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Using the 1999 film adaptation of G. Orwell's  
*Animal Farm* in ELT

## **Čestné prohlášení**

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## **List of abbreviations**

**AI** – Artificial Intelligence

**EdTech** - Educational technology

**ELT** – English Language Teaching

**IWB** - Interactive whiteboard

**TV** – Television

## **Abstract**

This thesis focuses on usage and convenience for teaching of the film adaptation of influential literary work *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. This thesis is based on a hypothesis, which characterizes film adaptations as necessary tools of teaching English language, further testing the hypothesis by proving the importance and fitting of said literary work and its adaptation. The thesis begins with an introduction of methods using film adaptations, skills-forming exercises, and benefits in pupils' learning via film. The practical part of this thesis aims at questionnaire research conducted on pupils, teaching a lesson with the film adaptation utilized and observations done by the researcher in order to validate the hypothesis.

## **Introduction**

This project aims to investigate the results of using film adaptation in English language teaching. The set hypothesis characterizes film adaptations as necessary tools of teaching English language. And further examination of said hypothesis aspires to prove the importance of films in the ELT process. The 1999 film adaptation of G. Orwell's *Animal Farm*, based on the famous literary work with the same title, was chosen due to its common usage in literature lessons in Czech schools, the importance and valuation of George Orwell as an influential role-model for beginner writers, and further possible utilization of *Animal Farm* adaptation in the learning process and skills development by primary and lower secondary school pupils.

Further research performed by teaching an actual class, questionnaires answered by taught and observing the whole process of film adaptation usage in ELT. Another element of the questionnaires ought to be a convenience of researching method and authentic research experience. The research by other method or different procedure was not feasible due to teachers' ongoing school semesters, time management, and impracticable long-term testing would interfere with results validations.

The first chapter of the thesis deals with correctly depicting the terminology, literary and political background of named work and hypothesis supporting research. A brief introduction of the author George Orwell, a short plot summary of literary work and a comparison with the film adaptation is presented in the theoretical part. For a clarification of the subject matter, the knowledge and language skills provided by the film aid for pupils of lower secondary school's age are provided in the theoretical part.

The Second chapter is an analysis of used methodology of the research, including the limitations of the research and of the methodology, and suggestions for the future research.

The third and final chapter is focused on specific qualitative method of research, which is the questionnaire-based research, teaching lessons with the utilization of the concrete adaptation, observing and describing such lessons for benefit in the future teaching of English language as foreign language to lower secondary school pupils.

# 1. Theoretical part

## 1.1. Film adaptation

To understand the importance of film adaptation and its significant positive impact on teaching English language, there is an obligation to characterize the actual meaning of an accurate adaptation of named literary work or a film remake based on the literary work.

The term “film adaptation” refers to a certain screenplay or cinematographic shot, which follows often an originally printed piece, which is transformed into a recorded and projected story following the printed base. Adaptations are meant to follow the original plot and the story’s main aspects, such as main characters, background, and timeline. Nowadays, adaptations are omnipresent because the modern era creates ideal conditions to recreate famous and important literary works. In the cases of poetry, short texts and extracts to be adapted to full-length films, the term of “evolving” takes place. Therefore, the role of adaptations can be described as to evolve from the written into visualized. (HUTCHEON, 2006, p. 1-7)

Not only there are easily accessed and commonly used recording technologies, but people require and demand visualizations of famous works, because viewing them is less time-consuming than reading. An extensive spread in production of film adaptations is very prominent in recent years due to more common usage of streaming platforms such as Netflix, HBO, Hulu, Disney+ and others. Streaming platforms themselves are mass-producing new films in order to gain new members or maintain their current audience. The uprise of named platforms has resulted in the demand for the new content or recreating the written. (Miloró, 2023) According to Miloro’s article for Forbes, there is a need for bigger diversity and wider storytelling range amongst the general audience. On the other hand, there are numerous and valid critiques of “retold and recreated” stories, which changed the original plot into a completely new story, which cannot be considered as an adaptation, but rather an “inspired by” the original piece. It is necessary to differentiate between types of adaptations. The most kindred type is a continuation of the original without obvious plot and character changes. (McFarlane, 1996). Another adaptation type suggests and focuses on the future, the continuation or prequel of the original work as it is with the *The Lord of the Rings: Rings of Power* series that are inspired by Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* book series. (Payne & McKay, 2022) Lastly, the story may be retold in a certain way of it being



deviated from its origin in form of the product being its own art piece and being influenced just with some elements of the original. (McFarlane, 1996)

However, the changes are openly welcomed by the general audience, because of their immersion and closeness to the modern issues and their own characteristics. In the past, readers could imagine themselves being a part of the story or visualize the protagonists in their mind, film adaptations add an opportunity to actually present the background, characters and even emotions, that is why adaptations are a powerful tool which helps audience to bond with the story and its heroes.

Considering all aspects, film adaptations can be very useful in helping English language learners to sharpen their language skills. Not only visual aspect of the film is prominent, but there is also audio and spoken language, which helps with building vocabulary and helps with pronunciation. Another helpful element of a film is the possibility of using subtitles, which helps with reading and vocabulary.

## **1.2. The 1999 film adaptation of G. Orwell's Animal Farm**

The 1999 film adaptation is a political comedy-drama written by Alan Janes and directed by John Stephenson. However, it was not actually the first adaptation of the same-titled literary piece. The 1999 film is the second adaptation, which is popular even today, as it is shot with living animals or models of animals that seem to be actually talking thanks to the computer-generated imagery (CGI). In comparison, the first adaptation from 1954 was not a live action, but an animated film. The newer adaptation is very captivating, and what is more important, it does really follow the original book's story. As George Orwell intended to warn readers against the impending danger of dictatorship in post-World War I Russia. Orwell's original 1945 written story is an allegory of the Russian Revolution, and the ideology of the danger of tyranny is followed in the film.

The anthropomorphic animals rebelling against humans and human farmers in the 1999 film version are voiced and portrayed by famous and awarded British and American actors, which has brought quite a spotlight to the film. Namely Peter William Postlethwaite starring as both Mr. Jones the farm owner and wise donkey Benjamin, Julia Karin Ormond as border collie story narrator, Allen Kelsey Grammar as noble pig Snowball, Sir Patrick Stewart as sadistic boar Napoleon, Sir Ian Holm Cuthbert as intelligent and mean pig

Squealer and many more film stars. The film includes fourteen animal models built to represent the animals of *Animal Farm* at Jim Henson's Creature Shop in London (Stephenson, 1999).

### **1.2.1. George Orwell's importance in the literature**

George Orwell was born on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1903 at Motihari in British India. George was influential author of British origin, whose actual name was Eric Arthur Blair. Blair's writing theme of dystopian Britain was heavily influenced by his upbringing, involvement with the politics and army service. Blair knew from very young age of six, his path will lead to the writing career as it was his passion. When talking about Orwell's upbringing, his mother and her strict Christian approach towards her children Orwell has formed into patriotic and nationalist person, who saw religion as weakened mind stating:

*“One cannot see the modern world as it is unless one recognises the overwhelming strength of patriotism, national loyalty. In certain circumstances it can break down, at certain levels of civilization it does not exist, but as a positive force there is nothing to set beside it. Christianity and international Socialism are weak as straw in comparison with it.”* (ORWELL, 2014b, p. 11).

Eric Arthur's later career was as a colonial police officer in Burma, where he had witnessed the cruelty of the political system and how unfairly the “lower class” is treated. After his resignation, he joined the militia during the Spanish civil war. This led to his involvement in war and fighting in Barcelona. He was morally and politically committed to socialism, but he was a lifelong anti-Stalinist. This ideology led to Orwell's dystopic works, where he expresses the harsh rule of leaders and a living under the tyranny of socialism and communism (Crick, 2019).

George Orwell's works are undoubtedly well-known all-around the globe as they are a warning of what will happen under the rule of totalitarianism and leader such as Stalin was. *Animal Farm* and *1984* are read even in recent days and parts of them cited due to recent war on the Ukraine. These literary pieces are popular in the Czech Republic, not only because of the Russian invasion to Ukraine, but also because they were used before and are still being used in the literary education of lower and upper secondary schools.

### 1.2.2. George Orwell as an inspiration to young writers

There are several young writers amongst every student group, and it is teachers' role to encourage them in their interest. According to the webpage National Writing project (NWP.org), there are several ways to help as a teacher to young writers:

- **Encourage** aspiring writers **to read** as much as they possibly can, as reading can help them develop rich vocabulary.
- **Provide them with writing prompts**, which can be anything from a picture, a news article, or a quote that they can use as a part of their writing.
- **Give constructive criticism and provide feedback**, which is essential to do, as young writers are still shaping their style and ideas, it can be overwhelming for them if they do not have any feedback as what to master further.
- **Provide examples** of famous authors to follow, as many writers started in young age, pupils can project themselves as famous writers, which can have a great impact on motivations.
  - o Famous writer, who started early and is a great role model for students, is actually George Orwell.

Orwell's reach all over the globe is undoubtedly significant even nowadays, as large numbers are inspired by his writing skills, his passion for writing, which was formed from very young age, and the relatability of his works in these days and in the near future. George himself wrote the *Why I Write* (2014b) book to share his journey as a writer and to possibly encourage and motivate others not to give up on their own path. Orwell even included his own rules of writing, in a case someone would like to master similar writing style. These rules are, in the words of Orwell, simple yet demand a change of an attitude towards modern writing. These are his six rules of writing:

*"i. Never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.*

*ii. Never use a long word where a short one will do.*

- iii. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.*
- iv. Never use the passive where you can use the active.*
- v. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word or a jargon word if you can think of everyday English equivalent.*
- vi. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.”*

(Orwell, 2014b)

By including information about George Orwell’s life and his writing journey to English lessons, teachers can set a very interesting and morally unobjectionable role-model to young learners, who in their early stages of school years are looking for someone to look up to. For English teachers Orwell is a very well-known figure, which makes including his works and his autobiography into the teaching easy to do so.

### **1.2.3. Film’s main plot**

The filmed story is an hour and thirty-one minutes long, recorded to the DVD and later on illegally copied and posted on streaming platforms like YouTube. The plot is set on the Manor Farm in Britain. The residents of the farm are different species of cattle and working animals. The farm is slowly dilapidating, and animals are suffering from overworking and neglect (Orwell, 2014a). The farm’s owner, Mr. Jones, is often drunk and is mean and cruel to his animals. The farmer is also in debt, which is even explicitly mentioned in the film during a hosted dinner with neighbours, the Pilkingtons. During the event, conversation about Mr. Jones’ debt to the Pilkingtons is held (Stephenson, 1999). At the same time as gathering of the farmers, the meeting of the farm animals takes place. The Old Major, the Middle White boar, explains to his fellow animals why humans are their enemies. At the end of the meeting, all animals sing a song, which got attention of the farm owner and he accidentally shoots and kills the boar Old Major. Later, when Mr. Jones goes into the town of Willingdon for a drink, forgetting to feed the animals, the kind-hearted and very strong Shire horse, Boxer, helps others to break into the food supplies. After the return, Mr. Jones and the farm staff investigates, and animals finally rebel and win the farm for themselves by driving Mr. Jones and other humans away. Snowball, one of the farm

pigs, becomes the leader of the “Animal Farm” and the Seven Commandments of Animalism are written on the boards with the white paint and says:

*“1. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.*

*2. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.*

*3. No animal shall wear clothes.*

*4. No animal shall sleep in a bed.*

*5. No animal shall drink alcohol.*

*6. No animal shall kill any other animal.*

*7. All animals are equal.”*

(Orwell, 2014a, p. 15-16)

In the meantime, Napoleon, a Berkshire boar, holds a meeting with his companions and Pincher, one of the farm's dogs, who he has sworn loyalty to him and becomes his guard (Orwell, 2014a). Napoleon orders Pincher to sneak out Jessie the Border collie's (narrator's) puppies. Napoleon proclaims that it is best for them to receive an education from him, despite Jessie's disapproval (Stephenson, 1999). Humans lead an attack on the farm and animals, only to be driven away. Pilkington plans working and trading with the animals instead. Meanwhile, Snowball is making plans to build a windmill to improve the living conditions of animals on the farm (Orwell, 2014a). Nonetheless, Napoleon summons now fully grown Jessie's puppies, who became his henchmen, to drive Snowball out of the farm. Napoleon usurps the leader's place and claims the pigs are now deciding the future. The construction of windmill with Boxer's help begins. A microphone planted on the farm reveals to Pilkington the pigs' ability to speak English. The trading between humans and pigs begins. Some time later, Jessie informs her friend that she witnessed pigs residing in the farmhouse and sleeping in the beds, which is forbidden for others. That is the first time, when the commandments are changed from “no sleeping in the beds” to “not sleeping in the beds with sheets”. Mr. Jones has not forgotten about his farm and with his wife they complot to destroy the windmill by blowing it up with dynamite as revenge to animals for taking his property. Napoleon blames it on Snowball and the rebuilding of the windmill begins. Pigs are progressively greedier with their food consumption and, of course, the subsequent food shortage is blamed on Snowball as well. Hens are forced to surrender their eggs and feeding is perceived as a crime punishable with death. Squealer, Napoleon's

propagandist, starts to create films about Napoleon and other forms of propaganda. Everyone who is supposedly working with Snowball will be executed. As time progresses, commandments are being so drastically changed, they no longer are in their original form. During the harsh and hard process of rebuilding the windmill, Boxer gets injured. The van, which is taking Boxer away, is owned by a glue company, which is noticed by Jessie and Benjamin, an old wise donkey. The animals try to save Boxer and despite all their efforts, they do not succeed. Napoleon gets paid by Pilkington for selling Boxer to the glue factory. Napoleon and the pigs receive more whiskey and start to drink even more alcohol, which leads to their further change into a very human-like form. The final commandment, "*All animals are equal*", has been newly extended to a new form stating:

*"All animals are equal  
but some animals are more equal  
than others"*

(Orwell, 2014a, p. 77)

Jessie, Muriel, the goat, Benjamin and a few other animals now clearly see the true nature of Napoleon and Squealer. They are truly evil and careless. When chance appears Jessie, Muriel, Benjamin, and some animals escape from the farm. Napoleon enslaves the rest of the farm residents and resembles humans. As years go by, previously escaped animals come to see how the farm had changed. The Manor Farm is destroyed, and Napoleon with Squealer are gone and only few animals have survived. Jessie reunites with her puppies, and they promise each other to stay together and not to make the same terrible mistakes as Napoleon and Mr. Jones. A new family buys the farm and the story ends (Stephenson, 1999).

#### **1.2.4. Comparison: Film adaptation versus the book**

The 1999 adaptation follows Orwell's original writing almost to perfection. However, there are some minor changes in the characters and the main plot, to make the visualization more interesting to the audience. The most prominent changes, which still play part as rather minor details, are:

1) **The narrator** – In Orwell’s original text, the mode of narration is a third person point of view. In the adaptation, the narrator and one of the farm animals is Jessie, a Border collie dog, who does not in fact exist in the literary piece.

2) **Windmill’s destruction** – The destruction substance - blasting powder (in Orwell’s version) was changed to dynamite, which is a more modern version and easier to depict in the film.

3) **Boxer’s journey end** – In the novel Boxer is taken away by knacker’s van, which transports carcasses of deceased animals. In later book editions, Boxer is taken by a slaughterhouse van and the adaptation’s version of the van is the glue factory’s one. These changes probably imply the modernization of some ways of getting rid of a dead animal or a severely injured one.

4) **The story’s ending** – Orwell’s novel does not end happily, the returning animals find the destroyed farm with very few animals, and pigs looking and behaving absolutely the same as humans, they are actually not recognizable as pigs at all. In the film, the ending is somewhat more positive. Mum and her puppies are reunited, the evil pigs are away, and the new owners might be a promising future. This leads to a belief that there is a happy ending.

- The happier ending might be even more suitable for younger children as they would have a hope for the sake of animals’ wellbeing. Young learners watching the adaptation would be more willing to work with the film in their lessons as they would not have experienced the negative feelings of a heavy ending of the film.

### **1.2.5. Comparison: The 1954’s adaptation of G. Orwell’s *Animal Farm***

The adaptation from 1999 is not the only filmed version of Orwell’s *Animal farm*, the first one is dated back to 1954. This version of the literary work is directed by John Halas and Joy Batchelor. However, the project itself was funded by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which has a heavy influence on the story’s plot as the narrative is more aggressive and targets to influence the audience against communism very conspicuously, which is a prominent difference. Film rights were bought from Sonia Orwell, George Orwell’s widow, after she was approached by the CIA’s branch, which combated communism in a usage of culture (SENN, 2015).

However, the main plot follows the original story in order of events and characters, as the 1954 film is also classified as an adaptation. In comparison to the 1999 version, this older filmed version is not portrayed as a “live action”, but it is an “adult animation”. By the adult animation, it is meant a cartoon-alike visual with adult narrative, which can contain vulgar language and is not targeted to young audience, as the theme is heavily political and it meets a few elements of propaganda. On the other hand, the 1954 adaptation, suggests that the regime under Stalinist pigs is way worse than Mr. Jones’ regime and the ending is changed into animals taking back their farm under the lead of Benjamin (HALAS & BATCHELOR, 1954).

### **1.3. ELT and language skills acquired by films**

English language teaching has been shaped by many teaching styles and methods. In recent decades, there has been a huge development in modern technology. New technologies and their availability have enabled an evolution in ELT.

Various studies confirm many benefits of a film implemented into language learning process. According to research in 2012, films enhance learning of the language by providing adequate aid and exposure which is necessary for spoken language learning (Bahrani & Tam, 2012).

Generally, films have proven to be a valuable enhancement to classical lessons. According to Gilmore (2007), films are a gateway to closeness of the language and a desired authenticity of the language in the classroom. Films are prosperous in the matter of a quantity of advantages in comparison to the conventional teaching styles.

#### **1.3.1. Educational technology in the Czech Republic**

Educational technology is necessary part of working with films, recordings and other interactive resources. The progression and modernization of the education system comes with an economic aid of developed countries, including Czechia, donating resources and money to schools to further improve their quality. Overall, each schooling institute - in the Czech Republic, is equipped with several types of technology. The types of the equipment currently and commonly used in primary and lower secondary schools are:



- **Boards:** School writing boards are the most common aid used. Boards have a very long history, which can be traced to early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is rather rare to encounter a classroom without any board. Blackboards (usually green or dark green) are essentially for writing or drawing while used in combination with chalk of white colour or different vibrant colours (Kidwell, 2008). A large number of blackboards were exchanged to more modern versions as in whiteboards, which are designated to be written on with non-permanent markers.
- **Flipcharts:** Flipcharts are smaller than standard writing boards. They can be described as a large flat block of paper, or a whiteboard mounted on a stand that can be easily flipped over to reveal new sheets of paper or a new surface for educational purposes usage (Lucas, 1999). Flipcharts are useful in small rooms as they are usually smaller and easier to store. However, the most beneficial aspect of flipboards is the option of clipping on a big format paper for writing or drawing on it as on boards. The final product of flipboard utilization is the paper, which can be reused or displayed as an aid for learners.

Flipcharts can be used as small-dimension whiteboards as they are purposely manufactured to be written on even without big paper blocks.

- **Big television screens:** Sorted in between interactive whiteboards and TV or computer monitors are big TV screens. Modern televisions are flat and easy to mount on the wall, and on some occasions cheaper than interactive boards. Schools, which opted to use modern technology, but were not able to afford, back then, very expensive equipment in the form of IWBs, bought big TV screens with software compatible to be connected to the computer or network and work similarly as smartboards (The Vibe Team, 2022). The distinction in capabilities is, nevertheless, immense. Rarely, even modern televisions have touch-responsive screens, which make writing notes on them not very user-friendly. Second distinction is the incompatibility with projectors.
- **Interactive whiteboards (IWBs) or smartboards:** Interactive whiteboards are a prominent step-up in technology in comparison to the classical writing boards.

IWBs can serve as other writing boards, while combined with special pens or even with just fingers. However, the biggest advantage seems to be the ability to be connected to the computer, which opens up number of possibilities such as a course book's interactive programs projected on, which makes working with course book more graphic and clearer for students (Glover, 2005). Commonly, geometry software or drawing software is used. IWBs are in majority of cases used as a screens or open spaces for projections in combination with projectors – integrated / connected to the board or as separate devices.

- **Projectors:** Projectors have a long history of technological evolution and usage in the education process; therefore, the projection is one of the most common and widespread methods of using visualizations. Schools use projectors in daily occurrences. The actual devices can be further divided into stand-alone type and integrated by its hardware to another device – IWBs or computer. The stand-alone projectors can be connected to computers, laptops or tablets, which make them easy to use and fairly easy to transport. Projectors are used to demonstrate useful educational materials – documents, pictures and videos (Harmer, 2015, p. 193).
- **Computers and laptops:** Computers and laptops are an essentiality of the modern era. With ICT education based and implemented into school's curriculum, it is mandatory for each school to supplement its equipment with computers or laptops for educational purposes. However, with modern equipment for each classroom, in majority of the cases, each class have its own computer. As Barroso (2019) states, the computers are deemed to be the most valuable resource in a classroom because of many useful functions, which are offered to the teacher and to pupils.
- **Audio players:** Nowadays, broadcasting the audio sources is mostly done via computers, mobile phones or tablets. On the other hand, the CD players are still widely and commonly used as they offer convenience and easier usage, which are very important aspects for older generations of teachers, who might be troubled with modern technology (Harmer, 2015, p. 193).

Teachers can also face other types of audio players, not including mobile devices and computers, such as portable speakers, interactive books with buttons and pre-

recorded audio, audio toys, etc. However, said types are not as common and mostly used by primary school teachers.

- **Apps:** With the internet connectivity increase, there is a demand for software tools for making teaching or learning easier and more synoptic. Learning via mobile devices is popular due to its convenience for users (Egbert et al., 2011). App users are able to access their device and use it for educational purposes whenever it is suitable, which can be for example during traveling as it does not require much space and equipment.

According to Oxford University Press' article (2019), there are apps designed directly for English language teachers, who are keen to help their students with their studies even after they leave the classroom. Referencing to the article, there are five very useful apps, which are in fact from Oxford University Press (OUP) itself and those are:

- 1) ***Say It: English Pronunciation*** – An app which comes with over 100 free British English words, 4 tests and 12 sounds, which are taken from the English File course and Oxford's dictionaries.
- 2) ***LingoKids*** – An app for very young learners, targeted age group is estimated to be from 2 to 8 years of age. LingoKids offers a playful way for teachers to introduce the language to their pupils, as the app includes songs, videos, free and printable worksheets, interactive exercises and many more assets.
- 3) ***Oxford Collocations Dictionary*** – A tool for improvement in accuracy and fluency of users. The app contains over 250 000 possible word combinations.
- 4) ***Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*** – Another helpful software, which makes its users expand and improve their language skills, vocabulary, as well as pronunciation, which can be improved by listening to audio of authentic British voices.
- 5) ***Practical English Usage*** – As the name of the app states, its aim is to help users practice using English in everyday situations and common language problems.

All stated apps are available on iOS and Android systems, which makes them very accessible for download and trial.

There are also other highly recommended apps by world-widely known companies. For example, freely accessible is YouTube Kids and Google Expeditions, and many more.

- **Cards:** Cards are smaller teaching aids, used by teachers in a class to help students visualize variety of elements when studying the language. Cards can be printed by companies focusing on educational aids or created by the teachers themselves. To help with visualizations, cards with pictures or drawings are created, to help learners with vocabulary or spelling there are cards with words or phrases written on them.

The utilizations of cards are quite simple, although tremendously helpful for learners. Cards can be held up and shown from the distance to pupils or distributed to the class for pupils to observe and memorise (Harmer, 2015, p. 194).

- **LEGO® and LEGO®Education:** Lego bricks are one of the most famous toys for generations to play with. Lego's history can be traced to 1950s and since then the toys were spread around the whole globe. Educators have managed to come up with creative and motivating ways to engage learners to play with the bricks and at the same time to learn and sharpen their language skills (Gadomska, 2015).
- **Robots:** Robots in the Czech Republic are becoming more common every day, as it is mandatory for pupils to learn basics in programming. However, robots are a great source of language practise in the lesson. Robots programmed to chat with students can help with communication, vocabulary and pronunciation as they are able to use recorded voices of native speakers of English language. Nonetheless, the ability of robots is still quite narrow because of the limited memory and program, which is not learning itself – artificial intelligence (Lee, 2022).
- **AI chatbots:** The most recent but very debatable source of English language for learners is artificial intelligence based chatbots. With omnipresent connection it is quite easy for pupils to find an actual AI chatroom. AI is supposedly learning from

its users, which applies in its unique responses and ability to lead a meaningful conversation on limitless topics, which can potentially help learners with their conversational skills. As it is a very new technology, there are not many studies or research data on AI's impact on language studying as such.

In recent days, there have been discussions on students' improper usage of AI chatbots. This applies mostly to students of higher education systems, but it is not rare for pupils of lower secondary education as well (King, 2023). Students are always tempted to make their task easier or actually not do their tasks at all, which is now more than ever easier with the access to said AIs. When student states task to the chatbot, the AI processes it and gives the tasks answer in a correct and sophisticated form, which is not only hard to discover for a teacher, but also not punishable as it is not verifiable that pupil has used the AI.

### **1.3.2. Films as language skills aid**

Language skills are formed during the process of learning, and they differ from each other so teachers must use diverse techniques and methods in order to achieve learners' capability of using the language. Films provide sources for all skills and that creates the necessity of films utilization in ELT, as audio-visual aids in the form of films are beneficial even for slower learners as this form of learning can be encouraging and can help with their engagement in activities and exercises.

Language skills can be divided into four separate groups, which are listening, speaking, writing and reading. Overall, each of the language skills is taught differently, but films are so versatile in usage and are able to help with every skill not only if focused on separate skill, but also simultaneously with all skills.

- **Listening** – The definition of the listening skill can be generalized according to Rost (2002, p. 177) as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says, then constructing the thought and representing meaning, which is followed by negotiating meaning with the speaker, and according to the mutual understanding comes the response.

A direct exposure of spoken language via films was proven to be beneficial as films offer an authentic experience of spoken language including dialects, pronunciation

and specific terminology and phrases used in everyday life or in specific situations. Learners watching films and listening to the audio are able to memorise certain themes and commonly used answers to be used in their future conversations. Listening to native speakers in films helps with listening comprehension.

- **Speaking** – There are multiple definitions of what speaking skill really is. However, the definitions can be narrowed into main thoughts. Nunan (1999) expresses his thought that a person's activities are being able to express speech elements based on existing circumstances, which in fact reflexes on reporting behaviour. Contradictorily, in Fulcher's pinion (2003), speaking is an ability gathered by socializing when one communicates. Furthermore, Larsen-Freeman (2000) is convinced that the speaking skill is the most important one; therefore it is teachers' obligation to pay a full attention to the process of their students learning said skill.

Films can be categorised as a type of communication as it meets conditions of what a communication is. In some aspects films are somewhat an exchange of speech elements reflecting on social situations created by the plot of the film.

Using films in lessons means to expose students to a valid source of the natives' actual usage of the mother tongue. A periodical exposure to the source of British accents and pronunciation has a positive impact on pupils' speech, as Kalean (2013) mentioned.

- **Writing** – Writing is another form of conversation, which is composed of exchanging information in material form. In this type of form, the information can be stored, and this is the most notable difference between writing and speaking.

Writing is one of the hardest skills for non-native speakers to acquire as grammar rules and lexicology differ in most languages from English (Haerazi, 2021). The biggest issue, when it comes to writing and is addressed by students, is their own limitation in the vocabulary (Indrasari et al., 2018). However, other factors such as an inadequate knowledge level of grammar, incapability of forming the idea even in the mother tongue and unwillingness to write are unmistakably big problems as well. Nonetheless, media (including films) play important part in the pupils' motivation. Films have a role of being an aid not only to the learner, but also to the

teacher, who by including the film can engage his pupils in the subject, let them enjoy the lesson more and thus focus on their tasks (Lee, 2020). Other features of the audio-visualizations are its themes, interesting characters and engaging stories, which can be an inspiration for essay writing.

- **Reading**– Reading is a fundamental skill, which can be interpreted as a gate to proceed to other skills. In general, other necessary language skills can be acquired by ability to read as written text can lead the reader to an understanding what the different skills are and how to obtain them.

There are not many recent and valid studies of reading skill formed via film. However, as already stated, films are a valuable source of the language authenticity brought to learners. On many occasions, films are adaptations of written literary works (Alqadi, 2015). The action of reading comes when the film contains subtitles. Subtitle is a form of a text appearing in the film as a description, spoken word re-written or as a translation of one language to another. Reading skill is exercised and sharpened as subtitles move fast from frame to frame. Audience, or in this particular case pupils, have to focus more, thus remember more and also read faster than they would with a book.

### **1.3.3. Exercising with films**

As suggested by Harmer (2015, p. 343) it is beneficial to engage pupils to watch while they listen as they encounter language in use and are introduced to paralinguistics. For example, they can match the intonation of voice to certain facial expression and also gestures used in concrete situations accompanied with established phrases. Harmer also points out unspoken rules of social or business circumstances, which are clearer to explain when they are filmed.

Exercising with films can create more relaxed atmosphere in class as students are watching films and videos as a form of relaxation; therefore, they associate watching films with relaxation and comfort, which is desirable atmosphere in lessons.

There are plentiful exercises done with films and videos, but altogether there are just a few types of such exercises, which are repeated or slightly adjusted. As suggested by Harmer (2015, p. 344-345) there are few exercise types – Silent viewing, frame freezing, pictureless listening, describing scenes, subtitles and storytelling. Inspired by Harmer,

these specific exercises can also be slightly adjusted to personal needs of individual teachers.

- **Silent viewing** – This activity can be divided into two forms, which are focused on different elements. The first one is “*Silent viewing for language*” and the second one is called “*Silent viewing for music*”.

- ***Silent viewing for language:*** The exercise requires the teacher to prepare film or extract of the film and play it at normal speed, but without the audio. The task for pupils consists of guessing what the characters might possibly say. The aim of this practice is to focus on the gestures and body language of characters in the video, which is part of communication skill.

The activity ends with the teacher playing the extract with sounds so students can compare how adequate their guesses were.

- ***Silent viewing for music:*** This activity has the same technique. The teacher plays a part of the film or music video without the sound and asks students what kind of music or music style would be played and why.

This exercise ends up with playing the sequence to the class and pupils comparing how accurate in guessing they were. Learners can also judge whether they match the director’s choice of music and if their idea would be better.

- **Freeze frame** – The frame-freezing exercise is very simple yet eminently effective. At any point of the film, the teacher can “freeze” the frame and from this point the teacher can use the stopped video in multiple ways:

- ***Describing the actual frame*** – The stopped frame will serve as an image, which should be described by pupils to exercise their vocabulary and speaking skill. The teacher’s role in this particular exercise is to correct mistakes and grammar.



- ***Guessing what will happen next*** – The next activity of frame freezing is aimed on pupils' ability to formulate their thoughts and predicament as they are supposed to express what they think will happen in the upcoming scene.

To make this exercise even more meaningful the students can have a discussion amongst themselves on how close their ideas were to the actual continuation of the film's sequence.

- ***Guessing what the character's answer will be*** – This activity, in comparison to the other two of the same type, is a bit more demanding on the teacher's preparation. The film sequences must be prepared in advance, so they make sense and are not just randomly stopped. The teacher should know what the answer to the dialogue in the upcoming frames is.

Yet again, pupils are asked to guess what the character's answer might be and there is the option of class discussion as well.

- **(Pictureless) listening** – This activity is suitable mainly for exercising the listening comprehension of learners. Teacher's role is to hide the screen or turn off the projector and play only the audio. There are three possible options of what is the main element of the exercise:

- ***Listening for language aspects*** – During the listening students are supposed to be paying attention to the dialogues and then guess where the dialogue takes place, who the characters might be, what the relationship is between the speakers and what they look like.

Likewise in the other listening exercises, it is suitable for the teacher to reveal the actual scene so the class can have a discussion and they can yet again compare their own ideas.

- ***Listening for music*** – The exercise on listening for music should be carefully chosen by the teacher prior to the lesson, as the music needs to be

prominent in the film sequence. Learners are exercised on listening skill without visual aids as the visual is hidden or turned off. The task for pupils is to guess according to the style of the music, what kind of scene is happening and where might be the plot of the story happening.

There is the option of class discussion as well, when the actual scene is shown to the pupils.

- ***Listening for sound effects*** – Suitable scene for this particular exercise is not easy to come by; therefore, the teacher should prepare this exercise in advance. Learners are asked to listen to the sound effects of the short sample (without visual aid) and try to come up with ideas of what might be happening and what such sounds may belong to.

Optionally, class discussion might take place and the ending of this exercise should be a reveal of the true origin of sound effects.

- **Describing a scene from pupil to pupil** – Similarly to the listening type and speaking type of exercises, this activity is focused on listening comprehension and at speaking and communication ability of students at the same time. Students are instructed by their teacher to form groups or more ideally pairs. One person is going to be listening to the scene, trying to memorise as much as possible and then retelling what they have heard to the other student, who will note it down or will interpret it to the teacher.

There is a possibility to adjust the exercise, if there is not the option of the listening and that is a frame freezing, when one of the students in a pair will be able to see the frame, he will memorise the picture in as much detail as the memory allows. The interpretation to the other student is little bit harder for lower secondary students, when it comes to picture description. It is advised for the teacher to let the perceiving students use notes and then interpret it to the teacher.

Both activities can be ended by playing the scene to compare the accuracy of students' interpretations.

- **Subtitles (fill in gaps)** – For younger or less skilled learners, filling up gaps is one of the best exercises as it helps them focus more on what they are looking for in the listening or in the reading of the subtitles of the films. This exercise requires the teacher to prepare worksheets on the specifically chosen parts of the film.
- **Predicting the film** – The teacher can instruct students to predict what film or part of the film they are going to see, what will happen in the film and who are main protagonists according to the clues the teacher had prepared beforehand. Then after the video is played, students could see if their predictions matched.

There is a wide variety of exercises and activities which are connected to working with film. Exercises are created on daily bases, majority by teachers and lecturers themselves, however, they are not regularly shared to others or to the public. However, such exercises are based on the listed types as there is not much new to change or to invent. Overall, the methodology remains the same, but with great and positive impact on pupils as they respond positively to the lessons with films according to the research (chapter 3).

#### 1.3.4. Other benefits of film usage in English lessons

Films play a significant role in education and skill practise is not the only factor gained by watching them. There are more benefits that can be listed as a part of teaching. Teachers and learners benefit from films, according to an article on fanthatracks.com (2021), in such ways as:

- In **enhancing understanding** - they can help students to visualize abstract concepts and ideas, which are brought by teachers, that they might not be understandable otherwise. They are also helpful with memorizing, as students remember information more effectively as they can visualize information gathered by film viewing.
- In **the promotion of critical thinking**: Films are often a representation of complex social and cultural issues, which are momentarily explored and dealt with. They can

prompt targeted groups, including pupils, to think critically and evaluate responses to social situations.

- In **increasing of students' engagement**: Audio-visualizations should be used to stimulate interest and excitement in learning. As the time period of the lesson is way too long for a focus span, students may be disengaged. Films can help with the struggle of losing the focus.
- In **raising the multicultural awareness**: With new technology and world-widely spread filming industry, students are provided with a source of insight into many different cultures and ways of life. This fact can greatly improve students' behaviour towards other social and cultural groups and help to develop a greater empathy for diversity.

## **2. Practical part**

In the theoretical part of the thesis the terminology and other elements of the theory were explained and defined to ensure there are not any obstacles in the terminology that would interfere with the representation of the research and collected data.

The practical part of the thesis is focused on presenting the research data gathered by the author of the thesis. The data collection was done by the author teaching a lesson on film adaptation usage in education process on an actual class, anonymous questionnaires answered by taught pupils, and observations done by researcher in the role of the teacher.

### **2.1. Aim and research questions**

The main aim of the thesis is to prove the set hypothesis as correct and answer three research questions. The hypothesis characterizes film adaptations as necessary, helpful, and didactically meaningful tools in the process of teaching the English language to lower secondary school learners.

Following the hypothesis of the thesis, research questions were formed in order to prove the importance and fitting of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* as a literary work and its adaptation.

#### **Research questions:**

Q1. Is it convenient to use film adaptation in ELT?

Q2. Which beneficial results were prominent after the usage of the film adaptation in ELT?

Q3. What are the pupils' views of the advantages in using film adaptations in the process of English language learning?

## **2.2. Research methodology**

The methodology used during this research was chosen due to the access to an actual class and pupils. Second factor of methodology choice was a convenience of chosen methods, which could have been done in school during the school year on pupils.

The research was conducted on pupils of Gymnázium Kroměříž grade Tercie B of the school year of 2022/2023. Tercie, which is an equivalent of 8<sup>th</sup> grade of lower secondary school education system, has the same curriculum as the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, but lesson aims are set higher and to challenge students more as they are perceived as “more intelligent” or “more gifted”. For testing the set hypothesis and research questions the quantitative method of questionnaires was chosen.

To triangulate the research second method, the qualitative, was used which consisted of teaching actual lesson using the film adaptation and observing the whole process.

### **2.2.1. Qualitative method of observation**

Qualitative method of observation is a research method that involves observing and describing certain element or situation, without attempts of measuring such phenomena. Observation can be described as a form of data collection, where the researcher is in the role of audience.

In qualitative observation, researchers typically watch, record, or note researched elements of the study. The goal is to get an understanding of meanings, experiences, and different types of roles of individuals or in groups.

Qualitative observation can take many forms, including participant observation, where the researcher immerses themselves in the social setting being studied, and non-participant observation, where the researcher observes from a distance without interacting with the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Observation done in Tercie B class was carried out with the pupils without informing them on it not to intervene or change their behaviour. When pupils know about observations they tend to behave differently, which was not desired. Observation as a method is easily conducted, however it requires preparation at least to some degree. It is necessary to set points of interest (elements which are being observed), to have a source of data for

observation. Recommended is to use some sort of recording tool. For recording the researcher can use a blank paper and pencil to make notes, voice recording devices, cameras or other technology.

### **2.2.2. Quantitative method of questionnaires**

Quantitative research is a research method that focuses on large number of collected data and most commonly used tool of this form of research uses questionnaires. Questionnaire is a set of questions formulated by a researcher or group of researchers to gather information from participants about a specific theme. Questionnaires typically consist of closed-ended questions, which provide a fixed set of response options to participants to choose from. However, it is not uncommon for the questionnaire to have open-ended questions included (Brace, 2013).

The forms can be administered in a variety of ways, including paper printed or hand written, online documents, or as recordings of interviews (Fowler, 2013). Questionnaires are often used in social science research, market research, and other fields, which can include educational fields, even teachers testing their pupils in the form of questionnaire filling in.

The usage of questionnaire in this research was ideal as for its convenience and practicality as students were able to answer the research questions without any troubles. Collecting data and data evaluation was convenient as well, as the form of the questionnaire is well-arranged and easy to navigate through.

### **2.3. Limits of the thesis**

This thesis has potential limitations. The research was conducted on lower number of the respondents. The total of 28 respondents to the questionnaire was due to the fact that the chosen sample of respondents was picked by cause of the teacher and pupils' relationship, knowledge of the school's ground and equipment. Another factor was the fact that pupils were familiar with the teacher as they had had lessons done, so there were not expected any obstacles or nervousness by the learners.

Second limitation encountered was the time management of the school, where the research was conducted as it was in the middle of the school year and students were finishing the first semester. This led to shortening and compaction of the planned activities to only two taught lessons. One of the taught lessons was added during the first phase of the research and would be more effective, if done in more than one lesson period. The planned lesson (appendix 1), on the other hand, went without obstacles and was successfully fulfilled by both, the teacher and pupils.

Unexpectedly, the targeted group of respondents was not in the full quantity, as present were 28 pupils out of 30. Two pupils were absent due to their illness.

The limitation of printed questionnaire (appendix 3) was not expecting other options of answers to the gender question, under the second question, where pupils asked, if they can write down under it a different gender, which was possible, and one respondent wrote “non-binary” as an acceptable answer to this question.

Questionnaire was divided into two separate parts. The first part was meant to be answered before the lesson with the film adaptation (questions 1 – 5). It was estimated that students of Tercie (8<sup>th</sup> grade of lower secondary school) already know *Animal Farm* and its symbolism, which was proven not to be truth. As already mentioned, teacher had to accommodate and add another lesson, prior to the actual tested one, and also had to modify the prepared lesson plan, which was resolved by adding a part of a discussion with given topics, which were set to make sure everybody understood what the literary work is about, who George Orwell was, and what symbolism the piece includes. After this issue was dealt with, the actual research of answering the remaining questionnaire parts could commence.

Even with limitations and their solutions, this research is a foundation to further studies, which can be benefiting in the field of teachers’ education.

## **2.4. Profile of taught group**

Tercie B is a very energetic class of pupils in age range of thirteen to fifteen years of age, which is considered to be the peak of puberty. Nonetheless, this group of learners is friendly and helpful to teacher in practise, as they are attentive, kind and friendly. The



benefit of this class is also the split between females and males, and other, who are friendly towards each other and help each other, so group or pair work is not problematic at all.

There are rare occurrences of misbehaviour, however each are easily resolved, raising a voice is uncommon. There are not any known cases of bullying, physical or psychological.

The level of English language is above the average as those are grammar school students. Commonly, pupils of the same age or even higher are at level A2, at best. Tercie B qualifies to B1 category (some students are very close to B2 level). When tested, pupils usually score very well, as the class has a competition between themselves going. The competition is based on, who gets the most “one” grades (equivalent of grade A), wins in the end of the school year a special prize of a basket full of sweets or tickets to the cinema.

There is only one student, who swerves from the rest of the class, as his grades are not as good, in reality he struggles quite a bit, which was prominent during the class discussions as this pupil would be silent or have troubles composing meaningful sentences. However, according to the class teacher, this student has received new studying aids and has more tutoring lessons.

### **3. Research**

#### **3.1. Using the film adaptation in ELT**

The lesson plan (appendix 1) and the questionnaire (appendix 3) were created specifically for teaching the whole group of Tercie B's pupils. If there were no absences, the full class would have consisted of 30 students; however, there were two absences.

##### **3.1.1. Lesson procedure**

###### Before the lesson started

- The class teacher logged into the computer in the classroom and made sure it is possible to use computer and projector without any technical issues.
- The film should be also checked and played at least a few seconds to ensure it is working. Checking the sound and visibility even from the farthest part of the class is recommended.

###### With the ring of the bell

- The class teacher and researcher in the role of the teacher are waiting in the classroom for all the pupils to arrive and take a seat.
- Then both lecturers greet the class. There was no need for introduction as this group was taught by the researcher during the teacher practise in the same school year.
- Pupils are already used to making pairs, which are each lesson randomly created, when pupils pick bottle caps, which are colourful and only two bottle caps have the same colour. The randomness of pairs helps with focus as pupils are paired with classmates they might not be as close to, which is an advantage, because such activity can help with the atmosphere in the group.

## Course of the lesson

### 1) Warm up activity

- Warm up is focused on a speaking skill as pupils are asked to discuss variety of topics. This activity is repeated every lesson, which makes pupils used to speaking and describing their ideas by using their own wording.
- The discussion topic of this warm up was “Favourite films and visiting the cinema”, which corresponds with the lesson theme.
- The teacher sets timer to three minutes and after the time is up asks pairs what they have discovered about each other. The whole course of the activity should not be longer than five minutes.
- During the discussion between the pupils, the teacher has time to prepare upcoming activities and prepare the projection.
- **Observation:** Pupils are waiting for the bottle cap draw in a line, as they have gotten used to the activity on such level that it is automated for them to do so. Surprisingly, no one complained about their pairing as it was expected due to the age of students and their puberty. More so, pairs with girls and boys together were not behaving out of ordinary or awkwardly, which is unexpected. The discussion itself seemed to go smoothly as everyone was interested in going to the cinema and watching films to some degree. No obstacle during this activity was encountered.

### 2) Whole class discussion of *Animal Farm*

- The teacher had prepared a list of questions, which were projected to make it easier for students to see. This part of the lesson was prepared due to the fact that pupils were not familiar with *Animal Farm* as much as was

expected. However, prior to this lesson, the teacher had a separate lesson on George Orwell as an author, his literary works and his political ideology.

- **List of discussion topics:**
  - **Who is George Orwell?**
  - **What are G. Orwell's famous works?**
  - **What elements do Orwell's works have in common?**
  - **What is the main ideology in *Animal Farm*?**
  - **Who are the main characters in *Animal Farm*?**
  - **Describe the main plot of *Animal Farm* in your own words.**
  
- The role of the teacher was set to be a mediator of the discussion, which meant as little involvement as possible. Pupils' task was to get to an agreement on the answers to given topics.
  
- The whole activity should be up to fifteen minutes, which was successfully managed before the time limit was up.
  
- **Observation:** Learners were able to use only English language during the discussion and ended up agreeing on the answers. The teacher, in the mediator role, helped only with an error and grammar correction and to establish who was speaking as multiple pupils at the time raised their hands. The only contradiction of the whole class discussion was some pupils remaining silent and not speaking at all as they might have been afraid to speak up.

### **3) Listening to sequences of the adaptation without a visual aid**

- The listening activity consists of three parts (appendix 1). Two listening sequences were specifically chosen by the teacher in advance to make sure the chosen scenes would be suitable and possible to discuss. The first part was played twice to the learners and the second listening was played only once to challenge the class. In the last part, after the discussion, the audio was played with the visual aspect of the film, pupils could compare how

accurate they were and if the visual aid played any role in the comprehension.

- Pupils were asked to listen carefully and to form their thoughts on what was in the scene in as much detail as possible by using their own words.
- The whole activity was meant to be up to twenty minutes. Although, the activity took circa three minutes more, the activity as such was successfully managed.
- **Observation:** Before listening activities, the teacher asked pupils how confident they are with their listening skill and quite surprisingly they were not confident at all. However, as the listening number one went, students were able to answer correctly. The second and more challenging listening went well and pupils got praised and the teacher tried to motivate them more. Overall, pupils manage their listening exercises without bigger issues and all they need is constant encouragement as they tend to second-guess or give up on the exercise before it even starts. The only encountered trouble was at the beginning of the exercise as the sound box did not play the audio loud enough and was not responding to the volume up button. It was quickly resolved with the turning off and back on the device.

#### **4) Description of randomly stopped frames of the film**

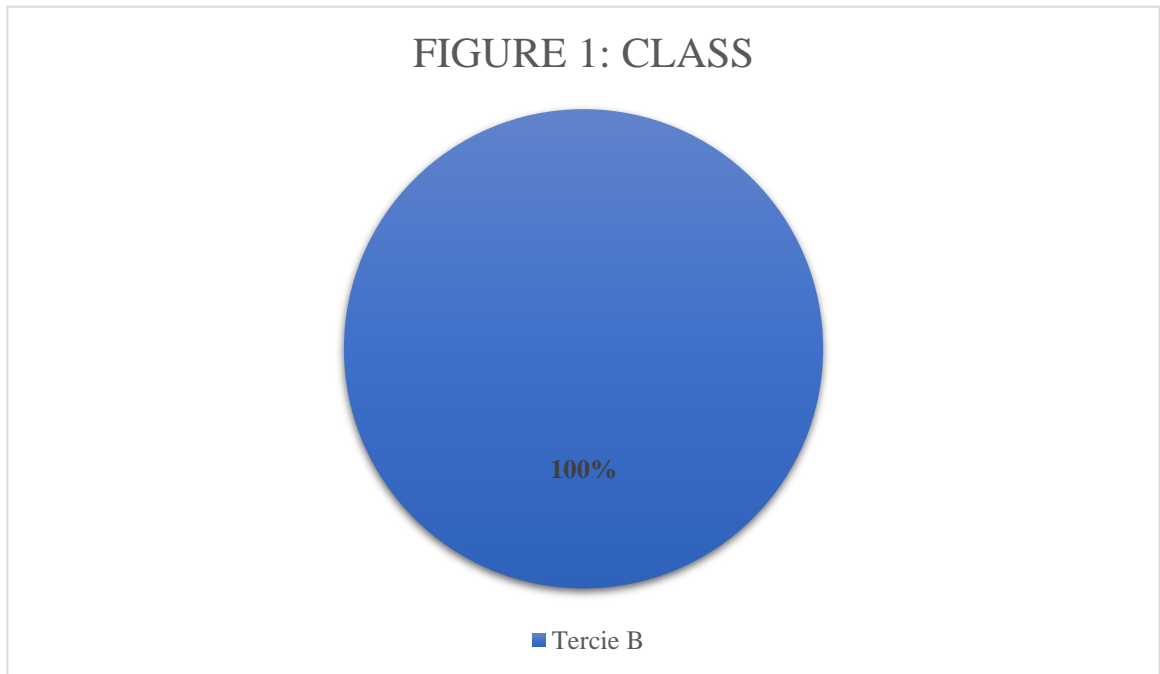
- The teacher stops the film at previously unplanned frames by fast-forwarding and skipping through the adaptation. The teacher tries to stop at interesting scenes so there is a plenty of elements to be described. The teacher asks pupils randomly to describe at least one element and to use “picture description” phrases such as: “In the picture is ...”, “In the background of the picture is ...” “We can see ... in the upper left corner.”, etc. These phrases are necessary to repeat as they are required at Maturita exam and pupils commonly make mistakes with prepositions. The teacher makes sure to correct errors.

- Pupils are describing the scene and using their own words, which is a reflection to the teacher as how advanced pupils are with their knowledge and vocabulary skills.
- The whole activity was meant to be the ending of the lesson to help as it was an easier task for pupils. The timer on this activity was up to 5 minutes.
- **Observation:** Describing pictures was very easy and relaxing for the pupils as they were losing concentration with the lesson ending.

Circa two minutes before the school bell rang the teacher reflected on the lesson and praised the group for a good work and excellent behaviour. The last action taken was to make the group stand up for the greeting.

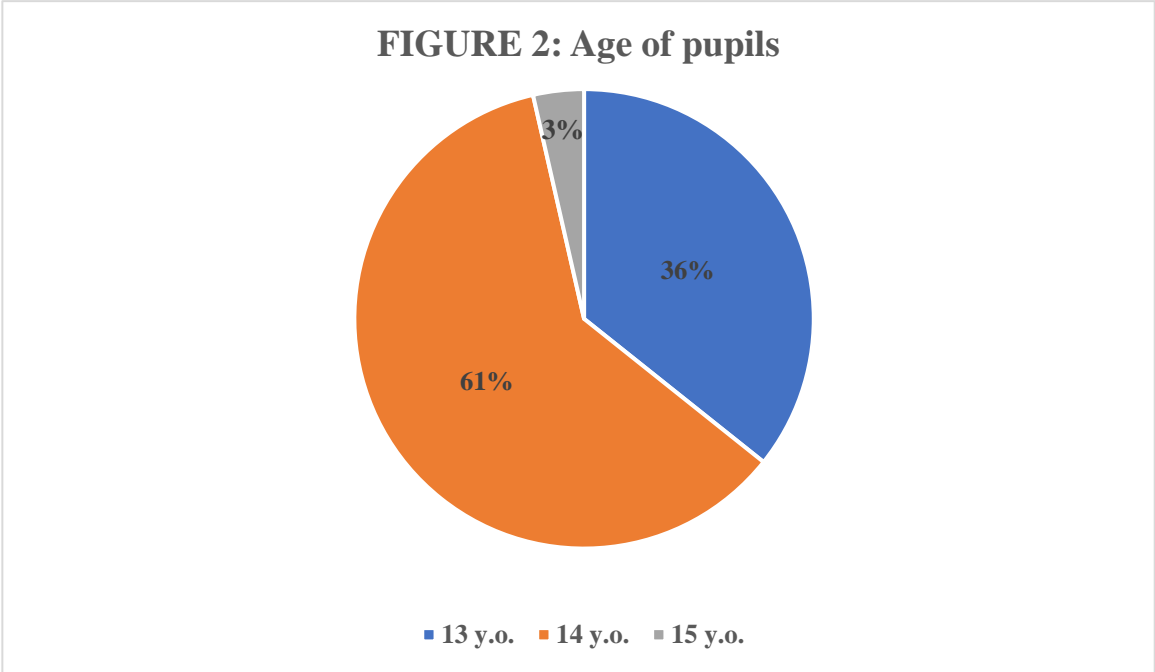
### 3.1.2. Questionnaire

#### Question 1.: Age, grade



- Question was mandatory and an open-ended answer was expected.

The pupils of Tercie B answered the control question that everyone – **28** students are in class of Tercie B, which is **100%**. This has proven that pupils understood the assignment and were answering truthfully to the questionnaire.

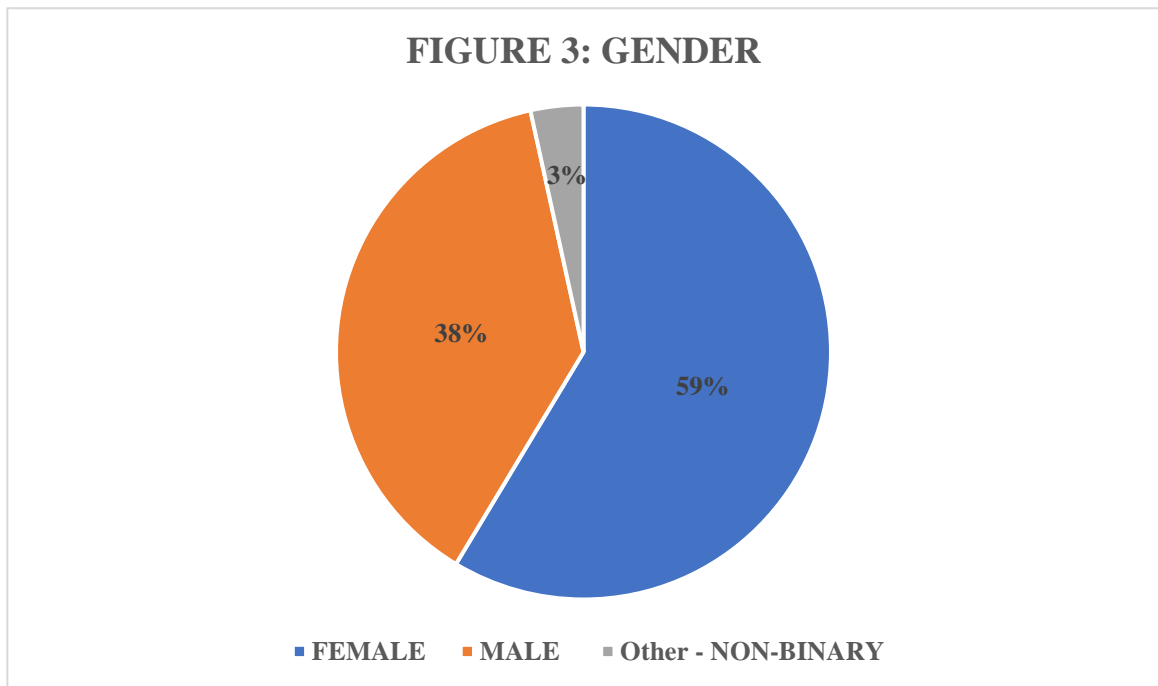


Second figure shows the age diversity of Tercie B class. However, the attendance during the research was not complete – out of 30 pupils 28 were present, thus this figure could have slightly shifted. On the other hand, this figure proves that the most common age in Tercie or 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes is the age of 14, followed by 13. It is rather rare for pupils of older age as 15 to study in this grade. The ages of respondents of this questionnaire were ten pupils of 13 years of age (**36%**), seventeen pupils of 14 years of age (**61%**) and only one respondent of age 15 (**3%**).



## Question 2.: Gender of respondents

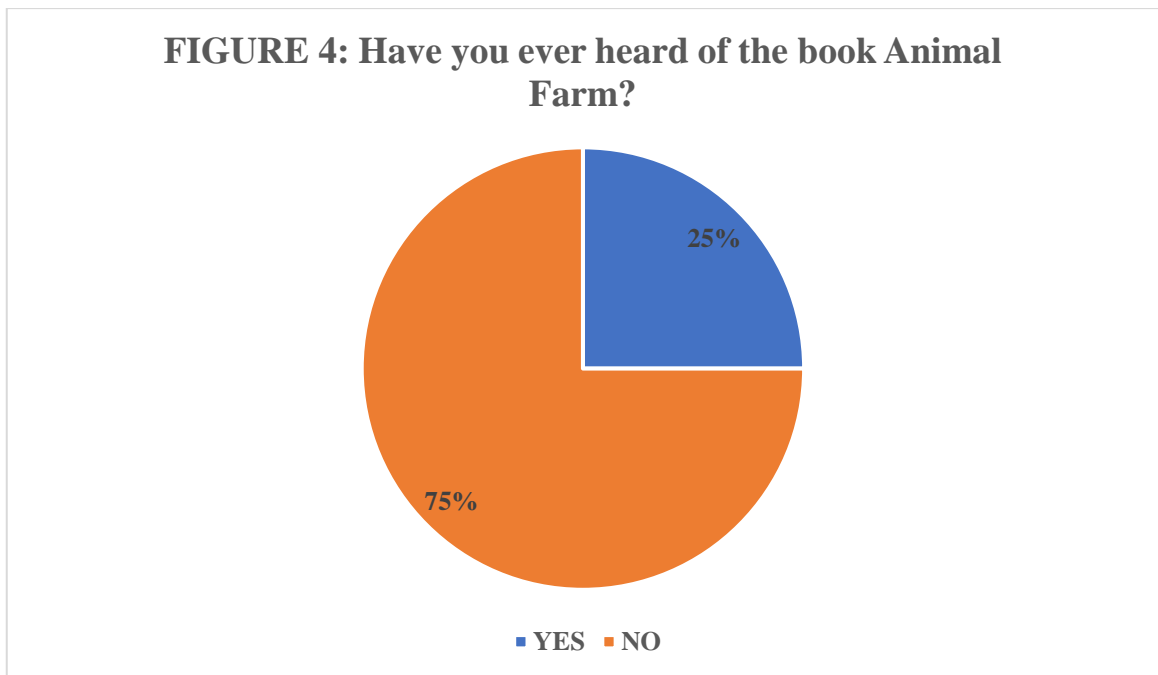
- Question was mandatory and a close-ended answer was expected to be circled.
- Choices were: FEMALE / MALE (with an agreement on writing else)



In this question it was set to be answered by circling the two only options of gender – Female or male. However, as it was proven later by browsing through the questionnaire printed on papers, there was one pupil of different gender “non-binary”, which is **3%** of respondents. They were allowed to add it during the questionnaire filling in. Majority of present pupils were females, sixteen of them, which is **59%** of the group. Males were represented by the number of eleven, which is **38%**.

**Question 3.: Have you ever heard of the book *Animal Farm*?** (prior to the lesson)

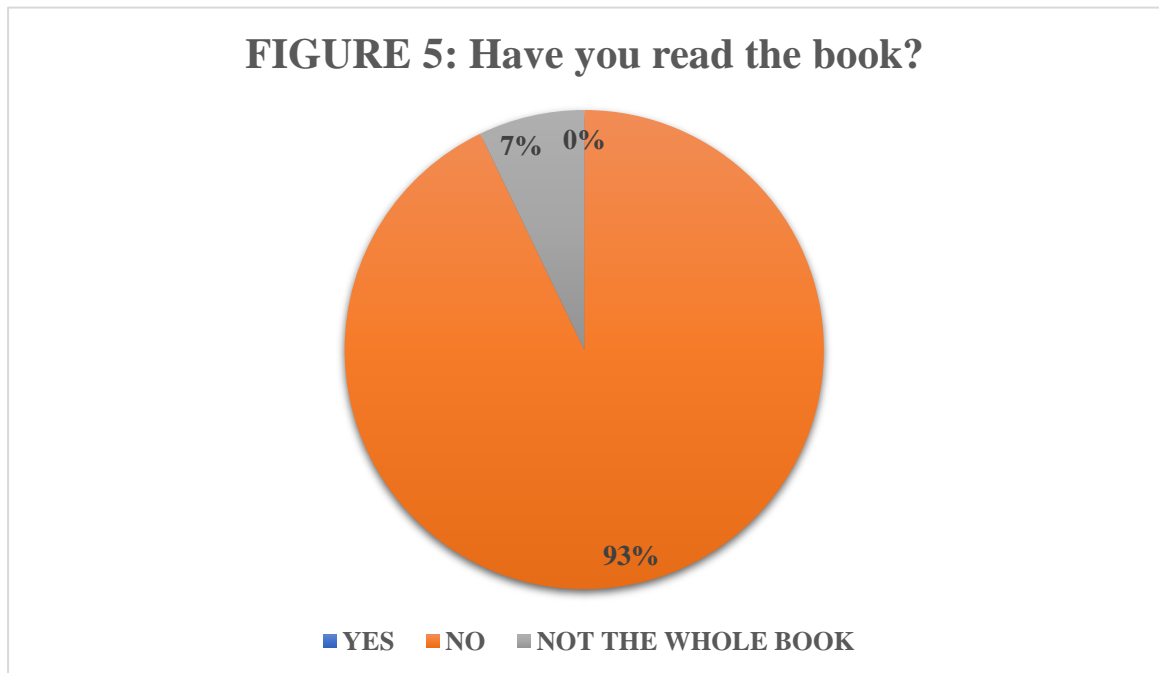
- Question was mandatory and a close-ended answer was expected to be circled.
- Choices were: YES / NO



The answer to this question has proven the need of a lesson, where the teacher discussed the literary work and the author. However, without previous lesson in English literature or even in Czech literature lessons focused on Orwell and his writing, **25%** of the class, which is seven pupils, knew the book. The rest of the group consisting of 21 pupils (**75%**), who did not know the literary piece, agreed on a separate lesson dedicated to depicting *Animal Farm*.

**Question 4.: Have you read the book?** (prior to the lesson)

- Question was mandatory and a close-ended answer was expected to be circled.
- Choices were: YES / NO / NOT THE WHOLE BOOK

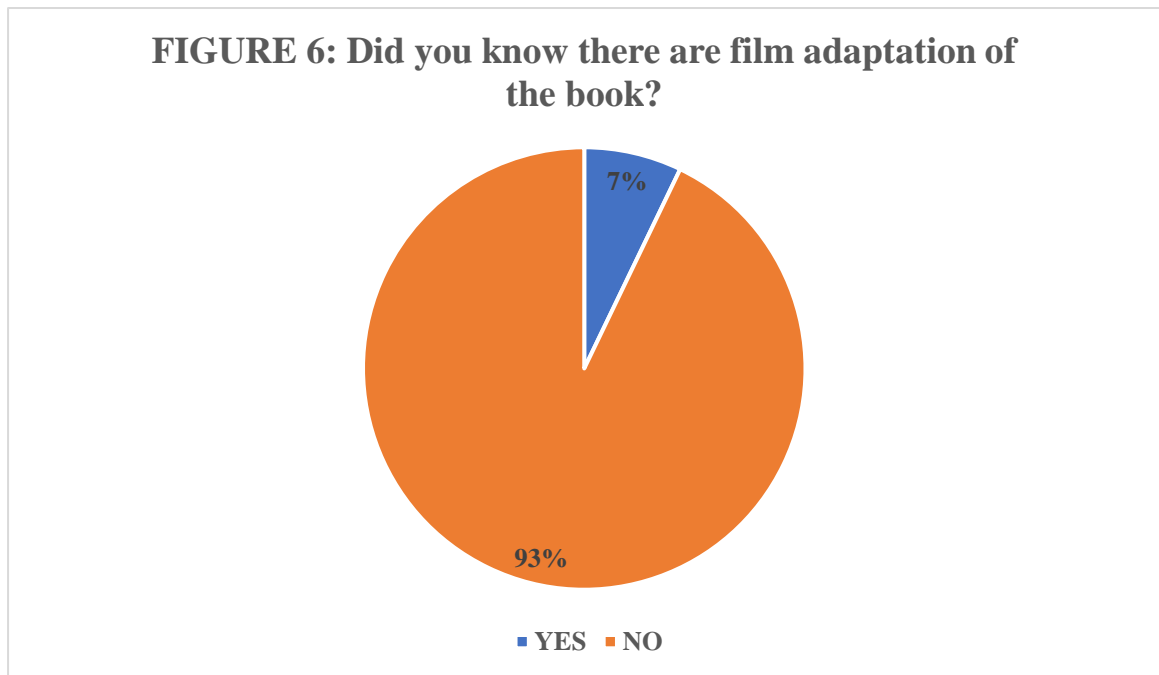


The expectations for question were that at least half of the tested group had already read the book. However, the collected data on this question would not change even after the added lesson as pupils did not have much time to read the work. Without the expected knowledge there still were **2** pupils who read the book at least partially, which makes **7%** of the tested group. The majority, being **26** pupils (**93%**) did not read the book. And no one (**0%**) had read the whole literary piece.

### Question 5.: Did you know there are film adaptations of the book?

(prior to the lesson)

- Question was mandatory, first part of the question was a close-ended answer and was expected to be circled; the second part was open-ended for pupils to write in their own ideas.
- Choices for the first part were: YES / NO



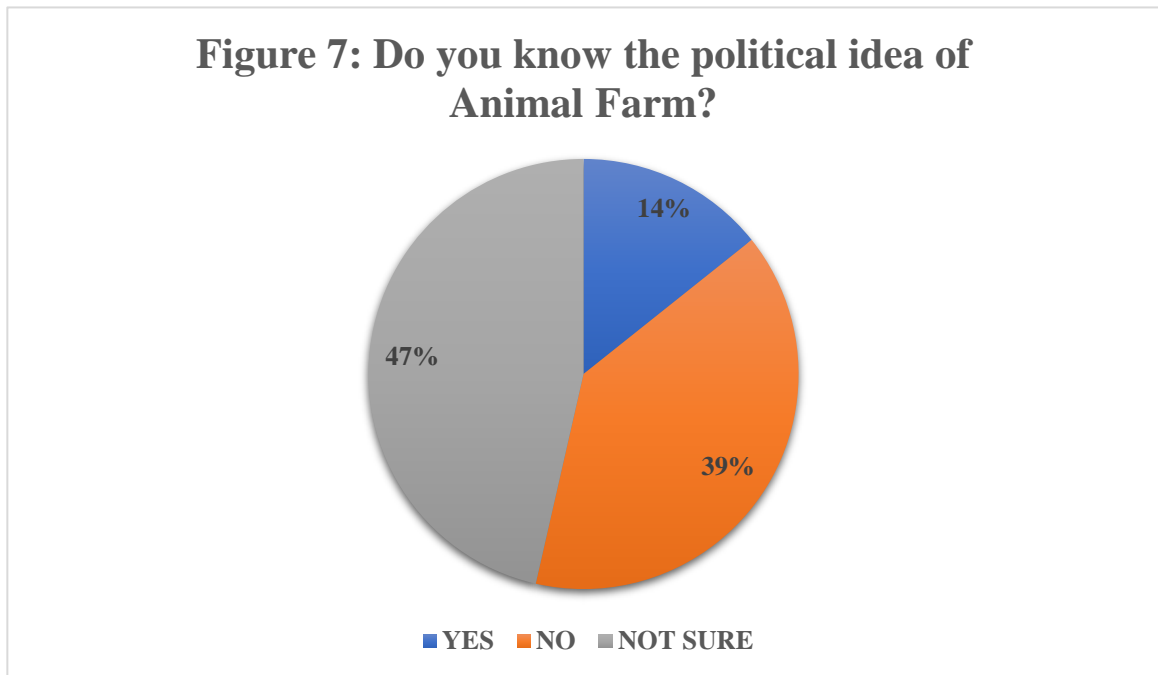
This question was targeted at those respondents, who had read the book and to determine how many students are interested in filmed versions of literary works. The absolute majority of respondents, which is **26 (93%)** students, had no idea if there are film adaptations of the book, as those 26 respondents were more than probably those who did not know the book at all. Presumably, **2 (7%)** respondents answering were those who knew about the book and thought so.

As for part two of the question (optional):

- If answered YES – opened space for writing which adaptation pupils know. Nobody answered.
- In case of NO as an answer, respondents should continue to the following question.

**Question 6.: Do you know the political idea of *Animal Farm*?** (after the additional lesson)

- Question was mandatory, first part of the question was a close-ended answer and was expected to be circled, the second part was open-ended for pupils to write in their own ideas.
- Choices for the first part were: YES / NO / NOT SURE



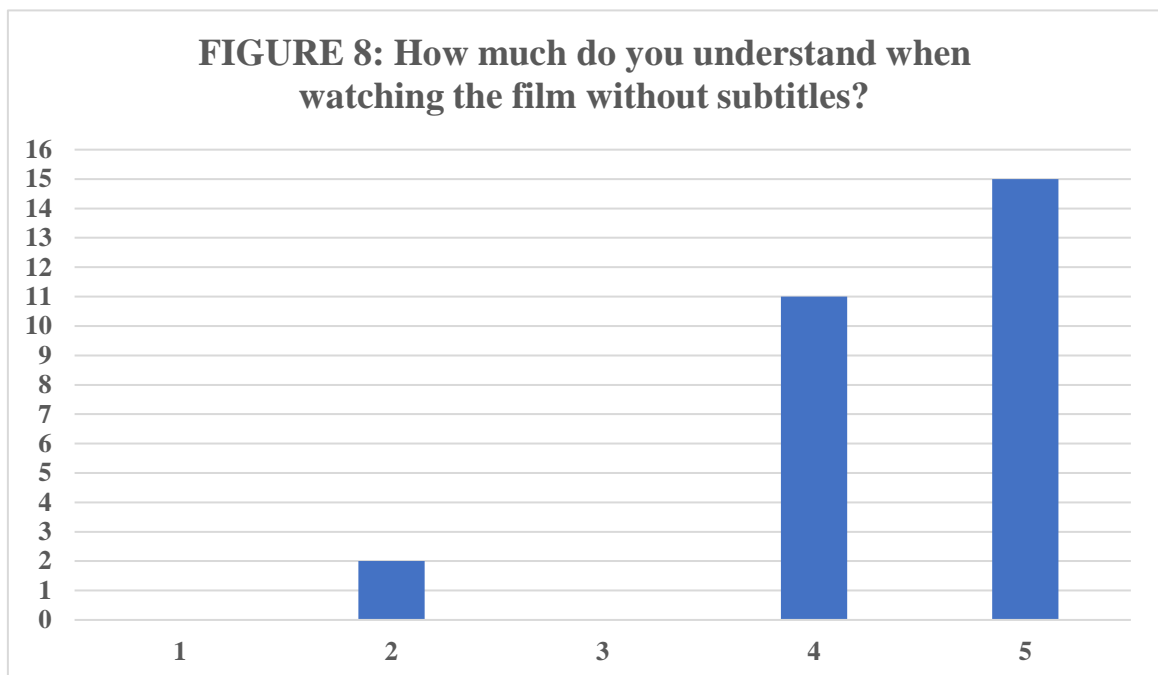
This question has proven that pupils need to be reminded about political ideologies behind certain literary works and modern media as they were still in majority of the cases uncertain. According to data collected in question number 6, there is a necessity of more through discussion of every literary work and background. As **47%** (**13** respondents) was not sure what ideology is symbolized in the *Animal Farm* and **39%** (**11** respondents) surely did not know. The minority of **4** respondents, being **14%**, knew and wrote correct answers.

In the second part of the question:

- If Yes answered – opened space for writing in the political ideology of the work – **3 times** answered “communism” and **once** “dictatorship”
- If No / Not sure - respondents should continue to the following question.

**Question 7.: A) COMPREHENSION – How much do you understand when watching the film without subtitles?** (after the additional lesson)

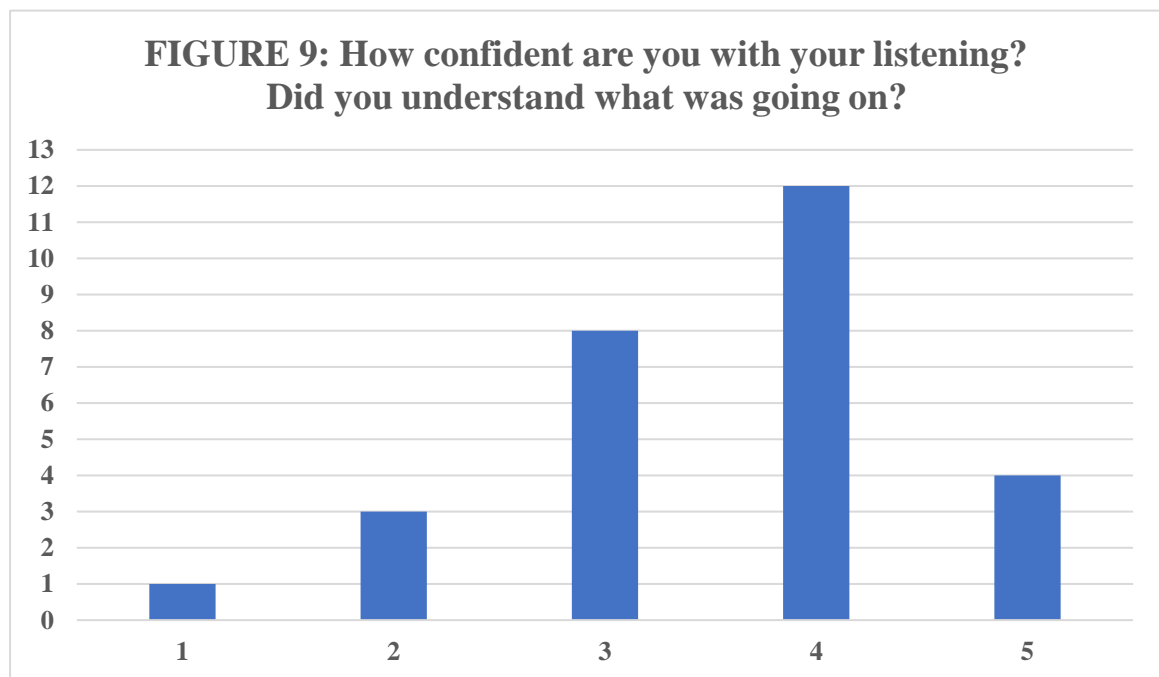
- Question was mandatory, part A) of the question was a close-ended scale of 1 – 5 and the answer was expected to be ticked, only 1 option to be marked
- **1** being the least understandable and **5** being the most understandable



For the part A of the question number 7, there was an expectancy of higher level of language. However, after playing film sequences without subtitles to students and following questionnaire testing, the collected data proves its appropriateness of utilization in lessons. As only **2** pupils answered number 2 as not understandable as much, **11** pupils responded number 4 (very understandable). Very unexpectedly, most students (**15**) responded that they could understand the adaptation without subtitles fully as they marked number 5.

**B) LISTENING – How confident are you with your listening? Did you understand what was going on?** (after the additional lesson)

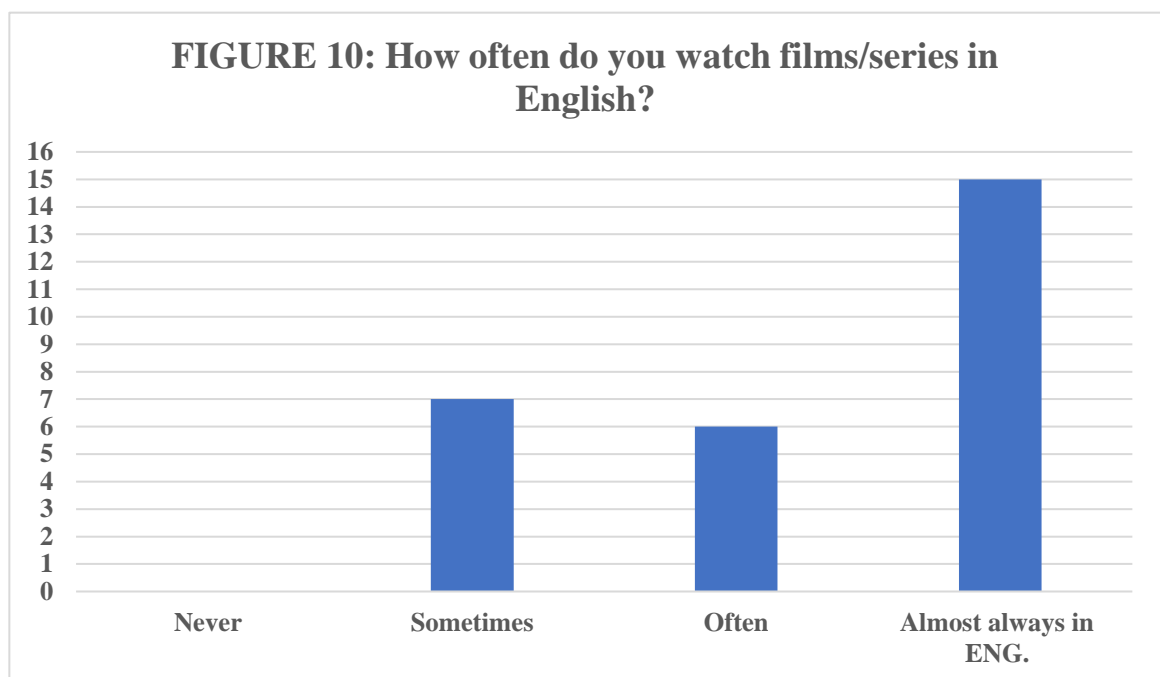
- Question was mandatory, part B) was also a close-ended scale of 1 – 5 and the answer was expected to be ticked, only one option to be marked
- Number **1** being not confident and **5** being very confident



Part B of question number has proven the importance of visual aids, as only listening has students not being as confident in the comprehension as it was in the case of watching the film without subtitles. Only **1** respondent was not confident with the listening. Less confident, number 2 on the scale, were **3** pupils, which means they understood at least some parts. The value of being halfway confident was under the number 3 and this was marked by **8** pupils. Most respondents, in number of **12** people, marked option 4 as it meant quite confident. The last option (number 5), of being very confident and probably understanding majority or the whole listening, was answered by **4** respondents.

**Question 8.: How often do you watch films / series in English?** (after the additional lesson)

- Question was mandatory, a close-ended with four options to choose from and circle / underline only one.
- Options: Never / sometimes / often / almost always in English
- If someone chose “never”, the respondent could continue to question 10 (skipping question number 9)



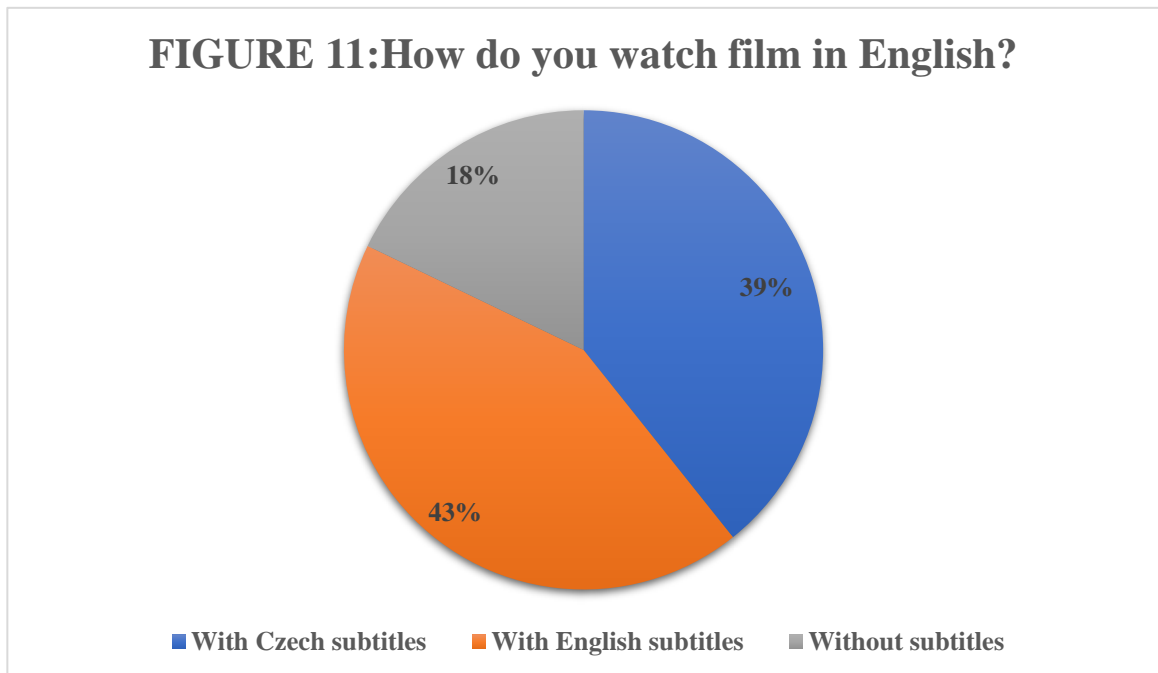
This question was targeted on the outside of school activities of pupils. As previous questions have proven, students have high level of English language proficiency. Their language skills are influenced greatly by their own self-education as they watch films or TV series at least sometimes. No one has underlined the “never” option, which indicates at least some exposure to the authentic source. The option of “sometimes” was marked 7 times, which indicates that English dubbed films are not the primary choice; however the exposure to the English language via film is remarkable. When it comes to some regularity in watching dubbed films or series, the choice of “often” was in the place and 6 respondents felt so. Notwithstanding, the absolutely unexpected result came in the form of 15 students purposefully watching films in English as often as possible, if not only in English.





**Question 9.: How do you watch films in English?** (after the additional lesson)

- Question was **not** mandatory, a close-ended with three options to choose from, there was option to tick only one choice.
- Options: A) With Czech subtitles  
B) With English subtitles  
C) Without subtitles



This question was set as non-mandatory in case of pupils not watching films in English at all. There was nobody to skip this question, so all 28 respondents participated. Films with the Czech subtitles watch **39%** (**11** respondents) of tested. Films with the English subtitles are the right choice for **43%**, which is **12** pupils. There are some pupils, who enjoy films without any subtitles and that is **18%** of the group (**5** learners). Results of this question confirms that students gain higher level of proficiency in language as they watch films in English, and they get even better as they use only English subtitles or watch entirely without subtitles.

**Question 10.: How do films help you with your language skills?** (after the additional lesson)

- Question was mandatory, close-ended with five options to choose from and one open-ended option for students to write in their ideas, there was option to tick all fitting choices.

- Options:

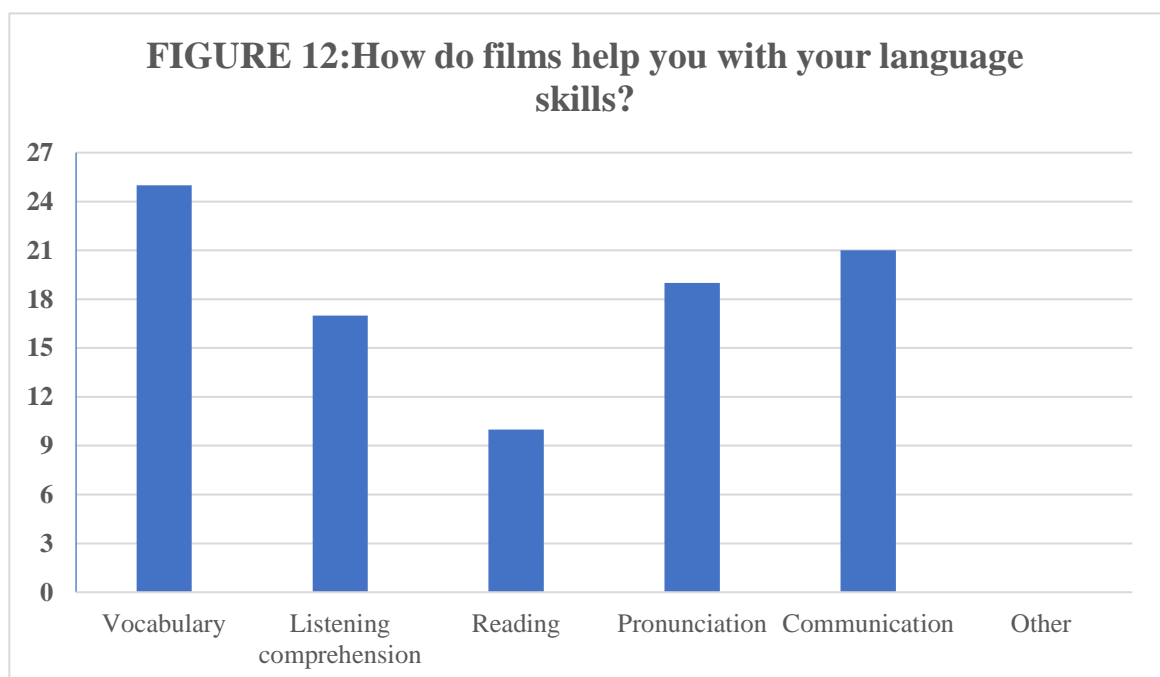
A) Films help with vocabulary

B) Films help with listening comprehension

C) With English subtitles on, films help with faster reading and reading comprehension

D) Films help with the pronunciation

E) Films help with communication skills (commonly used phrases, etc.)



F) Other (blank space left for students to write in)

This question targets pupils' own perception and highlights the importance of the films for them. The most ticked answer with **25** ticks was vocabulary, which indicates that pupils use films as a source of new vocabulary or to exercise usage of already acquired vocabulary.

Following with **21** ticked-off boxes was an answer about communication skills, which can possibly indicate students are trying to learn new phrases to master their speech or to resemble someone famous or interesting. Another important aspect, in pupils' point of view, is pronunciation. Whether learners struggle with pronouncing certain words or with pronunciation as such is not prominent during this research. It is debatable, if by the answer under "help with the pronunciation" was meant something more like "trying to sound like native". Nevertheless, **19** students feel like films help them with pronunciation as in the meaning of a language skill.

Another, equally important, language skill is a listening comprehension. According to the answers of **17** respondents, listening skill can be exercised by watching English films or TV series. Expected results, however, were different as listening would be the most picked answer and that was proven to be an incorrect deduction.

The least picked option, nonetheless, was the reading option. Only **10** respondents felt like reading subtitles while watching films is beneficial. Reading is quite overlooked skill, which in reality can be exercised during subtitles run on the screen.

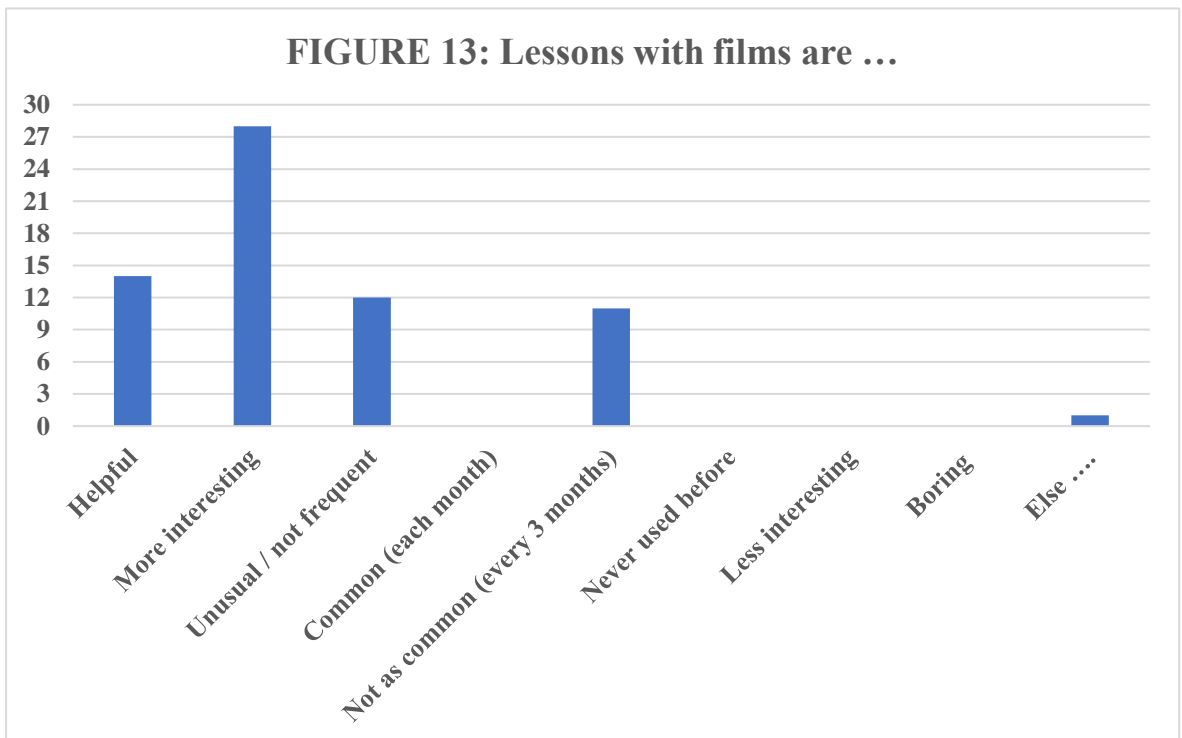
The blank space for writing in other ideas was left without any answer, which might imply that learners do not think about language skills, benefits from filmed authentic sources or how they are developing their language level.

**Question 11.: Lessons with films are ...** (after the additional lesson)

- Another mandatory question, a close-ended with nine options to choose from and one open-ended option for students to write in their ideas, there was option to tick all fitting choices.

- Options:

- A) Helpful
- B) More interesting
- C) Unusual / not frequent
- D) Common (each month)
- E) Not as common (every three months)
- F) Never used before
- G) Less interesting
- H) Boring
- I) Else ... (blank space) – written in 1x “relaxing”



Yet again, targeting pupils' own points of view about lessons with films with this last question of the questionnaire. As previous questions and answers collected hinted, learners find films important. Overall, there was no answer of a negative demeanour towards lessons with films. In fact, this applies to the answers of "Less interesting" and "boring". Students have positive attitude towards film lessons as they are more entertaining, which is supported by the results of this question. Each tested pupil marked the lesson as "more interesting", which is all of **28** tested pupils. It can be deduced, that students are welcoming towards more interactive lessons, even though they are still learning and being tested later on.

Following in a frequency of answers, **14** responses were collected under "helpful". As already proven, films are beneficial and helpful. On the other hand, learners do not realize or do not think about positive effects brought to them by watching English films as an authentic language source.

When it comes to the frequency of taught lessons with audio-visual aids, the respondents felt like these are "unusual / not frequent" in **12** cases. And in **11** cases, such lessons are conducted circa once in every three months ("Not as common" answer), which is not a very frequent occurrence. Fortunately, in case of "never used before", there was no marking as everyone had at least once in a while lesson with films. This answer was also controlling point for the researcher, to verify truthfulness of respondents not to mark answers without reading.

There was only **1** answer to the possibility of writing in own ideas, which read "Relaxing". This answer can serve as a reflection to teachers, who seek more relaxing for stressed pupils and educationally significant as the type of lesson to plan.

## Conclusion

The aim of this diploma thesis was to examine the potential benefits of the usage of famous literary works film adaptations, using the example of the 1999 film *Animal Farm*. The problematics has been described in detail and sectioned into elements of English language teaching in the thesis.

The theoretical part of this thesis includes important terminology, which deals with film adaptations description, by comparison of Orwell's *Animal Farm* and its film adaptation of 1999. Another comparison, of 1999 and 1954 adaptations of the same text, is included.

The role of George Orwell, as an author and writer, was depicted in the theoretical part as well. Orwell is inspirational not only for English teachers, but also for young students, who are looking for a role-model, who has deep morality. The thesis describes relevancy to the contemporary society in that it addresses the missing elements in foreign language teaching, as the film emphasises the importance of reminding young students of a tyranny under regimes such as totalitarianism and communism.

The educational process and more specifically, the English language teaching with modern technology aids is thoroughly described, analysed and listed as an instructional list for others who wish to teach others or themselves the important skills, which together makes the targeted English language complete.

The empirical part of this thesis is focused on used methodology and collected research data. The research was done by two methods – qualitative method of observations and quantitative method of questionnaire created for taught pupils. The first method, qualitative one of observations during the teaching, has brought deeper insight into the inspected problematics of lessons being uniformed and lacking visual aids.

The analysed results of the questionnaires affirmed the stated hypothesis. Film adaptations are not frequently and periodically used in ELT by lower secondary school teachers. Generally, the research data proved that modern schools are able to use the required technology, which makes film utilization possible and convenient. However, it is not a frequent occurrence as teachers prefer to follow the school's curriculum and make lesson plans according to course book syllabuses, which do not include film usage. Observing the class focus on required tasks, the focus on the film adaptation activities improved in comparison to the lessons with strictly course book content.

The results collected thus far from the questionnaire for learners confirmed that pupils find using film adaptations in the process of English language learning beneficial in at least one of their language skills, which concludes the set hypothesis with research questions as correct and provided an important insight into the perception of pupils.



## Resumé

Diplomová práce se zabývá využitím filmové adaptace *Farma zvířat* z roku 1999 stejnojmenného knižního díla George Orwella ve výuce anglického jazyka. Práce je zaměřena na výuku žáků převážně druhého stupně základní školy. Teoretická část je zaměřena na vytyčení používané terminologie, popisu děje knihy a ten je dále porovnán s filmovou adaptací. Další část je zaměřena na jazykové dovednosti a jejich rozvoj pomocí filmů. Praktická část se věnuje výzkumu, který je založen na hypotéze, která řadí film mezi důležité nástroje pro výuku jazyka, a zároveň je tato didaktická pomůcka praktická pro použití v hodinách, a také z pohledu žáků je taková hodina přínosná v mnoha aspektech. Testování proběhlo ve formě kvantitativního výzkumu za použití dotazníků pro žáky, kteří část hypotézy potvrdili. Kvalitativní část výzkumu zaměřená na výuku s použitím filmu a následně pozorování potvrdila i zbývající části výzkumné hypotézy.

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**Appendix 1** – Lesson plan

**Appendix 2** – Lesson teaching – Figure 1

- Figure 2

**Appendix 3** – Questionnaire

**Appendix 4** – Diploma thesis poster for 5th International Student Conference

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 – Lesson plan

<b>Subject</b>	<b>English language</b>
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Tercie B</b>
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Animal Farm</b>
<b>Thematic area</b>	<b>Literature and listening</b>
<b>Goal of activities (lesson focus)</b>	<b>Speaking, listening comprehension, vocabulary</b>
<b>Learning aims</b>	<b>1) Pupils are able to describe parts of the film using their own words. 2) Pupils will practise listening to a conversational narrative. 3) Pupils are able to lead a discussion and voice their own thoughts and ideas.</b>
<b>Time</b>	<b>45 minutes</b>

### Materials:

- Computer with DVD mechanics
- DVD “*Animal Farm*”
- Projector
- Papers / notes
- Pens / pencils

### PROCEDURE:

#### Before the lesson starts

**5 minutes**

- *Classroom preparation* – The teacher turns on the computer and other required technology.
- *Film preparation* – The teacher checks the sound and projection, in order to make sure that film projection will not be interrupted.

**2. Warm up activity – pair discussion** **5 minutes**

- **Discussion theme:** Favourite films and visiting the cinema
- Learners make pairs and will make a small talk about the given theme.
- Teacher's role is to mediate the discussion and ensure fluent discussion flow. The teacher also serves as a supervisor of pupils' focus and activity.

**3. Animal Farm – whole class discussion** **15 minutes**

- **Discussion topics:**
  - **Who is George Orwell?**
  - **What are G. Orwell's famous works?**
  - **What elements do Orwell's works have in common?**
  - **What is the main ideology in *Animal Farm*?**
  - **Who are the main characters in *Animal Farm*?**
  - **Describe the main plot of *Animal Farm* in your own words.**
- The teacher serves as the mediator of the discussion and supervisor of pupils' activity. The teacher also checks the accuracy of pupils' answers to given topics.
- Pupils discuss amongst themselves the given topics and should end up agreeing on answers.

**4. Listening - without visual aid** **20 minutes**

**- Part one:**

- **Film footage: 57 min 06sec – 57min 56sec**
- The teacher turns off the projection and plays only the audio, the audio is played *two times*.
- Pupils listen and are trying to remember as much as possible and answer what they have heard using their own words.
  - In the video: Napoleon has a speech about changing the rules on the farm, there is some resistance from others. Old Major is mentioned.



- **Part two:**

- **Film footage: 1hour 03min 01sec – 1hour 08min 18sec**
- The teacher turns off the projection and plays only the audio, the audio is played *only once* – in order to challenge pupils' skills and test their focus.
- Pupils listen and are trying to remember as much as possible and will answer what they have heard using their own words.
  - In the video: Napoleon has a hateful speech about Snowball and blames the explosion of the windmill on him. Boxer works way too hard. Animals have to sing a propagandist song. Food shortage occurs and hens are forced to surrender their eggs, which are broken during the night. Napoleon threatens to kill everyone, who disobeys.

- **Part three:**

- The teacher this time plays the audio with the image.
- Pupils will discuss how differently they perceive the situation now.

**5. Stopping film at randomly chosen frames - describing** **5 minutes**

- The teacher stops the film and asks pupils to describe, what they can see. The teacher asks pupils randomly to test their knowledge and vocabulary skills.
- Pupils are describing the scene – using their own words.

**Appendix 2** – Lesson teaching: Gymnázium Kroměříž - Tercie B – 29.3.2023



*Figure 1* Teacher- Bc. Marie Kyšnerová, class Tercie B



*Figure 2 Teacher- Bc. Marie Kyšnerová, class Tercie B*

1) Age, grade (class)

2) *Female/male* (circle)

3) Have you ever heard of the book *Animal Farm*? (circle)

YES/NO

4) Have you read the book? (circle)

Yes/no/not the whole book

5) Did you know there are film versions (adaptations) of the book before our lessons? (circle) YES/NO

If YES - have you seen any? Which one (year approx.)

If NO – continue

6) Do you know the political idea of *Animal Farm*? (circle)

Yes/No/not sure

If YES – do you know which idea it is

If NO/NOT SURE – continue

Bc. Marie Kyšnerová

7) **COMPREHENSION: How much did you understand when watching the film with subtitles? – scale 1-5 (most understandable)** (tick only 1 choice)

Without subtitles – 1-5

least understandable 1    2    3    4    5 most understandable  
           

Listening – only hearing parts of the film – how confident are you about your listening? Did you understand what was going on? 1-5 (tick only 1 choice)

Not confident 1    2    3    4    5 very confident  
           

8) How often do you watch films/series in English? (circle)  
*never/sometimes/often/almost always in English*

If NEVER skip to question 10

9) How do you watch films in English? (tick only 1 choice)

Choose:  
 With Czech subtitles  
 With English subtitles  
 Without subtitles

10) How do films help you with your language skills? (tick *all* fitting)

- They help with vocabulary
- They help with listening comprehension
- With English subtitles on, they help with faster reading and reading comprehension
- They help with pronunciation
- They help with communication skills (commonly used phrases)
- Other - .....

*Thank you for your participation 😊*

*Have a nice day!*

11) Lessons with films are...

Choose multiple (tick *all* fitting)

- Helpful
- More interesting
- Unusual / not frequent
- Common (each month)
- Not as common (every three months)
- Never used before
- Less interesting
- Boring
- Other ...

## Using the 1999 film adaptation of G. Orwell's *Animal Farm* in ELT



Bc. Marie Kyšnerová  
Institute of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Education  
Palacký University



### INTRODUCTION

This project aims to investigate the results of using film adaptation in English language teaching. The 1999 film adaptation of G. Orwell's *Animal Farm* (Stephenson, 1999) based on the famous literary work with the same title was chosen due to its common usage in literature in Czech schools and further possible utilization in the learning process and language skills development by lower secondary school pupils.

Adaptations serve as visualized original plot with the story's main aspects, main characters, the same background, and the exact timeline. Adaptations are omnipresent because the modern era creates ideal conditions to recreate famous and important literary works. As Hutcheon (2006, p. 1-7) wrote, the role of adaptations can be classified as "to evolve from the written into visualized".

### AIMS

The research is based on a hypothesis, which characterizes film adaptations as necessary, helpful, and didactically meaningful tools in the process of teaching the English language to lower secondary school learners. The further testing of the stated hypothesis follows formulated research questions and aims to prove the importance and fitting of said literary work and its adaptation.

#### Research questions:

1. Is it convenient to use film adaptation in ELT?
2. Which beneficial results were prominent after the usage of the film adaptation in ELT?
3. What are the pupils' views of the advantages in using film adaptations in the process of English language learning?

### RESEARCH METHODS

The research is performed by teaching an actual class while using the film adaptation, questionnaires answered by taught pupils, and observing the whole process of film adaptation usage in ELT. Another element of the questionnaires ought to be the convenience of the research method and authentic research experience.

Quantitative – questionnaires x Qualitative – observations

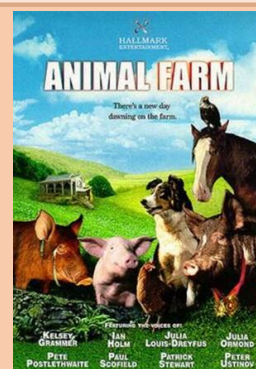
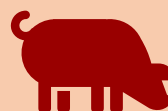
### RESULTS & CONCLUSION

The analysed results of the questionnaires affirmed the stated hypothesis. The observations during the teaching brought deeper insight into the inspected problematics.

Film adaptations are not frequently and periodically used in ELT by lower secondary school teachers. Generally, the research data proved that modern schools are able to use the required technology, which makes film utilization possible and convenient. However, it is not a frequent occurrence as teachers prefer to follow the school's curriculum and make lesson plans according to coursebook syllabuses, which do not include film usage.

Observing the class focus on required tasks, the focus on the film adaptation activities improved in comparison to the lesson with strictly coursebook content.

The results collected thus far from the questionnaire for learners confirmed that pupils find using film adaptations in the process of English language learning beneficial in at least one of their language skills.



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Figure 3 Connecting Research Communities (CRC 5): 5th International Student Conference at Palacký University, Czech Republic

## Annotation

<b>Jméno a příjmení</b>	Bc. Marie Kyšnerová
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<b>Název v angličtině</b>	Using the 1999 film adaptation of G. Orwell's <i>Animal Farm</i> in ELT
<b>Anotace práce</b>	<p>Tato práce se zabývá využíváním a vhodností filmové adaptace významného literárního díla <i>Farma Zvířat</i> od George Orwella pro výuku anglického jazyka. Tato práce je založena na hypotéze, která charakterizuje filmové adaptace jako nezbytné nástroje výuky anglického jazyka, dále hypotézu ověřuje tím, že prokazuje důležitost a výstižnost uvedeného literárního díla a jeho adaptace. Práce začíná představením metod využívajících filmové adaptace, dovednostních cvičení a přínosů ve výuce žáků prostřednictvím filmu. Praktická část této práce je zaměřena na dotazníkový výzkum prováděný na žácích, výuku hodiny s filmovou adaptací a pozorování za účelem ověření hypotézy.</p>
<b>Klíčová slova</b>	Filmy, adaptace, George Orwell, Farma zvířat, výuka, anglický jazyk, učitel, jazykové dovednosti

<p><b>Anotace v angličtině</b></p>	<p>This thesis focuses on usage and convenience for teaching of the film adaptation of influential literary work <i>Animal Farm</i> by George Orwell. This thesis is based on a hypothesis, which characterizes film adaptations as necessary tools of teaching English language, further testing the hypothesis by proving the importance and fitting of said literary work and its adaptation. The thesis begins with an introduction of methods using film adaptations, skills-forming exercises, and benefits in pupils' learning via film. The practical part of this thesis aims at questionnaire research conducted on pupils, teaching a lesson with the film adaptation utilized and observations done by the researcher in order to validate the hypothesis.</p>
<p><b>Klíčová slova v angličtině</b></p>	<p>Films, adaptation, George Orwell, <i>Animal Farm</i>, ELT, English language, teacher, language skills</p>
<p><b>Přílohy vázané v práci</b></p>	<p>CD</p>
<p><b>Rozsah práce</b></p>	<p>72 s.</p>
<p><b>Jazyk práce</b></p>	<p>Anglický jazyk</p>