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**Bakalářská práce**  
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**Presentation of comparatives and superlatives in grammar  
sections of selected ELT coursebooks**

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Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedené prameny literatury:

V Olomouci dne

.....

Vlastnoruční podpis

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## Abstrakt

Hlavním cílem této práce je srovnávání sekcí gramatiky v různých učebnicích, konkrétně se pak zaměřuje na gramatický jev stupňování přídavných jmen. Teoretická část se zabývá tématem co je to gramatika a jak prezentovat gramatiku, a praktická řeší otázky různých výkladů a prezentací nové gramatiky, podobnosti a rozdíly v pojetí prezentace gramatiky (vizuální pomůcky, kontext, uváděné příklady atd.). Tato bakalářská práce by mohla přispět k dalšímu rozvoji tohoto tématu, jako například zkoumání a porovnávání cvičení, které následují ve fázi procvičování.

## Abstract

The main aim of this thesis is to compare grammar sections in different coursebooks, specifically focusing on the grammatical phenomenon of adjective gradation. The theoretical part focuses on the topic of what grammar is and how to present grammar, and the practical part deals with the questions of dealing with different explanations and presenting new grammar, and similarities and differences in the concept of presenting grammar (visual tools, context, examples given, etc.). This bachelor's thesis could contribute to the further development of this topic, such as analyzing and comparing the exercises that follow in the practice phase.



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## Introduction

The appropriate, effective, and comprehensible coursebook is not easy to find. There are many coursebooks on the market, different publishers, and even several editions. In education, a clear and practical grammar section in a coursebook, accompanied by a sophisticated context, is needed. That is one of the reasons why I decided to choose this topic; as a future teacher, I would like to use materials that are suitable for English language teaching. I am aware of the benefits and weak sides of various coursebooks, but when focusing on grammar sections, there could be differences in explanations that are crucial for learners. Another reason is to discover how to teach English effectively and how to present new grammar easily without, if possible, confusing learners.

This thesis deals with the comparison of grammar sections in grammar coursebooks, specifically focusing on the explanation of comparatives and superlatives, and is divided into two main parts, a theoretical part and a practical part. In the theoretical part, there are six chapters. The first one focuses on grammar, the second one deals with how to teach grammar which includes deductive and inductive approaches. The third chapter contains a PPP model. A coursebook is the content of the fourth chapter, and the definitions of levels A1 and A2 by CEFR are dealt with in chapter five. Chapter six focuses on the grammar of comparatives and superlatives. The practical part focuses on general analysis and comparison of selected English coursebooks for lower secondary schools, but mainly it focuses on the comparison of presenting grammar sections of comparatives and superlatives. Chapter eight deals with the comparison of comparatives, whereas chapter nine focuses on the comparison of superlatives.

The main aim of this thesis is to identify the main similarities and differences in the grammar sections focusing on comparatives and superlatives in selected ELT coursebooks. Research questions are: What are the differences in the explanation of comparatives and superlatives in ELT coursebooks? Is the presentation of comparatives and superlatives supported by an appropriate context? What type of irregular adjectives are introduced? Which content does the figure offer? This thesis uses qualitative research methods that focus on interpretative analysis. Analysis of specific grammar sections in specific coursebooks, and comparison of textual data serve as research methods in this thesis.

## **A. THEORETICAL PART**

# 1. What is grammar?

## 1.1. Definitions

Ur (1996, p. 75) sees grammar as “*the way words are put together to make correct sentences*”. “*Grammar is a description of the language system - it shows us how we order words in sentences, how we combine them and how we change the form of words to change their meaning*” (Hadfield, Hadfield, 2008, p. 18). Another definition of grammar is by Thornbury (1999, p. 1) “*Thus a grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language’s sentences are formed*”. “*Grammar, then, is the way in which words change themselves and group together to make sentences*” (Harmer, 1991, p. 1). Ur, as well as Harmer, sees grammar more as elements that combine to form a sentence, but at the same time can have an effect on each other. Hadfield and Hadfield's definition is more complex because here it describes how words can interact and modify each other. In all the above definitions, the authors agree that grammar is an essential part of language for proper sentence formation.

## 1.2. Functions of grammar

Grammar is an important link between individual words and their meaning, forms, and relationships between the individual members of a sentence (Thornbury, 2006, p. 3 -7). Grammar is made up of two important linguistic sciences, namely morphology, which deals with the structure and shapes of words, and syntax, which deals with the relationships between words in sentences (Watkins, 2005, p. 42).

Grammar is a part of language and deals not only with the rules of language, but also with the formation of sentences, the putting together of units into sentences, and the written form of language as spoken (Harmer, 1991, p. 1). The analysis of a sentence or its composition leads to the discovery that sentences are made up of words that carry a certain meaning, and some are joined together with others to form phrases or collocations, which is essential information and knowledge for forming correct grammatical units (Scrivener, 1994, p. 116).

## 1.3. Word grammar, sentence grammar and textual grammar

Grammar focuses not only on larger units, such as a sentence or a paragraph, but also on smaller parts of sentences, such as individual words or phrases (Ur, 1996, p. 75). According to Harmer (1991, p. 1) and Thornbury (2006, p. 3), grammar can be further subdivided into subcategories of text grammar, sentence grammar, and word grammar. Modern grammar targets not only word grammar, but also textual grammar. There is also a special grammar called

educational grammar, which is characterized by the simplification of grammatical rules to facilitate learners' understanding (Watkins, 2005, p. 42).

Sentence grammar is the basic building block for building further conversations, texts, and, in short, development in communication (Thornbury, 2006, p. 103), and textual grammar deals with cohesion and continuity, the fluency of texts (Maley as cited in Thornbury, 2006, p. 3-4). Knowledge of sentence grammar is essential for correct sentence construction as well as for fluency in speaking, but especially in writing texts (Andrews, 2005, p. 1).

#### 1.4. Features of a language

Language consists of several elements, which are texts, sentences, words, and sounds. What really matters is the position of words in a sentence, as well as the position of sentences in a coherent text, so that the text is clear, understandable, and logically organized (Thornbury, 1999, p. 1). Watkins (2005, p. 8) adds that there are additional very important features of the language, namely, form, function, context, and meaning, and all of these features of language can be discussed in detail. The form of language deals with the constituents of a sentence, the word classes. The function reveals the relationships or nature of the content being communicated, while context indicates the situation in which the communication occurs.

A closer study of grammar and meaning shows that even one word, for example, is enough and that no complex grammatical phenomena are needed to understand the content and meaning of a word, situation, or need. The more context and the more description of the situation is known, the less grammar is needed, and only hints or a few words will suffice.

*A: Coffee?*

*B: Please.*

*A: Milk?*

*B: Just a drop”* (Thornbury, 1999, p. 4).

Learners can guess the meaning of a sentence based on their knowledge of vocabulary, but they need knowledge of grammatical rules to be able to produce grammatically correct sentences on their own. Learners will demonstrate their understanding of what they have learned and whether they can construct sentences and join longer chunks of sentences. Role-play can be an appropriate practice activity (Hedge, 2000, p. 167).

### 1.5. Grammar and the placement of words in sentences

Grammar shows the exact position of words in sentences, each word type has its specific place in the formation of a sentence. A particular word class has a fixed place in the sentence structure. This strict order in a sentence is for the English language, as other languages may have different word positions. This placing of word order is dealt with by the linguistic science of syntax (Thornbury, 1999, p. 1-2). The position of words in a sentence is crucial to grammar and its understanding, form, structure, and meaning of the whole sentence. Knowing the meaning of words is essential for structuring sentences and phrases, as only then words can be put together in a sentence in a way that is grammatically correct (Ur, Swan, 2009, p. 4).

Sentences are not just about putting words together in sequence, but about using the rules that make expressing oneself in a language correct (Thornbury, 2006, p. 5). Transformation of a declarative sentence into a negative sentence or an interrogative sentence, formation of plural or substantive into a verb, or vice versa. Correct word order and meaning or variation of words or phrases, this also requires knowledge of grammar and its rules (Hadfield, Hadfield, 2008, p. 18).



## 2. How to teach grammar

### 2.1. Deductive and inductive teaching of grammar

Before each lesson in which a teacher is going to present a new grammatical concept, he or she must always think about the method of presentation, the form of explanation, the difficulties or confusions that might make it more complicated for learners to understand the grammar correctly, how the practice will be conducted, etc. (Hedge, 2000, p. 145).

### 2.2 Covert and overt teaching

Covert teaching consists of the fact that the learners do not know that they are learning a new topic, grammar. They are so focused and immersed in the activity associated with the new grammar that they do not even know that it is new (Harmer, 1991, p. 3-4). The covert teaching is based on the learner's unawareness of the situation, where he does not know that he is learning new grammatical rules (Gollin, as cited in Mallia, 2014, p. 2). They are learning unconsciously. The teacher accompanies them on their journey of understanding and practising the topic. On the other hand, overt learning is conscious learning, where learners are made aware that new material is being discussed and are presented with the rules that relate to the topic (Harmer, 1991, p. 3-4). When choosing overt teaching, as opposed to covert teaching, learners are introduced to grammatical rules (Harmer, 1991, p. 4; Lightbown, 2006, p. 169).

### 2.3 Deductive approach

Thornbury (1999, p. 29) sees the deductive approach as “*a deductive approach starts with the presentation of a rule and is followed by examples in which the rule is applied*”. Thornbury (1999) also inclines towards the terminology of deductive learning as rule-driven learning and inductive learning as discovery learning. Habibi (2021, p. 90) says that learners may know the rules of grammar, but the problem is applying the knowledge to reality, practical conversation.

### 2.4 Inductive approach

This method works on the principle of presenting learners with a context from which they infer the grammar. The learning support and materials must be carefully selected so that the new grammar is unambiguous and understandable to the learners (Gollin, as cited in Mallia, 2014, p. 2). Thornbury (1999, p. 49) compares this method to learning through experience and, furthermore, to finding patterns of similarities and frequencies in communication, whereby the learner notices when and how certain grammatical features occur.

### **3. Presenting new grammar**

*“Presentation is the stage at which students are introduced to the form, meaning and use of a new piece of language”* (Harmer, 1991, p. 17). First, the new grammar must be unambiguous, comprehensible, and must be understood by the learners - its meaning. Repetition and sufficient time for fixation in memory are needed (Ur, 1996, p. 11-12). In the past decades, ideas have begun to emerge that grammar should not be taught strictly according to rules, but learners should be given the opportunity to learn it through communication (Hedge, 2000, p. 143).

A quality presentation of new grammar should be based on the following basic elements - full attention of learners, perception (learners repeat orally or in writing the given examples to practice the grammatical phenomena), understanding, short-term memory (putting the new grammatical structure in short-term memory - the next lesson when the repetition of this material will be developed) (Ur, 1996, p. 12). When explaining new grammar, it is necessary to be aware of the essential elements that influence the process of presenting new material. These include the appropriate explanation procedure, demonstration of the structure of the grammar, clarification of the importance of the grammatical phenomenon, and subsequent practice of the grammar (Hedge, 2000, p. 145).

#### **3.1. A PPP model**

The PPP model represents the three most basic stages of teaching new grammatical phenomena. These are presentation, practice, and production. During a presentation, learners are introduced to the new grammar, and in the following phase they practice it under the supervision of the teacher. The last is the production phase (Hedge, 2000, p. 164). A lesson should be structured so that its activities build on each other, so the first activity is the key (Scrivener, 1994, p. 32).

##### **3.1.1. Presentation**

In the first step, that is, the presentation itself, learners are provided with basic information about the new grammar, what its structure is, when it is used, and what its meaning is, i.e., what it expresses. At this stage, the context has an essential function to help learners better orient themselves in the overall presentation of the material (Hadfield, Hadfield, 2008, p. 16). Harmer (2007, p. 64-65) describes part of the presentation as putting the learners in a situation, with the teacher commenting on the situation and using the new grammar just given. It is also appropriate to use a variety of aids to help the learners understand the situation better.

### 3.1.2. Practice

The practice step is used to demonstrate understanding of new grammar and to improve it. The teacher verifies that the learners have understood the material correctly and further supervises their practice. In case of any mistakes, it is essential that the learners are reminded by the teacher and the material is explained or reexplained (Ur, 1996, p. 19). Practice leads to achieving correct construction and use of new grammar. By monitoring learners, the teacher is able to identify whether it is possible to move on to stage three, i.e., production (Thornbury, 1999, p. 128).

### 3.1.3. Production

The practice step is followed by the production step, which means the actual creation and composition of sentences using the newly learned grammar. Learners in this stage prove how they have been able to understand the grammar and apply it to practical life (Harmer, 2007, p. 66). The practice has the function of preparing learners to confront grammatical phenomena in everyday communication. The teacher should encourage learners to communicate in order to fulfil this stage (Hedge, 2000, p. 61, 166).

## 3.2 Context

The understanding of grammar is also influenced by the context in which the grammar is found, so it is the context from which learners can more easily understand the meaning and function of a given grammar that can be found in various materials (Hedge, 2000, p. 157). Thornbury (2006, p. 5) also believes that it is appropriate to teach learners grammar through conversations and context. Context, correct understanding, and the situation are very crucial elements in learning and teaching (Harmer, 1991, p. 1).

## **4. Coursebooks**

Most public schools use coursebooks as support and main source of materials and teaching. The choice of coursebooks should be based on specific criteria and teachers should know how to adapt the materials to their classroom (Bülent, 2006, p. 19). The market offers a vast number of schoolbooks, so it is not easy to find an appropriate one, and it is necessary to carefully consider which one to choose for learners' education. Learners want interactive materials full of pictures, games, and fun (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 1). Among other things, a book can be used as a support for teachers when it can support English language learning and supplement the teacher's instruction (Harmer, 2007, p. 181-182).

Usually, the coursebook is written by experienced teachers who have practice and know how to explain various things to learners in a clear way. This topic is related to the possibility of modifying the exercises in coursebooks according to individual requirements, but Scrivener recommends that beginning teachers follow the schoolbook guidelines (Scrivener, 1994, p. 38). When working with a coursebook, teachers can modify the assignment to suit the conditions of their learners. Indeed, it is common to find exercises in the coursebook that are not suitable for the teacher's classroom, or adaptation of materials is necessary (Tsiplakides, 2011, p. 761).

Modification of the coursebook can be done in different areas and in different ways as Tsiplakides states: modification of the content of the book, addition or deletion of the content of the coursebook, reorganization of the content, dealing with important omissions of the coursebook, modification and alteration of language tasks and activities (Tsiplakides, 2011, p. 761). Customising the schoolbook can be done in several ways, including adding your own ideas to the exercises in the coursebook to improve them, changing the assignment - making it more challenging for stronger learners, or doing only part of the exercise. It is not strictly necessary to follow the book; it is possible to do some exercises, not at all, or to do them in a different order (Scrivener, 1994, p. 43).

### **4.1. Selection of a coursebook**

As already mentioned, the main requirement for the correct choice of a coursebook is the matching of the teaching objectives together with the content of the schoolbook. Interactive and thought-provoking exercises, interesting texts and articles, activities focusing on language in use, this is what a book should contain (Bülent, 2006, p. 25-26). Garinger argues that it is appropriate to adopt a systematic way of evaluating a coursebook, one that proceeds from larger units (content, objectives) to smaller ones, at the level of individual exercises or explanation figures (Garinger, 2002, p. 1). Another essential factor is the language in which the coursebook

is written; the language should be appropriate to the language level of the class, but the instructions should still be clear and understandable (Bülent, 2006, p. 25-26).

A good coursebook should target a variety of learning styles, as this is the only way to make the book more effective. It should comprehensively develop all language skills as well as language systems (Bülent, 2006, p. 25-26). Important parameters in selecting a coursebook include attractiveness to learners, age-appropriate topics, a clear and comprehensive grammar section, and a sufficient number of practical exercises (Spratt, 1994, p. 29-31).

## 4.2 A Coursebook as a learning tool

The right selection of a coursebook is also essential for the learners themselves, as the book is one of the factors that affect their overall learning. If the book is attractive to them, they can remember the material more easily, and their motivation will increase (Tsiplakides, 2011, p. 758). Relevance and practical use of the language are more than desirable - learners want to see that what they are learning is meaningful and how they can practically use these skills and knowledge (Bülent, 2006, p. 25-26). It can also be positive for learners to know how far they have come in the coursebook. Looking back at how much they have already learned can give them the strength to continue their studies. A schoolbook with interesting exercises, texts, or videos on different topics can also support their interest (Harmer, 2007, p. 181).

## 4.3 Audio-visual aids

Learners can also learn grammar through exercises, games, or work with text or audio-visual aids. This may include coursebooks to support and supplement the teacher's explanation, visual aids, various figures, example sentences, etc. (Harmer, 2007, p. 63). Tsiplakides (2011, p. 914) believes that the use of audio-visual aids develops not only listening, but also speaking and perception of the situation. Tsiplakides also points out that these aids need to be chosen carefully in order to meet the objectives of the lesson and also the possibility of a loss of concentration in learners who, as a result of exposure to multiple senses, lose focus on grammar, which is crucial.

## 5. CEFR

The abbreviation CEFR stands for Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which is the document on which many other important documents are based, such as curriculum frameworks, curriculum documents, and a wide variety of other important materials. Many language examinations at all levels and the preparation for these examinations are also based on the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2020, p. 21-22, 28).

This is an international classification of language levels that is divided into six levels from the most basic to the most advanced. The basic level is referred to as A1 and is gradually followed by A2 -> B1 -> B2 -> C1, and the highest level a learner can reach according to CEFR is C2. At each level, it is specified what the learner has to achieve and what he/she has to master. These criteria are called Can Do statements. CEFR works with all language skills which are listening, reading, speaking, and writing (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2020, p. 35, 36).

The Common European Framework of Reference is a globally recognized document, and its use is wide-ranging. It is not only teachers and learners who draw on this resource, but also course designers, employers, and other major institutions such as universities.

The teacher and especially the learner can see the progress they are making (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2020, p. 21). Therefore, the levels can also be motivating, as the learner can see which level he or she is at and which he or she would like to reach, or which he or she needs to reach to be admitted to a job or university. For the employer, the description of the levels is a benefit, as they know what their employee should be able to do. There is also an undeniable advantage in comparing international results in various researches. A fixed classification makes comparisons more accurate.

The practical part of this thesis also works with the levels set by CEFR and the framework curriculum for primary education, specifically levels A1 and A2. The following quotations are based on the CEFR, which determines the content of all levels.

### 5.1 Level A1

*“Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where someone lives, people they know and things they have. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly*

*and clearly and is prepared to help.”* (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2020, p. 175).

## 5.2 Level A2

*“Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need”* (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2020, p. 175).

## 5.3 Focusing on grammar

### 5.3.1 A1

*“Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a learnt repertoire”* (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2020, p. 132).

*“Has a very basic range of simple expressions about personal details and needs of a concrete type. Can use some basic structures in one-clause sentences with some omission or reduction of elements”* (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2020, p. 131).

### 5.3.2 A2

*“Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes; nevertheless, it is usually clear what they are trying to say”* (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2020, p. 175).

*“Has a repertoire of basic language which enables them to deal with everyday situations with predictable content, though they will generally have to compromise the message and search for words/signs. Can produce brief, everyday expressions in order to satisfy simple needs of a concrete type (e.g. personal details, daily routines, wants and needs, requests for information). Can use basic sentence patterns and communicate with memorised phrases, groups of a few words/signs and formulae about themselves and other people, what they do, places, possessions, etc. Has a limited repertoire of short, memorised phrases covering predictable survival situations; frequent breakdowns and misunderstandings occur in non-routine situations”* (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2020, p. 130).

## 5.4 Framework Education Programme

Teaching a foreign language is crucial, especially for learners' communication in a foreign country, which allows better orientation in the culture, and also further studies or employment in the labour market. A foreign language is an advantage for various foreign stays, internships or cooperation with foreign schools (Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání, 2021, p. 16-17).

The framework curriculum is based on The Common European Framework, which specifies the necessary outcomes for language levels, and also states that learners should reach the A2 level by the end of primary and lower secondary education. When learning a foreign language, it is essential that the learners build a base that they can develop through further study (Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání, 2021, p. 16-17).

The Framework Education Programme requires that the learner should have a basic knowledge of grammar in which minor errors may be made, but which do not significantly alter the meaning of what is being communicated (Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání, 2021, p. 28).



## 6. Comparatives and superlatives

### 6.1 Adjectives

Adjectives belong to an open class, which means that new adjectives can be created over and over again. Adjectives have a descriptive function. Some adjectives can be recognized by characteristic suffixes such as *-able*, *-ical*, *-ful*, *-ish*, and so on (Carter, McCarthy, 2006, p. 438). However, a considerable number of adjectives do not have these helpful suffixes for possible identification (Dušková et al., 2012, p. 141). Quirk et al. (1986, p. 402) add that adjectives, if they are not in a sentence but stand alone, cannot be identified, but he agrees with Carter and McCarthy that some can be recognized just because of the characteristic suffixes. Adjectives can also be identified if they are in a graded form, typically the suffix *-er* or *-est*.

#### 6.1.1 Gradability vs. non-gradability

Quirk et al. (1986, p. 435) and Carter and McCarthy (2006, p. 441-442) agree that most adjectives are gradable, which can be detected by grading as well as by the use of intensifiers. These adjectives often occur with adverbs that indicate the degree of adjectives (Huddleston, Pullum, Bauer, 2002, p. 531). Dynamic adjectives are all gradable, as are most stative adjectives. Some adjectives that are non-gradable tend to be those that originate as nouns (*criminal*, *hungry*, *wooden*, ...) (Quirk et al., 1986, p. 432). In addition, Carter and McCarthy (2006, p. 442) add that gradable adjectives can be identified with their opposite meaning (*big-small*, *slow-fast*, ...), and adverbs that denote totality (*completely*, *totally*, *extremely*, *absolutely*, ...) cannot be used with these adjectives. Adjectives expressing just some kind of absolute properties (they can be confirmed or denied - *pregnant*, *married*, *infinite*, *unique*, *etc.*) cannot be graded, therefore, the general statement that adjectives inflect cannot be valid, as only some of them can be inflected (Dušková et al., 2012, p. 141).

### 6.2 Grading

Grading expresses the differences or equality between certain elements (Swan, 2016, p. 203). Grading can be done at three levels, namely when something is *more* – at a higher level, at the same level, or at a lower level, *less* (Quirk et al., 1986, p. 458), and it is also very crucial to choose the right grading procedure. One of these two options requires the suffix *-er* or *-est*, the first variant being used in the formation of comparatives, while *-est* is used in the formation of superlatives. The second option is the use of *more* and *most*, with *more* serving as the element of the comparative and *most* as the element of the superlative (Dušková et al., 2012, p. 149).

More can also be defined as a comparative to the pronouns much and many (Huddleston, Pullum, Bauer, 2002, p. 1123).

### 6.3 Inflectional or analytic comparison?

Huddleston, Pullum, Bauer (2002, p. 533) divide the grading into two types, inflectional and analytic, whereas Quirk uses the terms inflectional and periphrastic comparison (Quirk et al., 1986, p.461).

The difference between the use of the suffixes *-er* and *-est* (inflectional comparison) and the use of more or most (periphrastic comparison) is the number of syllables of the adjective (Quirk et al., 1986, p.461). If an adjective has three or more syllables, it is formed using the word more or most before it. Otherwise, if the adjective has fewer than three syllables, the first option is chosen, adding *-er* or *-est* immediately after the adjective (Carter and McCarthy, 2006, p. 438). Exceptions are adjectives with two syllables, which can carry both suffixes *-er* or *-est* and more or most before them (Quirk et al., 1986, p. 461). Swan (2016, p. 204) gives the example of adjectives with unstressed vowels (*narrow*, *simple*).

In the case of grading to the comparative level, the suffix *-er* or more is used by adding the suffix *-er* after the adjective, whereas more appears before the adjective (Swan, 2016, p. 203). When forming superlatives, the suffix *-est* is added to the adjective or most before the adjective (Quirk et al., 1986, p.458). The forms *more* and *most* are mainly used for three- and multisyllabic adjectives but can also occur in adjectives that have two syllables with the suffixes *-nt*, *-ful*, *-ous*, *-less* or participial forms of adjectives *-ed*, *-ing*, *-en* (Dušková et al., 2012, p. 151). However, Swan (2016, p. 204) argues that this phenomenon, with two-syllable adjectives ending in *-ed*, *-ing*, *-ful*, *-less*, must form comparatives and superlatives using *more* and *most*.

### 6.4 Compound adjectives

Compound adjectives can be graded in both possible ways. To create the comparative adjectives, it is possible to use more before the first part of the adjective or to add the suffix *-er* or to the first part or to use its irregular form (*well-paid* -> *better-paid* /*more well-paid*). The same principle applies to third-degree grading (Swan, 2016, p. 204), as the example given by Carter and McCarthy (2006, p. 464) “*That was one of the worst-organised trips I've ever been on*”.

## 6.5 The equality and inequality of adjectives

Swan (2016, p. 203) provides the same information as Quirk (Quirk et al., 1986, p.458), which is that *as (adjective) as* is used in the case of the same level of grading. Whereas, when expressing a lower degree of comparatives, *less* or *least* is added before the adjective (Quirk et al., 1986, p. 458). In the case of informal language, the variants *not so ...as...*, *not as ... as...* can also be used (Swan, 2016, p. 203).

## 6.6 Irregular adjectives

In addition to regular adjectives, which are graded in two ways according to the number of syllables, there is also a group that has irregular grading. This means that the whole word differs from its original base. These irregular adjectives include, among others, adjectives such as *good* or *bad*, which are widely used in common conversation (Quirk et al., 1986, pp. 458-459). Dušková et al. (2012, p. 154), as well as Carter and McCarthy (2006, p. 464) also list these irregular adjectives *good, bad, and far*, suggesting that these are the most commonly used.

## 6.7 Changes in spelling

In the case of regular adjectives, there may be changes in the written form of the word. A very common change is doubling of consonants, which occurs when there is one vowel between two consonants, as in the examples *fat -> fatter, thin -> thinner*. However, there are exceptions, as in the case of the adjective *cruel*, where both variations are possible, the doubling or leaving the base word and simply adding the suffix *-er*. The second option appears predominantly in American English (Quirk et al., 1986, p. 460-461). Words that are monosyllabic or disyllabic, and also have a vowel and a consonant as the last two letters in exactly that order, then the final consonant is doubled (Dušková et al., 2012, p. 150).

Other changes include the softening of *y* to *i*, as in the adjectives *happy -> happier -> happiest, easy -> easier -> easiest* (Quirk et al., 1986, p.460-461). This change is also mentioned by Dušková (Dušková et al., 2012, pp. 149-150), who adds that pronunciation is important in the case of these adjectives, as the postconsonantal *y* changes to *i*, whereas the postvocalic *y* remains unchanged (*grey -> greyer, coy -> coyer*).

If the preposition *than* appears in a sentence with an adjective (usually with comparatives), then the articles are not added to the sentence because one element is being compared to the others. In the case of superlatives, one element from a certain set of elements is being compared, so there will be a definite article. It is very often associated with the preposition *of (the biggest of all)* (Quirk et al., 1986, p.466). Comparatives are only possible

when comparing two elements; superlatives are used when comparing three or more elements (Huddleston, Pullum, Bauer, 2002, p. 1162).

## **Summary**

The theoretical part of this thesis focuses first on the concept of grammar in general, its function, and possible divisions. The next chapter focuses on the teaching of grammar. Deductive and inductive approaches are mentioned here, as well as how grammar should be presented to learners, for example using the PPP model, for which the individual stages are described in this thesis. The context, which plays an important role in teaching, is also discussed in the thesis. The next chapter concentrates on coursebooks as a traditional aid in explaining grammatical phenomena. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is included in one of the chapters, as this curriculum document influences foreign language teaching, from the classification and definition of all levels to the outcomes that learners at a given level should master. The CEFR is the basis for the Framework Education Programme, which is also included in the thesis. The brief introduction to comparatives and superlatives is another chapter of this thesis because they are the subjects of the practical part of this thesis.

## **B. PRACTICAL PART**

## **7. General description of coursebooks that are compared**

Your space 2, Project 2, Enter the Portal 3 and Go Getter 2 are the coursebooks that will be compared in the practical part of this thesis. All of these coursebooks are suitable for English language teaching at the second level of primary schools or multi-year grammar schools. These coursebooks were chosen for the purpose of diversity in coursebook publishing, but also because two of the coursebooks are approved by the Ministry of Education, while the other two are not.

### **7.1 Your space 2**

The coursebook *Your space 2* was published by Fraus in 2014, with the original edition published by Cambridge University Press in 2012. This is the first edition of this coursebook. In total, *Your space* has four titles and includes a range of materials to extend the learning of learners. The book is suitable for students at CEFR level A2. Specifically, this coursebook offers materials for approximately 80 lessons (Hobbs et al., 2014). *Your space 2* is approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (Seznam učebnic a učebních textů se schvalovací doložkou pro základní vzdělávání. Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy).

#### **Content**

The content of the coursebook is divided into a total of eight units, each further divided into smaller units A, B, and C. The main topics of the coursebook are People, Travel, The future, The past, Heroes, Nature, Outdoors, Cyberworld and Free time, which is a summary revision. The coursebook also offers an introductory unit called Welcome, which, like the Free time unit, does not count towards the eight units. The table of contents offers an overview table listing the language systems, which are grammar and vocabulary, and language skills, which are not further divided into writing, reading, speaking, and listening, but are only detailed specifically for each unit (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 4-7).

### **7.2 Go Getter 2**

*Go Getter 2* was published by Pearson in 2017 and offers this type of coursebook from the pre-A1 to B1 level. The set is suitable for teenagers, which is the target group for which the coursebooks are chosen for comparison. In total, the *Go Getter* series offers four pieces of coursebooks, with *Go Getter 2* focusing on A1/A2 level and offering materials for a total of 70-120 lessons (Croxford, Fruen, 2017). The coursebook is not on the list of approved textbooks by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (Seznam učebnic a učebních textů se schvalovací doložkou pro základní vzdělávání. Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy).

## Content

Go Getter 2 offers a total of eight units, including an introductory zero unit. Topics that appear in the content include Classmates, Fun with food, Technology for all, Big world, Around town, Just the job, Going places, Having fun. The content clearly shows when learners are due for revision, which tends to be a comprehensive and summary revision after every two units. The content is also supplemented with chapters on Get Culture!, which is usually an introduction to some topics from the cultures of English-speaking countries in the form of videos or presentations. Language systems are also clearly divided, and language skills are divided individually for each unit (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 2-3).

### 7.3 Enter the Portal 3

Enter the Portal 3 Published by MM Publications in 2021 and is designed for CEFR level A2. The Enter the Portal series contains a total of four coursebooks, all of which are suitable for English language teaching in primary or lower secondary schools (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021). This coursebook is not approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

## Content

The content is divided into a total of four modules, which are then further divided into units. One module contains two units, making a total of eight units. The coursebook contains an introductory chapter that is not included in the modules and is entitled Hello. The content is further divided into language systems into vocabulary, grammar, and functions, and language skills into specific skills such as reading, listening, and pronunciation, speaking, and writing. The next column contains symbols that are called 21st-century competencies. The chapters are not titled in any way, but the four modules are titled About me, Looking back, From place, to place, and What happened? (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 2-5).

### 7.4 Project 2

Project 2 was published by Oxford University Press in 2014 and is the fourth edition. The Project textbook set offers a total of five titles from levels A1 - B1 of the Common European Framework. This Project 2 coursebook is adapted to levels A1 - A2. The coursebook offers materials for three to five English language lessons per week (Hutchinson, 2014), and is on the list of approved coursebooks by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (Seznam učebnic a učebních textů se schvalovací doložkou pro základní vzdělávání. Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy).



## Content

Project 2 contains a total of six units, which are entitled My life, Animals, Holidays, Food, The world, and Entertainment. There is also an introductory unit called Introduction. Language systems are divided into a grammar section and a vocabulary section, language skills are linked to communication and then further divided for each unit. As an additional part of the content, there is a column in which culture is combined throughout the curriculum and the project. Here, too, the individual sections are divided into lessons (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 2-3).

### 7.5 Differences and similarities in the coursebooks

All the selected coursebooks are from different publishers, and only two of them are on the list of approved coursebooks, namely Your space 2 and Project 2. All coursebooks, with the exception of Project 2, have a total of four titles that build on each other. Only one coursebook is made up of modules and then subsequently divided into units. Language skills are presented differently in the content of different coursebooks. In the case of Enter the Portal 3, the individual skills are listed separately for each unit, whereas in the other coursebooks they are always listed under one column called skills, and only then are they divided for each unit. Only the Go Getter 2 coursebook has information about the units will be reviewed in the table of contents. Each coursebook contains a total of eight units, and the table of contents clearly shows the topics of the units or modules, as well as breaks down the language systems for the units. All coursebooks are also suitable for CEFR levels A1-A2.

## **8. Comparing the grammar sections of comparatives**

### **8.1 In which units can comparative adjectives be found?**

In Your space 2, there is a grammar of comparative adjectives in lesson 6 A, so the grammar is presented right at the beginning of the new lesson. In the title of the unit itself, there is an adjective in the graded form - We're faster than you! (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 66). Adjective grading is included in Go Getter 2 in unit four, which is titled Big world; however, the name of the subunit in which the grammar is located is It's more exciting, which also includes a comparative adjective (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 48). Enter the Portal 3 offers adjective comparison in the form of comparatives in module three, which is called From place to place, specifically in unit five and section B, which does not have a separate title, unlike the previous two coursebooks (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 48). The grammar section with adjective comparison in Project 2 is located, as in all the above-mentioned coursebooks, in lesson 5 B, entitled North and South. Although the title does not contain a comparative adjective, it compares the weather in the north and south of England, which is also applied in presenting the new grammar (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 58). Half of the coursebooks compared already contain a comparative adjective in the title of the unit itself, which can be better in orientation in the coursebook, and the teacher can start the grammar just by pointing to the unit title.

### **8.2 Presenting new grammar**

#### **8.2.1 Context**

In Enter the Portal 3, before the grammar section in the coursebook, there is a text that contains a story in which adjectives are used in their basic form, but also in various graded forms. Thus, learners can get a better understanding of grammar precisely through the text, where they can see how grammar is used in practical life (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 48), as was discussed in chapter 3.2. The presentation of grammar in the Project 2 coursebook is based on a very similar principle, where learners work with the text before the actual introduction of grammar, and where they also have the opportunity to listen to it. The text includes a comparison of the weather in two different places in England (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 58). The grammar in the Go Getter 2 coursebook, unlike in the Project 2 and Enter the Portal 3 coursebooks, is integrated into conversations that are accompanied by photographs, but overall, the text is not appropriately designed as a context for explaining grammar, as there is not a situation where it is obvious at first glance that the text is related to that grammar. The dialogue is therefore not suitable as a context. However, there is a video symbol next to the figure,

so the teacher also has the opportunity to use an interactive audio-visual aid in the explanation. The Go Getter 2 coursebook, unlike the Project 2 or Enter the Portal 3 books, does not have as sophisticated context, but it does offer other materials for understanding grammar in which the context is similar to the aforementioned coursebooks (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 48-49). The presentation of the new grammar in Your Space 2 is linked to conversations conducted by young people and contains a huge number of graded adjectives in the form of comparatives. Understanding of grammar should be based on this text, which represents a real situation (Hobbs et al., 2014, p.67). All coursebooks work with the text before presenting the new grammar (see chapter 3.1), but each in a different way. Go Getter 2 and Your Space 2 choose conversations as the appropriate context, which are supported by photographs, unlike the coursebook Enter the Portal 3, where the context is in the form of a narrative and a comparison of two cities. The context of Project 2 is very similar, with two short texts that compare the weather in two different places.

### 8.2.2 Explanation figures

In the Your space 2 coursebook, on the page, where grammar is found, learners are supposed to concentrate on the language focus, where there are selected sentences from the text in which just comparatives appear, but also sentences using *as...as* and *not as...as* structures. The grammar section continues to the next page, where a figure is already prepared, but it is not used for explanation, but only as an aid for working through the next exercises, but spelling changes are clearly visible (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 66-68). The grammar of Project 2 itself is introduced by the figure, where adjectives are first characterized, and next to these characteristics, they are listed in their basic forms. In the next column, there are blank lines where the learners write the correct forms of the comparatives. They are looking for them in the text in the exercise that precedes the grammar section. As a further task, learners are asked to find the rest of the adjectives in comparative forms and decide which of the rules in the figure they fulfil (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 58-59). Figure in the coursebook Enter the Portal 3 contains a total of nine examples of adjectives in the so-called positive form (the base form of the adjective), and next to it is a column with comparatives. The last thing listed in the table is one example sentence (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 49). In Go Getter 2 there is a figure containing several sections. The first section is the part of the figure that is referred to as short adjectives, and there are a total of four examples, each of which focuses on a different spelling change. The second section contains long adjectives, with only one example of using more before the adjective. The next section focuses on irregular adjectives with two examples.

The last thing the figure contains are two-sentence examples, one containing a sentence using a short adjective and the second containing a long adjective (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 49).

#### 8.2.4 Content of the figures

The figure in Your space 2 contains a total of ten adjectives that are graded, as was discussed in chapter 6.1.1), and always have the spelling changes in bold. The figure shows the suffix *-er*, the addition of *-r*, doubling consonants, the softening of *y* to *i*, and two examples of the use of *more* before adjectives (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 68). Go Getter 2 contains identical examples of adjective forms, but the second part of the figure contains the so-called long adjectives, where it is clear that *more* is added before the adjective. As with the previous coursebook, this one has examples of irregular verbs (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 49). Enter the Portal 3 contains the same as the previous coursebooks, but it is the only coursebook that does not have highlighted or otherwise coloured changes in spelling (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 49). The figure in Project 2 contains the following "*regular, short vowel, and one consonant, ending -e, ending -y, two or more syllables (except when the second syllable is -y)*", see chapter 6, where are these rules presented (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 59). Project 2 is completely different in its terms from the rest of the coursebooks, which only have the basic adjective form and the comparative form next to it. A partial exception is the Go Getter 2 book, which distinguishes adjectives into short and long.

#### 8.2.5 Irregular comparative adjectives

Enter the Portal 3 gives four examples of irregular adjectives, namely *good*, *bad*, *far*, and *much/many* (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 49). In contrast to Enter the Portal 3, in Your space 2, only three examples of irregular verbs are given; these are the adjectives *good*, *bad*, and *far* (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 68). Furthermore, in Go Getter 2, two examples of irregular adjectives are given, specifically *good* and *bad* (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 49). Project 2 does not give any examples of irregular adjectives on this grammar topic. Irregular adjectives are presented in a different unit (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 58-59). In the case of irregular adjectives, any coursebooks do not agree on the number given in the grammar section. However, all coursebooks that present irregular adjectives agree on the basic two adjectives that are *good* and *bad*. Irregular adjectives were discussed in chapter 6.6.

#### 8.2.6 Audio-visual aids

Go Getter 2 offers the option of a video that includes a story in which comparatives are used naturally, the video continues with a look and learn section where the grading of adjectives is re-introduced, and finally, there are example sentences again. As a further visual aid,

this coursebook uses photographs to accompany the young people's conversation (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 49). Your space 2 also offers support in the form of photographs to accompany the conversation (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 67). Project 2 provides pictures, unlike the previous coursebooks. These pictures show how the adjective in the base form becomes a comparative (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 59), which is not the purpose of the photographs in Go Getter 2 and Your space 2. There, the photographs serve to better understand the context. Enter the Portal 3 has a video symbol next to the grammar figure, as is the case in the Go Getter 2 coursebook, which can support the teacher to give learners an easier and better understanding of the grammar (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 49). All coursebooks work with photographs or pictures, but only the Project 2 coursebook really provides full support for learners to understand comparatives. Exactly half of the books provide audio-visual support in the form of videos. Audio-visual aids are also described in chapter 4.3

### 8.2.7 Continuity of previous units and exercises

The grammar in Your space 2 is presented right at the beginning of the new lesson, so it does not build on the previous lesson. What it does build on, however, is the next lesson, which focuses on superlatives (Hobbs et al., 2014, pp. 66-70). In the case of Go Getter 2, the grammar is in Unit 4.2, so grammar is not the content of the first sub lesson but follows after the introduction to unit four. However, the grammar presentation is followed by a new adjective vocabulary section (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 49). The grammar section in Enter the Portal 3 is preceded by a language system vocabulary section, where the topic is focused on adjectives, which then builds very smoothly on the grammar section (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 48). Project 2, unit 5 B, is linked to the topic of the weather, where learners first learn vocabulary on this topic and later use it to better understand and practice grammar (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 58). In general, it can be summarized that all coursebooks are sophisticated in that way that learners first work with vocabulary, most often with adjectives, and move smoothly to the grammar section.

### 8.2.7 Comparative adjectives that are used in the texts

In the case of Project 2, the text is full of various examples of the use of comparatives, even in different forms, as was discussed in chapter 6. It is possible to find adjectives containing *more*, as well as those with the suffix *-er* or *-r* or doubling consonants (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 58). Very similar is Your space 2, which, like Project 2, offers a wide range of comparatives, but also, for example, the use of *less*, *as ... as*, *than* (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 67). The text in Go Getter 2 contains only four examples of comparatives, which, compared to other coursebooks,

is not an adequate number for a text that is supposed to illustrate the context and the use of adjectives in graded forms. What cannot be overlooked, on the other hand, is the fact that these four examples are varied, and each adjective represents a different form of comparative construction (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 48). Unlike the other coursebooks, Enter the Portal 3 focuses primarily on the use of *as ... as*, and the structure of *more ... than*. The narrative contains only two examples of comparatives, one with the suffix *-er* and the other with *-ier* (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 48). Coursebooks offer great variation in this respect, especially in the variety of the number of comparatives, but also in the variety of examples of adjective formation.

### 8.2.8 Deductive vs inductive approach

Project 2 works with learners working with a text that compares the weather in two different places in England before the grammar is introduced, which is an example of the inductive approach, as was discussed in chapter 2. However, in the grammar section itself, the grammar is explained in the context of a table, where the rules for forming comparatives are given, so this is a deductive approach (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 58-59). Learners will use the inductive approach in Your space 2, as well as in Enter the Portal 3, where they work with the rules from the examples provided by the textbooks. Your space 2 offers a conversation, whereas in Enter the Portal 3 they work with a text (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 67; Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 48). Go Getter 2 contains conversations, but is not focused on grammar, so a deductive approach is used, as learners work with comparatives in the grammar figure (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 48-49).

### 8.2.9 Extras

In Your space 2, there is also a figure that alerts the learners to common mistakes. A total of four sentences are presented, two of which are always misspelled, crossed out, and spelled correctly. However, there is no explanation of why the sentences are misspelled (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 68). Enter the Portal 3 shows a note below the grammatical figure drawing attention to the phenomenon *as ... as*, which again contains one sample sentence (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 49). There is also a note, in Project 2, for reflection on how comparatives are formed in the native language of learners (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 59).

## 9. Comparing the grammar section of superlatives

### 9.1 In which units can superlative adjectives be found?

Your space 2 presents the grammar of superlatives in Lesson 6 B, whose title is again indicative and implies a superlative, The highest mountain (Hobbs et al., 2014, p.70). The Go Getter 2 coursebook, unlike Your space 2, does not include an adjective in the title of Lesson 4.3, nor does Project 2, where Unit 5 C is called Record breakers (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 50; Hutchinson, 2014, p. 60). Enter the Portal 3 deals with this grammar in Lesson 6 A, which falls under Unit 3, as comparative adjectives (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 54), which is an exception to other coursebooks that offer comparatives and superlatives within a single unit, whereas Enter the Portal divides this grammar into two units.

### 9.2 Presenting new grammar

#### 9.2.1 Context

The first explanation of the grammar of superlatives in Your space 2 is based on a quiz that contains questions like - Where is the biggest building in the world?, the quiz has ten questions in total. Learners are then asked to concentrate on language focus, where there are further example questions using superlatives (Hobbs et al., 2014, p.70-71). Enter the Portal 3 presents the context of superlatives to a much lower degree than Your space 2. Enter the Portal 3 offers learners a total of five short texts about Peru, with three examples using the superlative *the ...est* and one using *the most ...*, which is almost half the number of examples compared to the previous textbook (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 54). Project 2 adopts exactly the same presentation procedure as Your space 2, using a quiz as a context with a total of ten questions containing superlatives. Unlike the previous coursebook, however, Project 2 supplements the quiz with pictures from which learners can more easily understand the content of the questions (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 60). The most recent coursebook, Go Getter 2, uses a short story from the zoo for context, see chapter 4.3, where not only superlatives but also a comparative is used. The text contains superlatives of all forms (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 50). In summary, two coursebooks offer learners a quiz to understand superlatives, another coursebook offers a text with a story, and as a last resort, short texts are not primarily focused on the grammar under study.

### 9.2.2 Explanation figures

The figure in Project 2 is preceded by an exercise in which the basic forms of adjectives that occur in the quiz in the form of superlatives are introduced to learners. The assignment challenges learners to find these superlatives (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 61). The Go Getter 2 coursebook presents a figure that contains, as in the previous Project 2, adjectives, comparatives, and superlatives. However, this figure differs by a further subdivision, namely short and long (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 50). Figure in Enter the Portal 3 has all the requisites of the previous figures, differing only in the marking of positive adjectives when the other coursebooks use only the term adjective (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 55). Your space 2 first alerts learners to the formation of superlatives with the language focus table, where four examples are given, and just the superlatives are highlighted in bold. Then, on the next page, there is another figure that presents a total of five adjectives. Your Space 2 is the only coursebook that offers only a list of adjectives and superlatives (Hobbs et al., 2014, p.70, 72). However, unlike Project 2, the Go Getter 2 and Enter the Portal 3 books also have examples of irregular adjectives.

### 9.2.3 Content

The grammar figure in Project 2 contains a total of twelve adjectives in the first column, two examples of comparatives are given in the second column, and the learners are asked to create the remaining ten. The last column is devoted to superlatives, where only one example is added, and learners have to complete it again on their own (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 61). In addition to this difference, the figure in Go Getter 2 offers a summary of two irregular adjectives, *good* and *bad*, and their comparatives and superlatives. Another difference is that this coursebook also provides two example sentences within the figure (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 50). Another difference is then the number of irregular verbs, and, like the previous book, Enter the Portal 3 gives two example sentences at the end of the figure (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 55). Compared to other coursebooks, in Your space 2, there is no column with comparatives (Hobbs et al., 2014, p.70, 72).

### 9.2.4 Irregular adjectives

All books present the same irregular adjectives, see chapter 6.6, as when explaining comparatives, except Project 2, which does not present any, because they are not a part of this unit. The difference between the coursebooks that do include irregular adjectives is, as noted above, that Your Space 2 does not include an overview of comparatives and superlatives,



but only of the base form and superlatives (Croxford and Fruen, 2017, p. 50; Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 72; Hutchinson, 2014, p. 61; Mitchell and Malkogianni, 2021, p. 55).

#### 9.2.4 Audio-visual aids

The Your space 2 textbook does not offer any audio-visual aids to explain this grammar (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 70-72). While Project 2 provides learners with three pictures that show how an adjective becomes a comparative and then a superlative, which is an appropriate representation as all three stages are introduced (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 61). Go Getter 2 introduces superlatives in the form of a picture story, which is also an appropriate resource for context (see chapter 3.2). The story contains all forms of superlatives with spelling changes and incorporates irregular adjectives, which are in the grammar figure. It then offers the option of watching a video related to grammar, just as Enter the Portal 3 has this option (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 51; Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 55).

#### 9.2.5 Continuity of previous units and exercises

Project 2, Your Space 2, and, like the Go Getter 2 coursebook, continue to explain the grading of superlative adjectives in relation to previous lessons (comparatives) (Hutchinson, 2014, pp. 60-61; Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 70-72; Croxford, Fruen, 2017, pp. 50-51). The exception among all the books compared is Enter the Portal 3, which is the only one that does not follow superlatives immediately after comparatives, but continues with this grammar until one unit later, 6 A, but which, like 5 B, falls under Module 3 (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 54).

#### 9.2.6 Superlatives that are used in the texts

In Enter the Portal 3, there are a total of four examples of different superlatives in the text, and only one is formed by adding *the most*. The others have only the form *the ... est*. The text contains no irregular adjectives (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 54). In contrast to the previous coursebook, the story in Go Getter 2 provides a total of seven superlatives and one comparative. These superlatives have a variety of forms of formation, and the text includes both examples of irregular adjectives that appear in the grammatical figure (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, pp. 50-51). Very similar to the Go Getter 2 coursebook are the two quizzes in Your Space 2 and Project 2, which also contain various forms of superlatives. However, neither of these books contains a single irregular adjective in their examples (Hobbs et al., 2014, p. 71; Hutchinson, 2014, p. 60).

#### 9.2.7 Deductive vs inductive approach

All coursebooks first present a context that contains, more or less, examples of superlatives. Go Getter 2 specifically targets this grammar, where learners understand

the content of adjectives, and the presentation of a short story is followed by a figure of grammar, an example of the inductive approach (Croxford, Fruen, 2017, p. 50-51), unlike Enter the Portal 3, which also presents short texts first, but these are not targeted at the grammar of adjectives. Thus, learners learn this grammar only from the table that follows the text, a deductive approach, that was discussed in chapter 2 (Mitchell, Malkogianni, 2021, p. 54-55). The other two textbooks, Project 2 together with Your space 2, offer learners a quiz that targets superlatives. The coursebooks are structured so that learners work with the quiz first and then with the grammar figures. Specifically, in Project 2, learners are already asked to check again in the quiz before working with the figures to see if they have understood the formation of superlatives (Hutchinson, 2014, p. 60-61). Your space 2, after working with the quiz, asks learners to read the language focus, where superlatives are bolded, before following with the grammar figure (Hobbs et al., 2014, pp. 70-72).

## **Summary**

The practical part of the thesis deals with the presentation and subsequent analysis of four coursebooks, which were selected for the purpose of diversity comparison.

The first part compares the comparatives presented in each book. The comparisons include several criteria such as context, the use of comparatives in the presented text or the content of the explanation figures. The second part examines superlatives, which have the same criteria for comparison as comparatives.

Going through the practical part of this thesis, the coursebook Project 2 and Go Getter 2 are very well evaluated in most of the criteria. Enter the Portal 3, unlike these coursebooks, has weaknesses, for example, in the presentation of context or in the numbers or presentation of comparatives and superlatives in the texts. Your space 2 lacks audio-visual aids and grammar figure content in comparison to the other coursebooks.

Interestingly, Project 2 is approved by the Ministry of Education, whereas the Go Getter 2 coursebook is not. Another finding is that the inductive approach dominates over the deductive approach.

## **Conclusion**

This bachelor thesis focuses on comparing the grammar sections in English language teaching coursebooks. The main aim was to discover in what ways the selected books differ or, in contrast, agree in the presentation of comparative and superlative forms of adjectives, what context accompanies the grammar, and in what aspects the explanation figures are different.

The theoretical part of the thesis summarizes what grammar is and its function in language. Other topics include how to teach grammar and what approaches are used to present new grammatical content. An important part of this is the chapter that focuses on coursebooks as a support for teachers in the presentation of grammar. The books are further analysed in the practical part of this thesis. As the thesis and the coursebooks are aimed at learners of lower secondary schools, there is also the chapter on the characteristics of the language levels according to the CEFR, where levels A1 and A2 are described. These two levels fall within the chosen level of education. Last but not least, there is the chapter concentrated on the grammar of comparatives and superlatives.

The practical part consists of an overall evaluation of all selected coursebooks and their subsequent analysis. Furthermore, this thesis focuses only on the presentation of the grammar of adjective grading according to the individual criteria based on the books themselves. Coursebooks contain different approaches to explaining grammar, using a variety of means to create a context from which learners can better understand the grammar.

The research questions can be answered as follows:

What are the differences in the explanation of comparatives and superlatives in ELT coursebooks?

The explanation of comparatives and superlatives in selected ELT coursebooks is all presented in explanation figures, and what differs are example sentences, because they are not included in all grammar sections.

Is the presentation of comparatives and superlatives supported by an appropriate context?

The main differences in presenting context are the ways in which the context is presented. Go Getter 2 uses dialogs and pictures to create a natural way of using grammar which is appropriate context (chapter 3.2). Enter the Portal 3 offers short texts in which the adjectives are used, but the amount is insufficient in comparison to other coursebooks.

Project 2 and Your space 2 use quizzes that are also not that good, because the learners cannot see the real usage of grammar.

What type of irregular adjectives are introduced?

Selected ELT coursebooks that present irregular adjectives together with comparatives and superlatives (only Project 2 has a separate unit in which the irregular adjectives are presented) agree on the two most important ones - good and bad. What also differs is the number of irregular adjectives. Enter the Portal 3 contains four irregular adjectives, whereas Your Space 2 has only three and Go Getter 2 contains only two – good and bad.

Which content does the figure offer?

All the grammar sections contain spelling changes that occur when grading adjectives, as was discussed in chapter 6.7. Coursebooks Go Getter 2 also and Your pace 2 have the changes in bold, whereas Project 2 has only superlatives in bold, and Enter the Portal does not have any of these changes.

Grammar is essential for correct sentence formation, so it is important to focus on it in English classes. The success of presenting new grammar and achieving correct understanding by learners depends, besides other things, on the aids the teacher decides to use. Traditional aids include textbooks, so it is advisable to make sure that they are well-chosen and to focus on their parts of the grammar explanation.

The results of the analysis and comparisons coincide with the theoretical part of the thesis since the theoretical part of the thesis includes chapter 2.1 related to deductive and inductive approaches, which are then further examined in the practical part. The same is the case for spelling changes, which are described in the theoretical part in chapter 6.7, and also evaluated within the content of the figures subchapters. Another finding is context, which, as described in the practical part in chapter 3.2, forms an important part of the presentation of the new grammar. Audio-visual aids (chapter 4.3) and irregular adjectives (6.6), which are also part of the theoretical part of the thesis, are then reflected in the practical part. In the practical part of the thesis, context plays a big role in facilitating the presentation of new grammar, which is also confirmed in the theoretical part (chapter 3), where an appropriately created context can help in the subsequent explanation of the grammar. The deductive approach, as stated in the theoretical part in chapter 2.3, has certain limitations that are reflected in the practical part, where coursebooks mainly use the inductive approach.

The CEFR states that an A2 learner is able to talk about topics such as their needs and wants, as well as local geography or shopping. Knowledge of comparative and superlative adjectives will certainly be useful in conversations on these topics.

The results of this thesis are similar to the findings in the thesis *Comparison of grammar sections in English course books for lower secondary schools* (Pohanková, 2015, p. 48, 67), where it is shown that in the *Project* coursebook the grammar is accompanied by context, which is most often in the form of text. Then, furthermore, the explanation of grammar can be subject to deductive or inductive approaches.

The limitations of the work lie in its specificity in the comparison, where only the grammatical parts of the comparative and superlative were compared. Following on from this thesis, the exercises in which the grammar of the comparatives and superlatives will subsequently be practised could be analysed and compared, or, for example, a larger number of analysed coursebooks.

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## Anotace

Jméno a příjmení:	Monika Minarčíková
Katedra nebo ústav:	Ústav cizích jazyků
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Blanka Babická, Ph.D.
Rok obhajoby:	2022

Název práce:	Prezentace komparativ a superlativ v gramatických sekcích vybraných učebnic anglického jazyka
Název práce v angličtině:	Presentation of comparatives and superlatives in grammar sections of selected ELT coursebooks
Anotace práce:	Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá porovnáváním gramatických sekcí v učebnicích anglického jazyka, které jsou vhodné pro 2. stupeň základních škol. Teoretická část práce uvádí gramatiku jako součást jazyka a také se zabývá prezentováním nové gramatiky, stejně jako komparativy a superlativy. V praktické části jsou prezentovány a srovnávány jednotlivé učebnice a jejich gramatické sekce.
Klíčová slova:	Gramatika, srovnávání, analýza textu, učebnice, komparativa, superlativa
Anotace práce v angličtině	This bachelor thesis focuses on the comparison of grammar sections in English language coursebooks that are suitable for lower secondary schools. The theoretical part of the thesis introduces grammar as a part of language and also discusses the presentation of new grammar as well as comparatives and superlatives. The practical part presents and

	compares the different coursebooks and their grammar sections.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Grammar, comparison, coursebooks, text analysis, comparatives, superlatives
Rozsah práce:	47
Jazyk práce:	Anglický jazyk