose the anxiety and they can easily and naturally get involved in the role play.

1. The presentation of a role play

To make a role play work well, the teacher should predict the language the students might work with in the role play and think about the valuable information of the situation. The teacher must be sure to familiarize the students with the useful structures and vocabulary and with the situation and environment of the role play.

It is advisable to model the role play before the students practice it themselves, especially if the students are beginners or have a lack of experience with role-playing. The teacher can model the role play with a stronger student, use pictures together with audio recordings or use video.

1.1. The presentation of a situation

As already mentioned above, the situation of a role play should be suitable for the students, keeping in mind students' needs, interest and proficiency level. The situation should interest the students and at the same time enable them "to practice the language they have learned before" (Ladousse, 1989: 15).

1.1.1 Relevant information about the scenario

It is essential to give the students the context in which a role play takes place. The students need to know what exactly they are supposed to do. The teacher should explain the activity clearly to provide the students with the most important information about the scenario and clear role explanation. He/she should try to personalize the situation so that the students can easily identify themselves in the role play. For instance, in the situation at a bus station, the person giving information needs to know the prices of the tickets, destinations of the buses or times. The one representing a passenger should know where he/she is going, the time when he/she wants to leave or the seat where he/she would like to sit.

1.1.2 Role cards

Role cards are a great tool providing the information important in role-playing. According to Ladousse (1989: 15) role cards should usually contain only essentials to give the students opportunity to be creative. However, at the beginning level, the cards may contain detailed instructions. Depending on the situation, role cards may include

information like a profession, name, age, interests or feelings. Role cards can also include certain structures the students are asked to use during the role play.

The students can either keep their role card during the role play and use it as a guideline or return it to the teacher after reading. When teaching a heterogeneous class, role cards enable the stronger students to work on more challenging task. On the other hand, weaker students might get less complicated situation and succeed as well. Ladousse (1989: 15) recommends that role cards be distributed by the teacher, who decides which role each student gets. This can prevent some problems that might occur during role-playing. Ments (1983: 42) points out that if a weak student gets a key role or a role which is too difficult for him/her, the role play might come apart.

1.2. The presentation of a language

The students need to be equipped with the language that is likely to appear in the role play. The teacher pre-teaches the possible structures and vocabulary. The vocabulary and structures should be practiced properly so that the students will be able to use them in the role play. Ladousse (1989: 14) adds that some help may be given on the role cards, too. A variety of activities can be used to present and practice the language.

1.2.1 Reading material

One of the ways to present the language is to use reading materials. The activities presenting the structures might be: putting dialogues in the correct order, matching questions and responses, filling in the gaps in dialogues, reading a sample dialogue and discussing it etc. To present and practice the vocabulary, the activities like crossword puzzles, matching pictures with words, guessing the meaning from the context or brainstorming can be used. The teacher can also write the vocabulary or some of the structures on the board or give the students prepared worksheets with the language needed.

1.2.2 Model dialogues on CDs/videos

Audio and video materials might be a very helpful aid to present a model dialogue, too. According to Harmer (2005: 304) recorded material enables the students to hear a variety of different voices or accents. It gives the students "an opportunity to meet a range of different characters" (Harmer, 2005: 304).

Harmer (2001: 108) advises the usage of video in the lessons as "background information can be filled in visually". The students can see gestures, eye contact or facial

expressions of the participants. Therefore, video helps the students to understand the meaning of the language better.

According to Scrivener (2005: 155) the teacher should "keep the recording short and play it a sufficient number of times".

For the purpose of a role play, it is beneficial to use both reading and audio/video material. For example, first the students listen to a model dialogue and answer general questions like *"Where is the conversation taking place? How many people could you hear?"* etc. Then the students can get a worksheet containing the dialogue from the recording. They can read and listen to the dialogue for the second time. The students might answer more detailed questions or they can complete the missing phrases or words.

2. Time for students

First the students need enough time to practice and acquire the vocabulary and structures for the role play. Sometimes the language might be relatively easy for the students so a brief practice is sufficient. However, sometimes the activity requires more complicated structures or vocabulary the students are not familiar with. Some items of vocabulary or phrases might be written on role cards to help the students during role-playing.

When the students get their role cards, they also need some time to read and understand the role information written on the cards. The students must feel free to ask for help if they do not understand something as their understanding is fundamental for the play stage. The simplest questions the teacher can ask are *"Do you understand? Do you have any questions?"*; nevertheless, it may happen that the students will only nod or say that they understand or they will not respond at all. This, however, does not necessarily mean they really understand. Therefore, the comprehension might be done by asking several questions like *"Who are you? Where are you going? Where do you work?"* Etc.

Before practicing the role play, the teacher should give the students time to think of what they might say. The class can discuss it together or the students with the same roles can work in groups to share their ideas.

The students should know how much time they have to perform the activity. Ladousse (1989:12) advises to set the time limit or to inform the students that they have last 2 minutes before the role play ends.

3. Monitoring and helping students

During the role-playing, the teacher should observe the class. According to Harmer (1998: 93) the teacher should go round the pairs/groups listening carefully and giving prompts if necessary. However, Scrivener (2005: 92) points out that the teacher should not interrupt the students while speaking. He/she helps the groups only if they for example do not know how to continue or they need to know vocabulary.

Ladousse (1989: 15) adds that the teacher should not correct the mistakes immediately. The teacher can write down the mistakes which he/she wants to deal with after the role play has finished. Harmer (1998: 94) advises to note both "good and bad English usage".

4. Feedback

Right after the role play, the teacher gives feedback. Harmer (2005: 87) points out the importance of feedback as "teachers can see how well their class is doing and what language problems they are having; students can also see how easy they find a particular kind of speaking and what they need to do to improve."

Ladousse (1989: 14) recommends correcting the mistakes after role-playing by "eliciting the correct forms from the students, by writing them on the blackboard". The teacher should not, however, focuses only on the mistakes the students made. He/she also should praise the students and highlight the language he/she was impressed by.

Ments (1983:127-135) and Ladousse (1989, 16-17) claims that a very important part of feedback is "debriefing". The teacher should discuss the process of the role play with the students. The teacher should welcome the students' comments and opinions about the role play. The students might find the role play difficult or easy, they might not like the situation etc. The students' feedback helps the teacher to prepare role plays that are more effective and enjoyable for the student. Depending of the proficiency level, this stage might be done in the mother tongue.

II. Using props and realia

The right atmosphere is one of the essentials for a successful role play. A typical classroom, however, does not offer the proper environment for role-playing. Props and realia can bring a bit of real life into the classroom. The students can be motivated and involved in a role play more. Just simple props like a pen for a waitress, a menu for a

customer or a map for a tourist can help the students to identify themselves with the roles and to create the right atmosphere in the classroom. However, Ments (1983: 91) claims that "too many props will create the impression of a theatrical performance." The teachers should identify the "essence of the prop" to be used (Ments, 1983: 93). For instance, the gist might be the inability to see the other speaker when telephoning. Therefore, the students might be asked to sit back to back so that they cannot see each other's faces. Another example might be a situation in a restaurant; the customers could sit at the desk representing a table in a restaurant while the waiter could stand. Then the customer will probably need a menu and the waiter a pen and a note pad to write down the order.

III. The role of a teacher

Before role-playing the teacher's main role is to familiarize and equip the students with new language to be used in the role play. The teacher coordinates the activities in a meaningful way in order to practice both new vocabulary and structures.

During the role play stage, he students work independently. The teacher's role becomes less dominant, yet remains very important for successful role-playing. The following part explains the roles the teacher adopts:

1. Classroom manager

The teacher organizes the process of the role play. He/she gives the students valuable information about the situation and explains how to do the activity. He/she also establishes the seating arrangement and set the time.

As a role play is usually a pair or group work, the teachers ought to think about how to organize the pairs/groups. The students can, of course, find their partners themselves. However, in large and heterogeneous classes, in which it is appropriate to create the pairs/groups of the same language abilities, the creating of the pairs/groups should depend on the teacher.

2. Facilitator

Sometimes the students struggle when role-playing. They might have troubles with vocabulary, structures, ideas how to continue or they might feel shy to communicate in English. The role of the teacher is to encourage and support the students to become confident and independent when producing the language themselves.

3. Observer

Monitoring represents a highly important part of role-playing. The teacher observes the class in order to see the students' strengths and weaknesses. According to Harmer (2005: 347) not only do the findings help the teacher to give the students feedback, but also help the teacher to evaluate the success of the role play.

4. Participant

Sometimes the teacher can even get involved in the activity. However, Harmer (2005: 347) warns that the teacher can easily become a dominating element giving the students only a little space to be creative and independent.

CHAPTER II PROFESIONAL PROJECT

D HYPOTHESIS

Using various role play activities in EFL classes at lower secondary school can help students to develop their oral fluency and interactive speaking skills. Simulating real situations in the safe environment of the classroom eliminates the shyness of speaking English and prepares students for real life.

E DESIGN OF THE PROJECT

I. The aim of Project

The aim of the project was to find out whether role play activities suitable for students at lower secondary school contribute to the development of oral fluency and interactive speaking skills and whether they enable students to practice real life situations in the classroom effectively.

On the basis of the ideas studied in literature and my own teaching experience, I designed four lesson plans. The climax of each lesson plan was a role play activity which enabled the students to practice the situations they could experience in everyday life outside the classroom. The aim was achieved by various structural interactive role play activities. Different strategies were used to present the language. The lesson plans also show the way role play activities can be integrated in the whole lesson.

II. Collecting data

The project was performed at lower secondary school Liberecká in Jablonec nad Nisou. My mentor teacher taught classes 8. C and 8. A. Before implementing the project, I observed both classes for a week and interviewed the teacher to get some useful information about the students. I also analyzed the course book the classes worked with. The findings helped me to be better prepared for the lessons.

1. Textbook analysis

Both classes worked with Project 3 by Tom Hutchinson. Project is a five-level primary and secondary English course and consists of a student's book, workbook, teacher's book and class CDs.

The Student's book

The student's book is well structured and contains many illustrations and photos. It includes a detailed content, which enables an easy orientation in the book. The instructions are set in English; nevertheless, they are accurate and clear. The student's book consists of an introductory unit and eight main units. There are also four revision units and four extension units containing a culture section, projects and songs. At the end of the book, a pronunciation section and a list of irregular verbs are added.

Each main unit consists of four topic-based sections. Sections A and C focus on grammar. The inductive approach is used to present new material. There are many different texts and cartoon strips where new grammar structures are introduced in context. The section called *What's the rule?* encourages students to figure out the grammar form and meaning themselves. *Practice* gives students a chance to consolidate new grammar structures mainly through written practice.

Listening and speaking skills are practiced in section B. This section emphasizes the use of English in real life beyond the classroom. An emphasis is put on the functional language. The functions in the book include for instance requests, offers, giving advice and making suggestions. New vocabulary is presented in a teenage photostory called *Kids*. The *Everyday expressions* part focuses on colloquial phrases, which are first compared with the expressions in the mother tongue and then practiced through written exercises. The *Everyday expressions* section is followed by short communicative speaking activities where students practice and produce the phrases themselves. However, the majority of the speaking activities are focused on accuracy. The activities include for instance using model dialogues or drilling the phrases, which does not give much space for creativity. There are a few role play activities, which are, however, not sufficiently introduced. On the other hand, the language taught in the book might provide valuable material to be used in role plays. I really appreciate the connection of the language with the daily life. Students can see the practical usage of English, which can be a motivation aspect to learn English.

Section D practices and develops writing, reading and listening skills.

The *Extension* units expand to other subjects, too. Therefore, they give a great opportunity for the cross-curriculum links. The *Culture* section familiarizes students with the culture of the English-speaking countries. In the *Project* section, students can choose from three types of projects according to their interests and abilities. The songs in this section provide the practice of listening and grammar in an entertaining way.

The pronunciation is practiced in a few exercises at the end of the book. The phonetic alphabet is presented here. However, the *Pronunciation* section only deals with isolated words. The importance is placed on the correct pronunciation of the sounds of English. Other phonological features like rhythm, intonation or stress are not practiced.

The main units are supplemented by *Progress diary*, *Study skills* and short vocabulary activities. The *Progress diary* encourages students to take responsibility for their

own learning. After every unit, they are asked to do the *Progress check* in the workbook and then they evaluate their own progress. The *Study skills* part gives students tips how to study more effectively.

We can find many pair and group work activities, which encourage cooperation between the students.

The workbook

The workbook corresponds with the student's book. It offers a great source of further practice of the language taught in the student's book. The workbook contains a variety of grammar exercises, vocabulary practice and also entertaining activities like puzzles or crosswords.

Reading and writing skills are practiced and developed in the workbook; however, there are no tasks practicing speaking and listening skills. Each unit is followed by a Progress check, in which the tasks include both the new language and also language from the previous units. At the end of the book, a grammar reference part, a list of irregular verbs and wordlist are added. However, all grammar rules are explained in English, which I find difficult for the students.

The teacher's book

The teacher's book contains teaching notes for each unit and answer keys for the activities in the student's book and workbook. There are also tapescripts for the listening activities and tests. It also includes a few optional extra activities for stronger students. Nevertheless, it does not include any photocopiable activities or further ideas to be used in the lessons to revise the work in the student's book and workbook.

2. Interview with the teacher

I asked the teacher a few questions about both classes. She answered them very willingly and gave me some useful advice. The record of the interview is attached in Appendix.

I found out some important information, which helped me to be well prepared for teaching the classes. The relationships between the students in class 8.C are very good. They get on with each other very well. They are friendly and calm and they listen to the teacher. Therefore, it will be easy to maintain discipline. However, in class 8.A, there is Jessica, a bilingual student, who does not fit into the class as she behaves a little bit childish.

Especially boys do not want to work with her. Therefore, I have to be careful during pair and group work to find good partners for her. I will also have to find the way to engage her in the activities as she usually does not work during the English lessons. She might become a teacher's adviser. The students are often a bit loud; my mentor teacher advised me to keep silence for a few seconds to make them calm.

The preparation of the lessons will be rather demanding in terms of a variety of activities of different difficulty as both classes are heterogeneous. Radek is the weakest student in 8.C. He has been diagnosed with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorders) and dyslexia. He has serious problems with English. Sometimes he does not understand the basic instructions in English. He does not pay attention during the lessons and often does not listen to the teacher. He works very slowly in comparison with the rest of the class. Therefore, I will have to give him a great attention during the lesson and to prepare special tests for him. I will probably have to prepare shorter tasks for him, too. There are four above average students for whom I will have to prepare more difficult or longer tasks as they work faster than the others.

There are no students with learning disabilities in 8.A. However, there are a few weaker students. Andrej, Kuba, Honza and Bára work more slowly than the rest of the students. They are not very active and they seem to be bored during the English lessons. According to the teacher, they are intelligent, yet they have a lack of interest in English. Therefore, I will have to try to engage them in the activities and to motivate them. Besides Jessica Petr, Anna, Tomáš and Karolína are the strongest students in this class. Petr is very good at English and often shows that he is better than the others.

The majority of the students in 8.C need the teacher's help to express themselves. I will have to give them enough time to think about what they are going to say; it will be also necessary to give them prompts and ask them detailed questions Some of the students speak Czech when they want to express their ideas. The students in 8.C are not used to work in pairs or groups so the organization of pairs or groups might be a bit difficult at the beginning. I will have to be careful when observing them as they will probably need more help.

Both classes have tried role play activities; nevertheless, they do not have much experience with them. The teacher works mainly with the course book, which does not offer many role play activities. The teacher thinks the role play activities might be too difficult for

the students in 8.C and suggests to prepare simple role play activities. On the other hand, she thinks that the students of 8. A class will like role play activities and will have no problems with them.

3. The observation of the classes

I observed 3 lessons in 8.A class and 3 lessons in 8.C class to get a general characteristic about the classes. I wanted to see how the students worked during the lessons. I also noted the teaching style of the mentor teacher. The findings of the observations are summarized below. Detailed observation records are attached in Appendix.

Class 8. C

This class consists of 18 students- 12 girls and 6 boys. It is a mixed ability class. There are approximately 5 bright students. However, the rest of the students are weak. It is important to review grammar and vocabulary frequently. The pace of learning is slower than in the class 8. A.

During the lessons the students were very calm and they did not disturb. On the other hand, the most of the students were not active and did not cooperate with the teacher. The students listened to the teacher and tried to answer the teacher's questions; nevertheless, they often needed the help of the teacher. Some of the students even did not understand the basic instructions in English. They often spoke Czech in the lessons. The teacher explained grammar in Czech.

One student did not pay attention during the lessons. The teacher helped him very often. It was not easy for him to keep concentration for the whole lesson. He was always doing different things he was not supposed to do. He needed the teacher's attention almost all the time.

The students did not work in pairs or groups much. They were not able to work independently without the help of the teacher. In pairs or groups, they often spoke Czech and did not know what to do.

At the beginning of the lessons, the teacher prepared an activity to review the language they had learnt before. The teacher chose easier activities for the students than for 8. A class. She included many games and fun activities to motivate them. She was very patient, pleasant and often praised the students.

The communicative speaking activities were focused mainly on answering the teacher's questions. The teacher tried to engage the students into conversation, yet she got very little oral feedback. She often repeated questions using different words and gave the students enough time to think about the responses. However, she sometimes translated the questions into Czech.

Class 8. A

There are 22 students- 14 girls and 8 boys in the class 8. A. They have three 45-minute English lessons a week.

Even though the class is created by talented students from elementary schools in Jablonec nad Nisou, their learning abilities are mixed. It is a heterogeneous class. Therefore, the preparation of the lessons is demanding in terms of tasks of varying difficulty and also in terms of additional exercises to be used besides the exercises in the course book.

It seems that the students like the English lessons and are interested in language learning. During the lessons the class was often a bit noisy as the students wanted to express themselves and to share their ideas. They sometimes did not raise their hands and shouted answers.

The majority of the students paid attention, were active and participated during the lessons well. There were around 5 students who worked faster in comparison with the rest of the class and also approximately 5 students who were rather weaker and did not cooperate with the teacher much.

The students are used to speaking English; however, they sometimes asked questions in Czech if they did not understand something. The teacher usually answered them in English, but did not persuade the students to repeat the question again in English. The teacher spoke English almost all the time. She gave instructions and explained grammar in English. She sometimes used Czech to warn the students when they disturbed.

The lessons were dynamic and well structured. The teacher worked mainly with the course book; however, she also used different sources for warming up activities, short games or quizzes. She changed the activities quite often. Pair work and group work were included in the lessons. The students did not seem to have problems to work in pairs or small groups.

Communicative speaking activities were included in the lessons. The students discussed questions after reading tasks in pairs, or they were asked to think about the advantages and disadvantages of computers/mobile phones etc. in groups. Whole class activities were used to promote communicative speaking, too. The teacher often encouraged the students to speak by asking them a variety of questions. She wanted to know the students' opinions about the issues being discussed. However, only few students got a chance to speak English through the teacher- student interaction.

The classroom itself is not appropriate for teaching and learning English at all. The English lessons are situated in a laboratory in which it is impossible to change the seating and also the motion in the classroom is considerably limited. It is not easy to make groups there.

III. Lesson plans

1. Lesson plan 1

Topic: **Let's go shopping!**

Class: 8.A (13-14 years old)

Materials: role cards, worksheets, board, New Headway Pre-Intermediate CD

The role play activity is inspired by New Headway Pre-intermediate student's book, page 37.

The role play is controlled by a situation and phrases written on role cards.

The presentation of the language is realized by reading and listening material.

Aims:

- to learn how to carry on a polite conversation in a shop in order to buy or sell goods like a T-shirt, a mug or a book

- to practice functions like enquiring about the product or recommending the product

- to know the types of shops and products we can buy there

Objectives:

- students know the names of the shops and they know what they can buy there

- students are able to make conversations in order to buy or sell goods in the shops

- students cooperate with each other

Procedure

Stage 1: Warm up activity- alphabet game

Timing: 5 min

Pattern of interaction: Whole class

Aim: to practice goods, to prepare the students for the next activities

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher writes the following sentences on the board:

> Yesterday I went shopping and I bought... an **A**PPLE. Yesterday I went shopping and I bought an **A**PPLE and... some **B**READ.

- The teacher explains the activity.

T: *"Look at the board. (The teacher reads the sentences aloud.) We are going to play the alphabet game. Repeat the sentences and add more things you bought in a shop. The thing must start with a letter "C". Be careful. You have to remember all the things we bought!"*

- The teacher asks a few questions to elicit things students can buy in a shop.

T: *"What things which start with "C" can you buy? Do you have any ideas? (Cookies, a car, a coat etc.)*

- The students continue the game.

Stage 2: What can you buy in these shops?

Timing: 5 min

Pattern of interaction: Pair work

Aim: to practice the names of the shops, to practice the names of goods

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher asks the students questions about shopping.

T: *"Do you like shopping?"*

T: *"What do you usually buy for yourself?"*

T: *"How often do you go shopping?" etc.*

- The teacher hands out the copies and sets the task.

T: *"Look at me. Here is a copy for you. There is a table with the names of five shops. Work with your partner. What can you buy in these places? Fill in the table. Write at least three things to each column."*

The worksheet:

- The teacher calls out a few students in order to check students' answers.

T: *"Now we will check your ideas together.*

T: *"What can you buy in a clothes shop?"*

T: *"What can you buy in a bookshop?" etc.*

A clothes shop	A chemist's	A bookshop	A pet shop	A bakery
	✚	📖	🕷	

Stage 3: Listening 1

Timing: 5 min

Pattern of interaction: Individual work, whole class

Aim: to get a general idea about the conversation, to prepare the students for the next listening task

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher gives each student a handout with a dialogue.

T: *"Look at your handouts. We will listen to a conversation from a shop. Look at the questions on your handouts. Jane, read the questions aloud."*

- The teacher plays the recording.

T: *"Are the questions clear? Do you have any questions? Now listen to the conversation and write short answers to the questions."*

The worksheet:

Listen to the conversation. Answer the questions:

1. Where is the conversation taking place?

2. What does the customer want?

3. Can the shop assistant help?

4. How much does the customer pay?

- The teacher asks the students the questions to check their answers.

Stage 4: Listening 2

Timing: 7 min

Pattern of interaction: Individual work

Aim: to review the phrases connected with shopping, to see what the real conversation in a shop might look like

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher tells students to read the conversation quickly and asks about words which might be unfamiliar to the students.

T: *"Look at the conversation. Read it quickly.*

T: *"Look at line three. What does "to look for" mean?"*

T: *"Look at line nine. What does "changing room" mean?"*

- The teacher tells the students to read and listen to the conversation again.

T: *"Look at the conversation. Now read and listen to the conversation again and complete the lines."*

- After listening the teacher asks the students to check their answers.

T: *"Now check your answers with your partner. Look at the tapescript which is on the next page. Are there any words you do not understand?"*

The worksheet:

(The students were supposed to complete the words in italics)

Complete the lines from the conversation.

A: Hello. Can I help you?

B: *I'm just looking,* thanks.

…

B: I'm looking for a jumper *like this, but in blue*. Have you got <u>one</u>?

A: I'll just have a look. *What size* are you?

B: Medium

A: Here you are.

B: That's great. *Can I try it on*?

A: Of course. The changing rooms are over there.

…

B: I like it.

A: It *fits you very well.*

B: How much is it?

A: £39.99.

B: OK, *I'll have it.*

A: How would you like to pay?

B: *Cash.*

Stage 5: Practicing the dialogue

Timing: 5- 7 min

What: Students practice the dialogue they have listened to.

Pattern of interaction: Pair work

Aim: to practice the phrases which are useful for shopping in a clothes shop

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher explains the activity.

T: *"Try the conversation with your partner. One of you is a customer and one of you is a shop assistant. Do not read the dialogue. Cover the dialogue and try not to look at it! When you have finished, switch the roles and practice the dialogue again."*

- The teacher walks around the class, listens to the students and helps if necessary.

Stage 6: Role play- Let's go shopping!

Timing: 15 min

What: Students role play a situation which takes place in a shop.

Aim: to practice conversations in order to buy a T- shirt, doll, book etc., to simulate real situations in a shop

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher asks the students questions to review the phrases they might need to use in the role play. She writes some ideas on the board.

T: *"Look at the board. You want to buy a T- shirt. What questions will you ask the shop assistant?" What information about the T- shirt do you need to know? What will the shop assistant ask you?"*

Board plan (Sample questions which the students could see during role-playing):

I want to buy a T-shirt.	
A customer asks:	A shop assistant asks:
Can I try it on?	Can I help you?
How much is it?	How would you like to pay?
Do you have "M"?	What size are you?

- The teacher briefly illustrates the scenario.

T: *"Imagine that you are on holidays in London. You are going shopping because you want to buy some presents for your friends and family."*

- The teacher explains the activity and gives each student a role card with specific information. She prepared three sets of cards of a different difficulty.

T: *"I am going to give you these cards with some information. Look at your card. One of you is a customer who wants to buy something. The cards tell you what exactly you are looking for. There are a few phrases you have to use. One of you is a shop assistant who helps the customer as much as possible. There are also a few phrases you have to use. Read your cards. Do you have any questions? Do you understand your information? Think about the conversation for a few minutes. Now make a conversation with your partner."*

The role play cards:

Situation 1- easier situation for weaker students

You are a customer in a clothes shop	**You are a shop assistant in a clothes shop.**
You would like to buy a London T-shirt for your mum. [2]	Try to help the customer. He/She would like to buy a London T-shirt. Show him/her what you have.
During the role play you must say: 1. I'm looking for a London T-shirt. 2. Do you have "___" (size)? 3. Do you have it in _____ (colour)? Think about: the price, style… You can say them in any order. Try to remember them without looking at this card.	During the role play you must say: 1. Is it for a man or woman? 2. How would you like to pay? You can say them in any order. Try to remember them without looking at this card.

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[2] http://www.delightgifts.com/british_gifts_souvenirs/classic_fit_white_i_love_london_t_shirt.asp

Situation 2- more difficult situation

You are a customer in a gift shop.	You are a shop assistant in a gift shop.
You would like to buy a London mug.	Try to help the customer.
During the role play [3] you must say:	He/she would like to buy a London mug.
1. It's too expensive.	During the role play you must say:
2. I don't like this one.	1. I'm sorry, we don't accept credit cards.
3. Can I pay by credit card?	2. This one is the most favourite one, but it's £20.
You can say them in any order. Try to remember them without looking at this card.	You can say them in any order. Try to remember them without looking at this card.
Think about: the colour, picture, price…	

Situation 3- difficult situation for stronger students

You are a customer in a book shop.	You are a shop assistant in a book shop.
You would like to buy a London picture book for your parents, but you do not know which one is the best option.	Try to help the customer.
During the role play you must say:	He/she would like to buy a London picture book.
1. I'm looking for a good London picture book.	During the role play you must say: [4]
2. Which one would you recommend me?	1. We have a few very good ones. Let me show you.
3. I like it, but I'm looking for something cheaper.	2. This one is wonderful. It costs £35.
You can say them in any order. Try to remember them without looking at this card.	You can say them in any order. Try to remember them without looking at this card.

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[3] http://www.thelondoncompany.net/london-rain-ceramic-mug-449-p.asp

- The teacher observes the class and helps if necessary. She takes notes about the mistakes in order to give feedback after the activity has finished.

Stage 7: Feedback

Timing: 5 min

Pattern of interaction: Whole class

Aim: to give feedback to the students

Procedure:

- The teacher writes a few incorrect words, phrases or sentences on the board and encourages the students to correct them.

Stage 8: Follow up

Time: 2 min

Homework- the students write a dialogue which takes place in a pet shop. They are asked to write at least 15 sentences.

Reflection:

I tried to choose a variety of activities which would be effective, interesting and also fun for the students. There are 22 students in the class, so whole- class activities are not suitable as only few students participate. Therefore, I chose only the warm-up activity as a whole-class game. The reason why I chose a game was to motivate the students. The students enjoyed this activity. They even helped each other to remember and to think of the goods.

Next activity was focused on vocabulary related to shopping. The aim was to revise the goods and types of shops which the students would need to use in the role play. Students worked in pairs. I let them work with his/her neighbour. I thought it would be an easy task for the students; however, some of them found it difficult to understand the word *"a chemist's"*. I gave them a brief definition of the word in English: *"A chemists is a place where you can buy medicaments when you are ill."* The activity took longer than I had planned. I should have set this activity as a competition to make it faster and maybe more enjoyable.

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[4] http://www.landscapepictures.info/London_picture_photography_book.html

The students did not have any problems with the first listening. They answered the questions correctly so they got a general idea about the dialogue. Nevertheless, a few students had problem to fill in the lines in the conversation. Therefore, I decided to play the recording once again. The students had a chance to listen to the dialogue and at the same time to read it in the tapescript. As a result, we did not have enough time needed for the next activities.

The students then practiced the dialogue in pairs. They were asked not to look at the conversation, which made the task more challenging for them. I knew there were a few stronger students and I did not want them to work with the weaker ones as it would not be beneficial for both sides. Therefore, I organized the pairs myself.

After practicing the dialogue, we reviewed the questions a customer and shop assistant might ask. I wrote a few sample questions on the board so that the students could look at them during the role play if needed. I had prepared three sets of role play cards of different difficulty. The stronger students got more challenging situation. On the other hand, slower students got shorter and less difficult task so that they could succeed and felt confident. Four students got the first situation (buying a T-shirt), which was the easiest one. It was similar to the sample situation (buying a jumper) so the students could follow the sample dialogue they had practiced. Six stronger students got situation three, which was the most difficult in the sense of grammar structures the students had to use.

The role play cards included the items the students were going to buy as presents and also a few points the students had to ask about. However, not all the details about the items were mentioned. Therefore, the students could be creative, too. They had to think about the colour, size or material to buy the best present for the members of his/her family or friends.

During the role play, the students worked better than I expected. They are used to working in pairs or groups so I did not have to deal with any discipline problems.

I think the students found the role play enjoyable as they were active and worked freely and spontaneously. The interpersonal relationships in the class are good; therefore, the students were not shy to talk to each other. I was surprised they were able to use the language they had practiced before without looking at the worksheets frequently. They also spoke English most of the time. However, three pairs needed more help as they were not able to keep the conversation going. I tried giving them hints so that they could make their

own questions and responses. For example: *"What kind of books does your brother like reading? Does he like romantic books? How much money do you have? Ask the shop assistant about the price of the book."* Etc.

After the role play, we discussed the mistakes they had made while speaking. I wrote the incorrect phrases/ sentences on the board and asked the students to help me to correct them.

The mistakes the students made:

How <u>many</u> money does it cost?

<u>Have you</u> a book about history?

Can you tell me where <u>is it</u>?

<u>I looking</u> for a doll for my sister. etc.

I chose self-correction as I wanted the students to feel responsible for their own learning. The students were enthusiastic, however, they were noisy as they wanted to be first to correct the sentences. I waited for a few seconds and I used a gesture (index finger in front of my mouth) to be quiet. I asked them to raise their hands if they wanted to answer.

The problem I faced was a lack of time we needed for setting homework. I was forced to set it during the break, which was not very effective.

The role play was successful and the aims of the lesson were fulfilled. The role play helped the students to practice communicative speaking skills in a real-life context of buying and selling goods in a shop. I think it was very helpful to prepare easier and more difficult situations for the students. The most of the students worked independently and completed the task successfully. Only three pairs needed some help during role-playing.

2. Lesson plan 2

Topic: **One cheeseburger, please.**

Class: 8.A (13-14 years old)

Materials: worksheets, role play cards, black board

The role play is inspired by Role Plays for Today by Jason Anderson, pages 34-35.

The role play is controlled by three different situations written on role cards.

The language is presented by reading material (filling in the table) and a demonstration of a model dialogue between the teacher and a stronger student.

Aims:

- to simulate a real situation in a fast food restaurant.

- to learn how to order food and drink in a fast food restaurant, to make a complaint and to change the orders

- to review food and drink we can buy in a fast food restaurant.

Objectives:

- students know the food which they can order in a fast food restaurant

- students are able to order food in a fast food restaurant

- students cooperate with each other

Procedure:

Stage 1: Warm up activity- word search puzzle

Timing: 7 min

Pattern of interaction: Individual work, whole class

Aims: to motivate the students, to review food and drinks we can buy in a fast food restaurant

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher gives each student a handout with a word search puzzle.

T: *"Look at the worksheets. There is a word search puzzle. Can you find all twelve words? Try to find them as quickly as possible."*

Look at the word search puzzle. Find the words!

```
P  I  Y  H  Q  A  Z  Z  I  P  M  E  I
U  T  J  F  R  J  H  L  R  I  A  K  G
K  U  M  X  I  Q  Z  O  S  D  E  O  B
S  N  U  D  H  G  J  J  T  M  R  F  S
A  H  E  A  A  S  U  E  X  D  C  G  A
L  G  B  M  M  C  I  S  E  Q  O  A  N
A  U  H  Z  B  D  C  Q  I  C  E  G  D
D  O  C  L  U  A  E  R  H  N  C  Q  W
B  D  Q  Q  R  W  E  I  I  C  I  S  I
H  H  A  I  G  D  P  T  H  S  F  F  C
U  G  K  H  E  S  W  D  L  Z  P  J  H
Q  R  N  I  R  K  M  X  S  H  C  S  A
Q  X  Q  A  K  E  T  C  H  U  P  I  F
```

chips	juice
pizza	ketchup
doughnut	crisps
hamburger	salad
hot dog	sandwich
ice-cream	tea
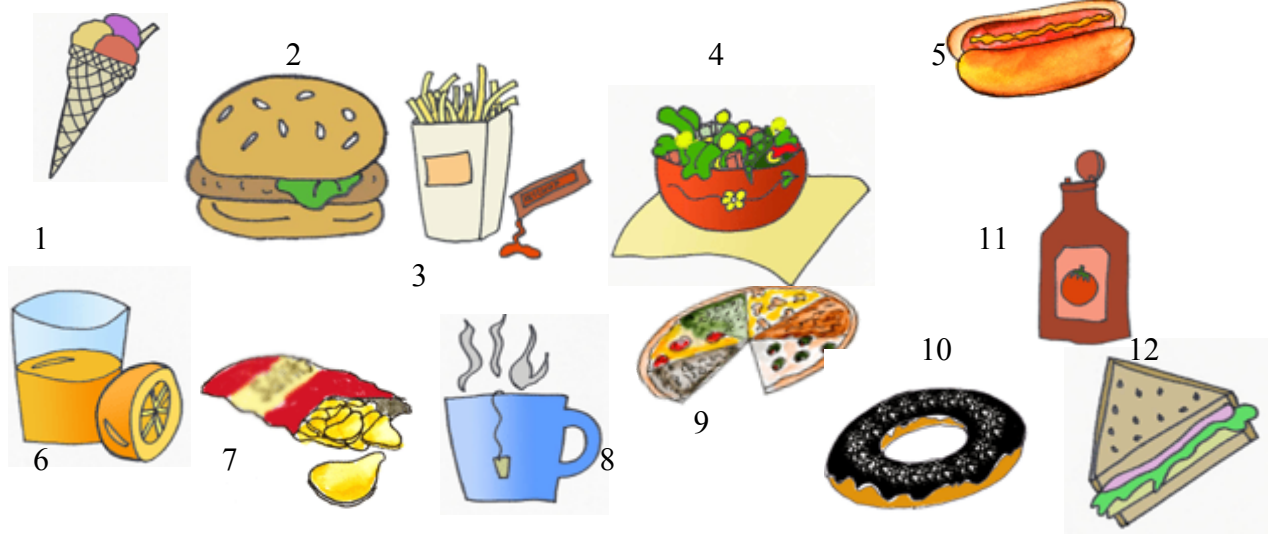
What is it?[5]

T: "*Have you found all the words? Check it with your partner.*"

T: "*Now look at the pictures below.*"

T: "*What is number 1? Who knows?*" (Ss: "*Ice-cream!*")

T: "*Can you find a hot dog? Which picture is it?*" (Ss: "*Number 5.*")

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[5] http://helpforenglish.cz/slovni-zasoba/okruhy-slovni-zasoby/tematicke-okruhy/c2006072352-food.html

Stage 2: Conversation about fast food restaurants

Timing: 5-7 min

Pattern of interaction: Whole class

Aims: to elicit the topic of the role play, to practice speaking skills

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher asks the students a few questions about the fast food restaurants.

T: *"Where can you buy a hamburger, cola or fries?"*

T: *"Do you eat in fast food restaurants?"*

T: *"What do you usually order?"*

T: *"Do you like fast food? Why? Why not?"*

T: *"Do you know any fast food restaurants?"*

Stage 3: What do the customers and assistants say?

Timing: 10-12 min

Pattern of interaction: Pair work, whole class

Aim: to be familiar with the phrases which can be used in a fast food restaurant

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher hands out a worksheet to each student. The students work in pairs and fill in the table with the phrases. Then the class checks the answers and the meaning of the phrases.

T: *"Look at me. Look at the worksheet I have. There is a table with two columns. What does an assistant in a fast food restaurant say? What does a customer say? Look at the phrases below. Work with your partner. Fill in the table."*

T: *"Now we will check your answers together. What does a customer say?"*

T: *"Do you understand the phrases?" "What does a phrase "Here you are." mean?"*

T: *"How do you say "Dobrou chuť." In English?"*

T: *"What do the phrases "to eat in" and "to take it away" mean?"* Etc.

<u>The worksheet</u>*(the letters in the brackets show the correct answers A- assistant, C-customer):*

<u>Look at the phrases. What does a customer say? What does an assistant say? Fill in the table.</u>

An assistant says	**A customer says**

Can I help you? *(A)*	She was first. *(C)*	Enjoy your meal! *(C)*	How much is that? *(C)*
That's £4.50. *(A)*	Who's next? *(A)*	Here you are. *(A)*	Eat in or take away? *(A)*
I want to eat in/take it away. *(C)*	Do you have any special offers? *(A)*	Can I have… a hamburger/large fries…? *(C)*	Have you got barbecue sauce? *(C)*
Would you like a drink with that? *(A)*	Is that everything? Anything else? *(A)*	Would you like regular or large? *(A)*	Without ketchup/salt/ice. *(C)*

- The teacher pre-teaches vocabulary which might be unfamiliar to the students.

T: *"Look at the board. I have written some useful words. Can you help me with the meaning of them? What does "to order" mean? You can order food in a fast food restaurant." Etc.*

Board plan:

a counter– pult	*onion rings– cibulové kroužky*
to order– objednat	*a special offer– speciální nabídka*
chicken sticks– kuřecí tyčinky	*to include– obsahovat*
cinnamon– skořice	*orangeade– pomerančová šťáva*

Stage 4: Role play- At the fast food restaurant.

Timing: 12- 15 min

Pattern of interaction: Pair work

Aims: to practice the situation at a fast food restaurant, to be able to order food

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher gives each student a worksheet with a menu.

T: *"Look at the menu. Read it quickly. Do you understand the words?"*

T: *"Now work with your partner. What is the name of your fast food restaurant?"*

The worksheet:

Think about the name of your fast food restaurant!

Name:
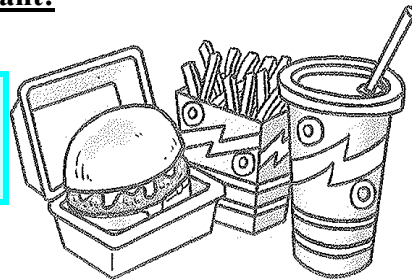
MENU

Burgers

Hamburger	70p
Cheeseburger	85p
Chickenburger	£2.25
Quarterpounder	£1.80
Masterburger	£2.75
Fish burger	£2.95
Vegeburger	£3.20

Chicken sticks

8	£2.45
6	£2.25
4	£1.85

Onion rings

regular	£1.20
large	£1.50

Fries

regular	£0.85
large	£1.00
bonus	£1.20

Meals

(include fries and drink)

	regular	large
Hamburger / Cheeseburger	£2.95	£3.25
Quarterpounder	£3.50	£3.95
Chickenburger / Masterburger	£3.95	£4.35
Fish burger	£4.10	£4.50

Special Offer

Bonus meal: add on 30p

Drinks

	regular	large
Cola / Orangeade / Lemonade	£0.90	£1.15
Orange juice	£1.50	£1.80
Mineral water	£0.80	£1.00
Tea / Coffee	£0.80	£1.00
Cappuccino	£1.30	£1.60
Milkshake	£1.10	£1.50

(chocolate / strawberry / vanilla)

Desserts

Apple pie	£1.50	
Doughnut	£0.70	

(chocolate / cinnamon)

	regular	large
Ice-cream	£0.85	£1.05

(chocolate / strawberry / vanilla)

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[6] ANDERSON, J. *Role Plays for Today.* DELTA Publishing, 2006.

- The teacher hands out role cards for the assistants and customers.

T: *"One of you is a customer who is going to a fast food restaurant and one of you is an assistant in a fast food restaurant."*

T: *"There are situations for the customers. Read the situations. Do you have any questions?"*

T: *"There is information for the assistants. Read the cards. Do you understand?"*

The role cards:

Student A- customer

Situation 1

You are a customer in a fast food restaurant. Go up to the counter and order lunch from the menu. You've only got £5.

Situation 2

You don't like ice in your drinks. You do not like ketchup. Place an order for two people. Your friend is coming soon. She is a vegetarian.

Extra situation for stronger students:

Situation 3

You are interested in Masterburger. Ask: "What's in it?" If it sounds good, order one. Ask the assistant if they have fruit tea.

Complain about something you have ordered. (The hamburger is too cold/ too salty etc. The cola is too warm…)

Student B- assistant

You are an assistant in a fast food restaurant. After you take the order, repeat it to the customer at the end and tell him/her how much it costs.

REMEMBER:

- Do not forget to ask if the customer wants regular or large.

- The Masterburger is a large cheeseburger with onion rings.

- Be polite. Say: Have a nice day./Thank you./Enjoy your meal…

- If the customer complains about something, say that you are sorry and give him/her a new drink/hamburger… for free.

- The teacher chooses a stronger student to demonstrate the situation.

T: *"Listen to me. First I will demonstrate the conversation. Petr, can you help me? Come to the board. Take the menu and the situation cards with you. We will demonstrate the first situation, OK? I am an assistant in Chicken Burger fast food restaurant. Come and order something."*

T: *"Look at me and Petr. Listen carefully."*

- The teacher explains the scenario. The students practice the conversations.

T: *"All right. Now you will make the conversation. Snack time! Your desk is a counter. Stand up. Customers go up to the counter and order something tasty. Start with the situation number one."*

- The students practice the conversation. The teacher walks around the class and helps if necessary.

T: *"You have one minute left. Now switch the roles."*

Stage 5: Feedback

Timing: 3 min

Pattern of interaction: Whole class

Aim: to give feedback to the students

Procedure:

- The teacher encourages the students to correct the mistakes they made. She writes the incorrect sentences on the board and asks the students to correct them. She also highlights what the students did well.

Stage 6: Follow up- Conversation

Timing: 2-4 min

Pattern of interaction: Whole class

Aim: to summarize the role play, to get feedback from the students

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher asks the students a few questions about the role play.

T: *"Who ordered a cheeseburger? Raise your hand."*

T: *"Who ordered fries?"*

T: *"What did you order for your friend, who was a vegetarian?"*

T: *"Was your assistant polite?"*

T: *"Was it difficult to order food?"*

T: *"Did you have any problems?"*

T: *"What did you find easy?"*

T: *"Would you change anything?"*

Reflection:

First I prepared a quick warm- up game to motivate the students and to review vocabulary related to a fast food restaurant. I think the students were interested in the game as they tried to work as fast as possible. When checking the meaning of the words, I found out that some students confused the words "crisps and chips". Therefore, I wrote the words on the board and encouraged the students to vote. I said: *"OK, look at the board. Who thinks that "crisps" means "hranolky"? Raise your hands. Who votes for "brambůrky"?"* Then I wrote the translation of the words on the board. The whole class participated well.

I wanted to make the students excited about the topic of the role play so I asked them a few questions related to a fast food restaurant. However, as it is a relatively large class, only few students got a chance to speak. The students sitting in the front rows were very active. They shared their opinions willingly. A few students sitting at the back were calm and did not disturb; nevertheless, they did not cooperate at all. I wanted to involve them in the conversation; therefore, I asked them the questions even though they did not raise their hand. I had to ask more detailed questions and give them prompts. I asked: *"Do you like fast food?"* The student answered: *"Yes."* I continued asking: *"What do you like?"* S: no answer. I tried to help him: *"Well, I like hot dogs. Do you like hot dogs?"* S: *"Yes, I do. And I like hamburgers."*

The students found the matching of the phrases quite easy. They worked faster than I had expected. They did not know the meaning of the phrase "Eat in or take away?" I gave them a brief definition in English. I said: *"Eat in means that you buy for example a hamburger and you eat it in a restaurant. If you do not want to eat inside the restaurant, you can take it away. You can eat outside, at home or at school. What does "to eat in" mean?* Ss: *"Jíst vevnitř v restauraci."* I asked about the meaning of the second phrase: *"What does "to take away" mean?"* Ss: *Vzít si jídlo s sebou."*

I thought the students might not know the meaning of the words I had written on the board. The students paid attention and tried to think of the meaning of the words. They often shouted the answers. I was surprised that they only did not know the words "a counter" and "to include". I translated the words myself. The students also did not understand what onion rings were. They were able to translate it; however, they could not imagine what onion rings looked like. I asked Jessica if she knew it. She explained it to the class in Czech.

During the demonstration of the role play, the students paid attention and watched the situation. It was the third lesson where we practiced a role play; and I could see that the students felt more comfortable and relaxed than during the first attempts with role-playing. I think they got used to role-playing very quickly. They communicated with each other spontaneously. However, around five students tended to read the phrases from their worksheets. I told them to look at the worksheet for a minute and to think what they were going to say. Then I told them to turn the worksheet over. The organization of their ideas helped them to keep the conversation going. It was obvious that around five students needed to practice the phrases more before role-playing. I should prepare more exercises practicing the language next time. I gave the class three situations. Four pairs completed all three situations; the rest of the class completed the first two situations.

I think it was a good idea to create the counters from the desks and to tell the students to stand up. They seemed to be very enthusiastic. The class was, however, a bit noisy. Therefore, next time I should tell them to work more quietly before the role play starts.

A few students had problems to pronounce the words "a doughnut and orangeade". The pronounced [ˈdəʊnʊt] and [ˌɒrɪndʒˈɪːd]. I wrote the words on the board and pronounced them correctly. I told the students to repeat them. I did not think about the practice of

pronunciation before the lesson. Next time I should spend some time to practice pronunciation, too. I praised the students, because they all tried hard and worked well during the role play.

I also asked the students a few questions to get to know what they thought about the role play. First I asked the questions in English. However, they started answering in Czech. I think they found it too difficult to express their opinions about the role play in English. I decided to continue in Czech. I said: *"OK, now we can speak about the role play in Czech."* The students found the role play enjoyable. Some students told me they had had problems to remember the phrases. Therefore, for the next role play, I should definitely include more activities to practice the language.

The role play was successful and the aims of the lesson were fulfilled. The role play helped the students to practice communicative speaking skills in a real-life context of ordering at a fast food restaurant. The students worked independently and were motivated. However, around five students needed more time to practice the language properly.

3. Lesson plan 3

Topic: **At the airport**

Class: 8.C (13-14 years old)

Materials: worksheets, board, F2F Elementary CD

The role play activity is inspired by Face2Face Elementary student's book, page 99.

The role play is controlled by a dialogue.

The language is presented by reading and listening material (filling the gaps in the dialogue).

Aims:

- to simulate a situation at the airport in order to check in

- to learn how to respond to these questions which are often asked when checking-in at the airport

- to learn the vocabulary related to an airport and to cooperate with each other

Objectives:

- students know the vocabulary and structures related to an airport and travelling by plane

- students are able to make conversations in order to check in at an airport

- students cooperate with each other

Procedure:

Stage 1: Warm up activity- matching the pictures

Timing: 7-10 min

Pattern of interaction: Individual work

Aim: to practice vocabulary needed at an airport, to motivate the students

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher asks the students a few questions about travelling.

T: *"Last lesson we talked about travelling. How can we travel?" (Ss: "By car/train/plane…)*

- The teacher hands out a worksheet to each student.

T: *"When we want to travel abroad, we can travel by plane. First, we need to go to an airport. Look at the copy. There are pictures which show things or activities related to the airport. Work individually. Match the pictures to the words/phrases. Who will finish first?"*

The worksheet[7]:

(Correct answers: 1-b, 2-c, 3-g, 4-d, 5-f, 6-a, 7-j, 8-h, 9-i, 10-e, 11-m, 12-l, 13-k)

- The teacher observes the class and helps if necessary. The students check their answers.

T: "*Now check your answers with your partner.*"

T: *"Let's check it together. Where is a passport?"*

T: *"What is letter e?"* etc.

T: *"Repeat: a passport…passengers…a check-in desk."* etc.

Stage 2: What does the woman at the check-in desk say?

Timing: 7 min

Pattern of interaction: Pair work

Aims: to practice vocabulary, to present the phrases used at the check-in desk

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[7] Redston, C. ,Cunningham G. Face2Face Elementary. Cambridge University Press. 2005. p. 99

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher shows the students a picture of a man. She explains the activity. The students read the conversation and guess what the woman at the check- in desk says.

T: *"Look at me. I have a picture. Who can you see in the picture?"*

T: *"What is he going to do?*

T: *"This is Joe and he is going to the airport now. Turn your worksheets over. Now he is at the airport. Work in pairs. Look at the conversation between Joe and the woman at the check-in desk. Read the conversation. What does the woman at the check-in desk say to him? The pictures help you to guess the words. Write the words or phrases under each picture."*

The worksheet[8]:   The picture[9] (smaller image):

[8] Redston, C. ,Cunningham G. Face2Face Elementary. Cambridge University Press. 2005. p. 99
[9] http://depositphotos.com/2977059/stock-illustration-Going-on-holiday.html

Stage 3: What does Joe say?

Timing: 5 min

Pattern of interaction: Individual work

Aim: to complete the dialogue which will be practiced, to present the phrases used at the check-in desk

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher hands out the cards with the phrases Joe says. The students try to complete the conversation with the phrases.

T: *"The conversation is not complete. Look at the card I am giving you. Fill in Joe's part of the conversation with the phrases from the table."*

The card[10] *(the numbers show the correct order of the phrases)*:

b) Fill in Joe's part of the conversation in 6a) with these phrases.

Yes. Here you are. *(1)*   Is this flight on time? *(7)* Thanks. Bye. *(8)*   Two. *(2)*

Which gate is it? (6)   No, I haven't. *(4)*   Yes, I did. *(3)*   A window seat, please. *(5)*

Stage 4: Reading and listening

Timing: 7-10 min

Pattern of interaction: Individual work, whole class

Aim: to check the students' answers, to practice listening skills, to check the meaning of the phrases

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher plays the recording twice to check the students' answers.

T: *"Read and listen to the conversation. Check your answers."*

T: *"Listen to the conversation again. Do you have any questions?"*

- The teacher chooses two students to read the conversation aloud.

- The teacher asks the students about the meaning of the phrases.

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[10] Redston, C. ,Cunningham G. Face2Face Elementary. Cambridge University Press. 2005. p. 99

T: *"Look at the dialogue again. What does "Enjoy your flight." mean?"* etc.

Stage 5: Practicing the conversation

Timing: 5 min

Pattern of interaction: Pair work

Aim: to practice the conversation at the check-in desk

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher explains the activity.

T: *"Work with your partner. Practice the conversation together. The worksheet helps you to know what to say."*

T: *"Now switch the roles."*

Stage 6: Role play

Timing: 10 min

Pattern of interaction: Pair work

Aim: to practice a conversation at the check-in desk, to be able to check in at the airport

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher reorganizes the pairs. The students work in different pairs. They sit at the desk facing each other. The desks represent the check-in desks.

T: *"Now we will practice the conversation again, but you will work with another partner. Look at me. Raise your hand if you are sitting closer to the window. You are the passengers. Now, turn back. This is your new partner. He or she is the woman or man at the check-in desk. Who hasn't got a pair?"*

T: *"Your school desks are now the check-in desks at the airport. Your school bags are your hand luggage. The passengers stand up. Do not look at the worksheets. The woman or man at the check-in desk reads his or her part from the worksheet. You have five minutes to practice the conversation. Then we will switch the role. Is it clear? Any questions? Make the conversation."*

T: *"You have one minute left. Now switch the roles."*

- The teacher observes the class. She helps the students if necessary.

Stage 7: Feedback

Timing: 2 min

Pattern of interaction: Whole class

Aims: to give feedback to the students

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher writes some incorrect words or phrases on the board and asks the students to try to correct them. She tells the students what she liked about their performance.

- The teacher asks the student a few questions about their performance.

T: *"Was it easy or difficult to be the passenger?"*

T: *"Could you answer questions the check-in desk woman/man asked without looking at the worksheets?"*

T: *"What did you like about the role play? What did you not like?"*

Stage 8: Follow up- Homework

Timing: 1 min

The students write their own conversation at the check-in desk in pairs. Some of the pairs will be asked to perform the dialogue in front of the class.

Reflection:

First the students matched the words with the pictures. They worked well and tried to finish the task first.

I showed the students a picture of a man to attract them. I asked them a question *"What is the man in the picture going to do?"* to promote speaking and sharing the students' ideas. However, the students were not active at all. They were looking at me, but did not say anything. For that reason, I asked more detailed questions. I also chose a student to answer. I started asking Yes/No questions and continued with Wh- questions. I asked: *"Is he going swimming?"* S1: *"No."* I continued asking: *"Is he going on holidays?"* S2: *"Yes, he is."* T: *"Is he going on winter holidays?"* S3: *"No, summer holidays."* T: *"Right, he is going on summer holidays."* T: *"Where is he going, do you think?"* S3: *"To Italy."* etc.

Sometimes, I had to repeat the questions several times and speak very slowly so that the students could understand. The students were able to answer; nevertheless, their answers were rather short. I might have told the class the information about the man myself as we spent too much time working on this stage.

Completing the lines in the dialogue using the pictures interested the students. They paid attention and worked independently. I had to explain the activity to Radek again as he did not know what to do. I tried giving him prompts. I said: *"Look at the pictures in exercise 1. What is this picture?"* etc.

After the students filled in the Joe's part of the dialogue, they listened to the conversation twice in order to check their answers. The class paid attention. Only few students participated when checking the meaning of the phrases. The rest of the students might have not been sure about the right meaning so they kept silence. Next time I should encourage them to express their ideas, too.

Before the students started to role play, I organized the pairs myself. As the students were not used to changing their seats, the organization of the pairs was a bit noisy and took longer time than I had expected. I gave the instructions in English; however, the students seemed to be confused. Consequently, I repeated the instructions again in Czech. I said: "Dobře, zvedněte ruku, kdo sedíte u okna. Otočte se dozadu. Tohle je vaše nová dvojice. Jeden z vás je cestující a jeden z vás je žena, nebo muž za přepážkou.

I think the students liked using the props. Some pairs even added their own props. They used their exercise books like passports or flight tickets. While observing the class, I found out that only five pairs were able to make the conversation successfully. They communicated spontaneously and were creative, too. They tried not to copy the dialogue on the worksheet. However, the rest of the pairs had serious problems to make the conversation. They tried to speak English; however, they were thinking about what to say for a long time. Around five students playing the customers did not understand the questions and were not able to respond. I tried giving them prompts in English, yet I did not find it effective.

Next time I have to prepare more activities practicing the structures needed for a role play. Maybe I can give the students some exercises as homework. They will have more time to practice and remember the phrases and will be better prepared for the role play.

As the role play took longer time, I decided to do the feedback in Czech. I praised the students for using their own props, helping each other and using English only. The students had problems to pronounce "an aisle". They pronounced it [aɪsle]. Therefore, I wrote the word on the board and pronounce it correctly. I told the students to repeat it after me. The students also answered the question *"Have you got…?"* incorrectly. Some students answered *"No, I don't."* or *"No, I haven't got.".* I wrote the question and three possible answers on the board (No, I don't. / No, I haven't. /No, I haven't got.) on the board and asked the students to choose the correct answer. I set the homework in Czech, too.

The aims of the role play were partly fulfilled. The students cooperated with each other well. Ten students were creative and enjoyed the role play. They used the structures correctly and spoke fluently without the help of the teacher. However, almost half of the students were not able to produce the phrases we had practiced themselves. They often looked at the worksheet to find out what they should have said. The pace of the activity was very slow. The students who were less successful when role-playing told me that they could not speak English without preparation and they had to think about what they wanted to say for a long time.

Lesson plan 4

Topic: **Where is the post office?**

Class: 8.C (13-14 years old)

Materials: worksheets, role play cards, black board, CD

The role play is inspired by Face2Face Elementary student's book, page 112.

The role play is controlled by goals. The students are given role cards with five places they need to go to and five places they are asked to give directions to.

The language is presented by listening and reading material (putting the conversations in order).

Aims:

- to learn how to give and ask for directions in a town

- to practice the basic phrases for giving and asking for directions which might be used in real life

Objectives:

- students know the vocabulary related to giving and asking for directions

- students are able to give and ask for directions in a town

- students cooperate with each other

Procedure:

Stage 1: Warm up activity- match the phrases to the pictures

Timing: 5 min

Pattern of interaction: Pair work

Aims: to motivate the students, to review directions

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher divides the students into pairs. She gives each pair pictures and cards with directions.

T: *"Work with your partner. Look at the cards and pictures. Can you match the cards to the pictures a-i?"*

The cards and pictures[11] *(the letters show the correct answers)*:

turn left *(i)*	go past the hotel *(g)*	it's on the/your right *(b)*
turn right *(d)*	go along this street *(c)*	it's opposite *(h)*
go over the bridge *(a)*	it's on the/your left *(f)*	it's next to *(e)*

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[11] Redston, C. ,Cunningham G. Face2Face Elementary. Cambridge University Press. 2005. p. 145
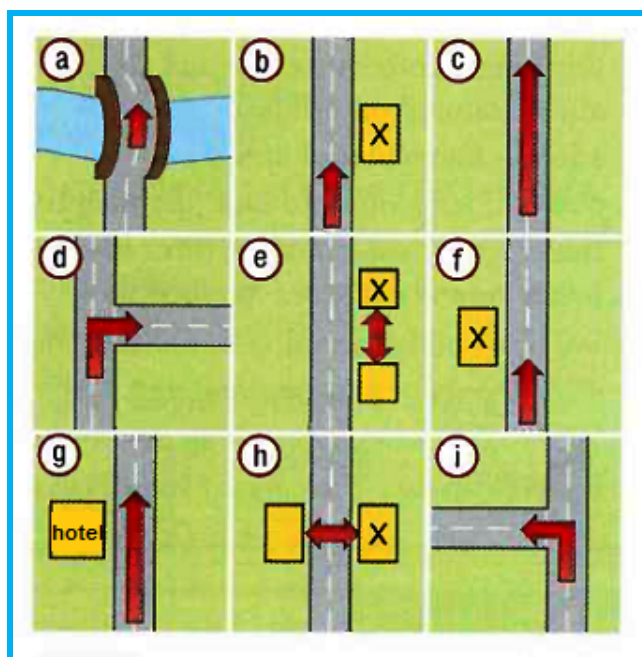
- The teacher observes the class and helps if necessary. The students check their answers.

T: *"Now we will check your answers together. Which phrase goes to picture a? What does "go over the bridge" mean in Czech?" etc.*

- The teacher shows the larger images of directions to the class several time to revise the phrases again.

T: *"Look at me. Do you remember the directions? Look at the first picture. Which direction does it show?" etc.*

Stage 2: Places in the town

Timing: 5 min

Pattern of interaction: Whole class

Aims: to review the places in the town

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher gives each student a map and asks the students a few questions about the places in the town.

T: *"Look at the map. What places can you see on the map?"*

T: *"What can you buy at the chemist's?"*

T: *"Where do you go when you are hungry?"*

T: *"Where do you go if you are ill?" Etc.*

The map:

Stage 3: Following directions

Timing: 5 min

Pattern of interaction: Whole class

Aims: to practice directions, to practice listening skills

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher gives the students the directions.

T: *"Do you have a good sense of directions?"*

T: *"Look at your map. Find the red point "You are here". It is at the railway station. Can you see it? Listen to me. I am going to give you directions. Follow them. Is it clear? Do you have any questions? OK, let's start. Listen carefully."*

T: *"Go along Abbot Street. Go past the book shop and the bus station. Turn left. That's West Street. It is the second building on your left. Where are you?"*

Stage 4: Putting the conversations in order

Timing: 10 min

Pattern of interaction: Individual work

Aims: to practice giving and asking for directions

Procedure and instructions:

T: *"Now you are at the railway station. You are asking for directions. Look at the conversations and put them in order."*

The worksheet *(the letters show the correct answers):*

1

YOU- _(3)___Where's that?

MAN- _(2)___Yes, there's one in Berry Street.

YOU- _(5)___Thanks very much.

YOU- __**1**_Excuse me. Is there a newsagent's near here?

MAN- _(4)___Go along this road and turn right. That's Berry Street. Go past the pub and the newsagent's is on the right, opposite the supermarket.

2

YOU- __(3)__Oh yes, I can see it. Thanks.

YOU- __(1)__Excuse me. Where's the police station?

GIRL- _(4)___No problem.

GIRL- _(2)___It's over there, next to the Internet café.

3

MAN- _(2)___ Yes. You go along this street, over the bridge and it's on your left, in New Road. You can't miss it.

YOU- __(5)__ Great. Thanks a lot.

YOU- __(3)__ How far is it?

MAN- __(4)__ Oh, it's not far. Only about five minutes' walk.

YOU- _(1)___ Excuse me. Do you know the Park Hotel?

T: *"Now listen and check. Find the places on the map. What numbers are they?"*

Stage 5: Useful phrases for giving and asking for directions

Timing: 5-7 min

Pattern of interaction: Pair work

Aims: to review phrases used for giving and asking for directions

Procedure and instructions:

T: *"Look at the table below the conversations. There are two columns. In the first column, there are phrases we can you when asking for directions. The phrases we can use when giving directions are in the second column. Read the conversations 1-3 again. Complete the phrases which are in the table. Work in pairs."*

The worksheet *(the students were supposed to fill in the phrases in italics)*:

ASKING FOR DIRECTIONS:	GIVING DIRECTIONS:
Excuse me. Is __*there*_____(a newsagent's) near here?	There's __*one*___in (Berry Street).
__*Where*_____´s (the police station)?	Go __*along*___ this road and turn right/left.
Do you ___*know*_____ (the Park Hotel)?	Go ___*past*___ the pub.
	Go __*over*___ the bridge.
	(The newsagent's) is __*on*__ your right/left.
	It's __*opposite*__ (the supermarket).
	It's __*next*___ to (the Internet café).
	It's __*over there*___.
	You can't __*miss*___ it.

- Students check their answers.

T: "Now we will check your answers. What phrases can we use for asking for directions? Honza, can you read the phrases?"

Stage 6: Role play

Timing: 10-12 min

Pattern of interaction: Pair work

Aims: to be able to give and ask for directions

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher organizes the pairs. Each student is given a role card with the instructions.

T: *"I am going to give you cards. Do not show your card to your partner. Look at your card. There are two tasks. Look at the first task. Work on your own. There are places which are not written on the map. Each place has its own number. Find the numbers on the map and write the names of the places there. Is it clear? Now look at the second task. Work with your neighbour. Ask for directions to the places which are written on your card. Complete your map with the places. Start from the point "You are here". Take turns. Do you have any questions? Let's start."*

Role cards:

A

1. **Work on your own. Find these places on the map. Don't show your partner.**

1 THE MUSEUM

4 THE BURGER BAR

8 THE POST OFFICE

11 THE CLUB

13 HE SCHOOL

1 **Work with your partner. Ask for directions to places f)-j) from "You are here".**

f) THE CINEMA

g) THE PIZZA PLACE

h) THE BANK

i) THE MARKET

j) THE PETROL STATION

B

1. **Work on your own. Find these places on the map. Don't show your partner.**

2 THE CINEMA

6 THE PIZZA PLACE

7 THE BANK

10 THE MARKET

12 THE PETROL STATION

2. **Work with your partner. Ask for directions to places a)-e) from "You are here".**

a) THE MUSEUM

b) THE BURGER BAR

c) THE POST OFFICE

d) THE CLUB

e) THE SCHOOL

- The teacher walks around the class and helps if necessary. She listens to the students and writes down the mistakes they made.

- The students check the numbers and places with their partners.

T: *"Now check your maps with your partner. Did you find all five places easily?"*

Stage 8: Feedback

Timing: 2-3 min

Pattern of interaction: Whole class

Aim: to give feedback to the students, to get the students' feedback

Procedure and instructions:

- The teacher tells the students what she liked about their performances. She also wants to know the students' opinion about the role play.

Reflection:

First the students were asked to match the pictures with directions to the cards. I think the students liked the activity; they worked fast and were enthusiastic. I knew that the class needed plenty of time to learn and memorize vocabulary and phrases. The students practiced the vocabulary the previous English lesson and they also got homework dealing with the phrases. (See appendix 3) I found it more effective as the students were already familiar with the phrases. To check the students' understanding, I showed them the pictures again. First I let the students shout the directions together and then I asked the students individually. I chose the weaker students as I wanted to be sure they knew the directions. The students worked well and even the weaker students participated. I think it was useful to show the pictures several times as the students could remember the phrases better. Radek had a problem to remember the phrases "go over the bridge" and "go past the hotel". Therefore, I asked other students to say the direction for him. I asked Radek to repeat them.

I gave the students the maps and asked them a few questions about the places to make them familiar with the map. The majority of the students were active and raised their hands to answer. Only four students were not active and they seemed they were not listening to me. As I wanted them to cooperate, I called them out, too. Radek did not understand the question I asked "Where do you go if you are hungry?" He answered: "Co je hungry?" I asked Lukas, a stronger student, to explain what "to be hungry means". I asked him: "What do you do if you are hungry?" Lukas answered: "I want to eat some food." I asked Radek to translate the word. He answered correctly "Mám hlad"

I wanted to motivate and prepare the students for the role play, thus I prepared a game in which the students followed the direction I gave them. It was fun for the students. They listened to me carefully and tried to follow my directions. They wanted to give directions to the classmates, too. However, we did not have enough time to do so. I promised to play the game next lesson.

Putting conversation in order took longer time than I expected. I decided to do it as a pair work activity. The students cooperated with each other well and worked quietly, however, they often discuss the task in Czech. I always told them to speak English and the majority of the students did so. I walked around the class and helped the students if necessary. Four pairs asked me what "over there" means. I translated the word to Czech.

To practice and summarize the phrases needed for the role play, the students filled in the table with gaps. I think this was very useful as the students practiced the phrases once again and they could also use the table during the role play to recall the phrases.

During the role play, the students worked well. They spoke English almost all the time and they used the phrases we had pacticed. Three pairs used Czech when making sure about the directions or asking for repeating the directions. I told their partners that they were English and they did not understand any Czech so if he/she asked them in Czech, they could say: "I am sorry, I do not speak Czech." Etc. Two pairs finished before the time I set. Therefore, I told them to think about other places which they could mark on their maps and give directions to these places. The rest of the class worked slowly. Sometimes I could see that the students looked at the phrases to their worksheets. I let them use the worksheets with phrases when giving the first two directions and then I asked them to turn the worksheets face down. It was more challenging for them and they were forced to think about what to say themselves.

I think it was very beneficial to practice the structured needed for the role play in advance during the previous English lesson. The students were more aware of the phrases they were supposed to use in the role play. They needed only little help. Radek was not easy to motivate. I had to help him a lot. He did not keep the concentration during the activity. I had to spend a lot of time with him as he was digressing from the subject very often. I tried giving him prompts like saying the beginnings of the phrases (Turn…., go straight…) and asking him questions like "Where should she go? Which street is it? Is it on the left or right?" Etc. He managed to accomplish only three points from his role card. Jana, who was working with him, was very patient and helped Radek by giving him prompts like: "Turn left or right? Is it Baker Street? Etc."

I wrote down the most common mistakes the students made during the role playing. I decided to work with the mistakes next lesson as we did not have enough time to work with them. I would write the incorrect phrases on the board and let the students correct them in groups. The most common mistakes the students made were (correct answers are written in the brackets): *"It is (Is it) a museum near here?, How long (far) is it? It is next (to) the supermarket. Go around (past) the cinema."*

I gave feedback in Czech as I found it more beneficial for both sides. I praised the students for speaking English during the role play.

The aims of the lesson were fulfilled. The students cooperated with each other well. They had a chance to get to know the phrases needed for the role play in advance, so the majority of the students were able to use the structures for giving and asking for directions correctly and spoke fluently without the help of the teacher. However, Radek was not easy to motivate. He had problems with the phrases; he could not use them during the role play without the help of the teacher or worksheet. The pace of the activity was rather slow.

V. Evaluation of the project

The evaluation of the project was carried out by means of my observations and reflections acquired in each lesson and the students' evaluation made by a questionnaire. In this part I would like to analyze and evaluate the most important facts which appeared in my research.

1. Reflections

In my reflections, I aimed to evaluate whether chosen role play activities contributed to the development of oral fluency and interactive speaking skills. I also observed whether the role play activities were enjoyable and suitable for the students.

Firstly, the main features I focused on during the observations were the students' ability to communicate with each other independently during role-playing and the ability to use the structures needed for role-playing appropriately. The hypothesis that role play helps develop oral fluency and interactive speaking was proved in three of the role play activities ("One cheeseburger, please.", "Let´s go shopping." and "Where is the post office?"). During these role play activities, the majority of the students worked independently, spontaneously and cooperated with each other well. The students used the structures they had practiced before role-playing with ease.

However, the first role play I chose for 8.C- "At the airport" did not verify my hypothesis. Looking at it in detail, I chose a type or role play which I thought would be easy for the students. As I knew they were rather weaker students with no experience with role playing and limited speaking abilities, I prepared a structured role play activity controlled by a dialogue where the students only answered prepared questions. Nevertheless, almost half of the students were not able to answer the questions independently without the help of the teacher or looking at the worksheets. I could see that I underestimated the time the students

needed for mastering new structures for the role play. I think the type of the role play itself was not difficult for the students, but the topic "At the airport" seemed to be quite demanding. Most of the phrases and structures for the role play were new for the students; therefore, the practice during the lesson was not sufficient for remembering them. I should have chosen a topic the students were more familiar with or to spend more time practicing the structures. On the other hand, the first role play in 8.A practiced shopping. Even though the type of the role play was even more difficult than in "At the airport" role play (the students had to be more creative as the role was controlled by a situation and phrases), the majority of the students fulfilled the task successfully. The reason might be that the students were familiar with the situation and the language needed for the role play was not too difficult to acquire.

Secondly, I also observed whether the students enjoyed the role plays. In general, the majority of the students enjoyed role-playing. I could see that the students were enthusiastic. They liked using the props like menus, schoolbags as carry-on luggage etc. I think the props made the activity more entertaining for the students.

Thirdly, I tried to evaluate whether the role play activities I chose were suitable for the classes. As already mentioned above, I did not find the role play "At the airport" suitable for the rather weaker students with no experience with role play. As a result of choosing too difficult topic, the aims of the lesson could not be achieved. In my opinion, the rest of the topics (going shopping, going to a fast food restaurant and giving and asking for directions) were suitable for the students.

The main problem I faced was the lack of time needed for all stages during the lesson. We often did not have enough time for feedback or setting homework. I think the most time consuming stages were the ones where the students practiced new structures. If new structures were presented during the lesson right before the role play, almost half of the students from 8.C had serious problems to remember them and to use them when role-playing. I found it very useful to practice the phrases in advance. For the role play "Where is the post office, please?", the students got homework dealing with the phrases. Therefore, they were prepared better for the further practice. They felt more comfortable when role-playing and were able to fulfil the task successfully.

2. Questionnaire for the students

After the last role play, the students were asked six questions. I wanted to find out what they thought about the role play activities they had experienced. Since my hypothesis was that role play could help students develop oral fluency and their interactive speaking skills and, by simulating everyday situations, it could prepare students for real life, the questions were designed to verify these claims. I also wanted to know whether the students enjoyed the activities I prepared. The questionnaire was written in the Czech language and was filled in by all forty students from both classes. (See appendix 1)

The survey showed that the students found role play helpful and valuable for real life. Eleven students already experienced similar situations practiced in role play activities in real life. Seven students had experience from a fast food restaurant, three students went shopping abroad and one student travelled by plane alone. The students believed that they would use the structures they practiced through role play in future in real life.

According to the responses, the students enjoyed role playing. The majority of the students found role-playing entertaining and they liked communicating with their peers. However, four students from 8.C found the role plays too difficult for them. They were not used to speaking without the constant guidance of the teacher; therefore, it was difficult for them to work independently in pairs. Only these students felt role play could not contribute to the development of oral fluency. I think these students needed to start with less difficult communicative activities like short dialogues or information gaps activities to get used to speaking. The help of the teacher would be necessary at the beginning.

However, the survey also indicated that the practice of the structures needed for role plays was not sufficient. Almost half of the students (nine students from 8. C and seven students from 8.A) answered that they would need to practice the structures more thoroughly before role playing. These results confirmed the findings acquired from my observations.

Fifteen students thought that they would feel comfortable and would be able to react and use the structures if they found themselves in similar situations in real life. The majority of the students (twenty-one), however, think they would be able to communicate in similar real life situations only if they could practice the situations in the classroom for several times. Four students responded that they would not be able to communicate. The reasons they mentioned were that they felt ashamed when speaking English with foreign

people and that they had to think about what to say for a long time. These findings indicate that role play can develop interactive speaking skills and prepare students for real life only if the situations are practiced for several times.

F SUMMARY

The main aim of the project was to find out whether the role play techniques contribute to the development of oral fluency and interactive speaking skills and whether it enables students to practice everyday situations in the classroom effectively so that they are prepared for real life.

Based on the results emerging from my research, I found out several interesting conclusions.

Firstly, it was proved that role play helps develop interactive speaking skills and oral fluency. The students cooperated with each other and used the structures they had learned before. However, it is important to choose a suitable topic and a role play activity which is challenging, yet not too difficult for the students. I could see that the students got used to role-playing quickly. After he first shy attempts, the students got familiar with role play and they fulfilled the tasks with confidence.

Secondly, the students found role play activities interesting, entertaining and valuable for real life. They thought they might find themselves in the same or similar situations in real life. They could see the purpose of studying English, so they were motivated to fulfil the tasks successfully.

I was disappointed as I revealed that a 45-minute lesson is not enough for mastering the structures needed for role-playing. The students also pointed out that they needed more time to acquire and consolidate the language before the role play itself. Therefore, I recommend practicing the language in advance so that the students will feel comfortable when role- playing.

To sum up, I find role play very useful for developing oral fluency and interactive speaking skills. In my opinion, it is a valuable technique suitable for heterogeneous classes. As the students usually work in pairs or small groups, they get more opportunities to practice interactive speaking. Moreover, after mastering the structures, the students would be able to use them in similar real life situations. However, with the elementary or weak students, I would recommend starting with easier communicative tasks like information gap activities or short dialogues.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

An interview with the teacher

1) Jaké panují ve třídě vztahy?

8. C

Studenti spolu vychází velmi dobře. Nejsou tu žádné vážné problémy. Respektují se a vzájemně si pomáhají.

8.A

Ve třídě panuje přátelská atmosféra, avšak Jessica, nezapadá mezi ostatní žáky. Pochází z Anglie, má tedy individuální studijní plán a v hodinách angličtiny nemusí pracovat. To může být jeden z důvodů, proč ji ostatní spolužáci neberou mezi sebe. Proti ostatním vrstevníkům se chová dětsky.

2) Nachází se ve třídě studenti se specifickými poruchami učení?

8. C

Radek je nejslabší m žákem ve třídě. Byla mu diagnostikována ADHD (porucha pozornosti s hyperaktivitou) a dyslexie. Má vážné problémy s angličtinou. Často nerozumí základním pokynům v angličtině a je pro něj složité udržet koncentraci po celou hodinu.

8. A

Nejsou tu žádní studenti s poruchami učení, ale je tu několik slabších studentů. Andrej, Kuba, Honza a Bára pracují pomaleji než zbytek studentů. Je nutné je často během hodiny povzbuzovat, sami nejsou aktivní.

3) Jsou ve třídě nadprůměrní studenti?

8. C

Katka, Jana, Ondra a Lukáš jsou nejsilnější studenti ve třídě. Během vyučování jsou aktivní a mají zájem o angličtinu. Pracují samostatně a rychleji než zbytek studentů.
8. A

Jesicca, Petr, Anna, Tomáš a Karolína jsou nejsilnější studenti. Petr je v angličtině velmi dobrý. Vyhrál mnoho školních soutěží a reprezentuje školu I v celostátní ch anglických soutěžích. Často ale ostatním spolužákům ukazuje, že je lepší . Je potřeba ho občas

usměrnit. Anna, Tomáš a Karolína také ukazují velmi dobré výsledky. Jsou komunikativní a aktivní.

4) Jaký je jejich postoj k učení angličtiny?

8. C

Většina studentů nevykazuje v angličtině dobré výsledky. I když se snaží, jejich pokrok je velmi pomalý. Myslím si, že je angličtina baví, snažím se hodiny připravit zábavně, ale domácí příprava není dostačující.

8.A

Myslím, že student mají hodiny angličtiny rádi. Většina studentů je během hodin aktivní. Jsou zvídaví a doma se pečlivě připravují. Někdy jsou poměrně hluční, většinou na chvilku zmlknu a pochopí, že mají přestat mluvit.

5) Dokáží se studenti vyjádřit v angličtině spontánně, nebo potřebují pomoc učitele?

8. C

Bohužel většina žáků je slabá a mají problém se v angličtině vyjádřit. Je potřeba jim dát dostatek času, aby si rozmysleli, co řeknou. I tak je jejich mluvený projev spíše slabší.

8. A

Většina studentů je velmi komunikativní. Mluví spontánně bez pomoci učitele. Někdy musím slabší studenty podpořit, aby vyjádřili svůj názor nebo se zapojili do diskuse.

6) Jsou žáci zvyklí na práci ve skupině nebo ve dvojicích?

8. C

Studenti zřídka pracují ve dvojicích nebo skupinách. Problém je, že většina studentů není schopná pracovat samostatně bez pomoci učitele.

8. A

Studenti jsou zvyklí pracovat ve dvojicích nebo skupinách. Pracují samostatně a málokdy mluví česky.

7) Mají žáci zkušenosti s aktivitou "role play"?

Zatím jsem do hodin anglického jazyka tuto aktivitu moc nezahrnula. Žáci vědí, co je role play, ale nemají s tímto typem aktivity moc zkušeností . Pracujeme hlavně s učebnicí, která role play activity moc nenabízí. Myslím si, že pro žáky 8.C by role play mohla být

poměrně náročná aktivita, naopak 8. A s role play nebude mít větší problém. Tito žáci mají rádi nové activity a myslím si, že je role play bude bavit. Pro 8. C bych navrhla připravit jednodušší activity.

Appendix 2

The questionnaire for the students

1. **Aktivita "role play" je podle tvého názoru:**

   a) Užitečná

   b) Zbytečná

   c) Nevím, nedokážu posoudit

2. **"Role play" aktivity, které jsme procvičovaly byly:** (možnost více odpovědí)

   a) Nudné, nebavily mě

   b) Zábavné

   c) Příliš obtížné, složité (co bylo obtížné?)

   d) Příliš snadné

   e) Nevím, nedokážu posoudit

3. **A) Už jsi měl/a příležitost využít některé fráze, které jsme v "role play" procvičovali? (např. na dovolené v zahraničí, na výměnném pobytu…)**

   a) Ano- (popiš situaci)

   b) Ne

   B) Myslíš, že některé fráze, které jsme v „role play" procvičovali, v budoucnu využiješ?

   a) Ano

   b) Ne

4. **Myslíš si, že aktivita „role play" může přispět ke zlepšení plynulosti tvého projevu v anglickém jazyce?**

   a) Ano

   b) Ne

5. **Byl čas na procvičení slovíček a frází potřebných pro „role play" dostačující?**

   a) Ano

   b) Ne, potřeboval/a bych více času, abych si slovíčka a fráze zažil/a

6. **Byl/a bys schopný/schopná vhodně reagovat a použít procvičované fráze, pokud by ses ocitl/a v podobných situacích jako v „role play" aktivitách, které jsme procvičovali?**

   a) Ano, samozřejmě

   b) Ano, ale jen pokud bychom situace procvičovali v hodině několikrát

   c) Ne

   d) Nevím

Appendix 3

Homework

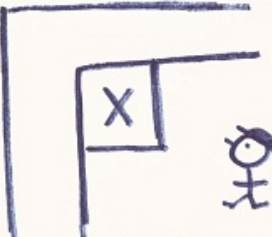Match the phrases with the pictures.

It's opposite the station.
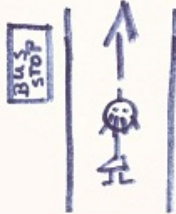
Go past the bus stop.

Go over the bridge.

It's on the left.

Take the second turn on the right.

It's on the corner.