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Modern boardgames in ELT - Codenames

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Prohlášení:

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen prameny uvedené v seznamu literatury.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the use of the educational game Codenames in English language teaching for vocabulary acquisition. The introduction emphasizes the importance of games in children's lives and their role in the educational process. Subsequently, the game Codenames is introduced, including its rules, advantages, and integration into teaching. The practical part involves conducting research to explore the effectiveness of using Codenames in vocabulary learning. The research employs various methods, including questionnaires, observations, experiments, and interviews. The research results are analyzed and evaluated in relation to the goals of the thesis. The findings indicate that Codenames is a highly effective tool for enhancing the quality of English language teaching and that children are able to acquire new vocabulary more quickly through its use.

Introduction

The educational process is an ongoing journey of discovery, understanding, and learning new things, and didactic games play an irreplaceable role in shaping and planning it. The importance of games in education is undeniable, as they allow students to actively engage in learning processes, develop critical thinking, communication skills, and teamwork. Games not only motivate students to learn but also create a pleasant environment where children feel free and safe, thus having no problem expressing their thoughts and opinions.

For quite some time now, I have been working as an English teacher at the Primary School in Město Albrechtice. I am aware that learning new vocabulary in the English language is crucial for language development, and I also know that it can sometimes be a significant challenge for children. That's why I wanted to focus on methods that could make it easier for them to acquire new vocabulary. I fell in love with the game Codenames right from its first play, and it occurred to me that it could be a suitable tool for enhancing the learning of foreign words. For this reason, I chose this topic for my diploma thesis.

This thesis focuses on the didactic game Codenames and its use in English language teaching for vocabulary acquisition. The introductory part of this work examines the role of games in a child's life, considering the transformations that games undergo in their development, and explores the factors influencing the selection and management of games in education. It also analyzes the place and organization of the game Codenames in teaching, the motivation it provides for learning, and evaluation methodologies that allow us to assess its effectiveness.

Subsequently, the game Codenames is described in more detail. The rules of the game are introduced, its integration into English language teaching is analyzed, and the benefits and activation elements that the game provides are identified. Furthermore, the thesis examines the specific use of the Codenames game for vocabulary acquisition in the English language.

The practical part of this thesis presents the implementation of the research, which is conducted using research methods, specifically pre-testing and post-testing, observation, a custom experiment, and interviews. The hypotheses are verified, examining whether board games are a more attractive form of learning English for students and whether the use of the Codenames game enables children to learn new vocabulary more effectively. The practical section also seeks answers to research questions, including whether the use of modern board games supports the teaching of English vocabulary and whether it enhances students' ability to memorize new vocabulary through board game practice.

THEORETICAL PART

1 DIDACTIC GAME IN TEACHING

Teaching a new language to a group of children is not a simple task, and educators have been striving for years to design engaging teaching methods that are not only entertaining but also effective. As conventional approaches, such as memorization and recitation, can "lead to boredom, anxiety, concentration difficulties, and other negative effects" (Wei et al., 2018, p. 146), teachers often seek to introduce and incorporate more interactive teaching methods into their practices to enhance children's activity and collaboration with the teacher.

In the study "Abort, Retry, Pass, Fail: Games as Teaching Tools," Gouglas et al. (2014) assert that "play and games are ancient elements of human learning" and that "games enhance the acquisition of complex skills, abstract thinking, and group cohesion" (p. 121). The use of games in education is certainly not novel, and as the term "ancient element of human learning" suggests, games are a time-tested and reliable educational tool that is inherent to human nature and has proven its effectiveness. Numerous recent studies affirm the utility of games and "[suggest] that game-based learning can effectively increase motivation for learning, support educational outcomes, and even reduce anxiety" (Wei et al., 2018, p. 146).

For the proper development of language proficiency in a new language, one of the priorities is to learn new words and expand the vocabulary of the new language as much as possible (Wei, W.Y.J., 2018). Wei et al. (2018), who conducted research on the use of the competitive board game Monopoly in English language teaching to enhance teaching effectiveness, consider vocabulary as the main focus in English language instruction, asserting that 'Word collection and understanding are closely linked to overall English proficiency... Vocabulary is therefore a pivotal point in learning English. Those who lack sufficient vocabulary cannot effectively comprehend or communicate' (p. 146). However, as important as vocabulary is for comprehension and active language use, its learning is a demanding experience, requiring numerous repetitions and memorization to transition from working memory to long-term memory. This repetitive memorization can lead to the aforementioned 'boredom, anxiety, difficulties in concentration, and other negative effects' (Wei et al., 2018, p. 146). The state of boredom or anxiety can, in turn, impact the learning process as it leads to frustration and loss of motivation.

This chapter will delve into the significance of play in a child's life and its potential integration into education. It will explore the importance of play for children and examine how incorporating play into teaching can enhance instructional effectiveness. Furthermore, the chapter will address the potential for increasing children's motivation through the use of games and discuss methods for evaluating games.

1.1 The Function of Games in a Child's Life

Through play, a child discovers a new personal world, becomes immersed in the game, and opens up new perspectives. When integrated into education, play brings forth novel learning opportunities. Play is undeniably more enjoyable than work or traditional learning, but why is that the case? While there is no simple answer to this question, Vágnerová (2005) provides some insight. The author discusses two types of play, with the first being symbolic play, which promises a sense of certainty to children because they navigate within an environment they understand. This is achieved by allowing the child to create a reality in symbolic play that adapts to their own needs. However, it is crucial to note that even in symbolic play, there are rules that may pose challenges for children. Disregarding these rules can have various negative consequences for the child, such as social exclusion (Čáp, 2001).

The second type of play, according to Vágnerová's classification (2005), is thematic play. This type of play is distinctive in that it allows children to engage in and experience various roles, whether positive or negative. These roles are special and entertaining for children because, in their everyday lives, they are not allowed to engage in these roles. Therefore, experimenting with and playing these roles is highly enjoyable and often enticing for children.

In a way, the importance of play in a child's life and its popularity among children are also explained by Němec (2002). The author argues that, when interspersed with various activities, it is play that captures children's interest and sharpens their focus. Through play, mundane and unattractive tasks, such as work or learning, can become enjoyable for children. Moreover, play is a completely natural daily activity for a child, and it is a necessity in their life. Without play, a child may experience deprivation, and these feelings and negative experiences can persist into the future. Therefore, the author considers play as a suitable teaching method.

Němec (2002) sees the importance of play in language education as a means for children to assume roles that are not permitted or are rarely encountered in their everyday

lives. These roles often mirror those they are likely to encounter in real life over time. Therefore, it is beneficial for children to experiment with and familiarize themselves with certain behavior patterns associated with these roles, rehearse situations, and practice reactions that they may need in the future. Through this process, children can acquire typical phrases, vocabulary, and expressions of feelings, attitudes, and behaviors.

Play in a child's life harbors a versatile developmental potential, as stated by Čáp (2001). The author argues that play fosters the child in both motor and constructional techniques, their sensorimotor coordination, memory, and imagination. This is crucial not only for education but also for life itself. The development of thinking, analysis, and synthesis in anticipating the opponent's moves is also significant. Thinking during the execution of individual moves, acquiring knowledge and insights, and practicing attention and concentration are essential aspects.

However, the author points out that not all games have the same predispositions. Each game develops different material or technical prerequisites in a child, so it is advisable to combine, alternate, and vary games. The alternation of games is crucial not only for these reasons but also because each child has a preference for different games, leading to variations in the popularity of individual games.

When discussing the use of didactic games directly in English lessons, it is necessary to delve into the concept of the affective filter, which is part of Krashen's humanistic theory. This theory emphasizes the emotional state of the learner towards the content being covered. It highlights that if a child feels pleasant during learning, this positive state will also reflect in the learning process, making it more effective and natural for the learner. Conversely, if a child feels unpleasant, the brain creates a kind of block to incoming stimuli. These manifestations become more apparent in situations of anxiety, low self-esteem, or lack of motivation (Curtain, 1988).

A typical element of incorporating games into teaching is creating an optimal positive atmosphere. Regarding the impact of games on a child's perceptual experience of the environment, it is essential to mention the theory of the comfort zone. This theory suggests that when a person operates within the range of their comfort zone, this state does not induce stress. However, it is not particularly conducive to learning because the ability to learn is significantly suppressed at this stage. On the contrary, if a person steps out of their comfort zone, optimal conditions for the learning process are established. If a child steps out of their comfort zone and learns something, the boundaries of this comfort zone expand. However, it is also crucial to note that if a person steps out of their comfort zone

and fails to learn anything, the comfort zone will narrow (Činčera, 2007). Therefore, it is important to proceed with caution. If we encourage a child to step out of their comfort zone, it is necessary to set conditions that the child can handle, resulting in the expansion of their comfort zone. This ensures an increase in the child's self-confidence, as they will believe in their own skills and abilities.

The significance of the emotional and mental state of the student as a crucial factor in learning is discussed, for example, in the study by Yanxia (2017). In his article, the author argues that a child is capable of effective engagement in the learning process only when in a positive emotional state. It is particularly important for the child to avoid succumbing to anxiety, as it is an emotion that negatively impacts the learning process and diminishes learning outcomes during the session.

Elkhafaifi (2005) also addresses anxiety and the problems it causes in the learning process in his study, where he examined the extent and impact of anxiety on learning and memorization of new information. The author concluded that students experiencing anxiety during lessons tended to underestimate their abilities and skills, ultimately resulting in lower self-assessment of learning and overall performance. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to prevent the learning process from becoming discouraging and inducing anxiety in children. However, at the same time, an appropriate level of challenge, as well as elements of enjoyment and motivation, should be ensured.

Some authors argue that the ideal conditions for creating an optimal learning environment, one that is free from anxiety and at the same time induces pleasant emotional states in children, fostering their willingness to engage in learning, motivation, and openness to the learning process, are achieved through the incorporation of games into education. It is precisely through games that can effectively enhance a child's intrinsic motivation and eagerness to learn new things, thereby positively influencing the outcomes of the educational process (Young, Wang, 2014).

Learning through play can engage cognitive, affective, and motor aspects of personality, ensuring holistic learning, which should be a desirable phenomenon in language education and beyond. In addition, compared to traditional teaching methods, games actively involve imagination and experience, positively influencing learning abilities. Another positive aspect of using games is the development of children's independence and their engagement in playing games (Maňák, 2003).

1.2 Transformations of Games in a Child's Life

It is a well-known fact that children's personalities undergo dramatic development over the years. This means that a game that yields very positive results for first-grade students may produce vastly different outcomes for students a few years older, as it may no longer be the right choice for them.

The selection of games within different age groups on the first level of primary school was the focus of a study conducted by the Prague School Ethnography Group in 2005. The results of the study indicate, for example, that the game Bingo can have very positive outcomes with significantly activating elements in the third grade of primary school. However, if the same game is used in the education of fifth-grade students, the results will be entirely different, as students in the fifth grade will categorically reject this game. This fact is influenced by both the psychological and physical development of children, with significant developmental leaps observed between the third and fifth grades. This can greatly impact the activating functionality of games.

According to the categorization of games used by the Prague School Ethnography Group (PSŠE) in 2005, which is based on the characteristics of games according to Caillois, four fundamental features of games can be identified. The first category is Agon, which is a game with a competitive character, characterized by a clear goal and an emphasis on following the rules. This type of game often occurs in the environment of the fifth grade, where children begin to understand the prestige of winners and gradually learn to respect rules. Adherence to rules is crucial, and their violation is unforgivable, potentially leading to defeat. Games with these characteristics are primarily suitable for the fifth grade environment and may not be appropriate for first-grade children, as they personally identify with losing, which could pose a problem in education. Children start to accept game rules gradually; in the first grade, they may mock those who lose, but such mockery becomes rare by the second grade. The dominant position of games characterized by the Agon type is observed in the fourth and fifth grades (Prague School Ethnography Group, 2005).

The second category includes games with an element of alea, where participants leave the results to chance. This category also encompasses games that measure children's intellectual abilities. In the first and second grades, these games are rare because children in this age group may not fully appreciate the role of chance. The third category consists of games of mimicry, where rules are not as significant, and the content, which children

improvise based on their imagination, takes precedence. These games are prominent, especially among younger children in the first and second grades, where they often engage in role-playing various institutions and situations. The last category comprises games ofilinx, which involve elements of dizziness or intoxication. Through this element, children depart from the real world and enter a realm they do not control. These games appear in their purest form only in the first grade, later transforming into attractions such as carousels or roller coasters (Prague School Ethnography Group, 2005).

Further changes in playing games can be observed from different perspectives. In the first grade, an adult still has the opportunity to enter the game as a participant, but in the second grade, this option gradually diminishes, and adults engage in the game only when children need assistance. By the third grade, the teacher's intervention is perceived as a school matter, hindering the natural flow of the game. The element of cooperation and the formation of player collectives undergo changes from initial arbitrary groupings to the creation of stabilized player groups. Children gradually avoid collaboration with certain individuals and prefer forming solid player teams (Prague School Ethnography Group, 2005).

There is an evolution in the approach to game rules. While in the first grade, rules are perceived more as obstacles, and children tend to downplay them, in the fifth grade, we can observe the abuse of rules in favor of the stronger or one's own benefit. At this stage, children gain power over others, who must strictly adhere to the rules (Prague School Ethnography Group, 2005).

The trendiness of playing certain games becomes noticeable only in the fourth grade. While in the first grade, children adopt any games and add them to their portfolio, in the second grade, a dominant game emerges, causing other games to fade into the background. In the third grade, paper games and those with surprising twists become popular, alongside games influenced by television and fashion trends, while games with toys gradually disappear, often ending in their destruction (Prague School Ethnography Group, 2005).

In the fourth grade, some games may face rejection due to their childish nature. Games that imitate cultural offerings of adults, including mimicking television contests or commercial games, come into play. In the fifth grade, gender division emerges as children seek inspiration from games played by older teenagers and actively assert their identity in the world of games (Prague School Ethnography Group, 2005).

In summary, it can be stated that play undergoes a certain transformation in a child's life, and choosing the right game is a very age-specific matter that should be taken into consideration. The selection of the right game should be based on the specific and current preferences of children in a given age group. This is something the teacher should keep in mind. The teacher should choose games for teaching with consideration for the children's age and the group's requirements.

Tan et al. (2018) acknowledge that a child's age influences their preferences regarding game selection. However, they emphasize that age is not the sole determining factor directly affecting the choice of a game. The individuality of the student, particularly their characteristic personality traits and preferred learning style, also significantly influences the perception and experience of a specific game. A more in-depth exploration of the impact of students' personality characteristics on their preference and choice of teaching methods was conducted by a group of authors led by Camorro-Premuzic (2007). Based on the results of their study (questionnaire survey), they concluded that students with similar personality traits tend to prefer the same teaching methods. For instance, a group of students characterized by low volatility and relatively stable emotional and mental aspects tends to consider the inclusion of group work and practical learning as ideal in the classroom. A more specific study was conducted by Lara (2013), who found that personality traits directly influence whether students perceive the incorporation of games into education positively and to what extent.

It is necessary to add, however, that these studies did not target children in the first stage of primary school but rather older students, and this aspect cannot be overlooked. While it is probable that the preferences in game selection may also reflect the individuality of children in the first stage of primary school to a significant extent, in comparison to age, it may not be as prominent a factor (Gruss, 2016).

1.3 Management and Selection of Games

As mentioned before, the choice of games must take into account the current preferences of children, primarily considering their age. Additionally, factors such as the number of children, their language abilities, and skills must be considered, all aligned with the educational goals. Regarding the content of the game, a general rule is that the larger and less organized the group, the simpler and shorter the game should be. Conversely, more complex games can be chosen for smaller groups of players with no doubt about their language abilities (Činčera, 2007).

According to Houška (1993), certain rules should be followed when incorporating games into teaching. The fundamental principle is that the teacher is merely the initiator who suggests the game but does not interfere further during its course. Another crucial point, as emphasized by the author, is that children should never be forced into playing a game; the choice of the game should stem from their initiative. Lastly, the rules should be considered a near necessity, firmly and clearly established to fulfill their purpose.

It is clear, as discussed earlier, that preferences in games change with age. Younger children prefer games with elements of mystery and enjoy solving puzzles. In the case that a child lags behind the linguistic abilities of the group, they will likely prefer group games. On the contrary, older and more linguistically adept children will favor games where they can excel individually. The teacher should be mindful of this and strive to involve everyone in the game, or at least a relatively larger group of children (Vágnerová, 2005).

Regarding the necessity of clear and understandable rules, Pišlová (2008) expresses that establishing rules is one of the most crucial aspects of a game included in the curriculum. The author agrees that the younger the group of children, the simpler the game rules should be. Pišlová recommends verifying whether all children understand the rules after their establishment, preferably by demonstrating, to ensure that even slower and less attentive students can orient themselves correctly. As a final rule, there should be a question asking if all children understood and if they have any unresolved questions about the course of the game. Only in this way can we prevent or minimize disputes within the group during the game. Established rules must be followed throughout the game, and in case of their violation, there should be predetermined sanctions publicly known to ensure children understand them.

Houška (1993, p. 66) also addresses the rules of the game and emphasizes that the simpler the rules of the game are set, or the simpler didactic tools are used during the game, the greater the chance of success for the game. This rule applies especially to younger age groups of students, where it will hold unconditionally.

The conclusion of the game should traditionally be associated with announcing the results. Determining the results should not only be for the students, but the teacher should also evaluate for themselves whether the game has stood up and fulfilled its purpose. Based on the teacher's own evaluation of the effectiveness and functionality of the game, it should be clear from the teacher's conclusions whether there is a need to adjust the rules and course of the game in any way, or whether the game was problem-free and fulfilled its purpose and function with the established rules of the game (Pišlová, 2008, p. 8).

Dvořáková (2011) also expresses her views on teaching methods and the use of games. She argues that in today's field of education, the direct method is highly regarded. This method emphasizes communication between students, both among themselves and with the teacher, with a significant reduction or complete elimination of the use of the native language. The meaning of individual words that come up in discussion is conveyed through games, aided by instructional images or objects, as well as non-verbal means. The teacher should strive to limit the use of the native language only in complex, tense situations, such as conflicts between students, or when explaining the grammar of the target language.

1.4 Place and Organization of Games in Teaching

Games foster positive relationships among students and between students and teachers. As previously mentioned, they stimulate children's motivation and concentration, actively involve them in the teaching process, reduce anxiety and tension related to learning, and create a pleasant learning environment. For these reasons, Petty (1996, p. 196) is convinced that games are an excellent instructional method that can be utilized in every phase of a teaching session. Additionally, the author emphasizes that a significant advantage of incorporating games into education is the desire for communication that games stimulate, particularly crucial in foreign language instruction.

Pišlová (2008, p. 8) believes that games can be utilized at any point during a teaching session since motivation is a desirable element at every moment of instruction. Games can be particularly employed for practice, repetition, and assessment of students' knowledge. If the aim is to enhance the motivational aspect of the game, then a short, entertaining, and cheerful game is chosen, one that arouses interest and a desire for exploration. The entire class or a single player can be involved in such a game, depending on the instructional goals. For practice, the entire class may participate, but if the game is used to assess knowledge covered in previous lessons, then only one student may be prompted to play. It is advisable to play only one round in such cases.

Nelešovská and Spáčilová (2005, p. 175) suggest that the choice of a specific game should align with its organizational placement within the teaching session. For instance, if a game is incorporated at the beginning of the lesson, it serves as introductory motivation and aids the teacher in capturing the students' attention. Suitable games for the beginning of the lesson include icebreaker activities, attention-focusing games, relaxation and stress-relief games, those promoting sensory perception and memory development, as well as

spatial orientation. Throughout the lesson, games involving imagination, creativity, or those fostering group relationships—aimed at personal and social development—can be introduced. As the instructional time diminishes and the end of the lesson approaches, it is preferable to choose relaxation games.

Pišlová (2008, p. 10) expresses her view on the frequency of repeating games, stating that some didactic games are better suited for a one-time use and should not be repeated. The purpose of such games is typically to teach children something new, solve a problem, or help them understand the topic being covered. On the other hand, certain didactic language games can be played repeatedly. These are games designed to reinforce acquired knowledge, activate the student, or provide relaxation for the child. Some games may be so well-liked among students that they can be included in the program more frequently, but it should not exceed once a month. Within this time frame, approximately twenty to forty games can be played. Certain games are characteristic of specific periods in the school year, so the author recommends incorporating such games into traditional activities and playing them regularly once a year, for example, during the Christmas or Easter season.

1.5 Motivation in Games

Motivation is one of the fundamental elements of a successful game. Only with the right motivation does a game have the potential to captivate students, allowing them to acquire as much knowledge and skills as possible. A teacher should dedicate time to the preparation and selection of various activities to engage students, while also focusing on how to motivate them. Motivation should, therefore, not be neglected, as it significantly influences learning outcomes and students' approach to assigned tasks (Stanjurová, 2011).

Motivation is understood by Průcha et al. (2003, p. 127) as a combination of internal and external factors that, in their nature, arouse, activate, and provide energy for all human actions, positively influencing experiences. Additionally, these factors direct behavior and experiences in a particular direction, guiding their course, particularly by influencing the manner and speed of achieving results. They also influence a student's responses to stimuli from the environment and relationships with others and the world.

Pišlová (2008, p. 16) suggests that each game should be preceded by a specific motivational activity, which does not need to be lengthy. Short motivational activities are preferred, as they lead to an enhanced performance by each player. The author mentions that brief motivation can be achieved through the use of pictures, movies, storytelling, etc.

A motivation lasting 2-5 minutes is entirely sufficient. The duration of the motivational activity should be influenced by the length of the subsequent game. For each game, a specific motivation should be chosen to captivate students, break stereotypes, and make the activity interesting. The author adds that motivation can be achieved through both fantasy and reality. Fantasy involves a fictional story, stimulating children's imagination and creativity. Realistic motivation uses real characters, current events in society, or historical facts.

In *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (1991), Jeremy Harmer puts a great emphasis on the importance of motivation in learning English and he argues that “the motivation that students bring to class is the biggest single factor in affecting their success (p. 3). Consequently, he scrutinizes the main influences that play a role in how motivated students are, starting with their reasons to learn the language. In Harmer's view, there is a significant difference between school children who need to learn the language to fulfill school curriculum and other learners who choose to learn the language for a variety of other reasons. While someone who decides to learn a language on their own, no matter their specific reasons, approaches the learning with a certain degree of extrinsic motivation “which is concerned with factors outside the classroom” (Harmer, 1991, p. 3), the school children often depend solely on the motivation provided by the teacher in the classroom.

In “English as a Second Language and English as a Foreign Language” (1965), Marckwardt makes a useful distinction between students who learn English as a second language, meaning those who are being immersed in the language either because it is a language of instruction in their school, a lingua franca in the area where they live, or for other reasons, and students who learn it as a foreign language, referring to those that learn English solely as a school subject and are not immersed in it in other scenarios (p. 4). It is clear that people who need to learn a language in order to function in their immediate surroundings will have a much higher degree of extrinsic motivation than those who need it only to fulfil school criteria and get a grade.

Because this thesis focuses on helping *school children* in Czech schools learn English vocabulary, the *intrinsic motivation* “which is concerned with what takes place inside the classroom” (Harmer, 1991, p. 3) will be the main area of focus throughout these pages. As Harmer (1991) suggests, “[m]any students bring no extrinsic motivation to the classroom. They may even have negative feelings about language learning. For them what happens in the classroom will be of vital importance in determining their attitude to the language, and in supplying motivation” (p. 4). Because teachers cannot influence how

much extrinsic motivation students bring to class, their task is to provide as much intrinsic motivation as possible in order to stimulate the students that lack the inner drive to learn English.

With regard to raising intrinsic motivation, Harmer (1991) mentions four main factors that affect it: firstly, the *physical conditions* in the classroom, including the amount of light, space and air, play a significant role in influencing the mental and emotional state of students; secondly, the teaching *method*, especially how interesting and effective it is, is a vital factor; thirdly, *the teacher* with his or her qualities and personality can have a significant effect on how motivated students are; and finally, *success*, failure and appropriate level of challenge are notable determinants of motivation (pp. 5-7). Out of these four, only two will be of crucial importance in the scope of this thesis; because the topic of the thesis is the use of modern board games in English language teaching and using board games is essentially a method of teaching, *the method* will get the highest degree of focus. And since using board games helps the teacher to get the level of challenge right, as well as the ratio of success and failure, the factor of *success* will also be important here.

As mentioned earlier, the research group of this study will consist of students of seventh grade in the Czech school system, meaning children that are approximately 12 or 13 years old. These students have just crossed the indefinite boundary between childhood and adolescence, and they therefore may be described as “early adolescents” (Eccles, 1999, p. 30). Harmer (1991) describes adolescents as “brittle” (p. 7) and he emphasizes the rising importance of peer approval (p. 8). With regards to motivation, Harmer stresses that “[a]t this age, getting the level of challenge right is vital. Where this level is too low the students may simply 'switch off': where it is too high, they may become discouraged and demotivated . . . More than anything else they have to be involved in the task and eager to accomplish it” (p. 8). Therefore, the use of board games in English language teaching may be exceptionally suitable for this age group, exactly because early adolescents need peer approval and the right level of difficulty and immersion.

Using the well-known board game *Monopoly*, Wei et al. tested 120 students, trying to discover whether the competitive gaming method will help reduce their anxiety about learning English, become more immersed in the learning process, and raise the effectiveness of the acquisition of vocabulary (p. 146). The authors worked on the premise that competitive board games “can significantly improve a competitive environment and state of immersion” (p. 155) which in turn increases the effectiveness of the lesson. Their

main focus was on what is called “flow theory” which explains that when students are faced with daunting and discouraging amounts of tasks, they can experience pressure and anxiety, but with appropriate setting and method, they can enter a state of flow which will keep them interested and concentrated. (p. 146). The goal of Wei et al. was to help students learn vocabulary through flow and immersion, and their findings confirmed that board games can be used in order for the lesson to become more immersive, and consequently effective (p. 155-156).

The results of Wei et al. uncovered important areas of potential in regard to the use of board games in the English language teaching. Their findings suggest that: a) board games have a potential to reduce students' anxiety about learning a language; b) board games help provide more immersive learning experience which keeps students concentrated, focused and interested; c) board games can raise the overall effectiveness of the lesson if used right (pp. 155-156). Anxiety is therefore reduced, and immersion increased. And since students are kept interested and focused, the board game helps prevent boredom or negative emotional state from hindering their educational progress.

The internal motivation of an individual is their current disposition towards a specific behavior. Some authors argue that if a teacher can internally motivate students to learn, then the hardest part is already done. The rest will follow naturally, as the child will want to learn on their own. Building upon interview results with students, Spiegeleirová (2021) presents another factor that can contribute to the development of internal motivation for learning. This factor involves the child perceiving and experiencing the effects of learning as a result of playing educational games. When the effects of learning are perceived positively and the child is convinced of the benefits of the game in the development of a foreign language, they unquestionably adopt a positive attitude towards the entire learning process. The work becomes enjoyable for them, and their internal motivation becomes stronger. The child wants to play the game on their own because they are convinced of its benefits in the realm of foreign language grammar.

However, the author specifically mentions, based on the results of interviews conducted with children prior to the start of the game, that children have varying expectations regarding their subsequent gameplay. Some are looking forward to it and are more motivated, while others are less so. Interviews regarding the perception of learning vocabulary and grammar while playing games were also conducted after playing the respective games. Within three groups of children, each tasked with playing a different game, there was a clear difference in feelings and the strength of internal motivation for further gameplay (Spiegeleirová, 2021).

Children felt either strongly motivated if they were convinced that the game was beneficial and expanded their vocabulary or less internally motivated if, after finishing the game, they believed that their vocabulary had not expanded much as a result of playing. These differences were significant and observable within the groups. Thus, we can say that the choice of game also has a significant impact on internal motivation. If a game is chosen that encourages positive feelings about learning in children and they are convinced that their vocabulary has been enriched or their grammar has improved, this will also enhance their internal motivation. However, if a game is too simple and children don't learn much from it, their level of motivation will be lower (Spiegeleirová, 2021).

1.6 Evaluation of Games

Evaluation of the game is one of the fundamental elements of any educational game. The final assessment of the game should take place after all players have completed the game and should not be omitted. Throughout the game, ongoing assessments can be conducted. Positive or penalty points are most commonly used for assessing both the progress of the game and the final evaluation. However, the allocation of these points should not be excessive, especially when assigning penalty points, as it may demotivate children by highlighting their mistakes and shortcomings without adequately praising their effort and success. Therefore, it is advisable to use more positive, affirmative points than negative ones (Pišlová, 2008, p. 15).

According to Pišlová, children respond very positively to evaluation methods where they play for something tangible. The advantage for the teacher in this specific evaluation is that they don't have to constantly add and subtract points. An example could be the allocation and deduction of specific objects, such as beads, tokens, etc. – almost anything can be used. This method of evaluation is very clear and provides players with control over the game. Individual exercises can thus come together to form a relatively exciting and appealing game. For instance, players can collect stamps of trees to assemble an entire forest, or gradually color in sections of pictures, and so on.

Recommendations for the assessment of didactic games, or active learning methods, are provided by Sitná (2009, p. 62). She suggests that teachers should evaluate the game continuously and frequently praise the children. The assessment should always be constructive and positive to motivate children for further work. It should also encompass various aspects of the student's performance, such as knowledge and skills, communication during the game, teamwork, positive group atmosphere, etc. Multiple

assessment techniques should be utilized to maintain children's attention and keep it attractive – methods like tables, drawings, points, etc., can be employed. Occasionally, negative assessment may be used, but this type of evaluation should be handled very cautiously.

2 CODENAMES GAME

Codenames (originally Krycí jména) is a Czech game designed by Vladislav (Vlaada) Chvátíl. It was published in 2015 by Czech Games Edition and has since gained wide popularity and positive reviews worldwide, earning various awards and the title of "Game of the Year" at several board game competitions (Czech Games Edition).

Because Codenames is a game centered around words, it is absolutely essential to know the meaning of every word on the table. And therein lies its potential for learning. Although the game was not designed as a tool for language learning, its potential for expanding vocabulary is quite evident. It is simply impossible to play the game if each player does not know the meaning of all the words they are playing with. They must therefore learn all unfamiliar words before the round begins. They then interact with these words throughout the round, creating associations and considering how to connect them with other words in the game. Therefore, students not only remember words; they are immersed in the game and are compelled to actively use the words they are learning.

This chapter will delve into the detailed utilization of educational games, specifically Codenames – a card game. First, the rules of the game will be outlined, followed by an explanation of the initial introduction of educational games into school instruction. The subsequent chapter will summarize and describe the advantages and activation elements of the game Codenames, and finally, the chapter will specify the significant impact this game can have on students' learning of new vocabulary.

2.1 Game Rules

Here is a brief overview of the rules of the game Codenames, adapted from the rules written by Vlaada Chvátíl in 2015: The game is primarily based on word association and teamwork. A group of at least four people divides into two teams, and each team selects one person to be their "spymaster." Twenty-five cards with words, or "codenames," are placed on the table, visible to everyone, but the spymasters see a code telling them which team each card belongs to (8-9 cards, depending on which team starts), which cards do not belong to any team (7 cards, also called "innocent bystanders"), and one card corresponding to the dangerous "assassin."

The objective of both spymasters is to give their teams single-word clues that will help them uncover all the cards belonging to their team. They must also avoid the cards of the opposing team and the assassin, which would immediately end the game. In practice,

one round may look like this: The blue spymaster needs to connect the words "television," "gorilla," "Mexico," "laser," "radio," "refrigerator," "Paris," and "teacher." To successfully uncover the secret, the blue spymaster must find a word that is associated with as many words on the list as possible. Initially, they choose the word "electronics" to connect "television," "radio," and "refrigerator," but then change their mind because the word "phone" is on the table, belonging to the red team. Finally, the spymaster selects "travel" as the key word, and the team correctly guesses "Paris" and "Mexico."

2.2 Incorporation of the Game into Teaching

Educational games are gradually being incorporated into school lessons nowadays, not only for the youngest children. The beginnings of using games in schools date back to the 17th century when Comenius' motto "School through play" changed teaching methodologies and approaches to learning. This led to the dramatization of education. In the 20th century, educational games gradually began to appear in schools, mainly among younger students, where they helped with language learning as alternative methods. Today, educational games are used across all age groups of students in schools, serving as motivational tools, helping to convey new material, making the material being studied more attractive to students, and last but not least, they also have a positive effect on practicing previously covered material.

2.3 Advantages and Activation Elements of the Codenames Game

Spiegeleirová (2021) emphasizes that one of the undeniable advantages of using educational games in teaching is their entertainment factor. According to a questionnaire survey conducted by the author of the study after playing the relevant games, more than half of the children enjoyed the game and would like to use it in class again. Only one student out of 18 subjects surveyed did not circle the answer on the questionnaire that they liked the game. The author explains this by suggesting that dislike of the game may be associated with factors such as misunderstanding the rules, etc. In the questionnaire, children especially highlighted the fun the game provided for them. Fun during the game Codenames is certainly not lacking, especially when played in a larger group of children, where more players guess on the team and have to agree on the chosen word. Therefore, the factor of fun must be considered as one of the positive activation elements of the Codenames game.

Another advantage of using games in teaching is the increase in students' motivation towards the entire learning process. As stated by Sharan and Shaulov (1990),

increased motivation is associated, among other factors, with the enjoyment children experience during games. Higher enjoyment leads to higher motivation, which is important when evaluating the effectiveness of learning. The authors argue that for games to be enjoyable and thus highly motivating for children, they must also engage the child's intellect and allow them to apply the results of their learning.

Nadziroh (2010) also addressed the motivation of students in learning English, focusing on the use of flashcards in vocabulary acquisition. Fourth-grade students were examined, and a pretest and posttest were conducted concurrently with the author's observational techniques. The results indicate that the use of gaming techniques with flashcards can increase students' interest in studying English – thus, card games contribute to an increase in motivation among students.

Fotini and Makrina (2017) aimed to explore the connection between increased motivation and the use of board games in their research, which involved observing eight young children aged six. The children were divided into two groups: experimental and control. Children in the control group practiced their vocabulary using traditional methods, such as textbooks and worksheets. In contrast, children in the experimental group used board games to practice their vocabulary. In addition to pretests and posttests, semi-structured interviews were primarily used to clarify the extent of students' motivation for vocabulary learning. From the students' responses, the authors conclude and argue that board games are a useful and practical tool for stimulating the motivation of young students in vocabulary learning. According to the authors, children are much more active in subsequent learning sessions after playing board games. They eagerly come to the classroom, are full of joy, engage in interactions, collaborate with each other, and engage in healthy competition.

In their study, Chotimah (2021) aimed to determine whether the specific use of gaming cards influences the motivation of students learning new vocabulary. The author conducted a qualitative study over six months involving 32 seventh-grade students. The research method utilized questionnaires distributed to the students for processing. The aim of the research was to ascertain whether the use of cards has a motivational aspect. Based on the results of the questionnaire survey, the author concludes that the use of cards in classroom instruction is motivating for students. Games utilizing cards can therefore stimulate motivation in children, with their advantage being a motivational element.

Yunus et al. (2010), focusing on the comprehensive impact of playing board games, argue that this modern educational strategy creates a fun and relaxed atmosphere in the

classroom. Board games are an intriguing novelty for children, significantly different from regular instructional hours, and provide them with a pleasant change. Children experience increased attention and motivation. Thanks to the relaxed atmosphere, students' anxiety about instructional hours is also reduced. However, the most crucial aspect, according to the author, is that the use of board games in instruction enhances students' academic performance.

According to Spiegeleirová (2021), another positive factor of incorporating board games into teaching is cooperative learning. The author states that cooperative learning was one of the main topics of interviews with students in the experimental group, where children mentioned teamwork, mutual explanation practices, and the competitive element of the game. According to the author's conclusions, all of these factors motivated the children to perform better than they typically would using conventional teaching methods.

The game Codenames engages children's brains and imagination, presenting an optimal challenge that stimulates children and contributes to higher motivation. Additionally, it involves the use of cards, which, as mentioned in the studies, are a significant motivational factor. Another positive aspect is that it provides the teacher with the right level of challenge. Therefore, Codenames serve as a means to increase student motivation, help improve the quality of the learning process, and allow children to take away much more knowledge that they have retained from the lesson compared to conventional teaching methods.

One advantage of the game Codenames is that winning or losing is not entirely dependent on knowledge of English but rather on teamwork and associative skills. Therefore, losing a round may cause anxiety about failure in the game, but this failure is not directly linked to knowledge of English vocabulary, as vocabulary can be discussed and learned in advance.

Spiegeleirová (2021), in addition to the previously mentioned benefits of incorporating board games into teaching, highlights the opportunity for children to immerse themselves in the fictional world of the game. Based on questionnaire surveys and interviews with children who had the opportunity to play the game "Forbidden Island," the author concludes that children enjoy fictional realities and imaginations that they can develop and build during the game. According to the author, the fictional aspects of games have a positive impact on players' experience of the game. Furthermore, in the case of fictional games, children can practice English in a unique context.

2.4 Codenames in English Teaching

Many studies have focused on the application and utilization of gaming cards in foreign language teaching. For example, Firdausah (2022) examined whether the use of gaming cards in English vocabulary teaching would lead students to acquire more knowledge and remember more foreign words due to the cards. The data for qualitative analysis were collected from 25 students in the 11th grade of MA Islamiyah Candi, who, according to the author, had difficulty memorizing vocabulary using conventional teaching methods. The method used to evaluate the results of using gaming cards was the average score obtained by students in assessing the acquired vocabulary after playing the game. The final data evaluation indicates that the involvement of gaming cards in teaching significantly enhances students' ability to acquire new vocabulary. The group of students whose teaching involved cards had significantly better final scores compared to students whose teaching did not involve cards. Therefore, the results of this study suggest that the use of gaming cards in teaching is undoubtedly advantageous in the learning process as it enhances students' ability to remember new vocabulary, which was initially unfamiliar to them.

Another similar study was conducted by Supriatin and Rizkililah (2018), examining vocabulary teaching using cards, where the authors attempted to analyze the impact of using didactic board games on vocabulary learning. The study involved 42 ninth-grade students from a public high school as observation subjects. The research method used by the author included diagnostic and final tests aimed at determining the reference level of the general vocabulary of the target sample of children before and after using the game. Furthermore, observation throughout the entire process and group discussions were utilized during the study to provide insights into the students' perceptions of the research. From the analysis of the gathered test results, observations, and final discussions, it was found that the use of cards can help students memorize vocabulary, not only in terms of form but also in meaning. Additionally, the authors concluded that using cards in teaching significantly helps engage students in learning, increases motivation, and reduces boredom in English language learning.

A similar study was conducted by Rahmasari (2016), who also investigated the significance of using cards in teaching and the strengths and weaknesses of their utilization in education. The study involved 26 fourth-grade students, and Rahmasari used observation and testing as research methods to assess the impact of incorporating cards into teaching on the average scores of the students. The final results showed that students

achieved significantly better scores when cards were used, with an average score of 8.15, compared to their scores before using cards in teaching, which were only 7.4. Based on these results, the author believes that the strong point of using cards in teaching is the increased effectiveness of learning. Conversely, no weaknesses were found in the educational gaming method involving cards.

The study by Nugroho et al. (2015) also supports the use of cards in teaching. The authors investigated whether using cards has an impact on better memorization of vocabulary by selected 32 students through vocabulary tests and a four-week observation period. The results of the first test, which assessed the vocabulary mastered before the introduction of cards into teaching, showed an average score of 52.65. After the introduction of cards into teaching, a second test was administered, and the results were significantly better, with an average score of 75.83. These results again suggest that using cards helps students expand their vocabulary, which is acquired more quickly and to a greater extent than with traditional teaching methods.

From the mentioned studies, it follows that the advantage of using card games, including the game Codenames, is the enhancement of the ability to memorize new vocabulary. There are indeed many authors who, based on the results of their research, have come to these conclusions. In addition to those already mentioned, we can cite, for example, the study by Febriyanti and Novit (2023), who observed students at public high schools in East Java, and the study by Thorig and Kurniawan-Wiralodra (2021), who focused on elementary school students. The youngest elementary school students were selected as the studied group of children by a group of authors led by Yuliantari et al. (2021).

Some studies also demonstrate that playing board games affects students in their cognitive and affective domains. Students who were exposed to board games during foreign language instruction showed significant improvement in several aspects of language skills, specifically in grammar, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and content (Rohdiana, 2017).

Fithriani (2018) also investigated the impact of board games on students' communication abilities. He found that modified board games like Monopoly, Snakes and Ladders help students develop their speaking skills by engaging them in descriptive text contexts. The author also established that board games improve students' grammar in their speech. This finding is supported by Phuong and Nguyen (2017), who examined the influence of board games on students' grammar in detail and discovered that board games

can significantly motivate students to learn grammar. The authors conclude that the utilization of board games in teaching can lead to improvement in students' grammatical abilities.

There are numerous studies examining whether card games have the potential to improve students' academic performance, and they all lead to the same conclusion – yes, they do. Given the large number of studies, it seems unequivocally demonstrated that the use of games positively influences students' ability to memorize new vocabulary. This is arguably the most important aspect of using games in English language teaching, as the aim of a school lesson is to teach students new knowledge.

It is worth noting that most studies primarily examine the strengthening of receptive vocabulary through card games. The distinction of the game Codenames is that it involves guessing words during gameplay rather than explicitly learning a set vocabulary. There is a certain difference here. I believe that through playing Codenames, vocabulary acquisition for students will be an even more enjoyable method of learning than with traditional card games. However, it will also pose a greater challenge for students, as it involves not just reading or listing words, but providing clear and understandable explanations of words and correctly understanding their meanings.

2.5 Use in Vocabulary Learning

This work operates under the assumption that expanding vocabulary is crucial for learning a new language. Wei et al. (2018), who conducted research on the use of the competitive board game Monopoly in English language teaching to enhance teaching effectiveness (p. 146), consider vocabulary acquisition as the main focus in English language education, stating that "Word collection and comprehension are closely related to overall English proficiency... Vocabulary is therefore a pivotal point in English learning. Those who do not have sufficient vocabulary cannot effectively understand or communicate" (p. 146). However, as important as vocabulary is for understanding and actively using the language, its learning is a demanding experience requiring a lot of repetition and memorization to move from working memory to long-term memory (Wei et al., 2018).

Thornbury (2002, p. 13) argues that vocabulary forms the basis of understanding in foreign language education. Only with the use of the correct and appropriate vocabulary can spoken words become meaningful when strung together. In practice, vocabulary is utilized to convey ideas to the surrounding world, as we assemble words into sentences to convey meaning and sense, as this is the only way to achieve understanding among people.

For this reason, it is in everyone's interest to have the widest possible vocabulary, as this will enable them to express more thoughts and feelings to their surroundings.

Neumanová and Dwyer (2009) define vocabulary as the words and phrases that we need to know because without them, we would not be able to communicate effectively in a foreign language. The authors distinguish between two types of vocabulary: expressive and receptive. Expressive vocabulary comprises words and phrases commonly used in spoken or written discourse. It refers to vocabulary that students understand, pronounce correctly, and actively use. Conversely, receptive vocabulary includes words and phrases that students perceive, know, and understand when listening or reading, but do not use in their own speech.

One of the essential factors for teaching English is, of course, the extent of new vocabulary within one teaching hour. Hendrich (1988) states that in the first year, a student is able to acquire approximately three words per teaching hour. With increasing experience, knowledge, and abilities, this number rises to four, five, but at most seven words per lesson. This applies to the entire educational period in the first stage of elementary school (Hendrich 1988, p. 137).

Traditional vocabulary teaching relies on outdated learning techniques, where students write down new words in their notebooks or consult a dictionary. However, the success of this method is not very substantial. Therefore, modern techniques in the form of didactic games are slowly coming to the forefront as an alternative to the traditional teaching approach.

Given that vocabulary books do not contribute much to students' vocabulary development and may rather evoke dislike, boredom, and forgetfulness, I would like to propose a potential solution to help students build and enrich their vocabulary. I believe that the ideal way to facilitate vocabulary learning is through the use of the game Codenames. In simple terms, it involves expanding vocabulary through cards.

Codenames features cards with nouns accompanied by interesting pictures or information, which motivate students to learn and grasp the meanings of these words. It encourages them to describe objects along with their characteristics using their own imagination to convey the essence and meaning of a given word to the other player, enabling them to guess it quickly and effortlessly. This aspect is excellent for vocabulary acquisition, as without vocabulary, communication is impossible.

As I am convinced of the benefits of the game Codenames in teaching English, I have decided to conduct a study aimed at providing a convincing answer to whether the game Codenames has the potential to positively contribute to the teaching of English vocabulary to elementary school children.

PRACTICAL PART

3 Introduction to the Research

Within this chapter, an introduction to the fundamental issues of the targeted research will take place. The main hypotheses, as well as primary and secondary objectives, will be discussed. Furthermore, the research sample, i.e., the target group and the entire research, will be characterized.

3.1 Hypotheses and Research Questions

Hypothesis:

- I. The utilization of board games in English language teaching is a more attractive learning method for students.
- II. II. By using the game Codenames, children are able to learn new vocabulary more effectively.

Research questions:

- I. Does the use of modern board games support the teaching of English vocabulary?
- II. II. Does practicing vocabulary through board games improve students' ability to memorize new vocabulary?

Goals:

The main goal of the research is to determine whether children can effectively learn new vocabulary, initially unfamiliar to them, through board games, specifically the game Codenames.

The first sub-goal is to determine whether the use of modern board games supports the teaching of English vocabulary.

The second sub-goal is to determine whether practicing vocabulary through board games improves students' ability to memorize new vocabulary.

3.2 Research Group, Participants in the Study

In this subchapter, the school where the research will take place will be characterized. Furthermore, the participants in the study, i.e., the research group, will be characterized.

3.2.1 Characteristics of the Research School

First, let's start with the history and basic information about the school... The municipality of Město Albrechtice is situated on the Czech-Polish border in the foothills of the Nízký Jeseník mountain range. It is part of the Bruntál district. The first mentions of the town date back to the year 1377. Since the introduction of compulsory school attendance in the 18th century, there has been a succession of buildings designated for educational purposes.

During the First Republic period, children of the Czech minority attended a two-class elementary school (today's upholstery workshop). The municipal school was located in the town of Krnov, which is 14 kilometers away. The German population built the school building between 1927 and 1929, and after several reconstructions, it still serves children to this day. With an increasing population after 1945 and the obligation for children to attend school, demands for school facilities grew. A new school pavilion was built in 1985-1986, followed by an extensive sports area in 1995-1996.

The school building served as a military hospital for Germans during the period of World War II. On September 3, 1945, 86 students began their studies here. The number of children from the municipality and its local areas increased. Today, the primary school is attended by 377 students in 18 classes. The modern school facility offers opportunities not only for quality education (computer classroom, specialized classrooms for physics, chemistry, biology, geography, music education, foreign languages, community center) but also for extracurricular activities in the afternoons and weekends. The school building also houses 4 sections of the school club, the Jaroslav Hrubý Art Workshop, and the school kitchen with a dining hall.

Today, the school serves as a zone for surrounding villages. Therefore, not only children from Město Albrechtice attend the school but also commuting children from neighboring villages. The educational work of the school is based on the Basic School program (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, registration number 16 847/96 – 2). The school aims to develop the personality of the student, provide them with the foundations of modern general education, educate them about a healthy lifestyle, and instill a sense of environmental protection.

This school was intentionally chosen for the research. The main reason for selecting the school is that I have been working here as an English teacher for many years. I believe that this fact will greatly benefit and support my research. As a result, I will be able to apply research techniques to students whom I know well, am familiar with their academic

history, and have the opportunity to observe them from a long-term perspective while teaching English. In my opinion, this is one of the very beneficial factors of the research, as I will be able to compare the extent and manner in which students' ability to memorize new English vocabulary changes when using the Codenames game.

3.2.2 Characteristics of the Research Groups

The participants in the research were selected from the aforementioned primary school, namely the Elementary School of Město Albrechtice. Only children from the 8th grade, aged between 13 and 14, will be involved in the research.

The research class consists of 24 students who will be divided into two groups: Group A, comprising 12 children, and Group B, also consisting of 12 children. When dividing the children into groups, I will consider their learning abilities, achieved level of English proficiency, and their previous academic achievements in English, especially their report cards from the previous school year. These pieces of information will be used to ensure the most balanced distribution of children so that both groups have, on average, the same level of proficiency in the English language.

Roughly 10 out of the total 24 students regularly play computer games in English, so it can be said that these students are ahead in English compared to others. For this reason, half of them will be placed in Group A and the other half will be placed in Group B to ensure that these facts do not distort the research. This would happen if all these linguistically gifted children were placed in one of the groups.

In terms of gender representation, out of the total of 24 students, there are only 3 girls. Therefore, the research will primarily focus on boys. Gender will not be taken into account. Despite this fact, not all girls will be placed in one group; rather, the distribution will ensure that two girls will be in one group, and one girl will be in the other group with boys.

Now let's move on to the categorization of students based on their English language results in the previous year of study. This is the main criterion for dividing the group into two parts to ensure they are as balanced as possible. An additional criterion for division is my perception of individual students, their ability to orient themselves, their ability to learn new things, communication during lessons, and their overall performance in English class. I am able to apply these additional criteria because I have been teaching the students for a long time and have formed a certain impression of each of them. I will use these additional criteria to divide the group into two balanced groups.

Final evaluation of 7th grade students (2022-2023)		
	A (Gender)*	B (Gender)*
1	2 (G)	2 (B)
2	1 (B)	1 (B)
3	1 (B)	2 (B)
4	1 (B)	2 (B)
5	2 (B)	1 (B)
6	1 (B)	1 (B)
7	3 (B)	1 (B)
8	1 (G)	3 (B)
9	1 (B)	1 (G)
10	3 (B)	1 (B)
11	1 (B)	3 (B)
12	2 (B)	2 (B)
Average grade	1,58	1,66

* "G" is used to denote girls, "B" is used to denote boys.

3.3 Research plan

Gavora (2000) states that there are three models according to which experimental research can be conducted. For the purposes of this thesis, the model utilizing pretest and posttest will be used according to his categorization. This experimental module is recommended by the author for cases where it is important to determine the answers to research questions before and after the experiment's application. This plan will look as follows:

	Pretest	Task	Posttest
Group A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Group B	Yes	Yes	Yes

1. Questionnaire

In order to apply the findings from the questionnaire survey and collect relevant results from it, it is necessary to first determine the level of proficiency of individual students in the new vocabulary. Therefore, they will be offered an initial questionnaire to undergo.

2. Creating a lesson plan using traditional teaching methods

It will be necessary to create a lesson plan for the control group, which will learn vocabulary using conventional teaching techniques, i.e., according to traditional teaching methods.

3. Creating a lesson plan utilizing the board game Codenames

Furthermore, it will be necessary to create a teaching plan centered around the use of the game Codenames. This entails how we will incorporate this game into the teaching, how long the children will play it, etc.

4. Implementation of the post-test

After the completed lesson, the children will undergo another questionnaire survey, which will provide us with results for the evaluation of the entire research.

5. Observation

Throughout the entire experiment, I will be utilizing the observation method, which will allow me to particularly obtain data about students' motivation to learn.

6. The interview

At the end, a short interview will be conducted with the children, which will shed light on the extent to which students understand vocabulary. It will help us understand whether students find vocabulary teaching meaningful and easily understandable. Within the experimental group, an evaluation of students' subjective perspectives on the meaningfulness of using the game Codenames for learning new vocabulary will take place.

3.4 Characteristics of Research Methods

For the purposes of processing my thesis, I consider the main research method to be the experiment. This experiment is closely related to and utilizes the method of questionnaire survey, as well as observational techniques and, last but not least, the method of interview. All the methods used will be further characterized in the following subchapters, in the sequence in which they will be utilized during the experiment.

3.4.1 Introductory Questionnaire

The introductory questionnaire was used before the start of the experiment, i.e., before the selected lesson from the textbook began to be discussed, which was divided into three teaching hours. The introductory questionnaire served as a pretest, and its purpose was to determine the children's level of vocabulary related to the lesson selected from the Project Student's Book by Tom Hutchinson – specifically, the third part, the third lesson titled

"Times and places." From this textbook lesson, nouns were selected from chapter 3B titled "dangerous situation."

The selected vocabulary, or rather, nouns that the children were supposed to learn in this lesson, were gathered into the introductory questionnaire. On the left side were their Czech names, and the children were supposed to fill in their English equivalents on the right side of the test. The words from the selected lesson were scrambled so that they didn't follow alphabetical order. I was concerned that if the vocabulary were arranged alphabetically, the children might make connections, and it could lead to some bias in the questionnaire. Thirty new words from the above-described lesson 3B were used. The introductory questionnaire in the form of a pretest looked as follows:

Tabulka 1 Displaying the pretest - introductory questionnaire

prasklina, puklina	
přehrada	
katastrofa	
konec	
všichni	
povodeň	
mimořádná událost	
Indonésie	
pořádek	
výkřik	
situace	
ulice	
plyšový medvídek	
lavina	
zemětřesení	
výbuch	
lesní požár	
hurikán	
tornádo	
výbuch sopky	
nehoda	
zachránce života	
infarkt	
zastánce	

zasnění	
cestovní kancelář	
nezávislost	
potíž	
Kypr	
možnost	

3.4.2 Observation

Throughout the entire experiment, I employed observation techniques. During each part of the lesson, both for the control and experimental groups, I marked on a scale from 1 to 10 how the children appeared to me regarding the various observed factors. This was done so that I could later revisit the results and evaluate them properly, without any distortion in the final conclusions. This method ensured that I wouldn't overlook any important details during the lesson. A value of 1 represented the lowest score, indicating, for example, minimal participation from the children in the lesson. Conversely, a score of 10 was assigned to activities where the children demonstrated maximum effort or when their work was particularly commendable.

I positively evaluated situations where I perceived feedback from the children regarding the task being discussed. Particularly positive situations included instances where the children spontaneously smiled or laughed, expressed joy or satisfaction, were willing to respond to the assigned task, began cooperating either with me or with their classmates, engaged in conversation while expressing their own opinions, etc.

If I found that the feedback from the children was rather negative, it involved directly opposite situations. For example, the children appeared sulky, I noticed boredom, they didn't seem joyful, nor did their reactions indicate any excitement or fulfillment from the assigned task. They were unwilling to cooperate, either with me or with their classmates, they were unwilling to respond to the assigned task or to work on it, they didn't engage in conversation, nor did they feel the need to express themselves further on the topic – in such cases, I made a note of a lower score in my notes for that particular activity.

At the end, I made a note of my overall impression of the lesson and the children. My observation focused on five basic indicators in each phase, particularly assessing willingness to work, thinking, curiosity, interest, and competitiveness. These indicators were evaluated in relation to the children's behavior, as mentioned above. I believe that the

observation method was very valuable for the entire experiment and its evaluation because it provides answers to fundamental questions, especially helping us understand what the students genuinely like and dislike. It also provides valuable information about students' motivation to learn when using specific teaching methods.

3.4.3 Experiment

The main and most essential part of my research, without which the study could not have been conducted, was the actual experiment. I included and conducted it according to Gavor's recommendations (2000). The author states that it is necessary to have two very similar groups for a well-conducted experiment – this was adhered to, as I had Group A consisting of 12 children and Group B, also consisting of 12 children. Furthermore, the author mentions that it is necessary for the groups to work under different conditions during the experiment – this requirement was also fulfilled.

Both groups underwent English language instruction in the form of three teaching lessons during the experiment, focusing on a selected lesson from the Project Student's Book by Tom Hutchinson, specifically section 3B ("dangerous situation"), which was part of the third lesson ("Times and places"). This was the same for both groups; however, the difference lay in how the lesson was delivered and which teaching techniques were used.

In Group A, which was chosen as the experimental group, the teaching and learning of vocabulary from the designated lesson involved using the board game Codenames. In contrast, children in Group B, designated as the control group, were taught using the traditional teaching method, primarily involving reading from the textbook, writing in workbooks, and possibly working in pairs. I consider the experimental part to be the most essential and also the most time-consuming and demanding part of the entire research process because it required significant time investment in terms of preparation and working with the children.

3.4.4 Final Questionnaire

After completing three teaching hours during which one lesson from the aforementioned textbook was covered, the students were given another questionnaire. This questionnaire was similar in nature to the initial questionnaire, but with the difference that the vocabulary was shuffled again to avoid any backward association with the initial questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire was to assess the extent to which the children were able to acquire the new vocabulary.

The same vocabulary as in the pretest was used. Again, Czech expressions were placed on the left side of the table, and the children were required to match them with their English equivalents, which they wrote on the right side of the table. The results of the final questionnaire were compared with those of the initial questionnaire, which helped clarify the specific achievements reached during the teaching lessons. Some children already knew certain words from the selected vocabulary before the start of the experiment. I took this into account when evaluating the final questionnaire, and words that the children already knew were not included in the evaluation or considered as words learned during the lessons. Instead, they were assigned a zero value.

I proceeded individually with each specific child, taking into account what they filled out in the initial questionnaire and in the final questionnaire. I consider the final questionnaire to be a source of relevant information about how many new vocabulary words from the selected chapter of the textbook the children were able to learn during the experimental teaching part. The final questionnaire looked as follows:

Tabulka 2 The format of the final questionnaire

prasklina, puklina	
přehrada	
tornádo	
Zachránce života	
Výbuch sopky	
Plyšové zvířátko	
Kypr	
Indonésie	
pořádek	
zastánce	
infarkt	
možnost	
hurikán	
lavina	
zemětřesení	
výbuch	
ulice	
výkřik	
situace	

infarkt	
nehoda	
lesní požár	
zasnění	
nezávislost	
mimořádná událost	
cestovní kancelář	
konec	
potíž	
povodeň	
katastrofa	

3.4.5 Interview

The interview method was utilized after completing the experimental part of the research and after filling out the final questionnaire. The interview was conducted with each student individually, making it an individual act. This approach was chosen to ensure that the conclusions and responses of individuals were not influenced by the conclusions and responses of the group. Each child, therefore, answered for themselves.

The interview was conducted solely between me and each specific child. It was carried out with all the children who participated in the experiment – including those from the experimental Group A and those from the control Group B. I consider the responses from Group A to be the most beneficial because their answers provide feedback when evaluating the integration of the Codenames game into the teaching process. The responses from Group B, the control group, give us insight into the effectiveness of standard teaching methods. However, more importantly, they provide us with results that we can use to compare with the responses from the experimental Group A.

The interview did not have precisely defined questions; they were asked based on the situation. However, the interview had three basic indicators as guiding principles. These indicators served as guidelines for conducting the interview. The first indicator was to assess the students' knowledge of vocabulary, specifically to what extent they understood the new English vocabulary. The second indicator was to understand what the children thought about the learned vocabulary – whether they found it meaningful and easy to understand. The third task of the interview, limited to the experimental Group A only,

was to determine whether the board game Codenames seemed to them to be an effective means of learning vocabulary and whether learning new words became easier through it.

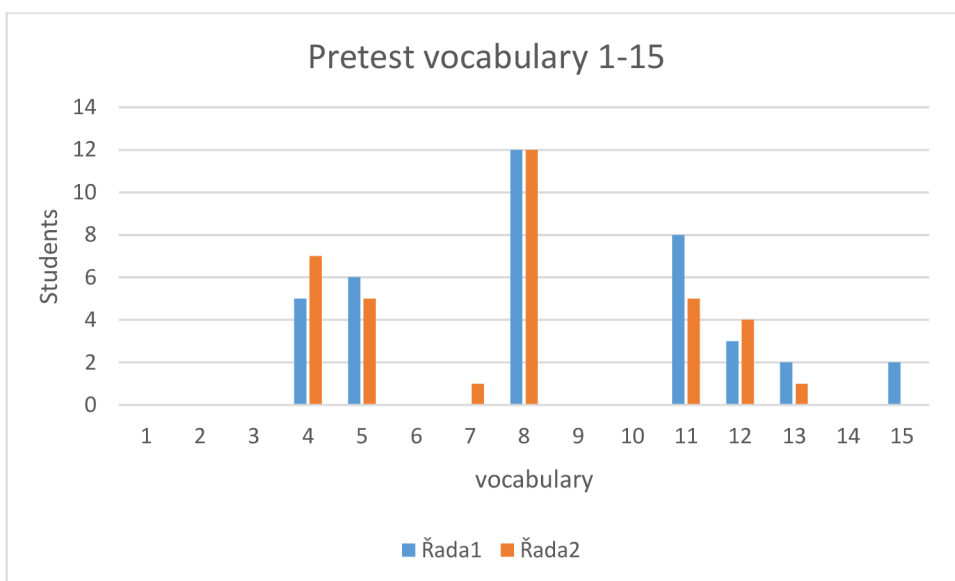
I consider this part important because it reflects the subjective perception of the students regarding the conduct of the lesson in a certain way. Differences in the perception of learning vocabulary in relation to teaching methods during the discussion of a new lesson will be highlighted. Based on the results, we can determine, through student feedback, whether the integration of the Codenames game into the teaching process is beneficial and positively perceived by students or not.

4 Research and Its Parts

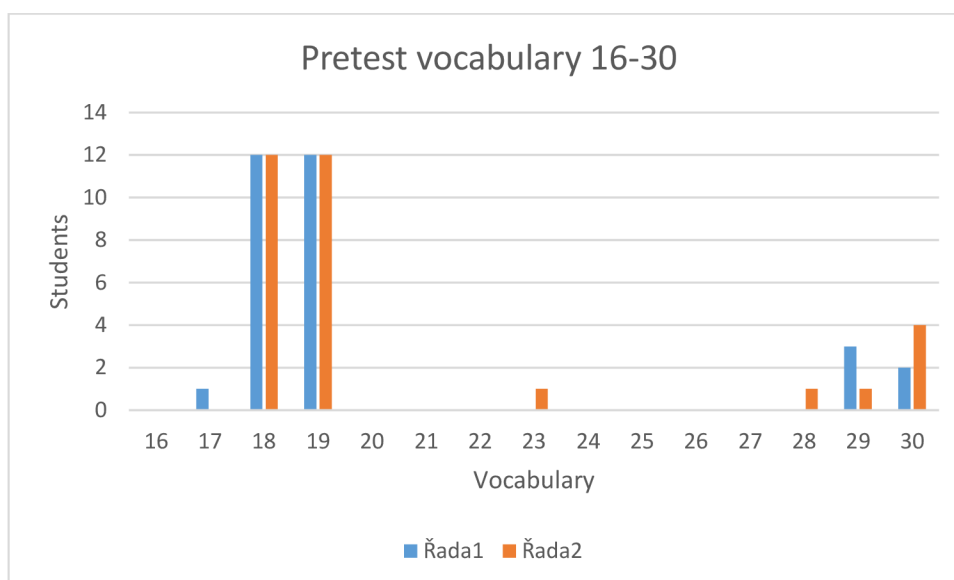
In this chapter, the individual steps of the research experiment will be described in detail, accompanied by separate evaluations of each part of the research.

4.1 Evaluation of the Initial Questionnaire – Pretest

For the evaluation of the initial questionnaire, the values were entered into a table in Excel, with each word assigned a value from 1 to 30 for better visualization in the graph. Subsequently, two graphs were created based on these values, with each graph representing the assessment of 15 words. The first graph evaluated the vocabulary of the first 15 words, while the second graph evaluated the second half of the vocabulary. Both graphs included evaluations from both groups simultaneously, where Series 1 represented the assessment of the experimental group, and Series 2 represented the assessment of the control group. At the time of the initial questionnaire survey, all children from both groups were present at school.



Obrázek 1 Pretest - Vocabulary 1-15



Obrázek 2 Pretest - Vocabulary 16-30

Vocabulary – 1-Crack, 2-Dam, 3-Disaster, 4-End, 5-Everybody, 6-Flood, 7-Incident, 8-Indonesia, 9-Order, 10-Shout, 11-Situation, 12-Street, 13-Teddy bear, 14-Avalanche, 15-Earthquake, 16-Explosion, 17-Forest fire, 18-Hurricane, 19-Tornado, 20-Volcanic eruption, 21-Accident, 22-Lifesaver, 23-Heart attack, 24-Believer, 25-Daydream, 26-Travel agency, 27-Independence, 28-Trouble, 29-Cyprus, 30-Possibility

From the graphs, it is evident that both groups were relatively balanced during the initial testing, indicating that we assembled the groups well to ensure the most relevant results. Neither group deviates significantly from the norm.

Some words were already known to the children or they dared to guess them. These words include "Indonesia," "Hurricane," and "Tornado." These words are similar in both languages, which explains why all the children either knew them or were able to guess them. We will not include these words in our analysis, and they will be assigned a zero value. As for the other words, they were mostly unknown to the children.

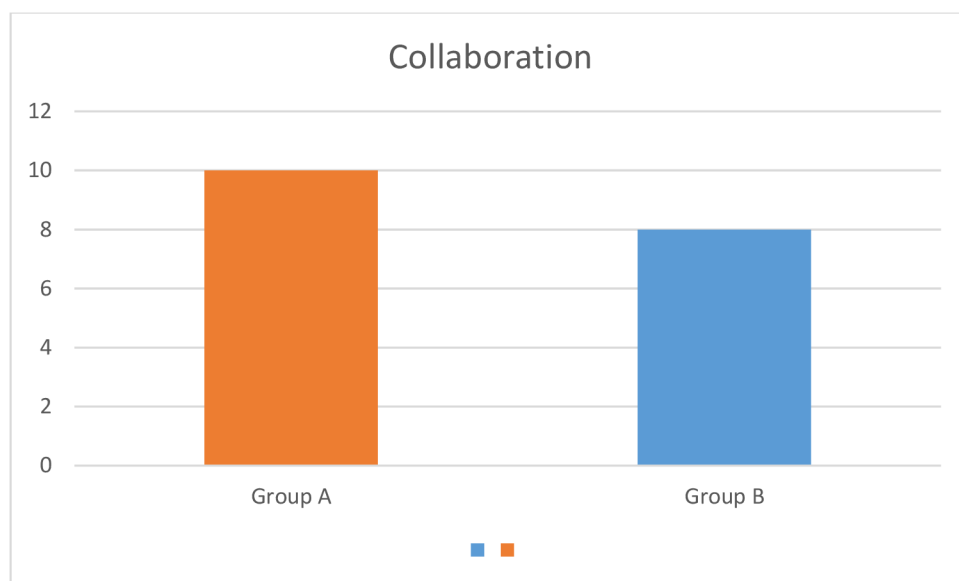
Some words are more familiar to children, or they know them from computer games, so they filled them out correctly in the initial questionnaire. Among the words that some children were able to fill in correctly are: End, Everybody, Incident, Situation, Street, Forest fire, Heart attack, Trouble, Cyprus, and Possibility. However, none of these words were known by all the children to the extent as previously mentioned words.

The words that the children already knew during the initial questionnaire survey will not be counted as part of the newly learned vocabulary, even though it can be assumed that the same number of students will fill them in correctly during the final questionnaire survey. Each word will be assigned a zero value to the extent to which students filled them in correctly during the initial survey.

4.2 Observation Evaluation

During the lesson, I evaluated the following factors on a scale of 1 to 10 in each phase of the teaching process: mutual cooperation, engagement in learning, willingness to work, attention, thinking, curiosity, interest, competitiveness, and enthusiasm. Finally, I added up the values obtained for each factor, divided them by their total number, and thus obtained the average value of each characteristic. I did this for both groups and then created a graph for each observed characteristic, which clearly shows how the groups (control and experimental) differed from each other.

Collaboration



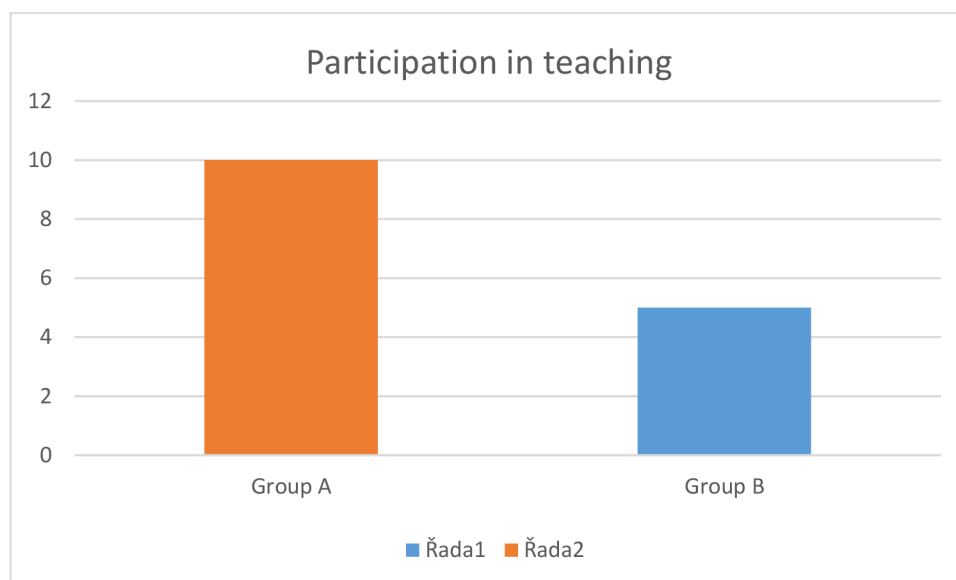
Obrázek 3 Evaluation collaboration

First, mutual cooperation was evaluated. From the graph, it is apparent that in this observed characteristic, the control group lagged only slightly behind the experimental group. Regarding the experimental group, I rated mutual cooperation at the highest possible level in all stages of the lesson because the children collaborated excellently with each other and also cooperated well with me as the teacher. During the creation of cards, the children divided tasks among themselves, and then they created the cards together. After explaining the rules of the game, they helped each other understand and experience the rules. During the game itself, the children also collaborated wonderfully. For this reason, I rated mutual cooperation with a score of 10 in all aspects.

The children in the control group also received relatively high ratings. Their group work was rated at level 10. However, in other parts of the lesson, they did not achieve such high scores. For example, during the listening activity, where I assigned the lowest score

for this factor, and during the subsequent analysis of what the students heard, I only gave a score of 6 because the students were not willing to collaborate with me, did not answer the questions I asked after listening, and did not attempt to consult with each other. In other phases of the lesson, mutual cooperation was rated higher, so this group still achieved a relatively high score.

Participation in teaching

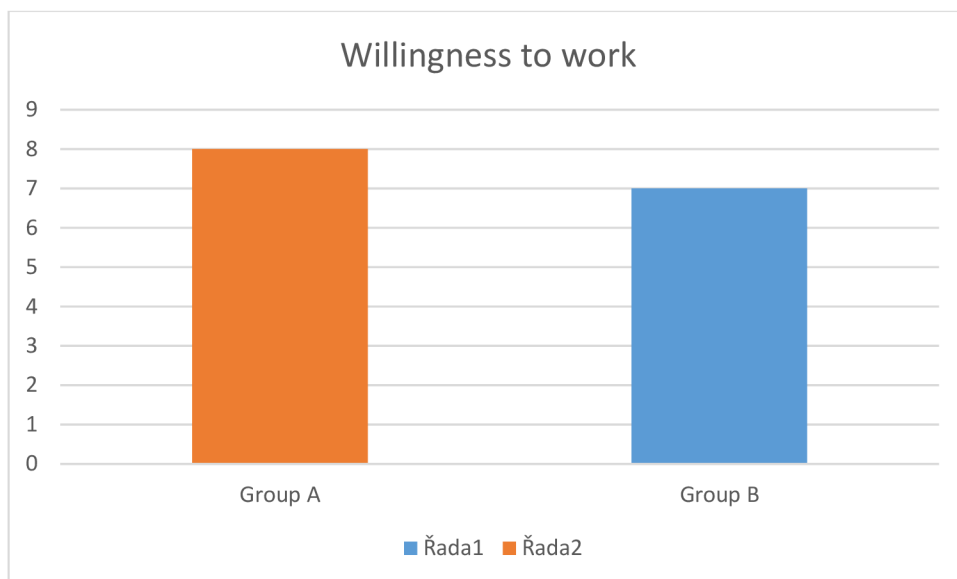


Obrázek 4 Evaluation participation in teaching

Engagement in the lesson was rated an average of 10 in the experimental group. However, in this aspect, the evaluation was not as consistent as it was for mutual cooperation. This was mainly due to some children being hesitant to participate at the beginning when we were preparing the cards for the game. However, after tasks were assigned, they became more engaged and started working. Additionally, at the beginning of the game, there was slight deviation observed in two children, who probably did not fully understand the rules of the game initially, so they initially kept their distance. However, due to excellent group collaboration and clarification of the game rules among classmates, these two children also became involved. Since engagement in the lesson was rated 10 in the remaining phases of the lesson, the overall average also came out to 10.

In the control group, engagement in the lesson was notably weaker. The children did not feel the need to engage in the lesson unless directly addressed by the teacher – myself – and prompted to respond. If I directly addressed them and asked for a response, the children would answer, but they did not actively engage in the lesson on their own initiative in any part of the lesson. For this reason, all phases of the lesson were rated lower.

Willingness to work

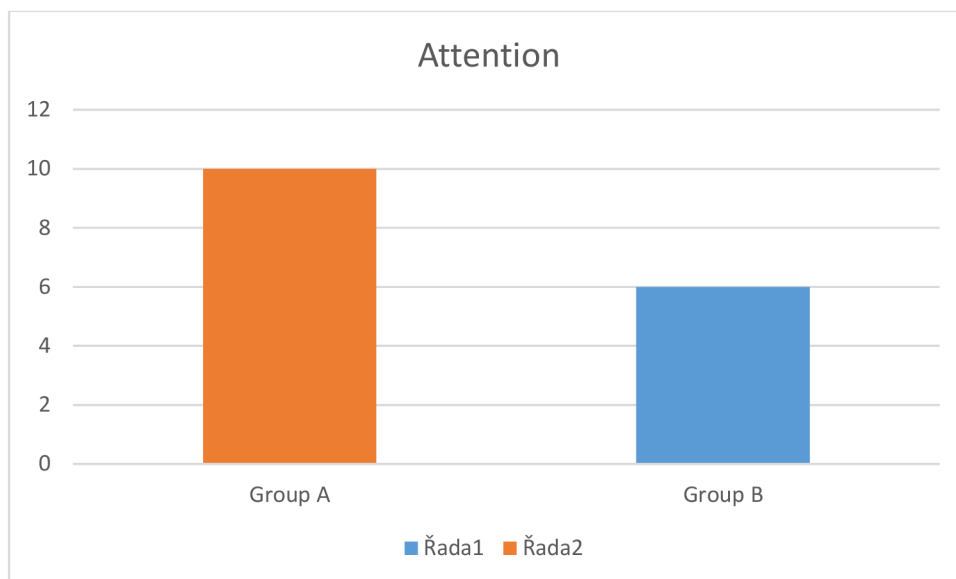


Obrázek 5 Evaluation willingness to work

The willingness to work within the experimental group was rated at the full score, especially during the game phases, when all children were willing to work, showed excitement, and their expressions indicated eagerness to learn new vocabulary. However, in the remaining parts of the lesson, the willingness to cooperate was not very high, especially in situations before starting the game, when the children were supposed to prepare playing cards with new vocabulary. In this part of the lesson, two group members even initially hesitated and tried to avoid work. Therefore, these phases preceding the actual game were rated at a lower level, with an overall average score of 8.

Even in the control group, the children were willing to cooperate. They received lower scores, especially during listening and subsequent analysis, as they were not very inclined to collaborate. However, despite this, a certain group of children was willing to communicate with me. This was mainly the boys, whom I know play computer games frequently and are therefore better in English than other children. For this reason, I believe that the rest of the group did not understand the listening part very well, which caused their reluctance to work during the analysis of the listening section. In other parts of the lesson, the willingness to cooperate was better, but still, I often saw discouraged faces when the children were asked to go to the interactive board or when a question was posed to them. The children sometimes frowned, did not smile, and their demeanor was generally subdued, so I did not give the highest possible rating and always deducted a few points. Overall, this group scored 7.

Attention

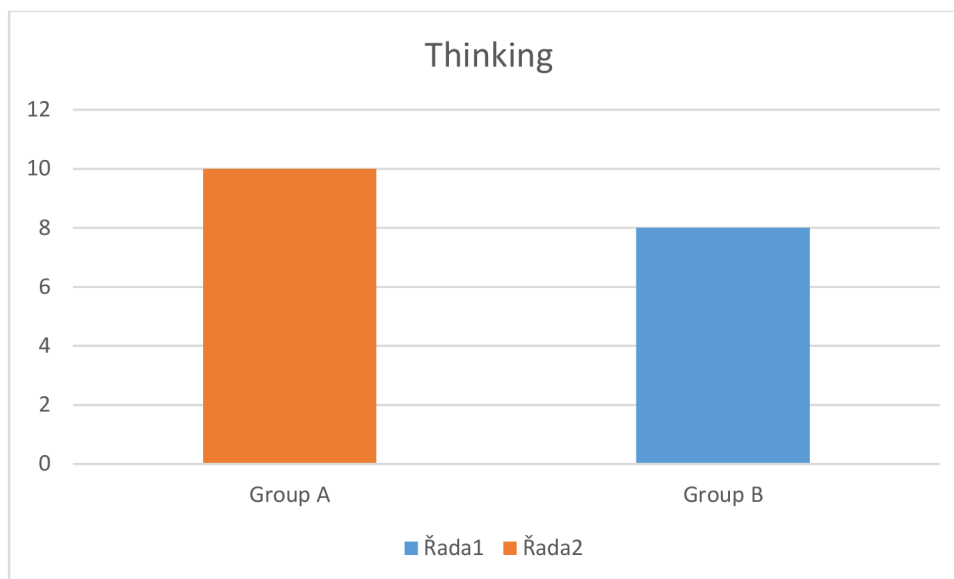


Obrázek 6 Evaluation attention

In the experimental group, attention was rated 10 in almost all stages of the lesson. Lower attention was only observed when the children were making playing cards. In this part, they sometimes engaged in off-topic conversations in Czech, sharing unrelated experiences. However, in all other parts of the lesson, their attention was excellent – during rule explanation and especially during the game itself. After averaging the ratings of individual stages of the lesson, this group again received a rating of 10.

The attention of children in the control group was not very high in any part of the lesson. The highest score was given at the beginning of the lesson when the children shared information about when they had met or encountered a dangerous situation. At that time, most of the children paid attention to what we were saying to each other, but as time passed, their attention waned, and it can be said that the rating showed a decreasing tendency during the lesson. Therefore, the overall score of this group in terms of attention rating was only 6 points.

Thinking

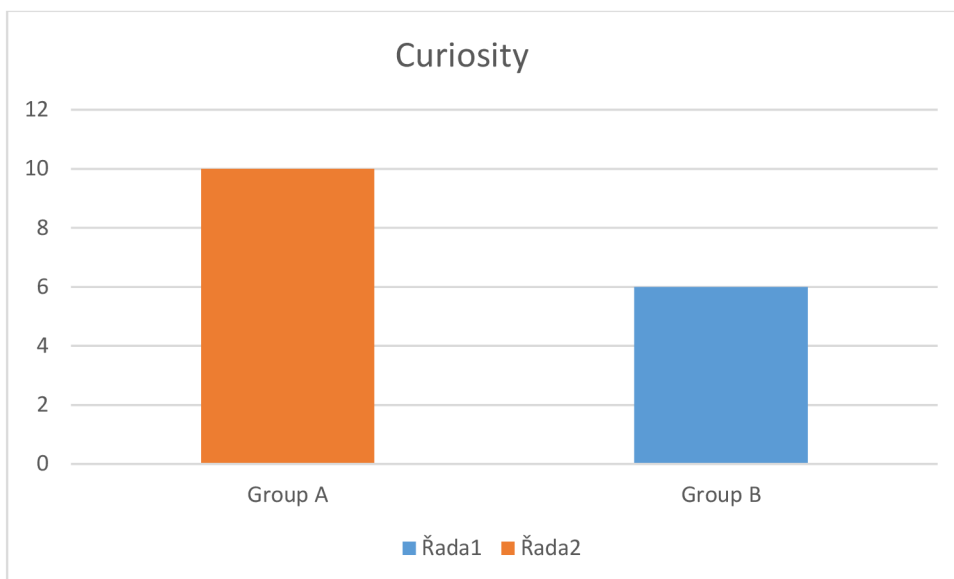


Obrázek 7 Evaluation thinking

As for thinking about tasks given to children, it can be said that within the experimental group, it was really at a high level. The children showed great inventiveness already when making playing cards with vocabulary, where they sorted tasks among themselves and thought them through properly to make the work efficient. They also thought carefully when explaining the rules of the game, asking about certain steps during the game and inventing simulated situations that could occur. During the game, they were then forced to engage their thought processes in order to be successful. In this observed aspect, all the values of the ongoing assessment were therefore at level 10.

In the control group, it was evident that children also think about the assigned tasks, but not all of them do so in every situation. In most cases, children began to think and consider the problem or topic only when I asked them a question. Therefore, the maximum rating was not achieved again, and on average, the children scored 8.

Curiosity

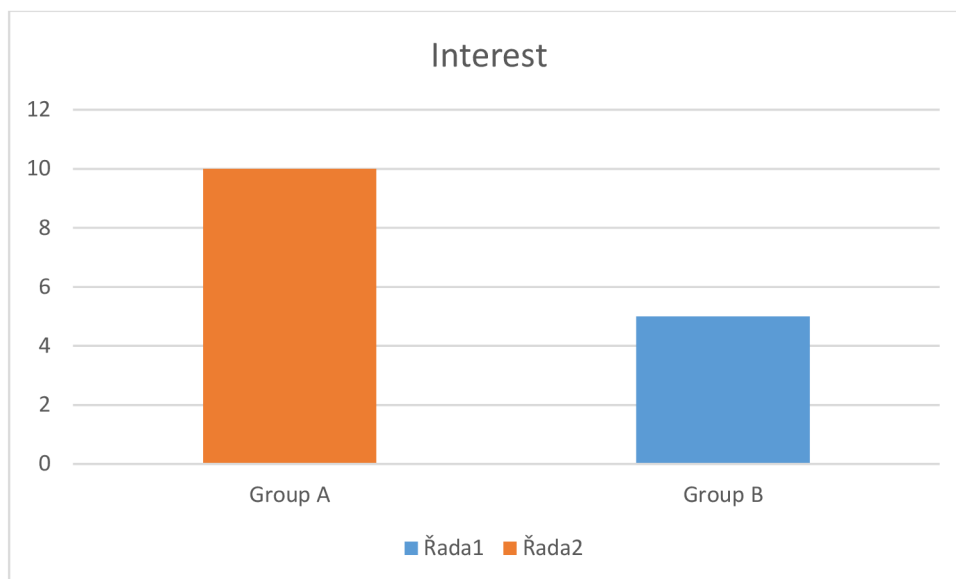


Obrázek 8 Evaluation curiosity

The curiosity of the experimental group increased during the teaching session. When I announced to the children that we would be playing the game Codenames, their curiosity was evident, and they all wanted to know more. The more I explained, the more their curiosity grew. I noticed a decreased value of this factor when I informed the children that we would need to prepare cards for the game. Their curiosity temporarily waned, and it seemed that they were less interested. However, after they prepared the cards, their curiosity was evident again. Overall, I had to rate it with the maximum number of points again.

As for the control group, it can be observed that their curiosity was almost constant throughout all phases of the lesson, albeit not very high. The values within the individual phases of the lesson ranged from 5 to 7 on the scale, with the most frequently used value being 6. Overall, after averaging, I obtained a value of 6. I explain this by the fact that the children knew in advance what would follow, as we fundamentally work similarly or similarly in every lesson. Therefore, the children are rarely surprised, and their curiosity is rather low.

Interest

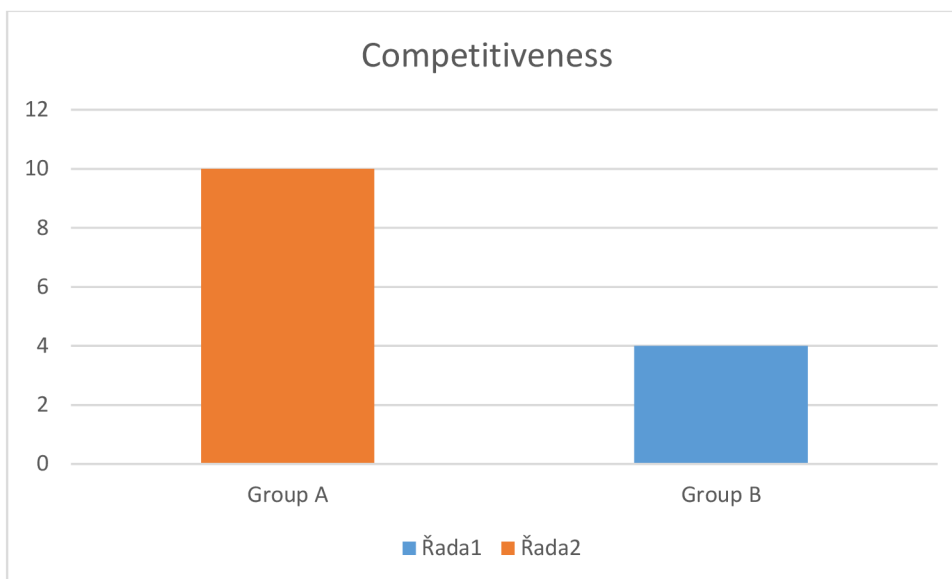


Obrázek 9 Evaluation interest

Interest from the experimental group was high from the beginning. The children enthusiastically absorbed all the information regarding the game. They inquired about certain details and willingly had the specifics explained to them in detail. Therefore, I evaluated the group's interest at a level of 10 in all phases of the teaching process.

In contrast, the children from the control group were rather indifferent towards the teaching. I did not observe significant interest from them in any phase of the lesson. It can be said that they showed some interest in receiving information from their peers when we discussed dangerous situations they had encountered. Occasionally, I also noticed excited conversations among neighboring classmates on the topic. However, for the remainder of the lesson, their interest was sometimes rated as low as 2 points, especially when the children had to fill in certain sections of their workbooks. On average, the interest of this group was therefore around the level of 5.

Competitiveness

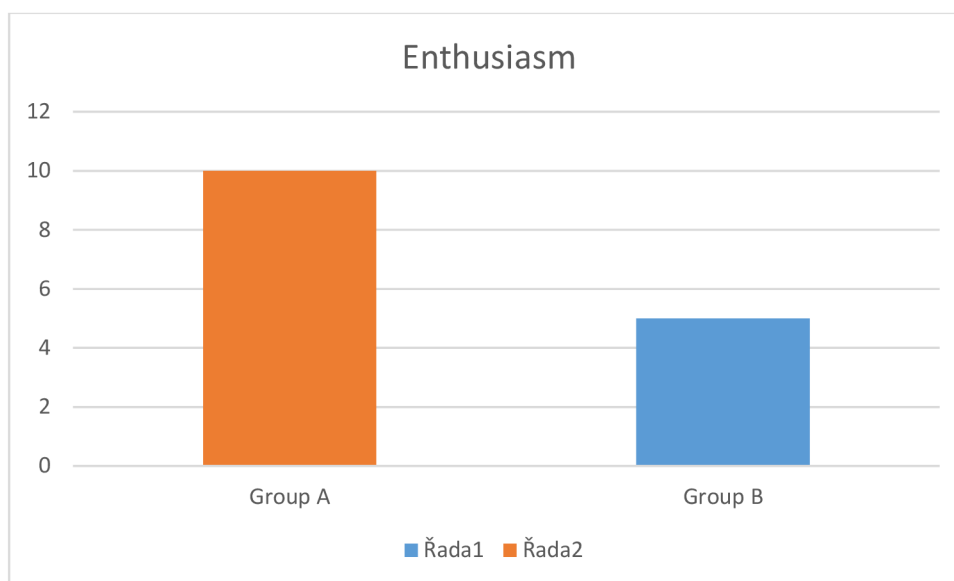


Obrázek 10 Evaluation competitiveness

The competitiveness of the children in the experimental group was indeed very high. They competed to see which group would start playing the game first. Throughout the game, competitiveness remained at its peak, with all groups striving to win. I believe this aspect served as a highly motivational factor, which I would like to highlight. The game Codenames stimulated the children's competitive spirit, thereby enhancing the learning process as the children made a significant effort to learn new words. For this reason, I rated this factor with a score of 10.

However, almost no competitiveness was observed among the students in the control group. The children did not feel the need to compete or prove that they knew new vocabulary better than their classmates. There was no motivational factor during the lesson that would stimulate their competitive spirit. Therefore, this factor was rated an average score of 4.

Enthusiasm



Obrázek 11 Evaluation enthusiasm

In the experimental group, the enthusiasm of the children was evident right from the start when I announced that the lesson would be non-traditional and that we would play the board game Codenames. The children were genuinely pleased that the lesson would not proceed in a stereotypical manner. The only moment of slightly lower enthusiasm was when the children had to make cards, but in other phases of the lesson, the enthusiasm was at level 10. Therefore, the overall evaluation also has a value of 10. I particularly want to highlight the enthusiasm they showed during the game – they were smiling, happy, and content.

The enthusiasm in the control group was comparable to the feelings I typically experience during English lessons. Some children simply enjoy English lessons and show enthusiasm when learning new things. This is especially true for those who excel in English due to the computer games they often play. However, the majority of the class does not show much enthusiasm during school lessons, especially when it comes to traditional, stereotypical teaching styles. For this reason, this factor was rated an average score of 5.

4.3 Evaluation of the Experiment

4.3.1 Experimental group

Lesson plan 1 – using the game Codenames

Lesson time: 45 minutes

Topic: Natural disasters

Aim: To introduce the game, the rules, and the new vocabulary

Students: 8th grade, twelve pupils

Introduction: In the beginning of the lesson the teacher introduced the Topic. She wrote it on the board and asked pupils to come to the board and make a mind map about this topic. In the attached picture you can see what their ideas about this topic were. This took us about 20 minutes. The pupils were very active and excited about the new vocabulary and the interesting part of introducing it by different way.

The rules: The teacher divided the pupils into two groups [6 and 6] players according to their English knowledge so the groups were even. Then she asked pupils to create their own cards with the words from the board. She gave them scissors, white paper, and a marker for it. One team prepared twelve words and the other thirteen. Then she explained the rules of the game. This part again took them about another fifteen minutes.

The game: There was only ten minutes left for the game. But they did not really get the rules, so the teacher had to explain it while playing the game. It was kind of difficult to play it in two teams. First, not all players had a chance to speak and secondly there was not enough time left. They had only eight minutes for this game.

Ending: The teacher decided to end the game by asking pupils to say their opinions about today's lesson. Most of them were positive. Some pupils were unhappy that they could not finish the game and play it to the end.

Reflection: I realized that it took us longer than expected. But it was worth it because the students enjoyed it, had fun, and were excited about the following lesson. While they were playing it for the first time in the big group of six and six players it was not the best decision. So, for the next lesson I decided to split them into four teams where each team will have three and three players. This way will every player have a chance to participate in the game.

Lesson plan 2

Lesson time: 45 minutes

Topic: Natural disasters

Aim: To be able to remember the new vocabulary through the game Codenames

Students: 8th grade, twelve pupils

Introduction: The teacher gave the pupils the opportunity to show what they remember from the previous lesson. They talked about the topic, the rules, and the game. She gave them the pretest from the vocabulary they heard last time. It took them about twenty minutes.

Playing: The pupils had to prepare another twenty-five words for the game so both teams could play the game at the same time. Before they started to play, they repeated the rules and the game started. As you could see from the attached pictures the atmosphere was very positive and competitive. They played about two rounds till the end of the lesson.

Reflection: In my opinion there again was not enough time for the game itself. The pupils loved it. All of them wanted to win. Even the one who normally does not speak much English was trying to do his best. They were confident with the rules and gave me hope that with this kind of approach to teaching the learning will be easier and more comfortable and helpful for them.

Lesson plan 3

Lesson time: 45 minutes

Topic: Natural disasters

Aim: To use the words in real life situation and remember them longer

Students: 8th grade, twelve pupils

Beginning of the lesson: The pupils divided into teams and started to play the game right away. This time they finished three rounds.

Testing: Then the teacher gave them the test from the vocabulary to see how many new words they remember. After that the interview with each of them followed. The teacher asked them what they would do in some kind of natural disaster situation and waited for their response. The answers were interesting sometimes very surprising.

Ending: They were able to talk about this topic without any hesitation. Which was the aim of this lesson. Mission completed. Students learned what they were supposed to and the teacher was proud of them.

4.3.2 Control group

Lesson plan for the group who will be taught by the traditional method. That is the what they usually use. The school is working with Projects teaching books, interactive projects I tools books and other internet sources and web pages (including different worksheets and on-line games for teaching)

First teaching session

Lesson: English

Teaching time: 45 min

Topic: Natural disasters

Aim: To learn new vocabulary, be able to read it, understand the listening and practise past continuous tense

Students: 8th grade, twelve students

Book: Project 3, School book and Workbook

1.	Introduction	6 min	T greets the Ps (Hello students how are you today?) She does the agenda and tells them today's plan		To introduce today's plan
2.	Talking	9 min	T writes A dangerous situation on the board. She asks Ps if they have a personal experience with some kind of danger. She waits for their answers and ideas what a dangerous situation is	White board with a marker	To know their opinion about dangerous situations
3.	Listening	2 min	Ps look through the pictures and listen to the recording.	SB p. 34/1a	To practise listening of new vocabulary
4.	Speaking	5 min	T displays the pictures on the interactive board, covers up the phrases. The Ps come to the board and point at each disaster that she mentions, they say it out loud	Student's Book and interactive board	To be able to say the new vocabulary
5.	Writing	8 min	Ps come to the interactive board and write the disasters under each picture then they fill out the crossword in the WB	Student's Book, WB p. 26/1a	Ps can write the new vocabulary
6.	Reading	8 min	Ps read quietly the interview. T asks the questions about it, so she could see if they understood the given text.	SB p. 34/2	To answer the questions about the given text
7.	Repeating and ending the lesson	7 min	T plays the king of English with the new vocab to see what the Ps remember from today's lesson. Then she prays them for good job.		To check the new vocabulary and evaluate the lesson

Second teaching session

This is the second lesson that the pupils will learn the new vocabulary, practice the grammar, and enjoy learning English by the traditional method.

Lesson: English

Teaching time: 45 min

Topic: Natural disasters

Aim: To practice new vocabulary, Ps will know the rules about past continuous and will be able to use it in sentences

Students: 8th grade, twelve students

Book: Project 3, School book and Workbook

No.	Activity	Time	Task	materials	aim
1.	Introduction	5 min	The T introduces the plan, does the agenda, and asks Ps what words they remember from the last lesson		To introduce today's plan
2.	Writing	5 min	T give Ps the test with the new vocab to see what words they have learned	Prepared sheet with the new vocabulary	To check out how many new words they know
3.	Present continuous	8 min	The T will ask Ps about the basic rules what they remember about present continuous	Blackboard	To summarize the grammar rule
4.	Speaking	10 min	Ps look at the pictures and use their own words what's happening in each one	Student's Book p.35/3	To be able to talk about the pictures
5.	Writing	5 min	T asks Ps to put the pictures in the correct order, then they check it in pairs before the T reveals the correct answers	Student's Book p.35/3	To put the pictures in the correct order
6.	Speaking	3 min	Ps fill out orally the missing words from the WB	WB p. 26/2	To practise the new vocabulary
7.	Writing	5 min	Ps write sentences in past continuous from the prepared words	WB p. 27/4	To practise present continuous
8.	Ending of the lesson	4 min	T asks Ps what they liked about today's lesson		To evaluate today's lesson

Third teaching session

The third lesson plan where we will apply the final vocabulary test from the words that the pupils have learned about the natural disasters.

Lesson: English

Teaching time: 45 minutes

Topic: Natural disasters

Aim: The pupils will know most of the new vocabulary, will be able to understand the video about the natural disasters in their city and will know when and how to use past continuous

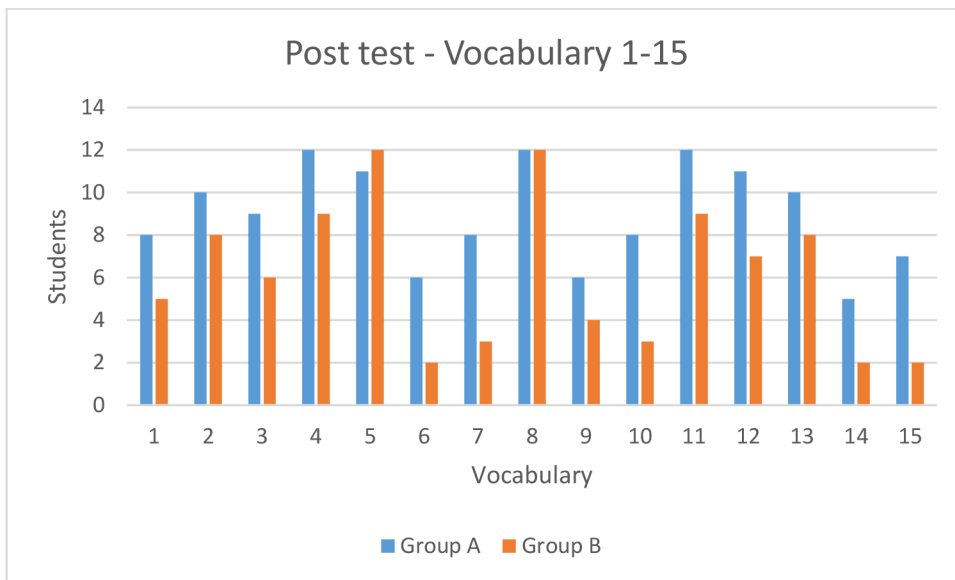
Students: 8th grade, 12 students

Book: Project 3, School book and Workbook

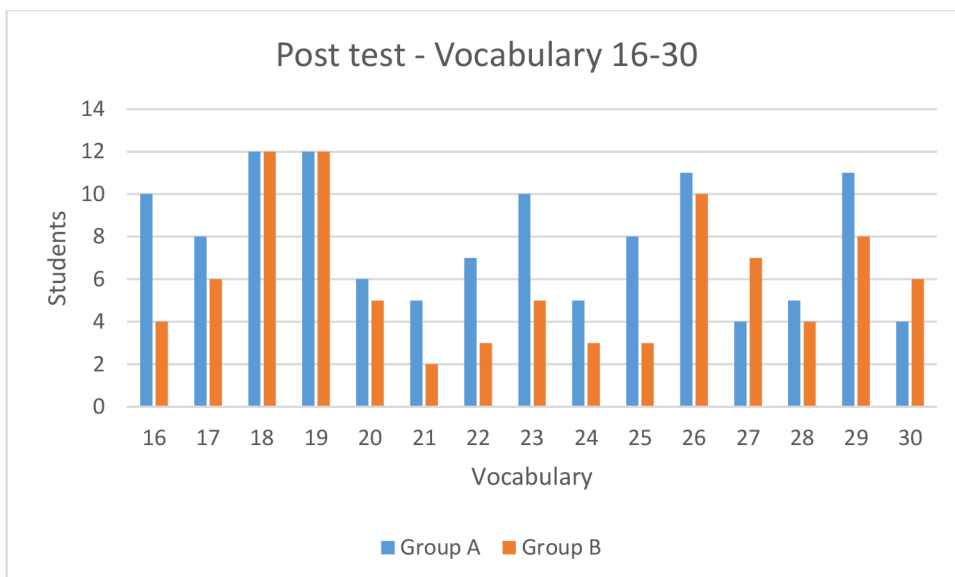
No.	Activity	Time	Task	materials	aim
1.	Introduction	3 min	The T says hello to the class and asks who is missing		To do the agenda
2.	Video	7 min	T plays a video about the flood from 1997 in the city where the Ps live and asks Ps what they know about it	T own material	To see how they understand the video
3.	Playing game	8 min	The T explains the computer game akinator and the Ps can practise the vocabulary through the game	www.akinator.com	Practising of the vocabulary
4.	Speaking	5 min	Ps try to complete the sentences from memory	Student's Book p.35/4 a, b, c, d, e	To be able to use past continuous
5.	Writing	7 min	T asks Ps to put the verbs in brackets into the past simple or past continuous then they check it together	WB p. 27/5,	To put the pictures in the correct order
6.	Making dialogue	5 min	Ps in pairs make dialogue	WB p. 27/ 6	To practise the new vocabulary
7.	Writing	8 min	The final vocabulary test	Prepared vocabulary test	To check out the knowledge of the vocabulary
8.	Ending of the lesson	2 min	T praises the Ps for a good job		To end the lesson

4.4 Evaluation of the Final Questionnaire – Posttest

After conducting the experiment, the students were given a post-test to determine the extent to which they were able to acquire the new vocabulary. The post-test consisted of 30 vocabulary words again, with each graph representing one half of the vocabulary. The words were assigned values from 1 to 30, with the values assigned the same way as in the pre-test. The graphs always show the results of both groups simultaneously. I consider the results of the post-test to be the most important and accurate reflection of the children's ability to learn new vocabulary using a specific type of teaching.



Obrázek 12 Posttest - Vocabulary 1-15



Obrázek 13 Posttest - Vocabulary 16-30

Vocabulary – 1-Crack, 2-Dam, 3-Disaster, 4-End, 5-Everybody, 6-Flood, 7-Incident, 8-Indonesia, 9-Order, 10-Shout, 11-Situation, 12-Street, 13-Teddy bear, 14-Avalanche, 15-Earthquake, 16-Explosion, 17-Forest fire, 18-Hurricane, 19-Tornado, 20-Volcanic eruption, 21-Accident, 22-Lifesaver, 23-Heart attack, 24-Believer, 25-Daydream, 26-Travel agency, 27-Independence, 28-Trouble, 29-Cyprus, 30-Possibility

From the graphs, it is evident that children in the experimental group achieved better results in almost all selected words except for "Everybody," "Independence," and "Possibility." This could have been caused by the fact that children may have avoided these particular words during the game because they are more challenging to explain, and therefore, they did not practice these words thoroughly. For some words, the results are significantly better in the experimental group, while for others, the results are nearly balanced, or slightly favor the experimental group over the control group.

For the words that children already knew during the pre-test, a zero value was assigned. Only words that the children did not know during the pre-test were considered. From the newly acquired words, I calculated the average and found that children in the experimental group learned an average of 15 new words over the course of three instructional sessions. Children in the control group achieved a result of 9 new words during the same period.

I believe that the groups were almost equally matched in terms of knowledge and intelligence, so the main factor influencing the results of the post-test was the teaching method. The instructional approach using the board game Codenames proved to be significantly better and more effective.

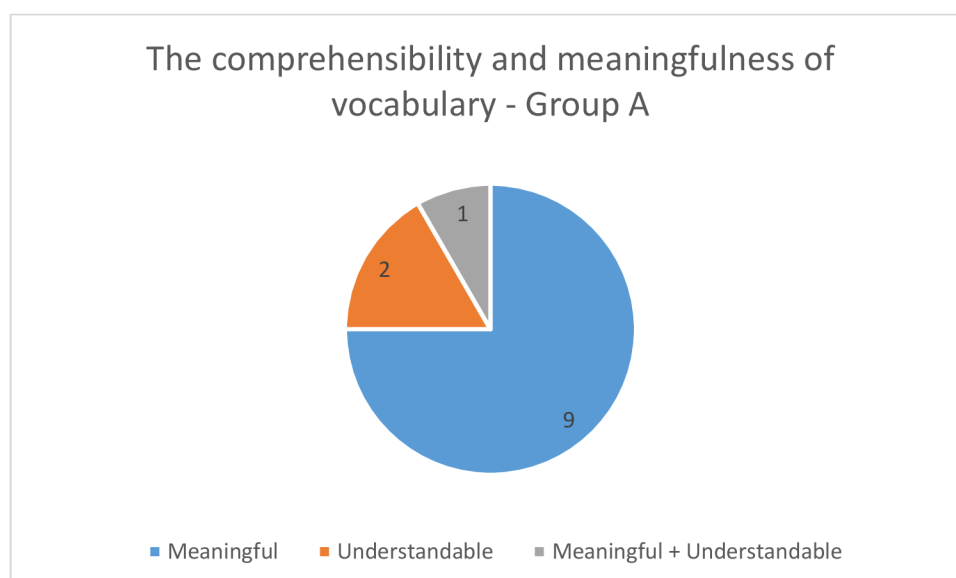
4.5 Assessment of the interview

Even though the conversation didn't have a completely fixed structure, I asked 6 fundamental questions and then, as needed and based on the situation, further inquired to be able to evaluate the children's answers and opinions in the end. Here is an overview of the basic questions and responses:

Do you understand the learned vocabulary?

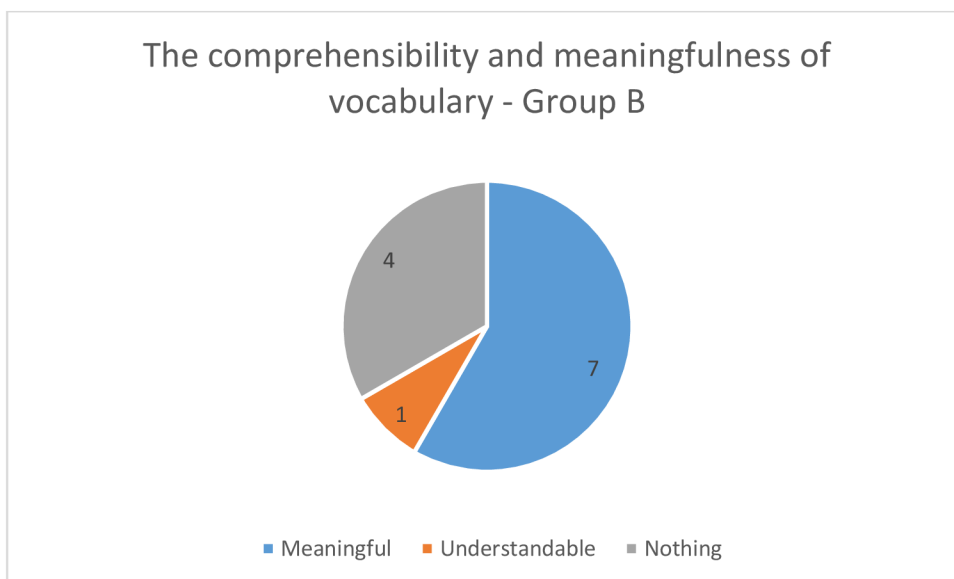
All respondents from both groups answered yes to this question.

Do you think this vocabulary was a) meaningful b) understandable



Obrázek 14 The comprehensibility and meaningfulness of vocabulary - Group A

The children from the experimental group circled "meaningful" in 9 cases, "understandable" in 1 case, and in 2 cases they responded that it was both meaningful and understandable.



Obrázek 15 The comprehensibility and meaningfulness of vocabulary - Group B

Within the control group, 7 respondents answered that the new vocabulary was meaningful, 1 student responded that it was understandable, and in 4 cases, nothing was filled in.

Based on the responses to this question, it can be concluded that the new vocabulary seemed less understandable and less meaningful to the children in the control group. However, the results may also be influenced by the fact that the children in the control group were somewhat bored and the teaching did not engage them enough.

Only children from the experimental group were asked the remaining questions.

Did the game seem to be an effective means of learning vocabulary?

All respondents answered "yes." Some children expressed their feelings and thoughts in sentences: "Yes, my classmates enjoyed it and it caught their interest, so they learned those words." "It was interesting and thought-provoking." "Yes, finally something creative, and I'm glad for it." "Yes, and most importantly, it was fun and it seemed to entertain everyone." "Yes, but we played it too little."

Did learning new words become easier for you?

The answer to this question was also unanimous; the whole group agreed that it did. Two of the children further commented on the question: "Yes, I memorized those words faster." "Yes, I understand it more now, and I remembered it better."

Was it more enjoyable for you compared to a regular lesson?

Again, everyone answered "yes," and some children further specified their response: "Yes, I really enjoyed it." "It was, and I learned more." "Yes, I don't enjoy English." "Yes, it was more fun and also more for practice. Much better."

Do you want to include this game in the lessons in the future?

The whole group unanimously answered "yes." Some further stated: "Yes, it was fun. It would be great. It would also entertain the slower ones and help them understand more." "Yes, it would definitely be great." "Yes, it was fun. One hundred percent yes."

Based on the interview, it can be concluded that the teaching method seemed more effective to the children in the experimental group compared to the traditional teaching approach. Learning new vocabulary was easier for them than usual. According to the children's opinions, it was also a much more enjoyable teaching method, and all of them would like to include the Codenames game in future English lessons. Therefore, I believe that the experiment was very successful, which is also reflected in the results, which are, in my opinion, very positive.

Conclusion

The aim of the theoretical part of the thesis was to provide comprehensive information regarding the integration of board games into English language teaching, particularly in relation to learning new vocabulary. I believe this objective was achieved as I extensively described, based on numerous studies, the role of board games in English language education.

Two research questions were formulated. The task of the first question was to find an answer to whether the use of modern board games supports the learning of English vocabulary. Based on observation techniques and also through interviews conducted with children in the research group, I can unequivocally state that the use of modern board games supports the learning of English vocabulary.

The second research question aimed to determine whether practicing vocabulary through board games improves students' ability to memorize new vocabulary. This was already discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis, where studies suggested that the answer is yes. My research merely supported this answer, as the results from the pretest and posttest clearly indicate that by practicing new words during the game of Codenames, children created connections between the Czech word and its equivalent in English. As a result, the children formed associations between words, leading to better retention of the new vocabulary.

Two hypotheses were formulated. The first one stated: "The use of board games in English language teaching is a more attractive form of learning for students." This hypothesis was confirmed, as indicated by the conclusions drawn from observation and interviews, where students unequivocally confirmed this statement. The second hypothesis was: "Through the use of the Codenames game, children are able to learn new vocabulary more effectively." This hypothesis was also confirmed, particularly through the evaluation of the pretest and posttest, where it was clearly demonstrated that children are capable of acquiring new vocabulary more efficiently and quickly through the game of Codenames.

I believe that my work has been useful and can help support language teachers in the practical use and integration of board games, specifically the Codenames game, into their teaching.

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