The effectivity of top-down versus bottom-up approach to developing reading

Bakalářská práce

Zadání bakalářské práce

The effectivity of top-down versus bottom-up approach to developing reading

Jméno a příjmení:	**Kristýna Holubová**
Osobní číslo:	P19000161
Studijní program:	B0114A300068 Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání
Specializace:	Anglický jazyk se zaměřením na vzdělávání
	Český jazyk a literatura se zaměřením na vzdělávání
Zadávající katedra:	Katedra anglického jazyka
Akademický rok:	**2020/2021**

Zásady pro vypracování:

Bakalářská práce se zabývá čtenářskými dovednostmi a jejich rozvoji u žáků základních škol. První část se věnuje způsobům výuky čtenářských dovedností a jejich zásadami. Dále se práce zaměřuje na kvality dobrého čtenáře a na jejich možné vylepšení. Nejdůležitější částí práce je podrobnější zaměření se na dva přístupy ke čtenářským dovednostem –top-down and bottom-up. V praktické části se práce zaměřuje na výše zmíněné přístupy a na jejich uplatnění ve výuce jednotlivých studentů. Cílem práce je specifikovat, jaký přístup je nejefektivnější pro studenty napříč věkovým spektrem základních škol. (Předpokládá se vzorek žáků různých věkových skupin v rámci individuálních hodin se žáky/doučování.)

Rozsah grafických prací:
Rozsah pracovní zprávy:
Forma zpracování práce: tištěná/elektronická
Jazyk práce: Angličtina

Seznam odborné literatury:

Abraham, P. (2002). Skilled reading: Top-down, bottom-up. *Field notes*, *10*(2), 1.

Farrell, T. S. C., & Farrell, T. S. (2009). *Teaching reading to English language learners: A reflective guide*. Corwin press.

Farris, P. J., Fuhler, C. J., & Walther, M. P. (2004). *Teaching reading: A balanced approach for today's classrooms*. McGraw-Hill Humanities Social.

Field, J. (1999). Bottom-up’and ‘top-down.

Frehan, P. (1999). Beyond the sentence: Finding a balance between bottom-up and top-down reading approaches. *LANGUAGE TEACHER-KYOTO-JALT-*, *23*, 11-14.

Vedoucí práce: PhDr. Iva Koutská, Ph.D.
                               Katedra anglického jazyka

Datum zadání práce: 20. června 2021
Předpokládaný termín odevzdání: 15. července 2022

L.S.

prof. RNDr. Jan Picek, CSc.   Mgr. Zénó Vernyik, Ph.D.
děkan   vedoucí katedry

V Liberci dne 20. června 2021

Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že svou bakalářskou práci jsem vypracovala samostatně jako původní dílo s použitím uvedené literatury a na základě konzultací s vedoucím mé bakalářské práce a konzultantem.

Jsem si vědoma toho, že na mou bakalářskou práci se plně vztahuje zákon č. 121/2000 Sb., o právu autorském, zejména § 60 – školní dílo.

Beru na vědomí, že Technická univerzita v Liberci nezasahuje do mých autorských práv užitím mé bakalářské práce pro vnitřní potřebu Technické univerzity v Liberci.

Užiji-li bakalářskou práci nebo poskytnu-li licenci k jejímu využití, jsem si vědoma povinnosti informovat o této skutečnosti Technickou univerzitu v Liberci; v tomto případě má Technická univerzita v Liberci právo ode mne požadovat úhradu nákladů, které vynaložila na vytvoření díla, až do jejich skutečné výše.

Současně čestně prohlašuji, že text elektronické podoby práce vložený do IS/STAG se shoduje s textem tištěné podoby práce.

Beru na vědomí, že má bakalářská práce bude zveřejněna Technickou univerzitou v Liberci v souladu s § 47b zákona č. 111/1998 Sb., o vysokých školách a o změně a doplnění dalších zákonů (zákon o vysokých školách), ve znění pozdějších předpisů.

Jsem si vědoma následků, které podle zákona o vysokých školách mohou vyplývat z porušení tohoto prohlášení.

24. dubna 2022   Kristýna Holubová

Poděkováni

Děkuji především PhDr. Ivě Koutské, Ph.D. za nezbytné a přínosné rady, bez kterých by se tvorba bakalářské práce neobešla, za nápady, kterými ji obohatila a za milý a pohotový přístup, který jsem v době psaní práce velmi ocenila. Také děkuji kolegyni Anastázii Vondrové, která mě po dobu psaní bakalářské práce velmi podporovala a která mi pomohla s její formální stránkou. V neposlední řadě děkuji celé své rodině, která mě zásobila svými pedagogickými zkušenostmi, a to především mému otci, Mgr. Vojtěchu Holubovi, který se podílel na gramatické správnosti práce.

Anotace: Bakalářská práce "Efektivita top-down versus bottom-up přístupu na rozvoj čtenářských dovedností" se zabývá čtenářskými dovednostmi a jejich rozvojem u žáků základních škol. Teoretická část práce se věnuje popisu termínů zásadních pro vypracování praktické části. Mezi tyto termíny patří gramotnost, čtení, čtecí dovednosti, typy čtení a čtecí strategie. Dále se práce zaměřuje na kvality dobrého čtenáře a na jejich možné vylepšení a také na čtenáře s dyslexií. Nejdůležitější částí práce je podrobnější zaměření se na dva přístupy ke čtenářským dovednostem – top-down a bottom-up. Teoretická část práce čerpá především z již dříve provedených výzkumů na téma práce a také z literatury popisující použité termíny.

V praktické části se práce zaměřuje na výše zmíněné přístupy a na jejich uplatnění ve výuce jednotlivých studentů. Cílem práce je specifikovat, jaký přístup je nejefektivnější pro studenty napříč věkovým spektrem základních škol. (Předpokládá se vzorek žáků různých věkových skupin v rámci individuálních hodin se žáky/doučování.)

Klíčová slova: výuky čteného projevu, čtení, přístupy ke čtení, top-down, bottom-up, typy čtení, kvality dobrého čtenáře, čtení s dyslexií

Abstract: The bachelor thesis "The effectivity of top-down versus bottom-up approach to developing reading" deals with reading skills and their development across pupils at elementary schools. The theoretical part of the thesis discusses terms which are necessary for the research in the practical part of the thesis. These terms are literacy, reading, reading skills, reading types and reading strategies. Later, the thesis focuses on the qualities of a "good reader" and their possible improvement and also on reading with dyslexia. The most important part of the thesis is a detailed description of two approaches to reading – a top-down and a bottom-up. The theoretical part is built on previous studies and on the literature written in the field of English learning teaching.

The practical part deals with two approaches to teaching reading – a top-down and a bottom-up and their application to the teaching process of individual students. The aim of the thesis is to specify which approach is the most effective for students across the age spectrum of elementary schools. (A group of pupils of various ages attending individual lessons is anticipated.)

Table of Contents

Introduction

The bachelor thesis deals with the effectiveness of two different approaches to developing reading skills of primary school children. These two approaches are a bottom-up approach and a top-down approach to information processing. A top-down approach and a bottom-up approach are different in many ways. It could be said that they are "opposites". But they are also similar in some details. The thesis deals with these two approaches used for developing reading skills theoretically and puts them into the process of teaching. The thesis evaluates their effectiveness by testing students' level of reading skills before and after using both approaches in reading skill development oriented lessons (more in the practical part of the thesis).

The idea for doing the research comes up from a relatively small number of texts about the issue found in experts' literature where the research question asked was: which approach (a bottom-up or a top-down) is more effective while teaching reading in English as a foreign language class at primary schools.

In the theoretical part, the thesis explains terms essential for understanding the practical part. These terms are literacy, reading, developing reading, reading skills, reading types, reading strategies, the reading process, two approaches to processing information while reading, i.e. a top down and a bottom-up approach, reading with dyslexia and "good reader" concept. In the practical part, the thesis shows the reader the process of teaching reading via these two different approaches (a bottom-up, a top-down), and gives the reader results of the research.

Theoretical part

The theoretical part focuses on literacy because "literacy is the ability to read, write, speak and listen in a way that lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world. Lacking vital literacy skills holds a person back at every stage of their life". (National Literacy Trust, 2017, assessed on April 20 2022) The same applies to reading because "readers are viewed as experts [when they] comprehend what they read" (Vaezi, 2006, assessed on April 20 2022) and comprehension, understanding of information, reading and critical reading are necessary skills for students.

The main focus of the theoretical part lays on two possible approaches to reading, a top-down and a bottom-up, which are also the core of the practical part. The thesis also covers the topic of reading with dyslexia, which is important to mention because learners with dyslexia may need different approach to teaching reading than learner without any learning disorders. Lastly, the text discusses the "good reader" concept because a "good reader" level is an ideal result, i.e. reaching "a good reader" level is the proof of effectiveness of a chosen approach to teaching reading.

1 Literacy

Prior to the discussion on reading it is necessary to explain the concept of literacy. Literacy is, according to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistic

> *"the ability to read and write in a language. The inability to read or write is known as illiteracy. Functional literacy refers to the ability to use reading and writing skills sufficiently well for the purposes and activities which normally require literacy in adult life. An inability to meet a certain minimum criterion of reading and writing skills is known as functional illiteracy. A person who is able to read and write in two languages is sometimes called biliterate"*
> (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 313)

Hall (1995) argues that teaching literacy has been based upon ideas drawn from psychology. Those ideas have reflected a belief that becoming literate is an individual learning process involving the mastery of a set of skills. Literacy is a state created by people. It did not exist somewhere in the world waiting to be discovered. Literacy is something that was developed by people as a response to their needs. It is people who use literacy, it is people who learn literacy and it is people who are influenced by literacy. Literacy is a social phenomenon. (Hall, 1995, in Brumfit, Moon & Tongue, 1995, p. 244)

According to Wolf (2008), there are five stages of developing literacy. Those stages are the emerging pre-reader, the novice reader, the decoding reader, the fluent, comprehending reader and the expert reader. Wolf (2008) describes the emergent pre-reader as someone typically between six months to six years old, and she claims that "the emergent pre-reader sits on 'beloved laps,' samples and learns from a full range of multiple sounds, words, concepts, images, stories, exposure to print, literacy materials, and just plain talk during the first five years of life. The major insight in this period is that

reading never just happens to anyone. Emerging reading arises out of years of perceptions, increasing conceptual and social development, and cumulative exposures to oral and written language." (Wolf, 2008, p. 115) The same can be concept is described as preliteray/pre-literacy too, see "preliteracy is the period in the life of society or culture antedating the use of writing or the keeping of written records." (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2022, assessed on February 11 2022)

The novice reader as someone between six to seven years old. She says that "in this stage, the child is learning the relationships between letters and sounds and between printed and spoken words. The child starts to read simple text containing high frequency words and phonically regular words, and uses emerging skills and insights to "sound out" new one-syllable words." (ibid., p.116) In EFL this stage mirrors what happens to foreign language beginner readers, see e.g. CEFR Companion volume "Pre-A1 Can recognise familiar words/signs accompanied by pictures, such as a fast-food restaurant menu illustrated with photos or a picture book using familiar vocabulary." (CEFR Companion volume, 2020, p. 54)

The third phase (typically between 7-9 years old readers) is the phase in which "the child is reading simple, familiar stories and selections with increasing fluency. This is done by consolidating the basic decoding elements, sight vocabulary, and meaning in the reading of familiar stories and selections." (Wolf, 2008, p. 127) For EFL class reflection see CEFR again "A1 Can understand very short, simple texts a single phrase at a time, picking up familiar names, words and basic phrases and rereading as required." (CEFR Companion volume, 2020, p. 54)

By the fourth stage (readers from 9 to 15 years of age), the stage of the fluent, comprehending reader, Wolf (2008) means the stage in which "reading is used to learn new ideas in order to gain new knowledge, to experience new feelings, to learn new

attitudes, and to explore issues from one or more perspectives. Reading includes the study of textbooks, reference works, trade books, newspapers, and magazines that contain new ideas and values, unfamiliar vocabulary and syntax. There is a systematic study of word meaning, and learners are guided to react to texts through discussions, answering questions, generating questions, writing, and more." (ibid., p. 136) The last stage, the expert stage (readers typically from 16 years and older) is described by Wolf like this: "By this stage, the learner is reading widely from a broad range of complex materials, both expository and narrative, with a variety of viewpoints. Learners are reading widely across the disciplines, include the physical, biological and social sciences as well as the humanities, politics and current affairs." (ibid., p. 156) Learners read these texts mainly in the classroom but they can come back to them in they spare time and connect information from texts with their knowledge of the outside world.

A child learning to read and write is not simply influenced by what goes on in the classroom (Hall, 1995, p.244). Children construct their own hypotheses about the nature of the processes of reading and writing (Ferriero & Teberosky, 1983 in Hall, 1995, p. 251) "Kids grow up in a culture that uses literacy for everyday purposes, which enshrines and transmits values through print, and which carries with it the technological and bureaucratic consequences of adopting literacy. Children growing up will experience literacy in very different circumstances according to the culture or community where they grow up". (Hall, 1995, p. 255) By identification, imitation, and roleplay, their awareness and skills in literacy will emerge over time. Literacy can evolve from a whole range of contexts in which they attempt to make meanings with written language (Beard, 1995 in Hall, 1995, p.252).

As it was already mentioned, literacy is "the ability to read and write in a language." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 313) Nowadays, the ability to read and write is a must for most countries around the world. Reading and writing skills are irreplaceable and people

want to improve them as much as possible. In the practical part, the bachelor thesis focuses on the question of which approach, a bottom-up or a top-down, is more efficient for improving reading skills and that directly corresponds with the topic of improving literacy.

2 Reading

Reading is the process of looking at written symbols and letters and understanding their meaning. Reading is an interactive process between the reader and the writer. Hughes (2007) describes reading as „a complex interaction between the text, the reader and the purposes for reading, which are shaped by the reader's prior knowledge and experiences, the reader's knowledge about reading and writing language and the reader's language community which is culturally and socially situated." (Hughes, 2007)

According to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistic reading is

> *"1) perceiving a written text in order to understand its contents. This can be done silently (silent reading). The understanding that results is called reading comprehension. 2) saying a written text aloud (oral reading). This can be done with or without an understanding of the contents. Different types of reading comprehension are often distinguished, according to the reader's purposes in reading and the type of reading used"* (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 443).

According to Thornbury (2006), reading is a receptive skill, but it does not mean it is passive:

> *"reading is an active, even interactive, process. Readers bring their own questions to the text, which are based on their background knowledge, and they use these to interrogate the text, modifying their questions and coming up with new ones according to the answers they get. In order to do this, they*

draw on a range of knowledge bases. They need to be able to decode letters, words and grammatical structures of the individual sentences – what is called bottom-up processing. But they also enlist top-down processes, such as drawing on discourse and schematic knowledge, as well as on immediate contextual information. Discourse knowledge is knowing how different text-types – such as news reports, recipes or academic papers – are organized. Schematic knowledge is the reader's existing knowledge of the topic. Reading involves an interaction between these different 'levels' of knowledge, where knowledge at one 'level' can compensate for lack of knowledge at another."

(Thornbury, 2006, p. 190)

Reading is a mental process so it needs other skills to be integrated with such as listening, speaking, and writing. This statement supports the fact that reading is one of the four main language skills alongside listening, speaking, and writing. Reading is usually the third language skill that people learn in their language - it comes after listening and speaking, see e.g. Thornbury (2006) claims that "it was once argued that nothing should be spoken until it has been heard, nothing should be written until it has been read, and nothing should be read or written until it has been heard or spoken." (Thornbury, 2006, p. 206) In other words, Thornbury (2006) mentions that "reception should precede production, and oral skills should precede literacy skills […] Also, productive skills are generally considered to be more difficult to master than receptive skills." (ibid., p. 206) He also says that these four skills do not exist separately and that they should not be practised separately as well: "However, the separation into discrete skills overlooks the fact that most communication is interactive, involving both reception and production, and often in equal measure. Practising productive skills apart from receptive skills, and vice versa, presents a distorted view of how language is really used." (ibid., p. 206)

2.1 Developing reading

From the moment children are born, they begin developing skills they need to master reading. Wells (1987) reported that "of all the factors which were associated with reading attainment at the age of seven, the most significant was the child´s knowledge about conventions of reading at the time of entry to school; this, in turn, was associated with the extent to which parents encouraged an interest in books and literacy and in particular by the frequency with which they read stories to the child, as well as the quality of their conversation with their offspring. Indeed, the power of story experience on the development of early language and literacy has become increasingly recognised in recent years." (Wells, 1987 in Hall, p.258)

According to Cicerchia (1992, assessed on March 22 2022), "there are many ways in which parents or teachers can help develop pre-literacy skills in children. For example, pointing out letters, providing ample opportunities for playing with language, and reading books to kids." Parents and teachers can also help kids to develop reading habits. To make them love reading. According to Poláková (2014, assessed on March 22 2022), who is the creator of the project called "Školní čtenářské kluby", the best way how to help kids to fall in love with reading is to read together in reading clubs. She also says that these clubs should be very attractive to kids' eyes. She claims that kids should read whatever they want as long as they read. She also says that the teacher in the club should give kids the space to ask questions and never tell them they are wrong. Teachers should read books for kids because it is always good if they can imagine how the kids feel while reading and which stories they like. (Poláková, 2014, assessed on March 22 2022)

According to Rayner et al. (2002), three general methods of teaching reading have been tried. One of them is called the phonics method, the second one is called the whole-word

method (also known as the look-say method), and the third one is the whole-language method (also literature-based instruction of guided reading).

2.1.1 The Phonics Method

The phonics (phonetic) method is "a method of teaching children to read. It is commonly used in teaching reading in the mother tongue. Children are taught to recognize the relationship between letters and sounds. They are taught the sounds which the letters of the alphabet represent, and then try to build up the sound of a new or unfamiliar word by saying it one sound at a time." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 398)

Rayner et al. (2002) claim that using the phonics method means learning the relationship between letters and the sounds associated with them (phonemes). "That is, children are taught how to use their knowledge of the alphabet to sound out words. The connections between letters and phonemes would appear simple enough. For example, the letter 'b' almost always sounds the same as it does in the word 'bat' […] Clearly, the lack of perfect correspondence between letters and sounds is a source of confusion and a potential roadblock for the beginning reader. As a result, many schools have adopted a different approach: the whole-language method (also called literature-based instruction or guided reading)." (Rayner et al., 2002, p. 86)

2.1.2 The Whole-word Method

The whole-word method (also word method, sight method, look-say method) is a "method for teaching children to read, commonly used in teaching reading in the mother tongue, in which children are taught to recognize whole words rather than letter-names (as in the alphabetic method) or sounds (as in phonics). It usually leads to the use of a sentence method, where whole sentences are used." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 587)

In the whole-word method "children learn by rote how to recognize at a glance a vocabulary of 50 to 100 words. Then they gradually acquire other words, often through

seeing them used over and over in the context of a story. This procedure could just as well be used to learn Chinese, in which each character in the written language corresponds to a word or word root. Actually, for the past half a century, youngsters in China have followed a different prescription: as the first step toward literacy, they are taught to read Chinese words using the Roman alphabet." (Rayner et al. 2002, p. 85/86)

This method skips the decoding process, making students not pronounce words aloud but rather learn to say the word by recognizing its written form. Context is essential, and providing images can help. Words can be presented on their own, later in short sentences, and where the readers are advanced enough, the words can be used in longer sentences or even short stories. As their vocabulary grows, children begin to extract rules and patterns that they can use to read new words. "The method is also called sight-reading. After many exposures to a word, children will sight-read the majority of the vocabulary they encounter." (Cicerchia, 1992, assessed on March 24 2022)

2.1.3 The Language Experience Method

According to Taylor (1992, assessed on March 16 2022),"the language experience approach (LEA) is a whole language approach that promotes reading and writing through the use of personal experiences and oral language". It is "a method used in the teaching of reading to young children which draws on the experiences children have in their personal lives as well as on the language skills and vocabulary they have developed outside the classroom. In this method, children may recount stories and experiences orally to the teacher, who writes words on charts or other visual devices and uses them as a basis for teaching reading." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 289) "The strategy here is similar to whole-word instruction, but it relies more heavily on the child's experience with the language. For example, students are offered engaging books and are encouraged to guess the words that they do not know by considering the context of the sentence or by looking for clues in the storyline and illustrations, rather than trying to sound them out. Often

children are given the opportunity to write stories of their own, in an effort to install a love of words and reading. The whole-language method aims to make reading instruction enjoyable. One of its key principles is that the rules of phonics should not be taught directly. Rather the connection between letters and sounds should be learned incidentally through exposure to text. This methodology stipulates that students should not be corrected when they make errors reading words." (Rayner et al., 2002, p. 86)

For the research in the practical part of the thesis, it would be helpful if there was another research concerning the topic of which method of these three mentioned above is more suitable for teaching reading via a top-down or bottom-up approach. Unfortunately, a research was not found. If there was one, results of the research in the practical part could be affected.

2.2 Reading skills

Reading skill is an individual's standing on some reading assessment. Skilled readers are those who score above some standard on this assessment, readers of low skill are those who score below some standard. Reading processes depend on the language of the reader and the writing system that encodes that language. The units of the writing system are converted into mental representations that include the units of the language system. Important are the identification of words and the engagement of language and the general cognitive mechanism that assembles these words into messages. (Perfetti, 1985, in Smelser & Baltes 2001, p.12800). "Reading skills are considered to be one of the basic skills in education alongside writing and arithmetic, skills which are considered to be an essential basis for further learning and for learning other school subjects." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 48)

There are several categorisations of reading skills, e.g. MacLachlan & Reid (1994) talk about a skill of 'interpretive framing'. They distinguish between four types:

> "Extratextual framing - using information outside the text, your background knowledge and experience, to understand texts; Intratextual framing - making use of cues from the text, such as headings and sub-headings and referential words such as "this" and "that" to understand texts; Intertextual framing - making connections with other texts you are reading to help to understand your text; Circumtextual framing - using information from the cover of the book, title, abstract, references etc. to understand the text." (MacLachlan & Reid 1994, p. 3-4)

Lee (2014–2022, assessed on April 20 2022) as a reading skill defines decoding, reading fluently, vocabulary work, sentence construction and cohesion, reasoning and background knowledge and working memory and attention.

2.3 Reading types

2.3.1 Intensive and extensive reading

In language teaching, reading activities are sometimes classified as extensive and intensive. "Extensive reading means reading in quantity and in order to gain a general understanding of what is read. It is intended to develop good reading habits, to build up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, and encourage a liking for reading. Intensive reading is generally at a slower speed, and requires a higher degree of understanding than extensive reading" (Richards& Schmidt, 2013, p. 193-194). "Intensive reading involves learners reading in detail with specific learning aims and tasks. It can be compared with extensive reading, which involves learners reading texts for enjoyment and to develop general reading skills." (British Council, assessed on March 13 2022)

"Extensive reading, in contrast to intensive reading, generally involves a rapid reading of large quantities of material or longer readings (e.g. whole books) for general understanding, with the focus generally on the meaning of what is being read than on the language. Extensive reading is intended to get the reader to focus on reading for the sake of reading (for information or entertainment), and less on reading for the sake of mastery of a particular linguistic structure of even a particular reading strategy or skill. Thus, it can involve a wide variety of reading skills or strategies. It is sometimes even referred to as a 'style' or a 'way' of reading." (Carrell & Carson, 1997, p. 49/50)

For instance, Grabe (1995) discusses pros and cons of extensive reading in comparison to intensive reading and states that extensive reading may be the best way to develop a large recognition vocabulary. Extensive reading is a key resource for building student motivation once students are hooked, and it has also demonstrated a positive influence on students' general background knowledge. Extensive reading may be the only genuine way for students to develop and maintain reading strategies, and become more strategic readers. Extensive reading is a key means for students to continue learning a second language on their own when they complete instruction. (Grabe, 1995, in Carson and Carrell, 1997, p. 50-51) On the other hand, there are several considerations that mediate against extensive reading. Extensive reading can easily be done at home without wasting precious class time. Teachers need to teach rather than let students learn to read. One needs a lot of interesting material and the problem of accommodating different student backgrounds and interests (ibid., p. 51-52).

Nuttall (1996) sums the issue as: "intensive and extensive reading are complementary and both are necessary" (Nutall, 1996, p. 38/39) or Carrell and Carson (1997) who say that

"intensive reading and strategy instruction are necessary for students to acquire the subtasks relevant to specific evaluated products. For example,

particular reading strategies/skills such as close reading for important details, identifying main ideas and supporting evidence, summarizing and identifying the top-level rhetorical organization of a text (or a key part of a text) may all be necessary for the readers to accomplish the larger task of producing a successful evaluated product like an essay exam. At the same time, though, intensive reading is insufficient in and of itself. Students need experience with the extensive reading that is required in all academic coursework. Without the experience of dealing with large amounts of text, and without having developed the ability to apply intensively acquired reading skills and strategies in appropriate ways during extensive reading, students will not be fully prepared to manage the reading demands of actual classes." (Carrell &Carson, 1997, p. 56)

2.3.2 Total, selective and detailed reading

Kotkov (2021, assessed on March 15 2022) refers to total reading as the way of reading when:

"the child is exposed to the three strands at the same time: mechanical (decoding), interpretation (meaning), appreciation. The child works with materials and activities that isolate these strands (although there is some crossover) […] The first strand of total reading is mechanical when the child learns to decode the written word. In order to read, the child must learn to break down a word into separate letter sounds, and then fuse those sounds to form a word […]The second strand of total reading is interpretation when the child begins to read for meaning. Pre-reading activities that support this include stories, poems, songs and rich conversations with real, complicated words, enriching the child's vocabulary […]The third strand of total reading is appreciation. Reading to a child from infancy can instil a love for books.

In addition to decoding sounds and reading for meaning, we want the child

to read with excitement and love for the written word." (Kotkov, 2021,

assessed on March 15 2022)

Selective reading is according to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistic "a level of reading comprehension in which the reader reads to note specific information in a passage including the sequence of information and a common goal in teaching reading comprehension. A good reader is able to select details relevant to main ideas and also to generate implied main ideas from detailed information." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 444)

Willows (1974) talks about selective reading as a process when the reader must choose between an amount of information that he needs for his purposes. (Willows, 1974, p. 409)

Detailed reading is described as "a technique that involves carefully reading and analyzing every word for a deeper understanding of the material. Detailed reading is used to extract accurate information from a material. Detailed reading usually starts with skimming. First, you skim the material to have an idea of what it is. Then you carefully read through it." (Escar, 2021, assessed on April 20 2022)

2.4 Reading strategies

Reading strategies are "ways of accessing the meanings of texts, which are employed flexibly and selectively in the course of reading. Such strategies include: 1 keep main ideas in mind, 2 guess unknown words from context where possible, 3 stop and re-read when you don't understand. The teaching of reading strategies and helping learners understand and manage the use of strategies is thought to be an important aspect of the teaching of second or foreign language reading skills." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 444)

In EFL classrooms teachers usually develop reading strategies of scanning and skimming (for more see 2.4.1 and 2.4.2)for speed reading. Speed reading consists of "techniques used to teach people to read more quickly and to achieve a greater degree of understanding of what they read. Readers are usually trained to use more effective eye movements when reading, and to use better ways of understanding words and meanings in written texts." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 504).

2.4.1 Scanning

Scanning is "a type of reading strategy which is used when the reader wants to locate a particular piece of information without necessarily understanding the rest of a text or passage. For example, the reader may read through a chapter of a book as rapidly as possible in order to find out information about a particular date, such as when someone was born." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 467-468).

2.4.2 Skimming

Skimming is described as "a type of rapid reading which is used when the reader wants to get the main idea or ideas from a passage. For example, a reader may skim-read a chapter to find out if the writer approves or disapproves of something." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 467-468).

2.5 Reading process

Hughes (2007, assessed on March 10 2022) describes reading as "an interactive, problem-solving process of making meaning from texts." She mentions that the reading process involves five stages. These stages are prereading, reading, responding, exploring and applying. According to Hudges (2007), the pre-reading stage includes "activating background knowledge, setting purposes for reading, making predictions and previewing a book, going on a picture walk, making a KWL map (what students know about the topic

before the reading, what they want to know about the topic and what they have learned after the reading), questioning and making predictions about a story. The second stage is the reading itself." The third stage is exploring and applying or post-reading. Hudges (2007) claims that post-reading includes story retelling all or part of a story, discussing favourite parts or elements of a story, answering questions, comparing to another book, writing a new ending, drawing a picture about the story, playing games related to the story, creating a radio play or other kind of performance.

According to Perfetti (1985), "it is visual word identification that is the process most distinctive to reading. Beginning with a visual input – a string of letters – perceptual processes produce the activation of the grapheme units (individual and multiple letters) that constitute words. In traditional models of human cognition, the words are represented in a lexicon, the reader's mental representation of word forms and meanings. Successful word reading occurs when there is a match between the input letter string and a word representation." (Perfetti, 1985, p. 2)

3 Approaches to Reading

This chapter focuses on the theory of the core of the practical part of the thesis. The core is going to be two approaches to reading called a top-down and a bottom-up.

"Approach in language teaching is the theory, philosophy and principles underlying a particular set of teaching practices. Different theories about the nature of language and how languages are learned (the approach) imply different ways of teaching language (the method), and different methods make use of different kinds of classroom activity (the technique)." (Richards &Schmidt, 2013, p. 30)

Top-down and bottom-up processing are two approaches discussed in research and literature about reading. Top-down and bottom-up approaches are described followingly:

"in psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, and information processing, a contrast is made between two different ways in which humans analyze and process language as part of comprehension and learning. One way, known as top-down processing, makes use of 'higher level', nonsensory information to predict or interpret 'lower-level' information that is present in the data. The other way, bottom-up processing, makes use of the information present in the input to achieve higher-level meaning. The meaning of these terms varies depending on the unit of analysis. For example, in word recognition, the higher-level information is knowledge of permissible words as well as actual words of a language, while the lower-level information is the actual phonetic input (or orthographic input in the case of written word recognition). In sentence comprehension or the interpretation of an utterance, the lower-level information is words, while the higher-level information includes knowledge of grammar, semantics, and pragmatics. As applied to the full understanding of a novel, lower-level information consists of words

and sentences, while higher-level information includes the reader's previously existing knowledge of the world, including cultural and moral values, scripts, schemas, and literary genres." (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 557)

Field (1999) claims that "in accounts of foreign-language reading, perceptual information is often described as bottom-up, while the information provided by context is said to be top-down. The terms have been borrowed from cognitive psychology, but derive originally from computer science, where they distinguish processes that are data-driven from those that are knowledge-driven." (Field, 1999, p. 338) Top-down processing happens when the reader activates their world knowledge to facilitate comprehending the text. On the other hand, in the bottom-up approach to reading, the written or printed text is the canter of attention and reading proceeds from part to the whole. Readers usually use their knowledge of lexical items, structural points, and phonological patterns to decode the text's meaning. In the bottom-up approach to reading, the reading process proceeds serially, from letter to sound, to words, to meaning. (Gough, 1972)

3.1 Top-down Approach

As for many other terms, for the top-down approach there exist many definitions. Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes top-down as "proceeding by breaking large general aspects (as of a problem) into smaller more detailed constituents: working from the general to the specific." (Merriam-Webster, 2022, assessed on February 13 2022) Suraprajit (2019) claims that "the concept of the top-down strategy is about guessing the meaning of the target reading material". (Suraprajit, 2019, p.455) Goodman (1971, in Suraprajit, 2019, p. 455) compares the top-down approach to reading to a psycholinguistic guessing game, by showing that the readers predict text's meaning primarily based on their existing or background knowledge. According to Field (1999, p. 338), the top-down reading approach means working from the whole to the parts with steps like

understanding, interpretation of words and letters, and word recognition in this order. Top-down reading means taking prior knowledge into account when encountering a new text so that a student's active schema related to a particular topic or theme helps them incorporate what they learn from their reading. "The top-down model of reading focuses on what the readers bring to the process. The readers sample the text for information and contrast it with their world knowledge helping to make sense of what is written. The focus here is on the readers as they interact with the text". (Goodman, 1967 in Abraham, 2000, p.1, 6)

The top-down approach is very complex. Contextual information can come from many different sources: from knowledge of the one who is reading or from knowledge of the world, from analogy with a previous situation, or from the meaning that has been built up so far. It can be derived from an expectation before reading. It also can take the form of spreading activation, where one word sparks off associations with others, or it can be based on the probability of one word following another (Field, 1999, p. 338). In other words, the top-down approach to reading is when readers use their judgment and background knowledge to make sense of a text.

According to Stieglitz (2015), there are three stages to developing reading via top-down approach: pre-reading, while reading and post-reading stages (See also 2.5.). Stieglitz (2015) says that the pre-reading stage is mainly based on the teacher´s questions to students. For instance: *What do you know about the topic? What do you want to know about the topic? What is your purpose for reading?* In this stage, students also preview the text to get the gist and to make some predictions about it. According to Scrivener (2011), the part of the pre-reading phase should be "introduction and lead-in, eg get the learners interested in the topic, initial discussion of key themes, make an explicit link between the topic of the text and students' own lives and experiences, focus on important language that will come in the text." (Scrivener, 2011, p. 267)

The teacher should monitor kids while they read, which means that the teacher should stop them while reading and let them ask questions about the text. If they do not understand the text, they are more than welcome to reread it. Stieglitz (2015) mentions that paraphrasing, figuring words out from the context, ignoring words that are difficult, making predictions based on new textual information, noticing keywords and thinking about what readers know is the most beneficial procedure while reading a text following the top-down approach. As for post-reading activities, Stieglitz (2015) lists paraphrasing, summarizing, confirming predictions, and thinking about what was learned. He also emphasizes that rereading is necessary if kids want to process the new information in the most beneficial way. (Stieglitz, 2015, assessed on February 11 2022) Scrivener (2011, p. 267) also mentions some post-reading activities such as role play, debate, writing task and personalisation.

3.2 Bottom-up Approach

In contrast with the Top-down approach, the Bottom-up approach means working from parts to the whole.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes the bottom-up as "progressing upward from the lowest level (as of a stratified organization or system)" (Merriam-Webster, assessed on February 13 2022)

As mentioned previously in the thesis, Field (1999) claims that "in accounts of foreign-language reading, perceptual information is often described as bottom-up." (Field, 1999, p. 338)

A bottom-up reading model is a reading model that emphasizes the written or printed text, it says that reading is driven by a process that results in meaning (or, in other words, reading is driven by text) and that reading proceeds from part to whole (Liu, 2010). This approach is also known as 'Behaviourist Approach'. According to Schifferdecker (2022,

assessed on February 12 2002), "The behaviourist theory of reading was developed in the 1970s but is still used in some schools today. According to this theory, children learn language by repeating words and sentences given by their teachers or on workbook pages. To learn to read, children must work through and develop a series of isolated skills. Phonics, which teaches readers to associate letters with their sounds, is the best-known example of a behaviourist approach to reading." (Schifferdecker, 2022, p.1)

The bottom-up approach leads to emphasizing the sounds of the words and the development of sight vocabulary. Its steps are first looking at letters and recognizing words, then understanding words, understanding sentences, and at last understanding the whole and connecting it with the knowledge of the world. In other words, the bottom-up approach is the complete opposite of the top-down approach.

Due to the importance and significance of top-down and bottom-up processing as revealed by previous studies (e.g. Abraham, 1985; Field, 2004), a lot of studies have been conducted to investigate the effect of top-down and/or bottom-up processing on learning different skills, and their application in a classroom. These studies and other, e.g. Suraprajit (2019) or Faterni (2014) are the reason why the research in the practical part of the thesis is done. It should mainly give the readers another perspective on the topic of the effectiveness of top-down versus bottom-up approaches to reading at primary schools.

4 Reading with dyslexia

According to some researches (e.g. Kennedy, 2015 or Helland et al.2011), the process of reading is different for kids with dyslexia. That is why this chapter offers a short overview of the specifics of reading with kids with dyslexia mainly in the context of top-down and bottom-up approaches.

(Developmental) Dyslexia (also word blindness) is:

"*a general term sometimes used to describe any continuing problem in learning to read, such as difficulty in distinguishing letter shapes and words. Reading specialists do not agree on the nature or causes of such reading problems, however, and both medical and psychological explanations have been made. Because of the very general way in which the term is often used, many reading specialists prefer not to use the term, and describe reading problems in terms of specific reading difficulties"* (Richards &Schmidt, 2013, p. 172).

"*a specific learning disability which origin is neurobiological. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These problems result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected about other cognitive abilities. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can influence the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.*" (Lyon, 2003, p. 2)

"*is characterized by an unexpected difficulty in reading in children and adults who otherwise possess the intelligence, motivation, and schooling considered necessary for accurate and fluent reading. Dyslexia (or specific reading disability) is the most common and most carefully studied of the learning*

disabilities, affecting 80 per cent of all those identified as learning-disabled."

(Shaywitz, 1998, p.1)

According to some researches (e.g. Kennedy, 2015 or Helland et al. 2011), the reading approach which would suits students without dyslexia may not be the best one for students with dyslexia. Kennedy (2015), being a dyslexic himself, says that the top-down approach to reading makes people make more mistakes while reading. On the other hand, the bottom-up approach may help students with dyslexia in learning how to read because "bottom-up processing may be the more efficient method while reading because it involves visually sensing the letters, decoding the letters to form words, and allowing the words to form complete sentences. This method prevents assumptions and allows for comprehension. Top-down processing may lead one to misread a sentence due to what he or she expects it to say." (Kennedy, 2015, p.1)

In the practical part, the bachelor thesis deals with the question: which approach, top-down or bottom-up, is more effective for students without any specific learning needs connected to reading. Therefore, it was found necessary to mention in the theoretical part which approach is more effective for kids with a specific learning disorder such as dyslexia according to the expert literature and other research done on the issue.

5 "Good reader"concept

The aim of the practical part of the thesis is to research which approach, a top-down or a bottom-up, is more effective for developing the reading skills of primary school children. The ideal result is to make readers as "good" as possible, to achieve a "good reader" level/status.

Block and Pressley (2001) and Harvey and Goudvis (2000) claim that a reasonable reader should be able to interact with text, have goals for reading, evaluate text for essential ideas, note the structure of text before reading, monitor their understanding as they read, process text during and after reading, create visual images based on the text they have read, synthesize information, enjoy and appreciate literature. Thorn (2021) suggests regular reading a wide range of texts to improve reading skills and become a good reader, which helps readers quickly recognize what type of text they are looking at. Also, use different skills, meaning reading texts in different ways (looking at the layout and headings, and reading quickly to get a general feel for the text (skimming), before reading more intensively or to find specific details (scanning)). Guessing the meaning of the words they do not know may also help readers get better at reading. Also, readers should never omit a reflection on what they read and make a note of a new vocabulary. At least, the most obvious way how to be a better reader is to read as much as possible.

It is partly teachers´ job to make good readers out of their students. One way how to do so is the choice of articles and books teachers choose for their classes. Students need to be hooked by the story or the book and teachers need to find a way how to manage it. Chamber (1980) believes that "we need a critical method which will take account of the child-as-reader; which will include him rather than exclude him". He considers that young people can be "remarkably perceptive about the texts that they enjoy" (Chamber,

1980 p. 11). He identifies their ability to understand intertextuality, to look at issues such as cliche and to engage with issues relevant to them through the medium of popular texts.

For teachers, it is very important to think about the topics they present to the kids through books.

It is crucial to be aware of the age and mindset of the kids. According to Jenkinson (1946), it is helpful to consider why kids and adolescents actually select particular texts to read. Young readers are seen to have particular emotional and academic needs. Jenkinson (1946) believes that „children read for two main reasons: because they are growing up and because they are having difficulty growing up . . . we read either in order to realise ourselves or in order to forget ourselves". (Jenkinson, 1946, p. 153) To summarize, it is important for teachers to consider the age, emotional needs and interests of the group they read with. If teachers do so, they make the group of readers interested in what they read, which makes them want to read more. As mentioned before, the more kids read, the better readers they become.

The empirical research was carried out to find out whether a top-down or a bottom-up approach is more effective in developing this kind of readers.

Practical part

The practical part of the thesis focuses on teaching reading via top-down and bottom-up approaches. The aim of the practical part is to decide which approach is more effective in teaching reading at primary schools and which one makes „better" readers out of the pupils. In other words, the practical part researches top-down and bottom-up approaches and their application into the teaching of individual students by testing students′ levels of reading before and after using a specific way of reading.

Before heading into the process of application of the top-down and the bottom-up approaches into the learning process, a prediction of the result has been made. Based on literary review and the knowledge of the features of each approach, a presupposition is that the top-down approach to reading will be more effective for primary school kids without any specific learning needs connected to reading. This presupposition goes back mainly to Wolf´s (2008) description of a pre-reader, i.e. one who „learns from a full range of multiple sounds, words, concepts, images, stories, exposure to print, literacy materials, and just plain talk during the first five years of life." (Wolf, 2008, p. 115)

The research respondents' were readers who met with the foreign language reading process for the first time and the most natural way to develop reading in English language would be while surrounded by the contexts, stories and so on. A top-down approach is mainly context-based and the knowledge of the world helps readers to understand the text.

There is also another reason why this pressuposition has been made. Poláková (2014, assessed on April 10 2022) mentions a story about nine years old Natálka, who had a horrible childhood. Her parents were addicted to drugs, which made her living just with her grandfather. Natálka struggled with reading in the first grade of primary school. Her teacher taught kids how to read via a bottom-up approach, which was not the best approach for Natálka. After the first year of her studies, Natálka started visiting the school

reading club where the teacher followed a top-down approach to reading. A top-down approach helped Natálka with her struggles with reading and she fell in love with books.

1 Methodology

The research is based on the observation of the lessons and learners' behaviour, on testing, reflexion of the teaching process and on the amount of studied materials. Activities for teaching reading via a bottom-up and a top-down approach are picked mainly from the book called Learning Teaching -The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching written by Jim Scrivener (2011, p. 267-268).

1.1 Research respondents

A group of ten kids, aged eleven to thirteen, were given a reading test, see Appendix.. According to ŠVP, the level of English of tested kids was A2 (for reference see CEFR (the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

1.2 Research procedure

The text for the test is taken from the website learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/. Some questions are from the same website and some of them are added by the author of the thesis. The tests were distributed amongst the learners, collected and marked.. Eight of ten kids got nearly similar results in the test (from 75 to 80 %). These eight kids, aged eleven to thirteen, were picked for the research.

The respondents were further divided into two groups of four kids. The plan for the three months research period was to teach reading to four kids individually following a bottom-up approach (later called Group 1), and another four kids following a top-down approach (later called Group 2). Each kid had individual lessons but the lesson plans for the kids in Group 1 are identical, and for the kids in Group 2 as well.

At total, 96 lesson were taught. Each learner was taught twelve lessons of reading. Plans for lessons were almost identical. The part which was changed was the text for reading itself.

After three months of teaching, kids were tested for the second time. The text for the test was taken from the website learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/ again. Some questions were from that website and some of them were added by the author of the thesis. Tests were then collected and marked. The results of the tests are published in the „results" section of the thesis.

2 Research description

2.1 Bottom-up lesson plan

This is an example of the reading lesson taught via a bottom-up approach (Group 1). Lesson plan is based on lesson plans available on the website teachingenglish.org.uk/. Objectives are formed according to Bloom's Taxonomy available in the article called How to Write Good Objectives for the AE E-Teacher Program. (Arizona Board of Regents, 2017, p. 2)

Age: 11–13 years

Level: A2

Focus: Reading via a bottom-up approach

Aims:

1) To develop reading skills of the students via a bottom-up approach.

2) To present new vocabulary in context.

Objectives:

1) By the end of the lesson, the student will develop their reading skills via a bottom-up approach.

2) By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to summarize the story.

3) By the end of the lesson, the student will learn at least ten new words from the text.

Materials: an English text called Story from the book called „Anglická čítanka", pupils´ personal dictionary

Time: 60 minutes

Assumed knowledge: knowledge of the majority of the words in the text

Anticipated problems: the student does not know the majority of vocabulary from the text

Possible solutions to anticipated problems: the student comes up with the meaning based on the text or the teacher describes him/her the word

Procedure:

Stage 1 (greeting): The student comes to the class and greets the teacher. He/she says how he/she was yesterday and how his/her day was so far. The teacher reacts and talks with the student for a while to activate his/her language and to help his with transition from Czech to English. Then the teacher presents the program of the lesson.

Aim: To activate the student and to prepare him/her for the lesson.

<u>Stage 2:</u> The student reads a story called Story. He/she does pre-reading activities such as scanning the text and reading underlined words (prepared before the lesson by the teacher) to practise how to concentrate on detail and how to come up with new information based on the detail. The learner reads the text word from word and tries to understand each word separately.

Aim: To practise reading via a bottom-up approach.

<u>Stage 3:</u> The student makes a list out of the words in the text.

Aim: To come up with the meaning of the text according to the meaning of individual words.

<u>Stage 4:</u> After the reading, the learner tries to understand the text based on his/her knowledge of the individual words.

Aim: To connect the meaning of the words with the meaning of the text.

<u>Stage 5:</u> The learner connects the story with his/her own experiences and talks about it with the teacher using new vocabulary from the text.

Aim: To be able to connect the story with their own experience.

<u>Stage 6:</u> The student summarizes the story using new vocabulary from the text.

Aim: To practise new vocabulary from the text, to be able to summarize the story.

Reflection: The pupil was reading via a bottom-up approach. The pupil was not surprised by the approach to reading. According to the pupil, a bottom-up approach was the one his teacher uses in English lessons for reading activities. The pupil learned the new vocabulary from the text. The pupil was very active and did not have any problems with understanding the text. The pupil was able to use the new vocabulary from the text while talking about his/her own experience.

2.1.1 Activities

An activity used the most before reading is going through the vocabulary. Some words which the teacher finds difficult or new were underlined in the text before the lesson. Pupils read these words and write them down. One of activity designed for pupils to remember words better is "drawing the word". Pupils do not draw a meaning of the word, but the shape of it. They use a different colour and a different shape for each word. It helps them to visualise and remember words better. Another activity which pupils like is talking about new words. Learners talk about the meaning of individual words with the teacher which later helps them to understand the meaning of the whole text. While reading, pupils go back to the words they have drawn before and connect their meaning with the meaning of the rest of the text. After the reading, kids summarize the text using words they learned and they put these words into new sentences talking about their background knowledge which corresponds with the text.

2.2 Top-down lesson plan

This is an example of the reading lesson taught via a top-down approach (Group 2). Lesson plan is based on lesson plans available on the website teachingenglish.org.uk/. Objectives are formed according to Bloom's Taxonomy available in the article called How to Write Good Objectives for the AE E-Teacher Program. (Arizona Board of Regents, 2017, p. 2)

Age: 11–13 years

Level: A2

Focus: Reading via a top-down approach

Aims:

1) To develop reading of the student via a top-down approach.

2) To connect the meaning of the text with student´s background knowledge.

3) To present new vocabulary in context.

Objectives:

1) By the end of the lesson, the student will develop his/her reading skills via a top-down approach.

2) After the reading of the first part of the text, the student will predict what will happen next.

3) By the end of the lesson, the student will learn at least ten new words from the text.

4) By the end of the lesson, the student will connect the story with his/her background knowledge.

5) By the end of the lesson, the student will summarize the story.

Materials: an English text called Story from the book called „Anglická čítanka", a mind-map template, pupils´ personal dictionary

Time: 60 minutes

Assumed knowledge: the majority of vocabulary from the text, the context of the text

Anticipated problems: the student does not know the words by which he/she can express what he/she wants to say about his/her background knowledge, the student does not understand some words from the text

Possible solutions to anticipated problems: the student will substitute the words he/she does not know with the words he/she does know, the student will guess the meaning of the text without knowing the meaning of some words, the teacher will describe the meaning of unknown words in other known words

Procedure:

Stage 1 (greeting): The student comes to the class and greets the teacher. He/she says how he/she was yesterday and how his/her day was so far. The teacher reacts and talks with the student for a while to activate his/her language and to help him/her with the transition from Czech to English. Then the teacher presents the program of the lesson.

Aim: To activate the student and to prepare him/her for the lesson.

Stage 2: The student reads a story called Story. He/she does pre-reading activities such as creating a mind-map with the word „story" in the middle. The student talks about why he/she has written down the words to the mind-map and explains his/her ideas to the teacher. The student guesses what the text is going to be about and writes his/her ideas down.

Aim: To prepare the student for the reading.

Stage 3: The student skims the first paragraph of the text and picks up its main idea, which he/she compares with his/her mind-map and his/her assumptions about the text. The student predicts what comes next in the text,

Aim: To come up with the main idea of the first paragraph and with the meaning of the rest of the text. To compare the text with the student´s mind-map.

Stage 4: The reader reads the next paragraph and does the same procedure as with the first one.

Aim: To come up with the main idea of the second paragraph and with the meaning of the rest of the text. To compare the text with the student´s mind-map.

Stage 5: The learner compares his/her assumptions about the text with the text itself. He/she either confirms or disproves his/her assumptions.

Aim: To be able to compare students´ assumptions with the text.

<u>Stage 6:</u> The reader writes down words he/she does not know and comes up with their meaning based on his/her knowledge of the text. The teacher explains the meaning of unknown words if necessary

Aim: To teach the student new words based on the text.

<u>Stage 7:</u> The student summarizes the story using new vocabulary from the text.

Aim: To practise new vocabulary from the text. To be able to summarize the story.

Reflection: The pupil was reading via a top-down approach. The pupil said that reading "this way" was way more enjoyable than normal. The pupil was more able to imagine the context of the text and also to connect the text with the outside world. It was obvious that a top-down approach suited the pupil very well. The pupil came up with substitutional words for words he/she did not know while talking about his/her mind-map. The pupil connected his/her background knowledge with the meaning of the text. The student learned new vocabulary from the text. The pupil was very active and did not have any problems with understanding the text. The pupil was able to summarize the text using new words he/she learned from the text.

2.2.1 Activities

Lessons taught via a top-down approach are enriched with a number of pre-reading activities. Those activities are mainly picked based on the book called Learning Teaching -The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching written by Jim Scrivener (2011, p. 267-268). One of the activities is giving a headline to each section of the article (or match given headlines with the sections). Another pre-reading activity is looking at the title and the illustrations (but not the text) and predicting which of the following list of words the pupil will find in the text. The most favourite activity is creating a mind-map. Pupils create a mind-map about the topic of a text and talk about it with the teacher. Scrivener (2011, p. 267-268) also gives some tips for while-reading and post-

reading activities. Pupils love an activity when they should discuss (or write) the missing last paragraph of the text and think about the ending of the story and then compare it with the real ending. Post-reading activity which is also liked by the pupils is acting out the dialogue, story, episode, etc.

3 Results

The pressuposition made before the research, i.e. that top-down approach is more effective for primary school children, has been confirmed. Group 2 taught via a top-down approach has reached a higher score on the second (comparing) test than Group 1 taught via a bottom-up approach, see table 1.

Table 1 – Results of the second test

Group	Results of the first test	Results of the second test	Result comparison
1	75 %	75 %	0 %
	75 %	75 %	0 %
	75 %	80 %	5 %
	80 %	82 %	2 %
2	75 %	80 %	5 %
	75 %	85 %	10 %
	80 %	85 %	5 %
	80 %	90 %	10 %

However, the comparison of teaching via top-down and bottom-up approaches has brought some unexpected results too. Kids taught via a bottom-up approach were able to memorize more words than kids taught via a top-down approach, which was seen every following lesson. On the other hand, kids taught via a top-down approach were more capable to summarize and understand the text as a whole, for more details see table 2.

Table 2 – Memorized words versus understanding of the text as a whole

Approach	Memorized words	Understanding of the text as a whole
Bottom-up	More than 10 new words per lesson	75-82%
Top-down	5-10 new words per lesson	80-90 %

In other words, if the teacher´s aim is to teach kids as many words as possible, teaching reading via a bottom-up approach is more effective than teaching reading via a top-down approach. But if the teacher´s aim is to make kids understand the text as a whole and to be able to summarize it better, the more effective approach to teaching reading is a top-down approach.

Group 2 also enjoyed reading lessons more than Group 1. Pupils in Group 2 loved talking about their background knowledge before the reading and it activated their brains and prepared them for the topics of the texts. They also loved to compare what they read to what they thought they would read. Because one of the points in chapter 5 says that a "good" reader should enjoy reading and Group 2 enjoyed reading vividly more than Group 1, it could be said that a top-down approach to reading makes "good" readers out of the kids and therefore that a top-down approach to reading is more effective than a bottom-up approach if the teacher wants pupils to be happy to read in his/her lessons.

Summary

The bachelor thesis introduced terms corresponding with reading and with the topic of teaching reading in the theoretical part. The thesis mentioned terms such as literacy, reading, reading process, approaches to reading and more.

Terms described in the theoretical part of the thesis made a base for the practical part of the thesis which focused on the effectivity of a top-down approach versus a bottom-up approach on developing reading at primary schools. The research was made in practical lessons by teaching individual students reading via these two approaches and testing them before and after using these approaches. There were eight learners divided into two groups of four learners and the teaching process was three months long. Group 1 was taught via a bottom-up approach and Group 2 via a top-down approach. Before heading to the research, the presupposition has been made. The presupposition (based on many factors mentioned in the thesis) was that teaching reading via a top-down approach will be more effective. The presupposition was confirmed. Group 2 got higher results in the comparing test. Group 2 got from 80 to 90 % and Group 1 got from 75 to 82 %. However, unexpected knowledge came up from the teaching process as well. Kids in Group 1 were able to remember more words from the text than kids in Group 2. Kids in Group 1 remembered more than ten words from the text per lesson and kids from Group 2 from five to ten words per lesson. Looking into the research from this point of view, a bottom-up approach was more effective than a top-down approach. However, the purpose of the research was not to choose an approach more effective for memorizing words but for developing reading skills. Thus, it could be said that a top-down approach is a more effective approach to reading if teachers want the kids to understand the text as a whole in its contextual background.

The idea of how to expand on the thesis is to test effectivity of a top-down and a bottom-up approach in the full class of kids for a longer time than three months. It could be also possible to do research on kids with dyslexia and choose which approach is more effective for them to either confirm or disprove other researches made on this topic before (mentioned in the thesis above).

Sources

Abraham, Paul. Skilled reading: Top-down, bottom-up. Field notes, 2002, 10.2: 1.

Abraham, R. G. (1985). Field independence /dependence and the teaching of grammar. TESOl Quarterly, 19, 689-702

BRUMFIT, Christopher, Jayne MOON a Ray TONGUE, ed. Teaching English to children: from practice to principle. Walton-on-Thames: Nelson, 1994. ISBN 0175568898.

Carrell, P. L., & Carson, J. G. (1997). Extensive and intensive reading in an EAP setting. English for specific purposes, 16(1), 47-60.

Field, John. Bottom-up'and 'top-down. 1999.

Grabe. W. (1995). Why is it so difficult to make extensive reading the key component of L2 reading instruction? Presentation (and handout) at the Reading Research Colloquium, AnnualTESOL Convention, Long Beach, CA.

Helland, T., Tjus, T., Hovden, M., Ofte, S., & Heimann, M. (2011). Effects of bottom-up and top-down intervention principles in emergent literacy in children at risk of developmental dyslexia: A longitudinal study. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 44(2), 105-122.

Liu, Feng. Reading abilities and strategies: A short introduction. International Education Studies, 2010, 3.3: 153-157.

Lyon, G. Reid; SHAYWITZ, Sally E.; SHAYWITZ, Bennett A. A definition of dyslexia. Annals of dyslexia, 2003, 53.1: 1-14.

MacLachlan, G. & Reid, I. (1994). Framing and interpretation. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Nuttall, C. (1982; new edition 1996). Teaching reading skills in a foreign language. Oxford: Heinemann Educational Books

Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. W. (2013). Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics. Routledge.

Scrivener, Jim. Learning teaching: the essential guide to English language teaching. 3rd ed. Oxford: Macmillan, 2011. Macmillan books for teachers. ISBN 9780230729841.

Shaywitz, Sally E. Dyslexia. New England Journal of Medicine, 1998, 338.5: 307-312.

Suraprajit, Prathomwat, 2019. Bottom-up vs top-down model: The perception of reading strategies among Thai university students. Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 10(3), 454-460.

Thornbury, Scott. An A-Z of ELT: a dictionary of terms and concepts used in English language teaching. Oxford: Macmillan, 2006. Macmillan books for teachers. ISBN 1-4050-7063-3.

Online sources

Bottom up. British Council [online]. 2020 [cit. 2022-04-24]. Available at https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/bottom-up

Council of Europe (2020), Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, available at www.coe.int/lang-cefr

DiveInLearning, 2015, Using Top-down Reading Strategies in Your Lesson, YouTube video. [29. 3. 2022]. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmIbfbYMfUE

Escar, Elizabeth. What Are The Reading Techniques? Iris [online]. 2021 [cit. 2022-04-24]. Available at https://irisreading.com/what-are-the-reading-techniques/

Fatemi, Azar Hosseini. The Effects of Top-down/Bottom-up Processing and Field-dependent/Field-independent Cognitive Style on Iranian EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension [online]. Iran, 2014 [cit. 2022-04-24]. Available at https://www.academypublication.com/issues/past/tpls/vol04/04/04.pdf. Ferdowsi University of Mashhad.

Kennedy, Daniel Frank. Top-down Processing and Dyslexia. PennState [online]. 2015 [cit. 2022-03-21]. Available at https://sites.psu.edu/psych256fa15/2015/09/13/top-down-processing-and-dyslexia/

Lee, Andrew M. I. 6 essential skills for reading comprehension. Understood [online]. 2022 [cit. 2022-04-24]. Avaliable at https://www.understood.org/en/articles/6-essential-skills-needed-for-reading-comprehension

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Bottom-up. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved February 13, 2022, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bottom-up

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Preliteracy. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved February 11, 2022, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/preliteracy

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Top-down. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved February 13, 2022, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/top-down

Rayner, K., Foorman, B. R., Perfetti, C. A., Pesetsky, D., & Seidenberg, M. S. (2002). HOW SHOULD READING BE TAUGHT? Scientific American, 286(3), 84–91. http://www.jstor.org/stable/26059605

Taylor, Marcia. The Language Experience Approach and Adult Learners. CAELA [online]. 1992 [cit. 2022-04-24]. Avaliable at https://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/LEA.html

Thorn, Chris. What makes a good reader?. Cambridge Assessment English [online]. 2021 [cit. 2022-04-24]. Available at https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/blog/what-makes-a-good-reader/

Top down. British Council [online]. 2020 [cit. 2022-04-24]. Available at https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/top-down

UKEssays. (November 2018). Definition Purpose and Models of Reading. Retrieved from https://www.ukessays.com/essays/languages/definition-of-reading.php?vref=1

Vaezi, Shanin. Theories of reading. British Council [online]. 2006 [cit. 2022-04-24]. Avaliable at https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/theories-reading

What is literacy?. National Literacy Trust [online]. 2017 [cit. 2022-04-24]. Avaliable at https://literacytrust.org.uk/information/what-is-literacy/

Appendix
The first test

Reading text: An email from a friend
Hi Samia,
Quick email to say that sounds like a great idea. Saturday is better for me because I'm meeting my parents on Sunday. So if that's still good for you, why don't you come here? Then you can see the new flat and all the work we've done on the kitchen since we moved in. We can eat at home and then go for a walk in the afternoon. It's going to be so good to catch up finally. I want to hear all about your new job!
Our address is 52 Charles Road, but it's a bit difficult to find because the house numbers are really strange here. If you turn left at the post office and keep going past the big white house on Charles Road, there's a small side street behind it with the houses 50–56 in. Don't ask me why the side street doesn't have a different name! But call me if you get lost and I'll come and get you. Let me know if there's anything you do/don't like to eat. Really looking forward to seeing you!

See you soon!
Gregor

Task 1
Are the sentences true or false?
1. Samia and Gregor are going to meet on Saturday.
2. Gregor is going to make lunch.
3. They haven't seen each other for a long time.
4. Samia's life hasn't changed since they last met.
5. The house is easy to find.
6. Gregor doesn't know the name of the side street his flat is on.

Task 2
Put the words in order to make sentences.
1. idea. like a great That sounds

2. me. for better is Saturday

3. you Why here? don't come

4. all about your I want new job. to hear

5. you Call if lost. me get

6. forward to looking you! Really seeing

Task 3
Answer the questions.
1. Is Saturday better for Gregor than Sunday? If yes, why?
2. Why is it difficult to find Gregor´s flat?
3. What information should Samia give to Gregor?
4. What does Gregor want to show Samia?
5. What is new in Samia´s life?

Answers:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

The second (comparing) test

Study skills tips
Many studies about language learning ask the question: What makes a good language learner? There are some things that good language learners do and some things they don't do. Here are some of the most useful suggestions from studies.

- Don't be afraid of making mistakes. People often get things wrong. Good language learners notice their mistakes and learn from them.
- Do group activities. People use language to communicate with other people. A good language learner always looks for opportunities to talk with other students.
- Make notes during every class. Notes help you to remember new language. Look at your notes when you do your homework.
- Use a dictionary. Good language learners often use dictionaries to check the meaning of words they don't know. They also make their own vocabulary lists.
- Think in the language you're learning outside the classroom. When you're shopping or walking down the street, remember useful words and phrases. Sometimes, when you're at home, say new words to practise your pronunciation.
- Do extra practice. Test and improve your language, reading and listening skills with self-study material. You can find a lot of this online.
- Imagine yourself speaking in the language. Many good language learners can see and hear themselves speaking in the language. This helps their motivation.
- Enjoy the process. Good language learners have fun with the language. Watch a TV series or film, listen to songs, play video games or read a book. It's never too late to become a good language learner.

Task 1
Are the sentences true or false?
1. Good language learners don't make mistakes.
2. It's a good idea to talk with other students.
3. Take notes only before an exam.
4. Good language learners write down the words and expressions they learn.
5. Think of language you know when you are outside the classroom.
6. Don't take tests outside of class – it is very stressful.

Task 2
Put the words in order to make sentences.
1. yourself speaking Imagine the in language.
2. a lot this of You find can online.
3. language Good have learners with the fun language.
4. process the Enjoy.
5. motivation. their helps This
6. language too become a good late to learner. It's never

Task 3

Answer the questions.

1. Is it good to make mistakes? If yes, why? If not, why?
2. Why is it good to take notes every class?
3. „Using a dictionary is not helpful." Is it true or false? If it is false, what is true about using a dictionary?
4. Does it help to watch movies in the language you learn?
5. Is it helpful to play video games in the language you learn?

Answers:
1.
2.
3.
4.

An example of the text

STORY

Story

Many and many years ago there lived a noblewoman in Prague known all over the city for her riches. She possessed a large area of land, woods and many houses in the city. Like all rich people she was very proud of her property and her beauty.

Once when she was walking in the society of rich men she decided to demonstrate her might. She took off her gold ring and tossed it into the river saying: "Just as this ring will never more come back to me, so my riches will never leave me."

Some time after, the noblewoman gave a party to which many people were invited. Suddenly the cook came into the solemn hall and said: "Look what I have found in one of the fish", and showed them a ring. The lady grew pale when she recognized it as the same ring she had thrown into the river. Her fatal prediction was soon fulfilled. Shortly afterwards she fell ill, lost nearly all her property and died as a poor woman.

POVÍDKA

Příběh

Před mnoha lety žila v Praze šlechtična, která byla po celém městě známá svým bohatstvím. Patřilo jí hodně půdy, lesů a mnoho domů ve městě. Jako všichni bohatí lidé byla i ona velmi pyšná na svůj majetek i na svou krásu.

Jednou, když se procházela po venku ve společnosti bohatých lidí, rozhodla se, že ukáže svou moc. Sňala svůj zlatý prsten a hodila ho do řeky se slovy: „Tak jako se ke mně už nikdy nevrátí tento prsten, tak nikdy nepřijdu o svoje bohatství."

Po jisté době pořádala tato vznešená dáma večírek, na který pozvala mnoho lidí. Tu náhle vstoupil do slavnostní síně kuchař a oznámil: „Podívejte, co jsem nalezl v jedné rybě," a ukázal všem prsten. Když šlechtična poznala, že je to tentýž prsten, který kdysi hodila do řeky, zbledla. Její osudová předpověď se brzy vyplnila. Krátce nato onemocněla, ztratila téměř všechen svůj majetek a zemřela v chudobě.