

Univerzita Hradec Králové  
Pedagogická fakulta  
Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

## **Hry a aktivity na slovní zásobu v angličtině**

Diplomová práce

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## **Vocabulary Games and Activities in English**

Thesis

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V Hradci Králové dne

Ráda bych zde poděkovala své vedoucí diplomové práce, Mgr. Pavle Machové, M.A., PhD., za její cenné rady a připomínky k mé práci a za vstřícné vedení a také všem učitelům, kteří se s ochotou zapojili do výzkumu. Dále bych chtěla poděkovat manželům Gabriele a Bradovi Place za jejich rady a inspiraci a především pak mé rodině za to, že mi studium umožnila a po celou dobu podporovala.

## **Anotace**

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Diplomová práce se zaměřuje na využití her a aktivit rozvíjejících slovní zásobu ve výuce anglického jazyka. Teoretická část nejprve krátce představuje novou koncepci pojetí výuky cizích jazyků na českých základních školách a gymnáziích. Pozornost je poté věnována především hrám a jejich významu pro život jedince. Teoretická část se zaměřuje především na funkci a uplatnění her a aktivit ve výuce a zároveň zmiňuje i výhody a nevýhody jejich použití. Dále pak dělí samostatně aktivity a hry do několika kategorií podle různých kritérií.

Praktická část diplomové práce obsahuje podrobnou analýzu několika her a tři podrobné plány tematicky orientovaných hodin s různými zajímavými aktivitami. Tyto hry a aktivity byly zároveň ověřeny v praxi na základní škole a víceletém gymnáziu. Součástí praktické části je i drobný průzkum vedený mezi učiteli, kteří hry a aktivity rozvíjející slovní zásobu do svých hodin anglického jazyka zahrnují.

Klíčová slova: Hra, aktivita, anglický jazyk, slovní zásoba, motivace, kompetence

## **Annotation**

ZAPLATÍLKOVÁ, Petra. *Vocabulary Games and Activities in English*. Hradec Králové: Faculty of Education, University of Hradec Králové, 2015. 112 pp. Thesis.

The thesis is focused on the employment of vocabulary games and activities in English language education. The theoretical part briefly mentions the new concepts of foreign language education in Czech elementary and grammar schools. The attention is then given to games and their importance in one's life. The theoretical part especially focuses on the main functions and employment of games and activities in lessons of English language and it also mentions the advantages and disadvantages they bring when used in the lesson. The classification of activities and games, according to several criteria, are also provided.

The practical part of the thesis contains a detailed analysis of several games and three thematic lesson plans with numerous interesting activities. These games and activities were employed in the English lessons of elementary and grammar school. The practical part also introduces some research among the teachers who use vocabulary games and activities.

Keywords: Game, activity, English language, vocabulary, motivation, competencies



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## I. INTRODUCTION

The thesis is focused on vocabulary games and activities and their employment in English language education. The thesis is divided into two parts.

In the theoretical part, the importance and advantages of the knowledge of English language are briefly discussed and the concepts of English as a foreign language or second foreign language as provided by the Framework Educational Programmes for Elementary Education (FEP EE)<sup>1</sup> and Secondary General Education<sup>2</sup>(FEP SGE) will be briefly mentioned. I would like to point to the fact that another translation of the Framework Educational Programme for Elementary Education carries the title Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education<sup>3</sup> and is available on the websites of MEYS (The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, MŠMT in Czech). In the thesis, the terms used in relation to the Framework Educational Programmes (FEP and namely FEP EE and FEP SGE) are taken from the English translations of the two documents that are available on the websites of NÚV (Národní ústav pro vzdělávání – see below). The abbreviation MEYS<sup>4</sup> is then employed for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. In the first chapter of the thesis, the key competencies that are developed during the whole educational process, including foreign language education, are briefly mentioned. The thesis, among others, will try to prove that the competencies stressed by the FEP can be developed through vocabulary games and activities.

The theoretical part also briefly discusses the importance of vocabulary in foreign language learning and several techniques of presentation and revision of vocabulary are given. Next, the role of memory in vocabulary acquisition will be mentioned and several techniques or strategies for successful retention will be provided. Information contained in this part should be beneficial for the creation of favourable conditions for education.

The final chapter of the theoretical part is then devoted to games and activities. The difference between the author's conception of games and that of activities is described at the beginning of the chapter. However, for the purposes of the thesis, and because the literature classifies 'a game' as a kind of activity, which testifies to the close relation of the two subjects, the author of the thesis does not make any difference between game and

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<sup>1</sup> (FEP EE, online, translated by Hana Čechová, available on: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/195> )

<sup>2</sup> (FEP SGE, online, translated by K. Millerová, Sean M. Miller and S. Kobylak, available on: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/161> )

<sup>3</sup> (MEYS, online, available on: [www.msmt.cz/file/9481\\_1\\_1/](http://www.msmt.cz/file/9481_1_1/) )

<sup>4</sup> (MEYS, online, available on: <http://www.msmt.cz/?lang=2> )

activity where there is no need for such a distinction. Nevertheless, the emphasis is put especially on games as first their benefits on a human's life are pointed out and opinions of several experts who dealt with or who have been dealing with the issue of games are introduced. As the theoretical part particularly focuses on the employment of vocabulary games and activities in English, functions of a didactic game are mentioned and the advantages that the employment of games and activities brings are discussed. The emphasis is put on the ability of games to engage the learner's interest, to motivate and to develop important skills. Nevertheless, the use of games and activities can bring about some problems that will be mentioned too. In relation to that and in order to employ games successfully, some principles that should be taken into account while choosing and preparing a game or an activity are introduced. There the importance of setting rules and roles beforehand is stressed. This is then followed with the separate classification of games and activities where the distinction between the two notions is clearly made. First, a general overview of vocabulary activities is given and then three categories are created for them. Games are then treated separately and also divided into several categories according to certain criteria. Different types of games for each category are provided altogether with concrete examples of games.

The practical part of the thesis is focused on the practical employment of vocabulary games and activities in English and it particularly tries to prove their positive effects on learners. The practical part includes a detailed analysis of five games developing vocabulary, each of which was practically employed in lessons of English language with three different classes of an elementary school. The detailed description of a game's course is always provided as well as a reflection over its use in the given class. This is followed with three thematic lesson plans based on the same topic and introducing several interesting activities practically employed in three different classes of a grammar school. The students' opinions on the thematic lessons are included. The last chapter analyses the interviews of seven teachers who employ activities and games in their lessons of English language. Their opinions and experience with the employment of vocabulary games and activities are presented. For instance, it will be explored what didactic or other purposes the teachers use the games and activities for, what advantages or disadvantages they perceive in them and what sources they draw inspiration from.

## II. THEORETICAL PART

### 1 The Importance of English Language and Its Inclusion into the Czech Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary General Education

Since the last century, the English language has gained considerably in importance and still keeps its position as a dominant world language. Nowadays, it is employed worldwide in the fields of politics, finance, science, sport, media, education, entertainment and many others.

The English language still keeps its dominant position in the world and represents an important means of communication and entertainment not only for educated people but for everyone who wants to keep in contact with the broader world. Its knowledge provides a great advantage in both personal and professional life as it makes us more independent and self-confident. Knowing the English language certainly enlarges our horizons and possibilities.

Our society comes into contact with the English language and culture almost every day without directly realising it. People listen to English songs while driving a car or shopping in a department store, they read articles containing English words or watch advertisements in TV that say “Simply clever” or “I’m loving it”. People eat hot dogs and hamburgers, play computer games that are mainly in English and they go to the cinema to watch British and American films in their original version. The English language is indeed a versatile instrument, the teaching and learning of which have become an integral and important part of the Czech National Curriculum.

In the following chapter, the position of the English language as a foreign language in Czech schools will be mentioned and related notions of *foreign language* and *second foreign language* in connection with the Framework Educational Programmes (FEP) for elementary and secondary grammar schools will be described. The *key competencies* representing the skills and knowledge acquired by a learner during the process of learning the foreign language for both Elementary Education and for Secondary General Education will be mentioned.

## 1.2 English Language in the Framework Educational Programmes for Elementary and Secondary General Education and the Key Competencies

It was assumed that learning a foreign language brings a great number of advantages such as access to a wide range of information, articles, books, movies and others. More and better job opportunities go hand in hand with the knowledge of English language that is these days strongly required not only in the sphere of international relations. The personal benefit of being able to communicate with a speaker of the foreign language is unquestionable. This all is considered and reflected in the educational process that principally aims at practical use of the language and at gradual development of the skills that are necessary for its successful mastery.

In the Czech Republic, different stages of the educational process have their norms and directives enacted in The Framework Educational Programmes<sup>5</sup> (FEP) for pre-school education, elementary education and secondary education together with key competencies expected to be acquired at a given Stage. In the following text, the FEP will be briefly explained and the Framework Educational Programmes for elementary education and for secondary general education in connection with teaching and learning the foreign language will be discussed so as to show what are the expected skills acquired by a learner of the foreign language during the educational process.

As Europe becomes more open and accessible for its inhabitants, it brings about new needs and tendencies expressed and shared by the European society. The crucial role of the school is to provide an education appropriate to the era and demands of the society and that is the reason why the Czech educational policy has been undergoing many changes and modifications since the beginning of this century. The efforts to keep pace with the European Union, of which the Czech Republic is a rightful member, and with the present situation in the world, the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic (MEYS)<sup>6</sup> adopted legally binding documents for different stages of the educational system, generally known as The Framework Education Programmes. The FEP was first introduced into the Czech National Curriculum in 2004 altogether with the *key competencies* representing the learner's "*knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to each context*" and spanning across the whole educational process. The FEP are "*built on*

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<sup>5</sup> (FEP EE, 2007, online, p. 6)

<sup>6</sup> (MŠMT: The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, online)

*the concept of life-long learning*”<sup>7</sup>, they specify the general goals of education and the key competencies expected to be developed by the learner, they provide the contents for each subject area defined in the programmes as well as the frameworks and rules for the creation of school educational programmes hereby giving more autonomy but also responsibility to individual schools and teachers. Last but not least, the FEP formulates the expected results of the educational process for each educational stage.

Concerning foreign language learning, since February 2013, the FEP for both the Second Stage of elementary schools and for secondary schools has ordered two foreign languages to be taught, one of them as a *foreign language* and the other one as a *second foreign language*. The first foreign language is compulsory for all pupils from the third class of elementary schools, whereas the second foreign language is mandatory from the eighth grade of elementary education. The preferred language by FEP is English: “...*the pupils must be offered the instruction of English before other languages.(...) The school must offer English as Second Foreign Language to pupils who did not select English as their Foreign Language.*”<sup>8</sup> The same system is applied to Stage 1 (from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> class) of grammar schools where students learn the foreign language from the first class and the second foreign language is introduced no later than the third class. The Framework Educational Programme for Secondary Grammar Schools (the Second Stage) makes compulsory both foreign and second foreign language.

Via learning the *foreign* and *second language*, learners also gradually develop the *key competencies* that go through the whole educational process and interconnect the educational fields. They are “*a set of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values which are important for the personal development of an individual and for the individual’s participation in society*”<sup>9</sup> and that are acquired at the end of the given stage of education. Their mastery is an important step towards successful and happy life in the nowadays society. The FEP EE names the *Learning competencies*, *Problem-solving competencies*, *Communication competencies*, *Social and personal competencies* and *Civil competencies* which are all treated by the FEP SGE, though differently by the contents. The FEP EE then mentions *Working competencies* whereas the FEP SGE introduces the *Entrepreneurial competencies*. Via the subject matter and different activities and projects provided by the school and teachers, the learner gradually acquires the skills and abilities and learns to use

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<sup>7</sup> (FEP EE, 2007, online, p. 6)

<sup>8</sup> (FEP EE, 2007, online, p. 108)

<sup>9</sup> (FEP EE, 2007, online, p. 11)

them effectively and meaningfully, and at the level of key competencies. So it is in the foreign language education. (For more information about the skills and knowledge expected to be acquired by learners of elementary schools and secondary grammar schools consult the FEP EE<sup>10</sup> and FEP SGE<sup>11</sup>).

To sum up, it can be noticed that the Czech educational policy puts big emphasis on the knowledge of at least two foreign languages and on the development of the key competencies. Learners are thus expected to take an active part in the educational process which should be based on communication and interaction.

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<sup>10</sup> (FEP EE, 2007, online, p. 23-25, 88, 108)

<sup>11</sup> (FEP SGE, 2007, online, p. 12-13, 16-20)



## 2 Teaching and Learning Vocabulary

It is believed that language is the most important means of communication in the human world and without it, there would be no real understanding between individuals. Each language in the world has its system of sounds that are combined into words. Consequently, by combining words we make sentences which we use in various communicative situations with the purpose of making oneself understood. It is via words that we can name things and express our opinions, emotions, needs or others. Vocabulary is indeed a very important component of learning a foreign language, if not the crucial one, and as such it deserves to be treated responsibly in the teaching process. The following chapter is aimed gives a general overview of the field of *vocabulary* and its importance in relation to teaching the English language. The concept of vocabulary will be therefore discussed and basic terms explained. Furthermore, different ways and methods of teaching and practising vocabulary will be introduced.

### 2.2 Vocabulary and Its Importance

The role of vocabulary in the learning process is very aptly introduced by McCarthy<sup>12</sup> who states: *“No matter how well the student learns grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2<sup>13</sup> are mastered, without words to express a wide range of meanings, communication in an L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way.”*

Indeed, while learning a foreign language, there are other components to be encountered such as grammar, reading, speaking, writing and listening but vocabulary seems to be the crucial one. When starting to study a foreign language, words are first to be learned and used even for a simple but still meaningful conversation. Without words, we would not be able to express ourselves nor to understand what other people say. Vocabulary is undeniably the very fundamental component of every language.

However McCarthy’s statement about the importance of vocabulary in learning a foreign language can be nowadays considered true and undoubtable by most linguists and of course teachers, for many years, it was exactly this component of teaching foreign

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<sup>12</sup> (McCARTHY, 1990, p. 8)

<sup>13</sup> Second language, foreign language

languages that was much neglected. According to Thornbury<sup>14</sup>, it was the *communicative approach* that re-aroused the general interest in vocabulary as the “*meaning-making potential of words*”<sup>15</sup> was recognised.

Learning foreign languages also includes developing several skills already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Those skills are reading and listening (receptive skills), writing and speaking (productive skills) and grammar skills. None of them could be mastered without the knowledge of vocabulary. The other way round, those skills and aspects of foreign language learning provide a fertile ground for encountering new vocabulary and new meanings of words as well as for recycling and using those already known. For example, Allen<sup>16</sup> states: “*Students who do not learn grammar along with vocabulary will not be able to use the language for communication*” and he adds that “*students must learn grammar, which involves uses of words.*” It can be therefore assumed that a simple vocabulary could be sufficient for teaching grammar. This statement, though, cannot be applied to the other skills or components in discussion. For example, writing a coherent letter or invitation would be impossible without knowing which words to use and the same problem appears while trying to have a conversation with the speaker of the foreign language. The adequate mastery of vocabulary is indispensable for reading activities that are at the same time a valuable source of new words. Schmitt and McCarthy<sup>17</sup> think that “*...most of words in any text need to be known before it can be read*” as “*the percentage of known and unknown vocabulary is one of the most important factors that determine the difficulty of a text.*” The high number of unknown vocabulary can even more impede learners’ listening comprehension as according to Harmer<sup>18</sup> who cites Underwood, it could be “*... like a dropped barrier causing them to stop and think about the meaning of a word and thus making them miss the next part of the speech*”. It is therefore reasonable to use such materials (texts, recordings, activities and games, etc.) that are adequate to learners’ level and that would not demotivate them by their going far away learners’ current language skills. Also Schmitt and McCarthy<sup>19</sup> give other arguments to demonstrate the importance of a good knowledge of vocabulary that crucially influences the development of successful writing, listening and speaking skills. They borrow the ideas

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<sup>14</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 14)

<sup>15</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 14)

<sup>16</sup> (ALLEN, 1983, p. 3,4)

<sup>17</sup> (SCHMITT, McCARTHY, 2000, p. 152)

<sup>18</sup> (HARMER, 1991, p. 272)

<sup>19</sup> (SCHMITT, McCARTHY, 2000, p. 155)

of Ellis and comment: *“Research has shown that lexical errors tend to impede comprehension more than grammatical errors, and native-speaking judges tend to rate lexical errors more serious than grammatical errors.”* Allen<sup>20</sup> confirms that *“...communication breaks down when people do not use the right words.”* Schmitt and McCarthy<sup>21</sup> confirm: *“a typical problem is that the learners often use basic vocabulary where good native-speaking writer would use more precise lower-frequency words.”* There the notions of *meaning* and *use* are encountered as let’s say two of the key vocabulary components that are necessary to be taken into consideration and to be understood when new words are to be learned. The problematic of *knowing a word* will be more closely discussed in Chapter 2.3.

It is yet convenient to mention how important the continual work on one’s vocabulary is. Herbertson<sup>22</sup> affirms that *“lexis is important at every level”* and Allen<sup>23</sup> chiefly points out the necessity and usability of basic words for the following stages of foreign language learning by stating: *“...much of the vocabulary found in lessons for beginners will be needed for writing and speaking English in future months and years. It is good to make an early start on such important words.”* The beginning lessons actually deal with words that have concrete meaning and that can be seen, touched, showed or performed. More advanced learners then work with more difficult vocabulary such as abstract words, multiple meanings, idioms, collocations and others (see Chapter 2.3). Herbertson’s<sup>24</sup> conviction that *“with lexis there is always something new to be learnt (even for native speakers) and students need to continue acquiring lexis for a deeper understanding of the language”* proves to be positively true. Therefore, as Harmer<sup>25</sup> asserts, *“we need specific ways of addressing the problem of language difficulty”* that was explained in the previous paragraph. According to him, these specific ways that can help to extend learners’ lexis, are *“pre-teaching vocabulary, using extensive reading/listening, and considering alternatives to authentic texts”* such as the widely spread graded readers<sup>26</sup>. Different word activities and language games are also very effective and useful helpers that facilitate learning words by providing many opportunities for their recycling and revising.

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<sup>20</sup> (ALLEN, 1983, p. 5)

<sup>21</sup> (SCHMITT, McCARTHY, 2000, p. 155)

<sup>22</sup> (HERBERTSON, online)

<sup>23</sup> (ALLEN, 1983, p. 8)

<sup>24</sup> (HERBERTSON, online)

<sup>25</sup> (HARMER, 1991, p. 272-274)

<sup>26</sup> books that are written specially for foreign language learners and where the language (e.g. vocabulary and grammatical structures) is adjusted to the learner’s level

To sum up, the importance of vocabulary in learning and teaching foreign languages is absolutely clear; words enable us to express ourselves and thus make the communication possible. Without knowledge of words, the basic language skills cannot be developed. We have seen how all the components of language learning are interrelated with the field of vocabulary and in connection to that, few suggestions were made about how to help learners gradually improve their lexis. Indeed, gradual and continuous work on the learner's vocabulary extension should not be neglected at any stage of the learning process.

### 2.3 Passive versus Active Vocabulary

While teaching new words to pupils, the decision about whether the words would belong to their **passive** (receptive) or **active** (productive) vocabulary has to be made by the teacher.

The passive vocabulary refers to words that will be recognised by pupils when they come across them in the context of reading and listening but they will not be able to produce them themselves. On the other hand, the active vocabulary comprises words that are expected to be well acquired, understood and used appropriately by pupils while speaking or writing.

There is also the possibility of a shift of the word from the passive vocabulary into the active one. This process is however gradual and can happen when learners hear or read the word many times.<sup>27</sup>

As far as the role of the teacher as a “decision-maker” is concerned, Gairns and Redman<sup>28</sup> state: *“In the language learning situation, we would stress the importance of decision-making by the teacher and materials written about which items are worth learning for productive use and which are only suitable for purposes of recognition”*.

If learners really **know a word**, their knowledge does not comprise only the *meaning* of the word and its *pronunciation*. There is much more to be learned about a word in order to be able to use it properly and meaningfully. Besides the meaning of the word, pupils have to know both the *written and spoken form* of the word, its *collocations* as well

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<sup>27</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 64-65)

<sup>28</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 65)

as its *derivations* and *connotations* (*associations*). Furthermore, pupils have to be aware of any particular grammatical characteristics of the word. There are just some examples for each of the components of “**knowing a word**”<sup>29</sup>:

**Written form:** *rain*

**Spoken form:** */reɪn/*

Example of **meaning**:

The condensed moisture of the atmosphere falling visibly in separate drops:

*(the rain had not stopped for days)*

A large or overwhelming quantity of things that fall or descend:

*(he fell under the rain of blows)*

Rain falls: *(it was beginning to rain)*

**Example of collocation:** *heavy rain, pouring rain, get caught in rain, autumn rain*

**Example of derivation:** *rainless, rained, raining, rainbow*

**Example of connotation:** *floods, umbrella, sadness*

**Grammatical characteristics:** noun *(it's pouring with rain)*

verb *(it's raining outside)*<sup>30</sup>

(For more detailed information see Appendix A: *Knowing a Word*)

## 2.5 Presentation of New Vocabulary Items

As far as the presentation of new vocabulary is concerned, teachers have at their disposal a great variety of techniques that they can use. The most common division is into **visual** and **verbal techniques**.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 16)

<sup>30</sup> (The examples are taken from: <http://oxforddictionary.so8848.com/search?word=rain> and <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/rain> )

<sup>31</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p.73)

### 2.5.1 Visual Techniques

Visual techniques are highly suitable for teaching concrete words (furniture, materials, etc.) or words that can be well demonstrated (professions, illnesses, sports and activities etc.). Possible visual techniques are:

- **Realia** - Using real objects to demonstrate the meaning of a word is highly suitable for younger learners but not only for them. Real objects stimulate learners' attention and activity. Teachers can use them for various activities as well. Realia can be things such as rubber, letter, button, candle etc.<sup>32</sup>
- **Pictures** - The most widely used visual aids are pictures. There are many kinds of pictures that are regularly used by teachers: *flashcards, large wall pictures, cue cards (for pair or group work), photographs, illustrations, projected slides, pictures drawn by teachers on the board, maps etc.*<sup>33</sup>
- **Mime and gesture** - One of the best advantages of mime and gesture is no need of equipment or preparation. Moreover, it can be a great fun to use them, which can have a positive impact on learners' ability to store the vocabulary in their memory. Mime and gestures are widely used for presentation of adjectives or activity verbs.

### 2.5.2 Verbal Techniques

Verbal techniques are another means of demonstrating words and their meaning. There are some verbal techniques presented by Gairns and Redman<sup>34</sup>.

- **Use of illustrative situations (oral or written)** - This verbal technique is convenient for words that are more abstract. The teacher then illustrates the meaning by using an appropriate context. It is also suitable to employ situations (or contexts) that are close to our learners or that are absolutely clear so as to avoid ambiguities.
- **Use of synonymy and definition**- Teachers often use synonymy and definition while explaining the meaning of a new word. It is important to bear in mind what the level of our learners is and adjust the definition accordingly. More detailed explanation and specification would be necessary for learners on a higher level. However, the

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<sup>32</sup> (HARMER, 1991, p. 177)

<sup>33</sup> (HARMER, 1991, p. 178-179)

<sup>34</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 74-75)

definition is not always sufficient and so the context should be used for clarification of the meaning.

- **Contrasts and opposites-** In this case, students are taught the meaning of words through contrasting two items of vocabulary as in this example: *hot x cold, narrow x wide, good x bad, sweet x sour* etc. It is however important to use the contrasted words in one context for which it is true: *sugar is sweet x lemons are sour, but sweet tea x sour tea.*
- **Scales** - This technique is very useful both for revising and teaching new items of vocabulary. When students learn two contrasting words or any gradable items related by meaning, the scales help to rank these words clearly. We can thus easily introduce new related words via putting them on their proper place on the scale.
- **Examples of the type** - When teachers want to illustrate the meaning of a superordinate word, they can use those items of vocabulary that represent it: *table, armchair, cupboard, drawer* are *furniture*.

### 2.5.3 Other Techniques

- **Translation** - Translation is said to be the quickest and easiest way of presenting the meaning of words. Thornbury<sup>35</sup> states that it is the most direct method, the advantage of which is evidently economy. It is also helpful while the class come across an incidental vocabulary.
- **Dictionary** - Good dictionaries are nowadays considered one of the best and quickest sources of information about words<sup>36</sup> and if learners know how to use them, it is a highly valuable instrument of finding words by oneself. Dictionaries provide learners with phonemic transcription and stress making which is very important while trying to make learners more self-sufficient in vocabulary-learning.<sup>37</sup> Dictionaries can be used for the tasks where no help of the teacher is expected and learners have to work on their own. The two basic types are bilingual dictionaries and monolingual dictionaries.

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<sup>35</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 77)

<sup>36</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 61)

<sup>37</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 79-81)

- **Guessing from the context** - This technique tends to activate learners' attention and creativity because they try to guess the meaning of a word only with the help of the context in which the word appears. It is an involving technique.
- **Asking others** - A learner can also ask others for the meaning of the word or its English equivalent if he/she does not know it. This strategy involves the activity of both learner and his/her listener(s) as the learner tries to "*make the context sufficiently clear so that the listener can provide the student with the word he is looking for.*"<sup>38</sup> But often a simple question as "*What's this called in English*" may be sufficient.
- **Grouping of items** - In this case we try to present vocabulary in a systematised way which means that we put words together according to some common point. This helps to "*illustrate the organised nature of vocabulary and at the same time enable learners to internalise the items in a coherent way*".<sup>39</sup> Words can be grouped in different ways as it is shown below:
  - **Items related by topic:** e.g. house, types of vegetables, items of clothing
  - **Items grouped as an activity or process (topic-related):** e.g. the steps involved in starting a car or buying a house
  - **Items which are similar in meaning:** e.g. *pretty, lovely, attractive* – these items can be easily confused
  - **Items which form 'pairs':** e.g. synonyms (*receive/obtain*), contrasts and 'opposites' (*old/new*)
  - **Items along a scale or cline, which illustrate differences of degree:** e.g. describing an essay: *excellent/very good/good/satisfactory/weak*
  - **Items with 'word families' i.e. derivatives:** This kind of grouping can be used to show the word building and the function of affixes, e.g. *pleasant – unpleasant, harmful – harmless.*
  - **Items which connect discourse:** e.g. sentence adverbials used in listing are for example: '*to begin with*', '*in the second place*', '*last of all*'

... and others (see Gairns, Redman, 1986 p. 69-71)

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<sup>38</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 77)

<sup>39</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 69)



### 3 Vocabulary and Memory

Memory plays a crucial role in human life as it enables us to remember and recall things we need to know to survive. Successful learning of languages also requires a good memory and effort on the learner's side but there are techniques and methods that help to better memorise and recall new items of vocabulary even if the learner is not a memory champion. It is therefore important for teachers to know how the memory works, that is to say how information are stored and why some of them are well remembered whereas others tend to slip away easily. The classroom work becomes more successful if teachers use procedures that help to make the retention of new items more effective. Basically, we distinguish between two types of memory: **short term memory** and **long term memory**.<sup>40</sup> Thornbury<sup>41</sup> also mentions the **working memory** which constitutes a 'bridge' between the two basic types of memory.

**Short term memory** enables us to keep information for a shorter period of time, usually up to few seconds. It is also said that most people are able to retain up to seven items or chunks of information but more information would cause a "*breakdown in retention*".<sup>42</sup> We use the short term memory to remember for example a telephone number; we will repeat and thus remember the number until it is dialled but after we don't need it we are not able to recall it.<sup>19</sup> It is obvious that this type of memory is not sufficient for a good retention of vocabulary and thus new words have to be subjected to the **working memory** where different operations will be carried out on them.

**Working memory** focuses on words and subjects them to such operations as *reasoning, learning and understanding*.<sup>43</sup> The information studied in working memory can come both from outside (our senses) and inside (our long term memory). However, its capacity is limited and the content is not permanent. A part of this type of memory is the **articulatory loop** which is a "*process of subvocal repetition (...) that enables the short-term store to be kept refreshed.*"<sup>44</sup> According to Thornbury, the capacity of the articulatory loop is considered to be the most important indicator of successful language learning.

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<sup>40</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 86-87)

<sup>41</sup> (THORNNBURY, 2002, p. 23)

<sup>42</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 87)

<sup>43</sup> (THORNNBURY, 2002, p. 23)

<sup>44</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 23)

Unlike the two types of memory mentioned above, **long term memory** can store the information not only for seconds but for weeks and years after the original input. Moreover, it has got an enormous capacity which enables to store new and new information. However, new information can be easily forgotten and there is the question how to prevent them from slipping out of our memory (for more information about the issue of forgetting see Appendix O: Why do we forget?). In order to learn languages successfully, we must ensure that new words move to **permanent long-term memory**.<sup>45</sup>

There are some **techniques** and **strategies** that help learners to store words in memory:

- **Imagery** – using **visual aids** during the lesson promotes successful storage of new items. Mental images of words that we construct in our mind help us to stock and recall the acquired words easily.<sup>46</sup>
- **Meaningful tasks** – using meaningful activities enable the learners to take an active part in the learning process and become more self-reliant.
- **Key-word technique** – it is a technique that is also based on mental images but here we try to associate *“the target word with a word which is pronounced or spelt similarly in the mother tongue”*<sup>47</sup> no matter what its meaning is. For example the English word ‘choose’ and the Czech word ‘čůza’.
- **Loci** – in this technique we use so-called ‘cognitive maps’. Those are *“familiar sequences of visual images that can be recalled easily”*<sup>48</sup> It can be *“object in a familiar room, events in a well-known story or any other such familiar sequence. To memorise an item, one forms a visual image of it and places it at one of the loci in one’s imagined scene.”* It is then easy to recall the target item when we retrieve the whole scene.
- **Rote learning** – is based on repetition of the target items of vocabulary (we can write them or say them either aloud or silently). Usually we put the words on a list divided into two halves where on one half there are the target words and on the other one there can be the Czech equivalents, definitions, synonyms, opposites etc. Then we hide one half of the list and test ourselves. This technique is that of mechanical learning and can

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<sup>45</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 86-87)

<sup>46</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 92)

<sup>47</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 92)

<sup>48</sup> (CARTER, McCARTHY, 1988, p. 65)

be very useful for memorisation of such fields of vocabulary as days of the week, irregular words etc.<sup>49</sup>

- **Mnemonics and playful approach** to learning languages presented by Činka<sup>50</sup> - Libor Činka in his book “*Ovládněte svůj mozek*” devotes one chapter to the issue of studying languages and effective retention of new vocabulary. He underlines the importance of context, creativity, imagination and fun in vocabulary learning. He also encourages teachers and learners to look for links between words and create smaller logical groups of items of vocabulary. I consider his idea of playful approach to learning vocabulary interesting and applicable and therefore I will briefly mention the key aspects of his method. He states that learners quickly retain new words thanks to rhyme and alliteration (e.g. **blue box**)<sup>51</sup>. Learners can also enhance the retention by the use of funny or interesting alliterations as well as by the engagement of emotions (e.g. **Indiana Jones is interested in India**). According to Činka, words can also be successfully retained if we put some effort into looking for links between words and creating unusual and brief images similar to those of advertisements: “*Pile – Hromadu práce udělá pile.*”<sup>52</sup> or “*Flew – Flusanec letěl obloukem.*”<sup>53</sup>

To sum up, the most successful way for retaining new vocabulary is to use it actively and meaningfully. It is also very convenient to engage as many senses as possible because it is always very motivating for learners if they can see, hear, touch, smell or somehow experience new words they are to learn. Moreover, creativity and imagination of both learners and teachers is equally important for successful retention of new items as well as for keeping the motivation alive. Vocabulary games and activities thus seem to be one of the most suitable means for practising vocabulary that helps to retain words successfully.

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<sup>49</sup> (CARTER, McCARTHY, 1988, p.66)

<sup>50</sup> (ČINKA, 2012, p.174-208, own translation)

<sup>51</sup> (ČINKA, 2012, p.184, own translation)

<sup>52</sup> (ČINKA, 2012, p.191, own translation)

<sup>53</sup> (ČINKA, 2012, p.192, own translation)

## 4 Vocabulary Games and Activities

The crucial role of memory in the process of vocabulary acquisition was mentioned in the previous chapter and several strategies that help to retain words were introduced. It is obvious that recycling and revising vocabulary helps our memory and prevents forgetting words we learned. Learners need to practise new vocabulary so as to get familiar with the new words and remember them more easily. As it was already mentioned, the best way how to successfully retain words in memory is to use them actively and engage as many senses as possible. For those purposes, various games and activities should be used during lessons of English language. Using vocabulary games and interesting activities is one of the ways how to motivate learners and thus enhance successful retention of words. They tend to engage more senses at the same time and they encourage learners to be creative and employ their imagination as well as critical thinking. This all was already claimed to have a beneficial effect on the storage of information in the long term memory.

In This Chapter, the role of games and interesting activities in foreign language learning and teaching will be discussed. Furthermore, the advantages as well as possible problems of using games in the classroom will be presented and some basic principles or advice while choosing and preparing language games will be mentioned. It is also convenient to devote some attention to the role of teachers and that of learners during games, as it can noticeably influence their progress as well as impact on learners. By the end of the chapter, different types of games and interesting activities that help to practise, revise or recycle vocabulary will be named and briefly discussed.

As far as the distinction between vocabulary activities and vocabulary games is concerned, literature mostly does not make any difference and if so, vocabulary games are classified as an example of language activities (see Gairns and Redman)<sup>54</sup>. In the thesis a language or a vocabulary game is perceived as an activity that has precise and fixed rules that must be observed and respected by all players, otherwise the game loses its meaning. On the other hand, language activity is in this issue looser and instead of rules we rather talk about points to be observed. Moreover, each game has either competitive or cooperative character (or both at the same time) which is not the principle for language activities as such.

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<sup>54</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 163)

## 4.1 Definition of Game and Didactic Game

A game is an integral part of human life and it is even said to be as old as the humanity itself<sup>55</sup>. Different cultures have developed different types of games that became important for their society. The crucial role of games in the child's physical and mental development is mainly stressed. Zapletal<sup>56</sup> states that a game is not only restricted to children but it holds an important place in the life of each of us. Moreover, Maňák claims the game to be an essential part of the evolutionary process as *“it links the outer world with the inner world”*.<sup>57</sup>

If we look into the Pedagogic Dictionary<sup>58</sup> we find the following definition of a game: *“A Form of activity that differs from work and study. People have been concerned with games all their life, however, it is at the pre-school age when a game gains a specific role – it is the predominant type of activity. Games have many aspects: cognitive, practising, emotional, motional, motivating, creative, imaginative, social, recreational, diagnostic or therapeutic. It involves activities of an individual, a pair, a small group or a big one. There are games that require the use of special aids (toys, game equipment, sport equipment, tools, devices). Most games involve social interaction that has explicitly formulated rules (the rules are set by the agreement of participants or by social conventions). In the game, much attention is paid to its progress (games based mainly on cooperation or competition). (...).”*

A game is always described as an enjoyable dynamic activity that stimulates and requires players' activeness and involvement. Authors concerned with games agree that it is a natural activity and the participation in it must be freely chosen by each player.

J.A.Comenius<sup>59</sup> defines game as an exercise of human spirit and body that is destined for more than one player. Players then compete so as to gain some award (material or that of honour). He then presents seven requirements that a game must meet in order to be a joyful activity: movement, own decision, sociability, competition, order, a game is played with ease and the aim of it is pleasant. He points out that movement is what first brings the pleasure of game and that we must allow children to be active participants

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<sup>55</sup> (ZAPLETAL, 1986, p. 11)

<sup>56</sup> (ZAPLETAL, 1986, p. 11)

<sup>57</sup> (MAŇÁK, ŠVEC, 2003, p. 126, own translation)

<sup>58</sup> (PRŮCHA, WALTEROVÁ, MAREŠ, 2009, p. 92-93, own translation)

<sup>59</sup> (in CHLUP et al., 1964, p. 340)

of every action. Thus we keep them motivated. According to him, it is equally important to join a game from one's own decision (or voluntarily) without force or imposed obligation.

Comenius<sup>60</sup> states that if learners are forced to any activity against their will, the aspect of joy or pleasure will not be satisfied and thus learning will be something unpleasant and exhausting for them. Therefore, a game should always be a matter of free choice. Šimanovský and Mertin<sup>61</sup> agree that a game is not obligatory and if children do not want to play, they should not play. Similarly, Maňák<sup>62</sup> states: “...it is freely chosen activity that does not follow any specific purpose, but it has the aim and value in itself.” Zapletal<sup>63</sup> is of the same opinion and he claims that a game “does not have to bring nothing more than a bit of joy and relaxation.”

However, Zapletal<sup>64</sup> adds that most games develop the personality (or one of its sides) as well as the human character and skills and they also help to train memory and enlarge knowledge. Sochorová<sup>65</sup> is against the statement that nothing is achieved by playing a game and she explains: “...when using a game, various skills can be trained (motoric activity, memory, creativity,...), various situations from the real world can be simulated. A game can make us relaxed and take our mind of things. A game increases intensity of life and it enriches us and our personality. Thanks to games we enlarge our experience and enrich our own life.”

Houška<sup>66</sup> mentions the social aspect of games played within a group of people and Zapletal<sup>67</sup> states that thanks to games, children can learn a lot about how to behave in the real life and how to appreciate honesty. Also Comenius<sup>68</sup> mentions the pleasure that a game brings thanks to its social character. People naturally seek presence of other people which is pleasant for them and they also like ‘banding together’.

Lee<sup>69</sup> can see the essence of many games in “outstripping, in friendly fashion, someone else's performance, or (and adult learners often prefer this) in bettering one's own...” He claims that games are very stimulating because they have a clear goal. He also

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<sup>60</sup> (in CHLUP et al., 1964, p. 341-342)

<sup>61</sup> (ŠIMANOVSKÝ, MERTIN, 1996, p. 8)

<sup>62</sup> (MAŇÁK, ŠVEC, 2003, p. 126, own translation)

<sup>63</sup> (ZAPLETAL, 1986, p. 15, own translation )

<sup>64</sup> (ZAPLETAL, 1986, p. 15)

<sup>65</sup> (SOCHOROVÁ, online, own translation)

<sup>66</sup> (HOUŠKA, 1993, p. 67)

<sup>67</sup> (ZAPLETAL, 1986, p. 15)

<sup>68</sup> (in CHLUP et al., 1964, p. 342)

<sup>69</sup> (LEE, 1979, p. 1)

thinks that both rivalry and cooperation are very enjoyable and stimulate participants' activeness.

Sochorová<sup>70</sup> sums up the main aspects of games:

- *they require activeness during an action*
- *they reflect mental processes (strategy, logic, solving problems, creativity, memory)*
- *they support communication on which a great stress is put these days*
- *they stimulate social processes (new roles are tried)*
- *they enrich life experience*
- *they develop personality*
- *they bring enjoyment*

In our times of modernisation and technological progress, the social aspect of collective games is stressed. Children as well as adults tend to spend more time passively in front of television or computer and the social contact as well as creative spirit seems to decline. Therefore, games should not be perceived as simple entertainment but as a means of self-development and socialisation.

#### 4.1.1 Didactic Game

While a game is a free activity that does not follow any particular aim, a **didactic game** always has some didactic purposes. Maňák says that some authors consider the didactic game as “*any creative simulation of reality that has educational intention...*”<sup>71</sup> and he adds that it can be any activity that brings satisfaction to a learner and the possibility to make use of his/her skills. Compared to traditional approaches to teaching, these *alternative* activities are for learners “*more interesting, more natural and richer in emotions.*”<sup>72</sup>

As it was already mentioned above, a didactic game always follows a didactic purpose and thus it can be classified as a didactic method. It means that through didactic games teachers try to achieve aims of the educational process. However, teachers should not overestimate the didactic aim to the detriment of the game itself because learners might

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<sup>70</sup>(SOCHOROVÁ, online, own translation)

<sup>71</sup>(MAŇÁK, ŠVEC, 2003, p. 126, own translation)

<sup>72</sup>(MAŇÁK, ŠVEC, 2003, p. 126, own translation)

stop view it as a game and their enthusiasm for it would rather weaken. On the other hand, a didactic game must not be too loose as to lack any educational aim. It is indeed important to use didactic games carefully and cautiously.

Maňák<sup>73</sup> claims that didactic games should support the development of “*social, cognitive, creative, physical, volitional and aesthetic competencies of learners.*” There are indeed many aims that a didactic game can have. It helps to develop learners’ personality, their skills and knowledge. During a game, learners usually have to communicate with each other and they may also discuss or deal with problematic situations. Thus they train and develop their communicative and problem-solving skills which are very important in the real life. Indeed, people always get into contact with other people and there are many problematic situations that an individual must face during his or her life. It is also true that nowadays, games gain on their importance especially because of their social and emotional aspect. Children often lack enough social contact and emotional relationship in their life and therefore, games can help them to compensate it.<sup>74</sup>

Didactic games can also train memory (as in *Kim’s Game*) and cognitive skills as well as imagination and creativity (as in storytelling or creating poems). They develop learners’ thinking. All those skills are highly important for successful and happy life of individuals. Some language didactic games also include movement or motoric activity thanks to which learners can get refreshed. Moreover, movement can be very beneficial concerning language learning because things that we experienced, did or performed are better remembered. Generally speaking, a didactic game can follow more than just one educational aim and can develop more skills at the same time.

Didactic games may also serve different purposes in a lesson. Teachers can use them as warm-ups in order to motivate and activate learners at the beginning of a lesson. Didactic games can also be used for presentation of a new subject matter or for its practise and revision. If the teacher assesses that a hard work was done, a refreshing game or activity may be introduced to recuperate.

Sochorová as well as Maňák stress the crucial role of teachers while choosing, preparing and supervising a game. Sochorová<sup>75</sup> states that it can be quite a demanding task for the teacher to prepare a lesson that includes a didactic game because there are a lot of things that must be taken into consideration and that must be arranged for: careful

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<sup>73</sup> (MAŇÁK, ŠVEC, 2003, p. 127, own translation)

<sup>74</sup> (MAŇÁK, ŠVEC, 2003, p. 126)

<sup>75</sup> (SOCHOROVÁ, online)



consideration of the lesson's organisation and of the subject matter, necessary equipment and material, preparation of learners and the choice of working groups.

Every didactic game has its rules that learners learn to follow. They get to know that following rules is important for the general enjoyment of the game. Learners get socialised and develop their self-control, which is a precondition for being accepted in the society or, in the case of school environment, by one's classmates. Hardly anybody would enjoy playing with someone who cannot control his/her emotions and behaviour.

To sum up, didactic games help to create and keep creative and amusing working atmosphere in a lesson and thus make the learning more enjoyable and successful. They give learners the space to express themselves, and to develop their skills in a less formal way. Learners take an active role in the learning process as they are encouraged to think creatively, communicate with others, solve problems or find new ways of approaching a problem and others. Generally, games engage more senses and thus enhance memorization and retention of material. Learners also experience positive emotions that games incite and enjoy the contact with other learners. The employment of games in the educational process is, however, not always a simple task for teachers.

## **4.2 Middle Childhood, Puberty and Adolescence and the Role of Games**

As it was already mentioned before, games are not restricted only to children but they can be played by people of all age groups. However, in each developmental stage, the approach to a game is quite different and this can thus influence the course of a game in English lessons. For the purposes of the thesis, two developmental stages in relation to games will be briefly described: Middle childhood and Adolescence.

Middle childhood is the period from the age of six to the age of eleven. This phase is one of the most difficult and demanding for a child who leaves the safety of his/her home and enters an unknown environment of school and encounters many new people and children. In this phase, school plays very important role in the life of the child and can have a great influence on his development.

This period is also referred to as the age of sober realism which means that a child "*is focused on what is and how it is*"<sup>76</sup> and he/she wants to understand the world that

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<sup>76</sup> (LANGMEIER, KREJČÍŘOVÁ, 2006, p. 118, own translation)

surrounds him/her. Children of this age get interested in books that realistically depict and inform about different cultures and countries, they like adventurous novels and enjoy browsing and reading children encyclopaedias. However, they remain uncritical towards rules and authority, which changes only later, towards the 'teen years'. Children also have very good imagination and accurate conceptions. However, as Langmeier and Krejčířová<sup>77</sup> mention, this is unfavourably influenced by television in front of which children tend to spend too much time.

Children develop their language skills, which goes hand in hand with the development of thinking and memory and they get socialised which is crucial for the development of social skills including self-control, adaptability or emotional comprehension. All these skills can be stimulated and favourably developed thanks to school work but also thanks to games.

Work becomes very important in this period and the ability to concentrate on some task that does not arise from the child's own wishes but rather from the outer impulse is the indicator of the child's readiness for school. However, besides work, game still remains one of the key activities that help children to get to know the world and things that surround them. As Langmaier and Krejčířová<sup>78</sup> comments, "*Children who start working do not stop playing. Even in the school age, game is indispensable for a healthy development of children's personality and conditions should be created for it.*" Children endeavour to realistic descriptions or depictions and they are more concerned with the success in a game, especially in social games. There is also difference between games played by girls and those popular with boys. Whereas girls prefer rhythmical games, handwork or games that include taking care of something or someone, boys like motoric or sport games and especially competitive games. With the growing age, children also tend to prefer games that have more complex rules, not those based on coincidence. They like imitating and taking roles, playing with words, different crosswords, riddles and brain teasers. Rules are very important for children and they carefully observe their following.

It is also important to say that the attention of pupils of the lower stage of elementary school (classes one to five) is still very unstable and its intensity is dependent on the diversity of a lesson and immediate motivation. Interesting games and activities can help to keep pupils' attention and motivation alive.

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<sup>77</sup> (LANGMEIER, KREJČÍŘOVÁ, 2006, p. 122)

<sup>78</sup> (LANGMEIER, KREJČÍŘOVÁ, 2006, p. 122, own translation)

Concerning the age of puberty and adolescence, which spans the period from the age of eleven to the age of eighteen, we must consider the transition between these two stages. There are several significant and visible biological changes that a pubescent has to deal with and there are important changes in the cognitive skills as well. They develop their logical thinking and they are even able to think about thinking, to make judgements about judgements etc. Pubescent begins to be highly critical about authority and he tends to make close relationships with people of approximately the same age and these are based on friendship and comprehension. Later on, first 'real' relationships between girls and boys that arise mainly from curiosity and the need to get assured about one's attraction appear. Deep love relationships appear at the end of adolescence.<sup>79</sup>

A game is during this period also viewed differently and there is a clear distinction between game and work. At the beginning, collective games are very popular and the earlier division between girls and boys games is thus softened and later overcome. Teenagers need to be in contact with both sexes so as to develop successful interpersonal relationships.

It is also important to approach teenagers with care and patience as well as to create an atmosphere of confidence and trust. Pupils of that age are often shy and afraid of losing their face before their peers. Employing games can be therefore very uneasy as compared to children of an early school age who are more spontaneous and relaxed. However, in my opinion, with the knowledge of their pupils and with good pedagogical skills, teachers can certainly choose a game that fits their class. Carefully chosen game can certainly be beneficial for all pupils, even for those who are first not willing to take part in it but who may be later drawn in by the enjoyment of their classmates. Games help to satisfy pupils' needs and curiosity as well as to help the development of their skills regardless their age.

### **4.3 Why to Use Games and Activities in Lessons of Foreign Language**

In the previous chapters of the thesis, some positive aspects of games and interesting activities have been already mentioned. The following text provides several authors' point of view on this issue and it sums up how the employment of games and activities can positively influence the course of the English language lessons as well as the knowledge and skills of learners.

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<sup>79</sup> (LANGMEIER, KREJČÍŘOVÁ, 2006, p. 149)

First of all, almost all authors that deal with games and activities agree that games and other activities help to enliven a lesson and create a less formal atmosphere in which learners can practise their skills actively and with concern. Hrušková<sup>80</sup> points out the aspect of joy in a game and she adds that fun, amusement or any kind of emotion are very good motivators that make learners active and support their ability to learn and remember. McCallum<sup>81</sup> stresses the willingness to experimentation and free participation that a less formal atmosphere of a game can stir up. Learners are more relaxed and thus they are not afraid to take risks and use language spontaneously and creatively. It may certainly be a good preparation for more serious tasks and for the real world.

McCallum<sup>82</sup> makes a list of further advantages that the use of games includes:

1. *They focus student attention on specific structures, grammatical patterns, and vocabulary items.*
2. *They can function as reinforcement, review, and enrichment.*
3. *They involve equal participation from both slow and fast learners.*
4. *They can be adjusted to suit the individual ages and language levels of the students in the class.*
5. *They contribute to an atmosphere of healthy competition, providing an outlet for the creative use of natural language in a non-stressful situation.*
6. *They can be used in any language teaching situation and with any skill area whether reading, writing, speaking or listening.*
7. *They provide immediate feedback for the teacher.*
8. *They ensure maximum student participation for a minimum of teacher preparation.*

Hrušková<sup>83</sup> and Carrier<sup>84</sup> state that games bring **variety** to lessons and thus they keep learners motivated and interested. They agree that the use of various activities or games stimulate learners' interest and curiosity and so learners' attention is focused on the given task. Variety can also mean the change of pace of a lesson, which is often very important for the renewal of energy after some hard or long work at the desk (chill-outs). Contrarily, teachers can use activities and games to stimulate learners' attention and energy and prepare them for more difficult tasks (warm-ups).

In a lesson, teachers can use vocabulary games and activities for other specific didactic purposes such as to introduce and practise new vocabulary (*matching games and*

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<sup>80</sup> (HRUŠKOVÁ, online)

<sup>81</sup> (McCALLUM, 1980, p. ix)

<sup>82</sup> (McCALLUM, 1980, p. ix)

<sup>83</sup> (HRUŠKOVÁ, online)

<sup>84</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 40)

activities, *Guess the meaning*) as well as to revise words already discussed (*Pantomime, King*) or even to train general knowledge of vocabulary or to recycle vocabulary learned during the whole educational process (*role plays, story-telling, Scrabble, Brain Box*).

Carrier<sup>85</sup> also mentions ‘hidden practice’, which means that learners learn without exactly realising it. They may be so involved in a game that they do not realize its didactic aspect. Games and activities also help to reveal ambiguities, problematic areas of the given language learning and gaps in knowledge or even in skills. They provide a good feedback for teachers.

Furthermore, there is a difference in the concept of the role of a teacher and that of a learner. The teacher is supposed to play more passive role of an observer and organiser whereas learners become active and they fully enjoy the cooperation and communication with other learners.

Lee<sup>86</sup> especially stresses the communicative aspect of language games by claiming that *“language is learned by using it”*. Indeed, language is the means of communication and as such it helps us to get or give information. The most important thing is to understand and be understood. Thanks to attractive activities and games, learners have a fancy to use and experiment with the language which is crucial for its knowledge and successful use. Moreover, apart from vocabulary or grammatical structures, learners can also develop other skills or competencies considered as necessary for a successful integration into the nowadays society.

Games and activities engage more senses which has a positive effect on the ability to retain and subsequently make use of what has been learned. Indeed, Watcyn-Jones<sup>87</sup> states: *“Once a student has done an exercise on paper, it feels “finished”, and is never easy to repeat. By allowing the students to physically arrange words on a table (e.g. in matching pairs or group of words), the sense of touch is used, and the more senses are involved in the learning process, the better.”*

To sum up, activities and games bring variation and help to make a nice atmosphere as well as good relationships between learners and the teacher. They help to get students more interested and involved. Most games and activities also engage more senses and they train and develop learners’ skills or competencies. Thanks to this, learning becomes more

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<sup>85</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 6-7)

<sup>86</sup> (LEE, 1979, p. 1)

<sup>87</sup> (WATCYN-JONES, 1993, p. V)

active and joyful and also the retention improves a lot. The social aspect of games and most activities enhances cooperation as well as healthy competition and most importantly it enables learners to communicate and to share but also to control their emotions. As there is a great number of games and activities, teachers can always find the right one to be used for given didactic purposes.

#### **4.4 Possible Problems of Using Games and Activities in Lessons of Foreign Language**

Although a wide range of positive aspects of didactic games and activities were presented in the previous subchapter, there are also some negative sides that their employment includes. While introducing an activity or playing a game, problems that teachers did not expect may arise suddenly and unpredictably.

First of all, teachers must know their learners and learners' attitude towards games or a certain game and activity. It is true that a game that went well in one class can be a failure in another class. As Carrier<sup>88</sup> mentions, not every class like playing games during lessons and teachers have to be able to adapt to that. Indeed, some learners may dislike games from different reasons (e.g. they may not like their competitive aspect or they may consider playing games childish). Carrier therefore states that it is very important to know how to make a game attractive for learners or how to adapt it. For example, older learners may be told the didactic aim of the game so that they know the purpose of playing it. It may also happen that a game which is always popular with a particular class can be suddenly refused as the class does not feel like playing it right that time. Despite all the teacher's preparation and arrangement, the game or activity should not be employed because, as it was mentioned, learners must not be forced to take part in a game.

Hrušková<sup>89</sup> then mentions the noise that games can cause when learners get too much involved so that they forget the school environment and other classes they may disturb. Especially young learners tend to express their emotions and excitement too loudly. Hrušková thinks that teachers can calm learners down to some extent but basically, they can hardly require the learners to be completely silent and still. Therefore, it is at least convenient to make the teachers from the neighbouring classes aware of the possible noise.

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<sup>88</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 6)

<sup>89</sup> (HRUŠKOVÁ, online)

As games and activities tend to create less formal atmosphere, it may also happen that learners are disobedient or even rude to each other, especially when a competitive game is employed. Learners may also tend to speak rather Czech than English. Teachers then find it hard to keep order in the class and they become discouraged and annoyed by the learners' behaviour. However, this may be prevented by an early setting of rules and subsequent punishments for their violation.

The preparation and material securing of some games or activities can also be demanding and time-consuming and if special equipment is needed, it may be a bit expensive (e.g. *board games such as Brain Box*). As Watcyn-Jones<sup>90</sup> suggests, it is convenient to save teachers' time by storing the material (in separate envelopes, packets etc.) and by making it durable (using cards or nowadays popular laminating films). Every material should be well stored and labelled (teachers should write the name of the activity and game or skills and language practised). Thus teachers avoid unnecessary work and save time.

While employing games and activities, teachers always have to anticipate possible problems that may arise. As it was indicated, if teachers are aware of what may go wrong in a game or an activity, they can prevent it or at least prepare for it. Despite some disadvantages, it is still widely believed that advantages prevail and that all effort put into the preparation and organisation will pay off.

#### 4.5 How to Choose and Prepare Game

Before teachers use a didactic game in a lesson, it must be well prepared and thought over. There are several points teachers have to carefully consider in order to integrate a game successfully. Maňák<sup>91</sup> provides these basic didactic principles:

- a) **defining aims of a game** (cognitive, social, emotional, clarification of the reasons why to employ a certain game),
- b) **diagnosing readiness of learners** (necessary knowledge, skills, experience, adequate difficulty of a game),
- c) **game's rules clarification** (learners' familiarity with the rules, fixing of rules, event. their modification)

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<sup>90</sup> (WATCYN-JONES, 1993, p. VI)

<sup>91</sup> (MAŇÁK, ŠVEC, 2003, p. 128-129)

- d) **specification of the game leader's role** (management, evaluation, there is the possibility to entrust learners with this role after they gain experience),
- e) **determination of the manner of evaluation** (discussion, questions of subjectivity),
- f) **securing an appropriate place** (room's arrangement, adjustment of terrain),
- g) **preparation of aids, material, objects** (possibility of improvisation, own productions),
- h) **setting the time limit** (plan of a game's development, participants' time available for it),
- i) **Consideration of potential variations** (possible modifications, learners' initiative, disturbing interventions).<sup>92</sup>

Carrier<sup>93</sup> makes difference between the stage of deciding which game to use and the stage of preparation. He claims that while teachers are choosing a game, they must take into account *“the level of the students, the main aim of having the game (specific language or skill practice, general practice, relaxation, punctuation of a long lesson), students' interests, age and preferences (e.g. would they prefer imaginative or a logical problem-solving game?), the time when the game is to be used”*. Carrier<sup>94</sup> then continues that *“teachers should ensure that the aids and materials are available, students are able to cope with the requirements of the game, such as working in groups, and the linguistic demands the game makes are within the students' capabilities.”*

The stage of preparation then includes a careful preparation and organization of the game, for example to make sure that the equipment needed works well and is in a good state; or if cards or paper material are to be used, teachers should make them nice and attractive so that learners are motivated to use them. After this, Carrier<sup>95</sup> states that it is important that teachers consider *“how the game is to progress, what students will need to do, and how they will be instructed in what to do.”* Timing should be also considered and any possible problems then have to be anticipated in order to get ready to cope with them successfully.

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<sup>92</sup> (MAŇÁK, ŠVEC, 2003, p. 129)

<sup>93</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 7)

<sup>94</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 7)

<sup>95</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 7)



In addition to that, McCallum<sup>96</sup> mentions that *the structures being studied at the moment* must be taken into account and *cultural considerations* should not be omitted.

In addition, McCallum<sup>97</sup> points out the fact that teachers must be acquainted with the rules of the game they want to employ as well as to understand them precisely and be ready to explain them to learners. It is not convenient to change rules during the game and thus every ambiguity has to be clarified before the game starts. McCallum also agrees with Carrier that some games require demonstration.

The time for a game in a lesson is not strictly done. Generally, authors agree that it is the teacher who decides when it is the right time to use a game. As it was already mentioned, games can serve different purposes in a lesson. First of all, teachers must know the aim of the game they want to employ, for example, they use them at the beginning of a lesson if they want to present or practise certain vocabulary needed for further use in the lesson and contrarily, if they just want to attractively revise vocabulary learned during the lesson, teachers may employ the game at the end.

Similarly, there is not any time limit prescribed to didactic games, on the contrary, as Carrier<sup>98</sup> states: *“it is not easy to predict how long a game may last.”* Every game is different and also classes and learners are different and thus it is hard to determine the exact time in advance. Teachers operate with the time they have at their disposal and that they are willing to devote to a game. This may vary from five minutes to the whole lesson.

In addition, Hrušková<sup>99</sup> discusses the role of correction. She thinks that some correction should come after the game (if it is not a part of it) and that learners should not be evaluated by any mark. She explains that while playing games, learners should be encouraged to experiment with the language and use it in real-like situations without fear of making mistake. This enables them to get more into the language. Similarly, too much correction during a game can discourage learners and demotivate them. It is therefore advisable to correct serious mistakes after the game. Carrier<sup>100</sup> is of the same opinion, however, he states that to certain extend, it is advisable to correct mistakes of students when working in small groups in order to avoid their copying.

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<sup>96</sup> (McCALLUM, 1980, p. X)

<sup>97</sup> (McCALLUM, 1980, p. X)

<sup>98</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 9)

<sup>99</sup> (HRUŠKOVÁ, online)

<sup>100</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 9)

Choosing and preparing a successful and effective game or an activity is not always an easy task as there are a lot of points to be considered. Teachers certainly have to know well their students and school premises but their organization skills and ability to anticipate are equally important.

#### **4.6 Teacher's and Learner's Role in Game or Activity**

In a game or an activity, teachers' and learners' roles become a bit different from those of the traditional frontal teaching method. Whereas teachers are more in the background so as to monitor students' activity, learners become more involved in the given task and so they are active.

The role of the teacher as an organizer of games has been mentioned and points concerning the choice, preparation and evaluation of games were briefly discussed. This also includes giving clear instructions or demonstration (e.g. write sample sentences) at the beginning of a game or correcting learners' mistakes. According to Carrier<sup>101</sup>, one of the key tasks of teachers is making a game attractive to students. He states: *“With proper presentation most games can be made attractive and even quite staid adult students will be happy to participate in game-playing.”*

While playing a game, teachers have further tasks. As McCallum<sup>102</sup> states, teachers become facilitators, which means that they do not order learners what to do or what not to do, they rather stay in the background, monitor learners' activity and interaction and if necessary, they provide help. However, they should always have the situation under control and thus, if learners break rules or behave inappropriately, the teacher should intervene in order to keep the game in its limits and sense.

While monitoring a game or an activity, teachers also notice mistakes that learners make. Hrušková<sup>103</sup> advises to write the mistakes down in order not to forget them. Teachers can thus discuss them after the game. She also advises to end the game when learners still enjoy playing it. This, according to Hrušková, ensures that learners will look forward to its continuation or to other games. She also thinks that teachers should not take part in the game if there are small groups or few students as his or her presence might be

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<sup>101</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 6-7)

<sup>102</sup> (McCALLUM, 1980, p. XI)

<sup>103</sup> (HRUŠKOVÁ, online)

disruptive or discouraging. On the other hand, she finds the participation adequate in big groups or in games where learners form a circle as in this case, *“the group’s intimacy cannot be disturbed”*. It also helps to put learners at their ease or to make the progress of the game faster.

On the other hand, learners are expected and encouraged to play an active role in a game or in an activity as they have to use their skills and knowledge in order to be able to take part in it. Furthermore, as Hrušková<sup>104</sup> mentions, in a game, learners employ their responsibility and creativity and thanks to the social aspect of games, they experience various emotions and have to deal with unexpected situations.

Learners certainly have to respect a game’s rules as well as the rules set by their teacher or by themselves. This also includes observing the principles of behaviour in a game or an activity, which is very important for the enjoyment of the game. It is especially in the pair or group work (these are the two main ways of grouping learners in a game) where social competencies are developed and trained. Hrušková<sup>105</sup> introduces several social skills that games help to develop: listening to each other without interruption, respecting rules, handling criticism and one’s own emotions, recognizing and successful use of elements of non-verbal communication, recognizing conflicts and searching for solution with others, bearing responsibility in a group, offering help to others and accepting it when offered.

One of the main principles that teachers must respect is that the participation in a game is free and learners must not be forced to play it. However, as McCallum<sup>106</sup> states, every student or pupil should be somehow involved in a game. As it has been already mentioned, it is up to teachers to make the game attractive for learners and ensure that it fits their level, needs and interests. Nevertheless, not every member may be willing to take part in a game from various reasons. In this case, McCallum advises to engage students in different roles such as judges, score-keepers or audience. He explains: *“Everyone should be made to feel he has some part in the game, even though for the moment it is a passive role.”*<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> (HRUŠKOVÁ, online)

<sup>105</sup> (HRUŠKOVÁ, online)

<sup>106</sup> (McCALLUM, 1980, p. xi-xii)

<sup>107</sup> (McCALLUM, 1980, p. xii)

## 4.7 Activities and Games Practising and Revising Vocabulary

In the following text, classification of games and activities will be provided. As games and activities are very complex issues, different authors classify games and activities according to their own standpoint and preferences. I thus introduce my classification of games and activities based on classification of several authors. My sources are always mentioned.

### 4.7.1 Activities Practising and Revising Vocabulary

There is a great variety of interesting and stimulating activities that help to teach, practise, revise or recycle vocabulary. Different authors provide different classification and sometimes their conception of activities varies. In my thesis I perceive activities as exercises that require more than a sheet of paper and a pencil. Activities, according to my point of view, are more attractive and motivating for learners than ordinary exercises. For example, they can engage more senses at one time and thus, enable the learners to move around the class, touch words and arrange them on the paper but also on their table or on the board (e.g. crosswords, matching activities), or to perform an oral activity (e.g. situational dialogue or role play), etc. In the following text, I provide general overview of vocabulary activities. Next, I present some activities based on written and spoken form and then I mention how audio, visual or audio-visual material can be used to practise vocabulary in an attractive way.

#### 4.7.1.1 General Overview of Vocabulary Activities

- **Associations** – we often use **mind maps**, **spider-grams** or **vocabulary networks** to present new vocabulary but it is a perfect technique for revision as well. Generally the teacher can give a word and learners try to think up as many words as they can that are connected with the word (e.g. travelling: car, bus, train, holiday, beach, mountains, foreign countries, Australia). **Brainstorming** is an activity in which a topic or a word is given and learners have to think of as many words as possible that are associated with the topic.

- **Groupings** – teacher can give learners a list of words, the learners then try to put words into categories according to some common point (see Chapter 2.5.3, ‘grouping of items’). To make this activity more engaging, words can be, for example, written on cards and scattered all around the classroom. Learners then have to walk around the classroom, find all the words and write them into the appropriate category.
- **Stories** – there are many activities in which pupils work with stories and vocabulary. For example, teacher can give ten words that must appear in learners’ stories. Another possibility is to let learners choose at least five pictures and according to them the story will be created. Learners also like the game called “*Story Cubes*” where they toss the cubes (there are nine cubes) that have a picture on each side. After they toss them, learners create a story from the pictures on the top side of the cubes. This is quite a demanding activity as not only a good knowledge of vocabulary but also that of grammar is important, but on the other hand, pupils revise the words in context which is one of the best ways of successful language-learning.
- **Odd one out** – in this vocabulary activity, pupils must find the word that does not belong to other words given (e.g. drawer, cupboard, sofa, baby – ‘baby’ is not a piece of furniture).
- **Crosswords** –they are suitable for all learners and can be also used for testing vocabulary. Teachers can provide clues in the form of pictures, definitions or Czech equivalents.
- **Word cards** – learners can revise vocabulary by writing English word on one side of a card and its Czech translation on the reverse side of the card. The number of cards that we then use should be between 20 and 50. Learners can then test themselves, or in pairs or groups, by: giving either the Czech or the English translation, using the word in a sentence, guessing each other’s word (asking yes/no questions), making categories (organising words) etc.<sup>108</sup>
- **Word searches** – teachers can adapt word search to the level of learners and thus make it attractive for all learners.

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<sup>108</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 145 - 147)

- **Matching words to the pictures and labelling pictures** – for example, we can use a picture of a room and its furniture where several numbered arrows point at each object in the room. Learners have to write a word which corresponds to each number. In other activity we can use flashcards or real objects and learners have to match them with given words or name them without any help.
- **Projects** – the employment of projects in lessons of English language can be very motivating and useful as through them, students do not only practise or revise vocabulary and grammar, they also learn how to work with information and they practise writing skills. Learners like to write about things or persons that interest them, for example about their favourite actor or singer, about animals, sports, foreign countries, food etc.
- **Tongue twisters** – through tongue twister, learners practise especially pronunciation of words, but they can certainly be translated and thus some new words can be learned easily. Tongue twisters are very amusing for all learners.
- **Riddles** – riddles are quite popular among people. We like the feeling of resolving a problem which motivates us to think about it and to search for a solution. Riddles are very involving activities that are capable of capturing our mind and attention and thus they certainly have their place in language learning.
- **Ice-breaker activities** – this kind of activities are designed for new groups of learners or when a teacher is getting to know his or her learners. Watcyn-Jones<sup>109</sup> also recommends them for pair or group work. He mentions the activity “*Find someone who...*”<sup>110</sup> for which a lot of variation exist. In this activity, each learner is given a card with five sentences. They are given some time to make questions on the sentences given (e.g. The learner gets a card with one of the five questions and the first task is: “*Find someone who: can name three things you would find in a bedroom*”. The learner makes a question: *Can you name three things you would find in a bedroom?*). Then, learners walk around the class, ask the questions and try to elicit an answer for each question (e.g. *a bed, a lamp, a drawer*). They are allowed to ask just one question at every time they speak to one of their classmate. Learners then write down the answers to their questions and the name of the

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<sup>109</sup> (WATCYN-JONES, 1993, p. 1)

<sup>110</sup> (WATCYN-JONES, 1993, p. 1)

corresponding classmate. It is advisable to give a time-limit and stop the activity even though not everyone found answer for each question. At the end, teachers can ask each learner to read out one of the questions and an appropriate answer or to read the question for which no answer was given and answer it together.

#### **4.7.1.2 Working with Texts and Writing Activities**

Written exercises are probably the most common and the most used ways of practising and revising vocabulary. Redman and Gairns<sup>111</sup> present them as means of testing vocabulary as well. They are very easy to understand and they do not require much time to be done. However, it is often very hard for learners to concentrate the whole lesson on a sheet of paper with exercises to do. In order to make an exercise more attractive and motivating for learners, teachers can transform it into an activity by, for example, making photocopies and cutting words out. Watcyn-Jones<sup>112</sup> states: *“Learning becomes more active, the students get more involved and, in my experience, retention improves enormously.”* He then underlines the possibility to touch and arrange words and he adds: *“the more senses that are involved in the learning process the better.”* For activities, different ways of working with text can be used:

- **Multiple choice quiz** – in this activity, learners choose one from four alternatives given which suits best the gap in a text (or in a sentence). We can make it more interesting by dividing learners into groups or pairs each of which votes for the ‘right’ answer for each question. Each group or pair then scores a point for each correct answer. At the end, points can be counted and groups or pairs evaluated.
- **Word formation** – in a text there are some words, each of them in a bracket and the learners’ task is to give those words into an appropriate form so that it suits the text. Teachers can make word formation more interactive by, for example, creating cards in a way that each word is separated into halves each of them written separately on two cards. Teacher can then, for example, scatter the cards of 8-10 words around the class. Learners’ task is to find the words by putting the correct halves together.

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<sup>111</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 115-124)

<sup>112</sup> (WATCYN-JONES, 1993, p. v)

- **Sentence formation** – in this type of activity, teachers can, for example, cut several sentences into words (each sentence has a different colour) and give them to pairs or small groups. Each group or pair then scrambles the words on the table and tries to rearrange them in the correct order.
- **Focusing on key-vocabulary in the text** – students have to read the text and then they have to do the true/false exercise.
- **True/False** – this technique can be used for texts as mentioned above or separately, e.g. *Anglická synonyma slova 'list' jsou:*

<i>sheet</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>page</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>leaf</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>live</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>F</i>

- **Matching** – e.g. matching the word to its definition, to the picture etc. Matching exercises are very widely used as they are not difficult to prepare and are quite effective. The possibility to physically arrange words is itself motivating and it helps to better retain and remember the words.
- **Error correction** – students are given a text that contains some faults and the task is to find them and correct them.
- **Translation** – translation should inevitably be a part of language-learning. Teachers can make translation more attractive by employing amusing or authentic texts such as jokes, quotes from movies or quotes of famous people, poems or songs.
- **Keeping diaries** – some learners may like to write down what they experienced, their ideas and feelings and illustrate it by pictures or photos. However, in my opinion, they should not be forced to this activity.
- **Odd one out, Crosswords, Projects**



### 4.7.1.3 Speaking Activities

Another possibility is to practise and revise vocabulary via speaking activities. This could be sometimes quite time-demanding, but speaking activities very closely reflect the reality where learners will face situations that require not only their knowledge but also their skills and self-confidence. The following division is taken from Gairns and Redman.<sup>113</sup>

- **Role play and Short role play** – in this technique, learners usually work in pairs or in small groups. They are given specific roles and the task of each learner is to act his or her role. Learners can be provided not only with instructions for their role (role card) but also with some useful phrases and words. Interaction, cooperation and communication among learners are integral parts of this type of activity. Role plays should certainly be a part of language learning as they present real-life situations.
- **Situation dialogues** – they include real-life situations such as shopping for clothes, making an airline reservation, going to a doctor, reporting a crime etc. Learners are not given any specific role but rather a situation to deal with in pairs or in small groups.
- **Narrative trough visuals** – e.g. learners are given a card with a picture that represents the vocabulary that is tested: class is divided into groups each of which gets different cards. Each group is supposed to create a story that will include all the items they were given.
- **Co-operative storytelling** – e.g. a woman sitting in a café and drinking some tea in afternoon – describe the woman. Suddenly a man came into the restaurant and called her name – what was her name? Who was the man?

In such kinds of activities as the narratives are, learners can cooperate and each of them may be involved thanks to taking turns.

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<sup>113</sup> (GAIRNS, REDMAN, 1986, p. 144-153)

#### ***4.7.1.4 Activities Based on Audio, Visual and Audio-Visual Material***

- **Songs** – songs can be very useful and effective way of learning new vocabulary and they certainly help to revise already learned words. Teachers can use songs in different ways – e.g. teachers leave out certain words in the text of a song and learners have to fill them in while listening to the song; learners associate pictures to words highlighted in the text of the song; learners put jumbled parts of the song into the right order, etc.
- **Movies and other audio-visual materials** – using audio-visual materials such as movies, series, documentaries or records of native speakers can be very motivating for learners. They are a good source for devising various activities (gap-filling, matching, labelling, describing and guessing characters etc.). They can be used even without sound (e.g. learners can be told to try to dub a scene or to guess what characters say) or without image (e.g. learners can try to guess what is happening in the scene or teachers can give learners pictures that illustrate a given scene and the task is to put them into the correct order according to what learners hear). Movie posters, teasers, reviews or soundtracks can be a good didactic material as well. Posters are, for example, very useful to practise description.
- **Interactive whiteboard** – interactive whiteboard is nowadays widely used in the foreign-language classes. Learners are attracted by interactive activities where animation and picture plays a big role. They can see, hear and even touch words. Different activities can be done through interactive whiteboard, including gap-filling, matching, quizzes, crosswords, etc.

### **4.8 Classification of Games Practising and Revising Vocabulary**

There is a wide range of games that were devised for a foreign language-learning. Games can be divided according to various aspects such as grouping of learners, skills and knowledge practised, aims of the lesson, actual classroom climate and learners' engagement etc. However, there is no clear classification of vocabulary games as different authors use different classifications. Therefore, with the inspiration of the text by

Polerecká<sup>114</sup> and that by Watcyn-Jones<sup>115</sup>, I introduce my classification of vocabulary games based on several didactic aspects and for each type I describe at least one example of a game.

#### 4.8.1 Games Focused on Specific Aspect of Word Knowledge

This type of games focuses on different aspects of word knowledge mentioned in Chapter 2.3 (see ‘knowing the word’) and treated in detail in Appendix A. Learners can practise the right spelling and pronunciation or they can guess a word through description of its meaning and they can also play with letters so as to form already known words.

##### 4.8.1.1 Spelling Games

Spelling games are based on practising the written form of words the knowledge of which is important for writing as well as for reading skills. Written form of a word differs from its spoken form and this type of games can help students to realize the differences. Among the spelling games certainly belongs a well-known guessing game called **Hangman** where one player (or a teacher) thinks of a word (but it could be a phrase or a sentence as well) and writes as many dashes as there are letters in the word on the blackboard or paper. Other players try to guess it by saying letters. If a letter is well-guessed, it must be written in all its positions. If the suggested letter is not in the given word, an element of a gallows and a hanged man is drawn. The game ends when the given word is guessed or when the gallows with the hanged man are drawn. Other games of this type are **Word Search** and **Word ladders** introduced by Carrier<sup>116</sup>. In **Word ladders**, two words are written on the blackboard with a space between them, “*the teacher explains that one word must be changed into another in a number of steps by changing only one letter at a time (e.g. boot - .... - .... –shoe; answer: boot – soot – shot – shoe).*” Students can work individually, in pairs or in groups and they can use dictionaries to check if the words they found are correct. McCallum<sup>117</sup> mentions **Scrambled words** where learners are given a list of words but in each word the letters are jumbled. Learners’ task is to unscramble them and

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<sup>114</sup> (POLERECKÁ, 2011)

<sup>115</sup> (WAYTCYN-JONES, 1993, p. iii-iv)

<sup>116</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 43)

<sup>117</sup> (McCALLUM, 1980, p. 87)

form the correct word (e.g. *gmea* – *game*). These games can be adapted for all learners, from elementary to proficient.

#### **4.8.1.2 Pronunciation Games**

Pronunciation games focus on practicing the spoken form of words. Correct pronunciation is vital for comprehension and successful communication. In pronunciation games, learners can be for example challenged to correctly pronounce given words or to recognize (and eventually write down) words or sounds that were pronounced by someone else.

Pronunciation is practised in the game called ***Rhyme ping-pong*** introduced by Carrier<sup>118</sup>. In this game, both listening and speaking skills are practised. First of all, the teacher introduces the game by giving a word (e.g. *stay*) and encouraging the students to find other words that rhyme with the given word (e.g. *play, lay, clay, stay, etc.*). Then, two students compete, one of them says a word (e.g. *be*) and the other one tries to quickly find its rhyme word (e.g. *me*). If one of the players cannot continue, his opponent wins a point. The two players continue next rally that is started by the winner of the previous one. Carrier suggests that the same pair continues the rallies until seven points are gained. Then, another two learners can play.

Another popular pronunciation game is called ***Whispered Words*** where two groups of the same number of players compete against each other. The members of each group must stand in a row, one member after another. The teacher whispers to the two learners standing in the front of each row a word (in English or Czech), the word is then transmitted in English from one player of the group to another and the last player in each row has to say the word aloud. The first one to correctly pronounce the word scores a point for his/her group. There are many possible variations of this game, for example, teachers can use pictures or the players at the end of the row have to draw the picture that manifests the meaning of the given word on the blackboard. Whole sentences can be also used instead of separate words. This game is popular with both younger and older learners.

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<sup>118</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 59)

### 4.8.1.3 Word-building Games

Word-building games are based on formation of words and they give learners the insight into the areas of affixation, compounding or conversion (see Chapter 2.3). Word-building games can also practise spelling and pronunciation. Playing with words and letters can be very amusing. An example of this type of a game can be **Word Family** where a word is given (*e.g. cook*) and learners' task is to use prefixes, suffixes or compounding in order to form as many words with the root 'cook' as possible (*e.g. cookery, cooking, overcooked, undercooked, cooked, uncooked*). More words can be then given. Learners can work individually, in pairs or in groups. For each correctly formed word they score one point. Winners are those with the most points at the end.

**Mixed syllables**<sup>119</sup> is a game that practises word-building from syllables. First of all, the teacher writes a word that contains two syllables on the board and divides the word according to the syllables (*e.g. handmade = hand – made*). The teacher then divides the class into pairs or groups, each of which is given a pack of cards with one of the syllables written on each card. Each learner is given the same number of cards (5-6) and the rest of the cards are put face down on the table. First player starts with one of his cards put face up on the table. Other players, in turns, try to put down the second card to form the whole (two-syllable) word. If a learner cannot form the word, he or she takes an extra card but if he or she manages to do it, the learner scores one point and starts the next round.

### 4.8.1.4 Word Meaning Games

These games focus on the knowledge of words' meaning(s). They can include the work with synonyms, antonyms or polysemes (see Chapter 2.3) of given words as well as defining or guessing the meaning of a word and in some cases, translation may be required. There are also games that are based on classification of given words according to the meaning (*e.g. chair, table, drawer, sofa – furniture*).

**Hot Seat** is a good example of game where the knowledge of the word's meaning is necessary. Class is divided into two teams that form two groups facing the board. One member of each team moves his or her chair forward to face his or her group. Then the first word is written on the board (*e.g. the teacher can use recently-learned words, famous*

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<sup>119</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 39)

people, animals, etc.). Then the two learners in front of the class, in the ‘hot seats’, take turns in calling members of their groups to give them clues about the word written on the board. They both can try to guess the word anytime during the game and the one who guesses it first, scores one point for his or her team. Next, other two players go to sit in the ‘hot seats’ and the game continues. As Learners must correctly explain the word’s meaning, they should also formulate correct sentences in order to be understood and thus they do not practise only their vocabulary skills but also their speaking skills. A lot of variations of the game exist. Other games of this type are *Guess the meaning*<sup>120</sup> or *Synonym bingo*<sup>121</sup> mentioned by Carrier.

## 4.8.2 Games Requiring Specific Grouping of Learners

Most games require different grouping of learners. There are games for the whole class, for groups or for pairs. The form of grouping influences the involvement of individual learners in the lesson as well as in the game. For example, some learners may feel uncomfortable to express themselves before the whole class and thus work or game in pairs or groups can be more motivating for them. In groups or in pairs, learners usually get more opportunities to speak and to be actively involved. It is advisable to use different forms of grouping of learners during the lessons of foreign language learning.

### 4.8.2.1 Games for the Whole Class

In this type of games, all learners play together and no groups or teams are formed. This type of grouping enables every learner to express himself/herself. However, it may happen that less forceful or shier students will stay in the background. The teacher is usually an organizer (more active role - e.g. the teacher tells the learners what to do in a given time, gives points etc.) or a supervisor of the game (more passive role- e.g. the teacher controls the development of the game, corrects mistakes if necessary, etc.).

An example of the game for the whole class is Carrier’s *Celebrities*<sup>122</sup> where the class tries to guess the name of a well-known person. One learner chooses (or is given) the name and the others ask questions about his or her clothes, job, life, nationality, physical

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<sup>120</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 40)

<sup>121</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 46)

<sup>122</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p. 32)

appearance etc. The learner who is answering them can say only *Yes* or *No*. Clues can be also given to the others (e.g. the first letter of his/her name). The first one to guess the right name scores one point and becomes the next ‘presenter’. This game requires the correct use of question forms which may be difficult for young or elementary learners. Carrier therefore suggests to revise question forms before starting the game or to write some sample questions on the board.

The game called *Hot Seat* described in this chapter can also be used with the whole class if only one learner goes to sit in the ‘hot seat’ and the rest of the class gives him/her clues to guess the word written on the board. After having guessed the word, he or she can choose the next ‘guesser’ (e.g. the learner who provided the last or the best clue). Indeed, a lot of games that can be played with the whole class can also be used with groups and eventually with pairs.

#### **4.8.2.2 Games for Groups**

This organization form can be more effective and motivating for learners as it gives them more space to express themselves. Learners can be divided into big teams or small groups according to the aims of the game. Teachers can also divide the class according to different criteria (e.g. learners’ abilities, blond-haired or brown-haired, boys vs. girls, or just randomly). Sometimes it is important to group learners of different abilities and language knowledge so as to make all the groups equal. The advantage of this is also the fact that less skilful learners can be helped by those who master the language better. On the other hand, teachers may find it adequate to group students of equal knowledge so that each group can work at their pace.

However, group work can be difficult to control by teacher. The teacher cannot be at each group at the same time and thus he or she cannot supervise the development of the game and cannot take notes about all the serious mistakes. Learners may also tend to speak their mother language and thus it can be advisable to appoint one member as a ‘leader’ and supervisor of the group.

Lee<sup>123</sup> introduces *Word Race* as a group game where each group receives the same picture, for example a scene with a park and different people doing different things (e.g.

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<sup>123</sup> (LEE, 1979, p. 46)

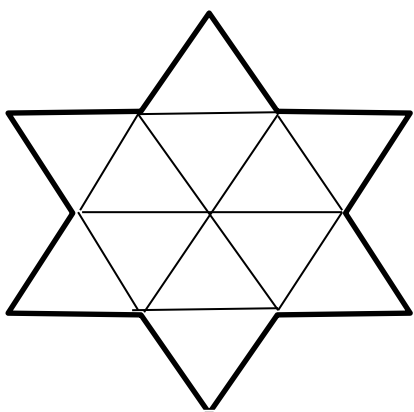
running, feeding ducks, playing games etc.). There can also be different trees and plants. Each group then has five minutes to write down correctly and legibly as many things and actions shown in the picture as they can (e.g. a river, a family having a picnic, a basket, a runner, children playing football etc.). Beginners might just name the items they can see in the picture.

#### **4.8.2.3 Games for Pairs**

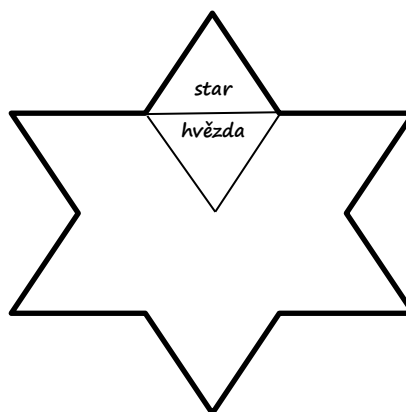
The biggest advantage of games for pairs is that they require complete concentration and engagement of all learners and thus each one has got a lot of space to practise the language. Games in pairs are easier to supervise by teachers and students are less likely to speak the mother language or to cheat. However, it is important to carefully consider the pairs we make as we can be sure that, for example, two troublesome learners together will not do what is required. It is also true, that pair work sometimes tempts learners to speak Czech. Teachers should thus always supervise learners' activity, though it is evident that he or she cannot control all the learners at the same time. As in group work, it is sometimes suitable to put together a learner who understands well the language used and a learner who is not so skilful in the language so that the first one mentioned can help the other one.

*Star* is an example of a game for pairs and I got it from my colleges. The class is divided into pairs and each learner receives a paper with the star displayed below, in Picture 1. Each learner then writes 12 English words and their Czech equivalents into the star so that the English word is above its Czech equivalent as shown in Picture 2. Each of the twelve connecting lines gets one English word and one Czech word. Each star then must be cut out to twelve triangles (along the connecting lines). Learners in pairs then exchange their 'pieces' of the star and the task for each learner is to correctly assemble the pieces by putting the English word and its Czech equivalent together as shown in the Picture 2. Thus they must put together all the pieces (or triangles) so as to create the star where each word corresponds to its Czech equivalent. We can set a time limit or learners can compete who first correctly assembles the triangles. Nevertheless, this game is equally interesting and motivating without any time limit or competition. It is suitable for all types of learners.





*Picture 1: Star A*



*Picture 2: Star B*

### 4.8.3 Cooperative and Competitive Games

Most games have either competitive or cooperative character. Both competitive and cooperative games have their value in the learning process. However, they completely differ from each other. Whereas competitive games are based on competition between learners, cooperative games focus on discussion and close cooperation. Teachers must know their students very well to decide on which type of game would be suitable and interesting for their learners.

Competitive games are especially attractive for younger learners who like to compare their skills with their peers. These types of games can be therefore very motivating for young learners no matter if they play in groups, pairs or individually. The most motivating factor is the prize (just being the first one is very often enough rewarding) that drives them forward to better performances. They try harder and with much more effort because they want to be the best and gain recognition or praise from the teacher. The typical example of a competitive game is **King** where learners are in two rows and two learners in front of each row compete for who first translates a given word or says what is in a given picture. Nevertheless, not every learner is fond of competitive games and thus those who do not want to take part in a game can be time-keepers or they can record scores and make sure that no one is cheating. Older students may be reluctant to play competitive games. Teachers must respect this and find other alternatives.

On the contrary, cooperative games are based on communication and cooperation and there is no winner or loser. Basically, there is some problem to be solved or discussed in pairs or in groups. Team-mates are encouraged to discuss a problem, to cooperate with

each other and eventually to reach a compromise. They learn to listen to each other, to take into account and consider someone else's opinion but also to express and justify their own point of view. Wright<sup>124</sup> states: "*The essential ingredient of a game is challenge. We do not believe that challenge is synonymous with competition. (...) We like the idea that many of the games depend on cooperation in accepting problems and searching for solutions to them.*" One of the games they suggest is called ***Describe and draw a picture***<sup>125</sup> where learners work in pairs. The first member is describing a picture given to him/her by the teacher and the second one is trying to draw it. After the task is completed, they both compare the two pictures and discuss them. Variations of the game are possible.

There are also games that combine both competition and cooperation. Learners may be divided into pairs or groups within which they cooperate in order to defeat other pairs or groups. An example of this activity is ***Guess what I'm drawing*** where learners are divided into two teams from each of which one member goes to the blackboard. The teacher gives them an English word and the task is to draw it so that other members could guess the word. A detailed analysis of the game is provided in the practical part of the theses (see Chapter 6.1)

#### **4.8.4 Games Based on the Aim of the Lesson**

As it was already mentioned in Chapter 4.5, games can be used for a specific aim of the lesson. Teachers can choose a game according to what they want to do with vocabulary in the lesson. If their aim is to teach new words interactively, they can use games that focus on presentation of new vocabulary. Teachers may also want to revise recently learned words and thus they choose a game that suits this particular aim. Another possibility is to recycle words of the whole topic area discussed during a longer period of time or to employ vocabulary learned earlier.

##### ***4.8.4.1 Games Focused on Presentation of New Vocabulary***

New vocabulary can certainly be presented in an interesting way by using various games and activities. In Chapter 2.5, different techniques of presenting new vocabulary

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<sup>124</sup> (WRIGHT et al., 1983, p. 4)

<sup>125</sup> (WRIGHT et al., 1983, p20-23)

were mentioned and all of them can be employed in games. Indeed, pictures, sounds or real objects are often an integral part of games and activities. Teachers use them to demonstrate the meaning of words without having to translate them.

The game **King** described in the section ‘Cooperative and Competitive Games’, is a game that can be used for presentation and quick revision of vocabulary. Teachers can first say the new word and demonstrate its meaning by showing the corresponding picture or object to learners. Learners first repeat the word together and then the teacher calls individual students to say it. Thus several words can be taught and the game *King* can be played right after.

Another possibility is to attach the pictures on the board (we can use magnets, adhesive tape or patafix glue pads) and then play a game called **Swatting**. Learners form two rows facing the board and the two learners staying first in each row get a fly-swatter. The teacher says a word in English and the learners’ task is to swat the corresponding picture. The first one to swat the correct picture stays in the game and goes at the back of his or her row, the other one has to quit the game. Then, other two players compete. The winner is the ‘one last standing’. This game is suitable for children and younger learners.

#### **4.8.4.2 Games Focused on Revision of Vocabulary**

Vocabulary can certainly be revised by all the games mentioned above. Another well-liked game is **Pantomime** (or **Guess the mime**<sup>126</sup>) via which we can revise especially the vocabulary related to physical and other activities (e.g. skiing, swimming, walking, but also reading, listening, counting ...), emotions and states of mind (e.g. sad, happy, angry, dreamy, sleepy ...) or objects, people and animals. Pantomime can be played with the whole class, in teams or even in pairs. While played with the whole class, teachers can prepare cards with the words they want to revise and let the learners cast them (for instance at the beginning of the game or every time some next student goes to perform), or the learners can think of the words themselves. At the beginning and learners make a circle, one ‘actor’ is chosen to perform the first word. Other members put up their hands if they know the correct answer. The teacher should control who was the first with his or her hand up and let him or her say the word. It is also possible that the ‘actor’ chooses the one who will answer as sometimes it is difficult to notice who was the first. If the answer is correct,

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<sup>126</sup> (CARRIER, 1980, p.13)

the ‘actor’ and the ‘guesser’ switch places. And the game continues. I always play this game with the whole class and I let each learner perform at least one word.

#### ***4.8.4.3 Games Focused on Recycling of Vocabulary***

Recycling of vocabulary is a very important part of language learning as it enables learners to employ or reuse words they learned over a period of time. Games provide a fertile ground for learners to play and interact with words and make their use more spontaneous. Thanks to games teachers can also have a feedback about the general vocabulary knowledge of their learners as well as about how well they remember the words learned.

Vocabulary can be recycled in the game *Shopping Tour*<sup>127</sup> by McCallum, where general or high-frequency vocabulary is used and the letters of the alphabet reviewed. In this game, learners sit at their desk or they make a circle. The game starts with the first learner who tells about a shopping tour he went on and he or she adds an item he or she bought. The initial letter of the word must be A (e.g. *an airplane*). The next learner has to repeat the whole sentence, the item named, and add his/her item beginning with letter B: “*I went shopping and I bought an airplane and a bike.*” The game continues according to this pattern and all letters of the alphabet are used. McCarthy suggests that the letters Q, X, Z may be eliminated. He also mentions a variation in which an adjective is added to the object named (e.g. *I went shopping and I bought an awesome airplane*). This game is suitable for intermediate or older learners. Elementary learners can play a variation of this game by saying just words (e.g. *an airplane, an airplane and a bike...*).

Another game recycling vocabulary is called *A hot-air balloon*. This game is especially based on the revision of professions and words such as *useful* or *useless* but it requires wider vocabulary knowledge as well. Before the game is started, each learner chooses a profession and the teacher writes them all into one column on the board. The teacher then starts to explain that the whole class went on a trip in a hot-air balloon. The balloon is now over the sea and they are too heavy to fly further and thus someone has to leave. Each learner after another suggests the one who must leave, the teacher makes points on the board and when the biggest number of points is counted, the profession suggested has to defend himself or herself why it should not be him or her. If he or she

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<sup>127</sup> (McCALLUM, 1980, p. 16)

does not manage to persuade the others, he or she must leave. The profession is then erased from the board as well as all the points and the game is repeated until there is only one last ‘survivor’. Learners can use phrases such as: “*I think that the businessman is useless on the board. In my opinion, there’s no need for the shop assistant...*” or in defence they can argue: “*I think my profession would help our rescue. When we are rescued, I would work instead of him...*”<sup>128</sup>

#### 4.8.5 Board Games

Board games are very popular among all learners. They usually include a pre-marked surface or ‘board’ and some pieces that can be moved or placed. Sometimes they consist of playing cards, dice or other equipment. Teachers can also prepare simple board games themselves as suggested by Watcyn-Jones<sup>129</sup>. His board game *Clothes* is made for pairs and consists of a board with pictures of clothes (6 pictures across and 5 pictures down), below each picture there is a gap. Below the board with pictures, there are six squares (numbered 1-6) each of which has five words in it representing the clothes on the board. Players need a die and different coloured pencils. The first player throws the die and gets number 5, for example. This means that he or she has to look at the words in the square number 5 and choose one word that he or she writes into the gap below the corresponding picture and he or she crosses the word out from the list in the square. Then, the second player continues and the game is played in the same way. If any of the players throws a number where no word is left, he or she misses a turn. The turn is also missed when one of the players is not able to place a word. In these cases, the other player is on turn. Watcyn-Jones recommends to set a time limit and to stop students at the end of it. The teacher then reads out the answers and the learners check their answers. For each correctly placed word, one point is scored and for each incorrectly placed word, one point is lost.

Other board games that can be used for revising or recycling vocabulary but that require specific equipment are *Scrabble*, *Pass the Bomb*, *Brain Box* or *Story cubes*. The game *Pass the Bomb* is very popular among students and pupils. It is very useful while revising a thematic vocabulary or a Unit vocabulary from the textbook. I describe this game in the practical part of the thesis (see Chapter 6.2).

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<sup>128</sup> (EIBENOVÁ et al., 2013, p. 91)

<sup>129</sup> (WATCYN-JONES, 1993, p. 11-12)

### **III. PRACTICAL PART**

#### **5 Introduction**

I would like to begin the practical part with its brief description. The practical part consists of two parts. The first one is devoted to games and activities and the second part presents the results of my research.

In the first part, several vocabulary games and activities will be described and their employment in a particular lesson will be discussed. I used all of the games mentioned in Chapter 6 in actual lessons of English language with several classes, the characteristics of which are provided at the beginning of the subchapters devoted to the particular games. Each game is also followed with a brief description or overview of its use within the lesson and its advantages and disadvantages that emerged from their practical employment.

Furthermore, the practical part of the thesis contains three thematic lesson plans consisted of several activities that were designed for three different classes of a grammar school where I performed my teaching practice. All three lesson plans are based on the same topic – *movies* – and they try to show how this topic can be used in the creation of numerous interesting vocabulary activities. The worksheets for the activities are displayed in the Appendix J. At the end of the chapter devoted to the thematic lessons, the results of a short questionnaire related to the lessons and distributed to the learners after each of them are summed up. The description of each activity as well as the reflection over its employment in the given class is displayed in Appendix L.

Finally, the research exploring the teachers' point of view over the employment of games and activities in English language education is presented and the results of it are summed up in the final chapter of the practical part of the thesis.

## **6 Analysis of Games and Activities Developing Vocabulary and Their Practical Employment in the Lesson of English Language**

As it was mentioned, it is believed that the employment of games in lessons of English language has numerous advantages. The aim of this chapter is to analyse five games and demonstrate their use in practice. It studies whether games can really stimulate learners' interest and activity and if their use for revision or practice of vocabulary is beneficial for learners. This chapter tries to confirm the statement that learners are more interested and involved if the subject matter is presented in a more interesting and amusing way.

In the following text, five games are presented from which two are borrowed and three are devised by myself. Each game mentioned in the text was employed in a lesson of English language in classes of both first and second stage of elementary school. The aim and rules of each game are described, the material needed is mentioned and analysis of the game's course in a given class is provided. Each game is followed with a brief reflexion over its employment in the given class. Furthermore, the characteristics of the classes are given at the beginning of each chapter concerned with individual games.

### **6.1 Weather Forecast**

#### ***Characteristics of the Class 4.A***

This class belongs to the Stage 1 of elementary school. There are 15 students in the class of English language and all of them are members of the same class (other language classes are generally combined from different classes of the same grade). I have been teaching the class 4.A for half a year. As they belong to the first stage of elementary school and they have been learning English just for two years, the emphasis is put on the acquisition of vocabulary and the repetition and comprehension of basic and simple grammatical structures. The class works with the textbook called *ChitChat2* where the activities and exercises are designed to be interactive and amusing. The majority of students of this class do not have problems with English, their pronunciation is very good and they have positive attitude towards learning English language. There are three students who are less skilful in the English language and they tend to be quite passive during lessons. There are also four boys that are often very noisy and whose inappropriate

behaviour sometimes disrupts the lessons. They often speak without being asked and thus deprive other pupils of the opportunity to speak. Those boys however belong to the more skilful pupils of the class and their performance is usually very satisfying. They attended some private courses of English before they started to learn it at school. There is also a certain rivalry among some boys of the class and thus I often have to calm them down or reprimand them for being mean to each other. For this reason I do not allow them to sit next to each other.

Generally speaking, the pupils of the class 4.A are very active and cooperative during lessons of English language and they are quite nice to work with.

### ***Material Needed***

- **Weather forecast cards**– see Appendix B
- **Weather cards** – see Appendix C
- **Flashcards or pictures with activities** – For the game I chose the following activities: *Playing tennis, Walking, Skiing, Flying a kite, Swimming, Playing cards, Going to the gym*. At the back of the picture, there is the English expression of the activity in case pupils do not recall it (see Appendix D)
- **Models representing weather and temperature** (sun, rainy cloud, stormy cloud, windy cloud, snowy cloud, thunder, cold and hot thermometer) – cardboard or sturdy paper can be used and painted accordingly (see Appendix E)

### ***Game's Description and Rules***

In the class, we were discussing the topic of weather and so I created a game that I named ***Weather Forecast***. This game is focused on the revision of vocabulary related to weather, clothes, days of the week and activities and the time required for playing it is about 30 minutes. It is suitable for young pupils of the fourth, fifth or sixth grade but I believe that with a slight alternation it could be used with the students of higher grades of elementary school. The game practises pronunciation as well as spelling and both receptive and productive skills are trained. It is based on work in pairs but it also focuses on cooperation of the whole class. The game enables all pupils to use their creativity to perform their task as well as it enables them to use the language in a practical and amusing way. During the game, pupils take roles of presenters and spectators.



Before the beginning of the game, the teacher should start with a very brief revision of days of the week, clothes and weather to warm the students up (e.g. ask questions such as: *What is your favourite day of the week? What is the weather like today? Is it cold today? How many degrees is it outside? What clothes do you put on? ...*). Make sure that pupils understand the words *below*, *above* and *put on*. After this, let pupils make pairs or divide them yourself, if necessary. There should be seven pairs representing seven days of the week but the game can be played with fewer or more learners as well. When this phase is finished, ask the pupils (in English with the help of mime, or eventually in Czech) if they watch or listen to the *weather forecast* and write the expression on the board. Continue with: *What does weather forecast mean? Why do people watch or listen to it? Do you know any weather presenter?* Elicit the answers and help pupils, if necessary.

Then, let them imagine that the weather presenters of BBC are ill and all the electronic system needed for the presentation of weather is out of function. Therefore, they have to take over the work of presenters and computers and both tell and demonstrate the weather predictions to the spectators for the following week. Each pair will get a *Weather forecast card* (see Appendix B) with information that must be all mentioned (day, weather, temperature, clothes).

Each pair has to decide who will *tell* the information (the presenter) and who will *show and mime* them to the spectators (the assistant). Each pair has at their disposal models representing different type of weather (sun, stormy cloud, rainy cloud, snowy cloud, thunder, wind) and temperature (blue and red thermometers). The clothes must be mimed. The assistant demonstrates the information simultaneously to the presenter's speech. The presenter has to give enough time to spectators to write down the information and he or she makes small pauses after each item mentioned (day, weather, temperature, clothes).

It is also necessary that there are sample sentences that the presenter can use so that children have a clear idea about what they are asked to do. These can be written on the board or on the *Weather forecast card*. It is very convenient to begin the game with a demonstration of a possible presentation. There is an example:

Presenter: "*Good morning, here is the weather forecast for Monday. On Monday it is hot and sunny.*"

(Assistant: *Shows the model of sun.*)

Presenter: "*It is twenty degrees above zero.*"

(Assistant: *Shows the red thermometer.*)

Presenter: *Put on your T-shirt, sunglasses and shorts or skirts.*

(Assistant: *Mimes the given items.*)

The pairs who do not present at the time are spectators and need to carefully listen to the weather forecast as well as write down all important information about each day's weather prediction (in English) in order to choose the right day for an activity they will get later. The notes should be brief (e.g. Monday, raining, + 5, umbrella, boots, jacket), pupils are not asked to write down the whole sentences. Each pair can get a chart displayed in Appendix C or the teacher can draw it on the board so that pupils can copy it into their exercise books. If pupils miss a piece of information, each of them has got the possibility to put up his or her hand and ask the presenter to repeat it or to spell the word they did not understand. They must ask in English (e.g. *What is the day, please? What is the weather like today? What is the temperature? What are the clothes? Can you spell it, please?...*). The questions should be also written on the *Weather card* and revised or pre-taught before the beginning of the game in the warm-up phase. If the pupils do not know any word, the teacher can mime it or show it on a flashcard. However, pupils are supposed to know the vocabulary on their *Weather forecast cards*.

Give the pupils 3-5 minutes to divide roles and to prepare their presentation of the *Weather forecast*. Then, all pairs go one after another in front of the class and present 'their weather' to the others and the others, as spectators, keep notes about the weather forecast. The teacher monitors the activity and helps students if necessary.

When all the information are copied and all the pairs took turns in presenting the weather, the activity continues with each pair tossing a card representing an activity (e.g. playing cards, skiing, watching TV, ...) and the task is to find the right day (or days) for doing the activity. The pairs then take turns in saying the activity and the suitable day. They will also say what clothes they put on for the activity, e.g. *"On Monday it is raining. We are going to the gym. I put on the tracksuit."* Other pupils check the answer. At the end, pupils can vote for the best day and activity of the week. The chart with all the days and weather predictions can be displayed to pupils so that they can check the spelling.

### ***Game's Course***

I employed the game in the class 4.A because I wanted to revise a wide field of vocabulary that we had discussed for approximately two months (activities, days of the

week, weather and clothes). I started the game with a warm-up phase described in the previous section called 'Game's Description and Rules'. I asked the pupils questions such as: *What is your favourite day of the week? What is the weather like today? Is it cold today? What is the temperature outside? What clothes do you put on? What is your favourite item of clothes?* I elicited the answers from the learners so that each one told me at least one sentence. I made sure that pupils understand the word *temperature* by asking them "Is it 5 above or below zero?" and I draw the picture of a thermometer and wrote +5 (*five above zero*)/ -5 (*five below zero*) on the blackboard. Then, I asked them again the question and let them look at the thermometer. They answered me that it was five below zero, which was correct. I asked them about the clothes and mimed the word "put on". Students answered differently, for example: "I put on my boots. I put on my scarf. I put on my socks." or "I like my blue sweatshirt. I like red T-shirt...".

Next, I continued with questioning them about the word *weather forecast* and I wrote the expression on the blackboard. At first, pupils did not know but when I stated to play a weather presenter, they guessed it. Then I asked them in Czech if they knew why people watch or listen to it and whether they knew any weather presenter. Pupils spoke in Czech and they were very keen on explaining their point of view. However, they did not know any weather presenter.

Then, I told the pupils to form pairs and let them imagine that the weather presenters of BBC are ill and all the electronic system needed for the presentation of weather is broken. I told them that they have to take over the work of presenters and computers and thus tell and demonstrate the weather predictions for the following week to the spectators. I equally showed them the *Weather forecast cards* and told that they contain important information that had to be mentioned when presenting the weather in front of the class. I also told them to decide who from the pair was going to be the weather presenter and who was going to be the assistant miming and demonstrating the weather with the help of the models I displayed in front of the class.

Each pair then picked one *Weather forecast card* and altogether we read the sample sentences at the bottom of the cards. I told the pupils that the words in brackets should be replaced by the information they had on their cards and that each pair had different information. We continued with a brief demonstration of the task; I took the role of presenter and picked one skilful student to be my assistant. After each sentence I made a little pause so that the assistant could choose the right model of weather or mime the clothes. He did not have any problem with this task. I asked students if they understood

this phase of the game and having received a positive response I continued to describe the role of spectators. Each pair was provided with the *Weather card* and they were explained the spectators' 'rights' and 'duties' (see the section 'Game's Description and Rules'). I especially pointed to the fact that this game is cooperative and thus they were expected to discuss everything in pairs as a team. I repeated the possibility to ask the presenters questions mentioned on the *Weather card*, if necessary. It was also important to stress that each pair really had to fill in the *Weather card* with the information about every day of the week except for theirs. I motivated them by mentioning the subsequent use of the information.

Each pair was then given three minutes to go through the information on their *Weather forecast cards* and to prepare the presentation. I monitored the pupils' activity and was ready to help. The pupils sometimes wanted to verify vocabulary concerning clothes (e.g. coat, scarf) and thus I mimed it and let them guess it in Czech. When the limit was over, I asked the first pair to come in front of the blackboard and begin their presentation. The presentations were often funny as the pupils who were presenting the weather were quite fast and thus their assistants had to make quick moves to change the models and mimes. On the other hand, the spectators often had to ask additional questions, which sometimes made them problems, and the game was thus slowed. This ameliorated with the course of the game, when the third pair was to perform. The game became more fluent with the repetition of the structures. The boys that I mentioned as being 'disruptive' took their roles of a presenter and an assistant creatively and they also changed voices, which was funny for the others. On the other hand, they did not write much information into their *Weather card* as they did not pay much attention to the presenters. I had to order them several times to listen and make notes.

When all the pairs presented their weather forecast, I asked them to take one card with an activity on it and considering the weather conditions, each pair had to find the best day for the given activity and mention some suitable clothes for it. I wrote a sample sentence on the blackboard: "*I go cycling on Wednesday. It's sunny and hot. I put on my shorts, my T-shirt and my trainers.*" The pairs then took turns in making the statements and the others checked them. At the end, I thanked all the pupils for a good job they did and told them that the BBC weather presenters owed them a song. As we ran out of time, the song was played at the beginning of the next lesson.

### ***Reflection***

In general, pupils cooperated with each other and they enjoyed the game. They especially liked to touch and present the models of weather. Each pupil had the opportunity to speak and perform his or her role and thus everyone was involved in the game. Children thus revised vocabulary from several thematic areas, they employed several language skills such as speaking, pronunciation, spelling, listening. They also revised the formation of simple sentences and questions and above all, they used the language practically in a real-like situation, which can help them in the future.

However, there was a problem with those boys who considered recording information told by the presenters as boring. The game might have seemed slow for them as they did not spend time writing down the words. However, this was an integral part of the game as I wanted to practise especially the spelling of days and clothes, which often causes problems to learners. Nevertheless, the rest of the class seemed to enjoy the game and they were very willing to cooperate and being engaged in the task.

## **6.2 Pass the Bomb (Tick Tack Boom!)**

### ***Material Needed***

- **bomb** - an electronic timer that has a variable time allotment

### ***Game's Description and Rules***

I often employ a variation of the game *Pass the Bomb*<sup>130</sup> for a brief revision of some topic areas such as *clothes, travelling, nature, house etc.* Originally, it is a kind of board word game, where learners pass an artificial 'bomb' from one to each other in order to avoid being 'blown up' and to do so, they must say a new word. The word must contain the letters from the card that was drawn by one of the players at the beginning of the game (e.g. if there are letters *TO*, learners can say words such as *today, tomorrow, toddler, into, Plato, etc.*). The variation of this game that I employ is based on the knowledge of words connected with the given topic and learners' ability to quickly recall them. The emphasis is put on the spoken form of the word.

The rules of this variation of the game "*Pass the Bomb*" are very simple. Learners have to form a circle, then a topic is given and the bomb is set. The teacher repeats the

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<sup>130</sup> (Barc, Heyworth, Rodriguez. PIATNIK, 1994)

topic and passes the bomb to the first player who must quickly say a word related to the given topic. If he succeeds, he can pass the bomb to the next player standing on his right. The game continues in the same way but players must not use the words that have been already said. When the ‘bomb’ explodes, the player who is holding it loses and can be asked to leave the game. The game is then played again until there are enough words to be mentioned.

Other variations of this game are possible. For example, instead of a topic, we can use the initial letter (e.g. *words beginning in letter M – mouse, milk, my, mobile, must, make...*), or for more advanced learners we can employ two letters (e.g. *words beginning in letters SK – sky, ski, skull, skydiving, skyscraper, skydiver, ski-school, skier, skiing, skin,...*). It always depends on the level of learners and the aim of using the game.

### ***Game’s course***

I employed this game at the beginning of the lesson with the class 4.A in order to quickly recycle the vocabulary concerning the topic *sport and activities* (e.g. *swimming, riding a bike, walking, hiking, judo, karate...* but also: *reading, writing, listening, speaking...*). The class had not played this game before in the lessons of English. First of all, I asked all the pupils to form a circle at the back of the classroom. Then, I explained them the rules of the game and we tried it out on the topic *animals*. Pupils were excited and they immediately understood the rules as well as the aim of the game, so that we could start for real.

Pupils got very involved in the game and they tried to ‘get rid of’ the bomb as quickly as possible. The first round was very quick as it was easy for them to recall the words. They even employed words such as *climbing, diving* or *hitchhiking*. However, the second round started to cause problems as the pupils began to repeat the words that had been already said (e.g. *playing football, basketball*). I had to pay attention to what the pupils said in order to prevent repeating the words. When a word was repeated I did not let the player pass the bomb and he or she had to think of another one. The pupils themselves sometimes protested if they assessed that the word had been already said. When the bomb exploded, learners began to laugh and the one holding it acted like he was dying. The class agreed that those who were ‘blown up’ could stay in the game. Altogether, we were able to make four rounds on the given topics. The game took about five minutes to play and each

pupil got actively involved in it. They even wanted to play the game again and thus we played a variation of the game – words with the initial letter *P*.

### ***Reflection***

The game was amusing for the pupils and they really enjoyed it. Thanks to the game, different vocabulary areas can be practised or revised in a very attractive way that motivates learners. They especially enjoy passing the bomb and its ticking.

The game is based on practising the spoken form of words. Learners play individually and they are responsible just for their own responses. However, all of them play collectively, which helps to weld the class together as well as to make each pupil actively involved. I was also pleased to see that the pupils' pronunciation of the words was very good and that they remembered a lot of them, although *sport and activities* were not the exact topic that we were discussing at that time. One of the biggest advantages of the game is the time. The game can be played in 5 or less minutes.

## **6.3 Fashion Show**

### ***Characteristics of the Class 8.A,C***

There are 14 pupils in the class 8.A,C. They work with the textbooks called *Project4*. The majority of them are girls. Most students do not have any serious problems with English and they are quite assiduous and cooperative during the lessons. Four students, one girl and three boys, are less skilful in the language and the boys sometimes tend to be disruptive during the lessons. For this reason, they have to sit individually. One boy of the class tends to be annoying as he keeps making inappropriate comments on exercises we do in the textbook or he suddenly starts to laugh during the lesson and to ask questions that have nothing to do with the English language. I always have to calm him down but on the other hand, he knows to be helpful. Generally, the pupils of this class have a positive attitude towards learning the English language and they cooperate during lessons.

### ***Material Needed***

- different **items of clothes and accessories**

- **cards for the jury and useful expressions** (see Appendix F)
- **sample sentences** for the presenters (see Appendix G)

### ***Game's Description and Rules***

The game is focused on revising vocabulary related to clothes, accessories, materials and different patterns and, with a slight variation, it can be used for every grade of an elementary school where the topic of clothes is being dealt with in English. It also practises the use of present continuous of the verb *to wear*, the expressions *be made of* and *too/enough*. Learners cooperate in pairs in order to prepare and perform their task. They have a great opportunity to use their creativity while combining clothes or commenting on them. The game also helps learners to get used to speaking or performing in front of an audience as well as to fight the 'stage fright'. In case that there are learners who do not want to be in a pair and perform the 'show', the teacher can group them in one team representing the jury.

The game can be divided into two parts. First of all, learners must be told about the game in advance so that they can bring clothes. It can be whatever they find. At the beginning of the game, learners make pairs in which they will work during the whole game. In pairs, pupils create their 'outfit', they carefully prepare its detailed description and they decide on who will take the role of the presenter and who will be the model walking on the catwalk. They can be also given the dictionary and a card with useful expressions (see Appendix G). If there are pupils who are not willing to perform the fashion show, they become members of a jury. The members of the jury are each given a card with instructions which they read and then discuss together. This phase is esteemed to take about fifteen minutes.

The second part of the game is the Fashion show itself. Each pair gets a number that marks the order in which the presentations will succeed. Pupils put on their outfits and the Fashion show can begin. The model is walking and doing all the possible figures and movements and the presenter comments on the outfit the model is wearing. Other pupils watch the show as spectators. The jury then gives their opinion on the outfit but each member also has to follow the instructions on the card he/she got. The spectators then say whether they agree or disagree with the jury and they can make their own comments about the outfit, too. During the game, the members of the jury exchange their cards. Thus the game continues until all the pairs presented their 'show'.



### ***Game's Course***

I employed the game *Fashion Show* as a practical and amusing way how to revise the topic of *clothes*. The lesson before, the learners were told about the game *Fashion show* and asked them to bring whichever clothes they wanted. For every case, I brought some clothes myself, which paid off because a lot of pupils forgot to bring them.

First of all, I asked four pupils from those who had forgotten to bring the clothes to be the jury and the rest of the pupils formed pairs. Then, I distributed each pair a card with some expressions that they could use in the presentation of an 'outfit'. I told them to use accessories as well and to make the 'outfit' as interesting as possible. They started to prepare the 'outfit' and its description for the *Fashion Show*. They wrote their description into their exercise books and the presenter was supposed to learn it by heart.

Those pupils who were appointed the jury were each given a card and some useful expressions (see Appendix F). Their task was to read the instructions on the cards and discuss them in the group. The pupils helped each other to translate the instructions and discuss possible answers as well as vocabulary.

I allowed all the pupils to use dictionaries to check words they were not certain about or to find those that would help them in their task. Each unknown word that was to be used in the presentation had to be written on the board for others to understand. A time limit of fifteen minutes was set for all the preparation. During the preparation, I monitored the pupils' activity and helped, when it was necessary. Sample sentences or expressions helped the students to get an idea about how the description should look like and of course, they could employ them by substituting words. However, I encouraged the pupils to use their creativity to form different sentences (e.g. *You can see our model wearing a light blue skirt made of cotton.*). When I heard or saw a mistake I called attention to it and asked the given learner to find the correct solution. I also helped them with some unknown words. For example, two pupils did not know the English expressions for 'kozačky' and 'náhrdelník' and other two pupils wanted to translate the word 'rastafariánská čepice'.

After the time limit, it was necessary to make space for an imaginary catwalk and the pairs chose the order according to which they then presented their 'outfits'. The members of the jury sat together on one side of the classroom and the audience on the opposite one. The *Fashion show* began with the first pair. The pupils were very dynamic and they really enjoyed presenting the outfits. Especially the models gave way to their spontaneity, they made funny movements and they also threw the upper layers of clothes

(e.g. jacket, cap, hat, gloves ...) to the audience and jury. They also pointed to the clothes mentioned by presenters. The atmosphere was relaxed and joyful. For example, one boy commented on the model: "*He is wearing a leather jacket with very fashionable buttons. He has got a very manly headband made of wool. He has got a very stylish umbrella with natural motifs.*" The boy's (model's) headband was pink with a knitted rose on the left side and the umbrella was also pink with a flower pattern. It was really funny to see the boy wearing girl accessories.

The presentations were well prepared and most of them were fluent. However, some presenters found it difficult to recall the new words they used in their descriptions. At the beginning, I allowed them to keep their notes with them and take a look into them only if necessary. However, one of the pupils read it all. He argued that he did not have enough time to learn it. During the presentation, pupils made some mistakes such as "*she wearing ...*" instead of "*she is wearing*" or "*jacket is leather*" instead of "*the jacket is made of leather*". I did not correct grammar mistakes but I made pupils aware if there was a mistake in vocabulary, especially when they used a wrong word while describing the 'outfit' (e.g. when they said *bracelet* instead of *necklace*). I kept notes of minor and grammar mistakes to discuss them after the game.

The jury were to comment on each 'outfit' and exchange their cards after each presentation. On the whole, their comments seemed to me quite brief as I expected them to use their imagination and comment much more widely on the 'outfits'. Those learners, except one, are good at English and thus they did not have any big difficulties with creating sentences. Although they did not have the opportunity to prepare the whole sentences in advance as they did not see the 'outfit' before, there was more spontaneity in their speech than in the speech of the 'presenters'. They correctly used the expression such as "*I think that it is too...*" or "*In my opinion...*" but the word order what sometimes caused problems. For instance, some of them said: "*the sweater I don't like the colour*".

One of the learners that wanted to be the jury did not want to participate at all, which was a disappointment for me but I did not force him to play. He told me that he only wanted to watch the game.

During the game, there was noisier in the classroom than usually as a lot of 'outfits' and their description were very funny and the pupils were excited to discuss them with the classmates. I sometimes had to calm the learners down. Nevertheless, we all really enjoyed

the game and it was very rewarding for me that the pupils wanted to continue even when the lesson was over.

### ***Reflexion***

This game is mainly based on revision of vocabulary but it also helps to develop other language skills and learner's competencies. Thanks to the game, learners can practise the vocabulary via real objects that they can touch and even try on. Pupils work in pairs and must agree on the 'outfit' which they then describe. They help each other in order to prepare the description in time and they must also agree on their roles. Those who work in a group (the jury) have to discuss their tasks and they can help each other to understand the instructions on the cards. Together they can think about the possible sentence constructions. Moreover, each one is challenged to speak or to perform something before the others which helps to prepare them for real-life situations. *Fashion show* enables pupils to use what they've learned in a practical way that is interesting and amusing for them and it may also be a source of new words. As I have already mentioned, except one pupil, all the learners got actively involved in the game and enjoyed it.

The disadvantages of the game are noise and time demands. I sometimes had to calm the pupils down as they were too loud to hear what the presenter was saying.

I think that it would be suitable that each pupil presented an outfit once so that each one could try to be both the 'presenter' and the 'model'. Thus everyone could speak and practise the language orally. In that case, more than just one lesson would be sufficient.

## **6.4 Accident**

### ***Material Needed***

Equipment for learners (See Appendix H):

- two **adhesive plasters**
- two small bottles of **eye drops** (empty)
- two **bandages**
- **crepe paper** (as an imitation of real plaster)
- two tubs of **ointment** (empty)
- four **tablets** and four **capsules** (each in closed package)
- two **red face colours** (or two red lipsticks)

For teacher (see Appendix I):

- **card with instructions** and (or) **picture of the injuries**

I used real objects for this game but it is possible to create paper models of these objects. I also used small bottles of eye drops and tubs of ointment that were empty so as to prevent possible problems and I recommend to use face colours as the lipsticks may be well resistant and it can be a problem to wash it off.

### ***Game's Description and Rules***

The game that I called ***Accident*** is focused on revision of some basic terms related to the parts of body, injuries and treatments. It is a kind of matching activity. In the game, pupils play with real objects that they can touch and move. Learners are given orders to be performed and thus they practise their receptive oral skills. I employed the game as a warm-up activity at the beginning of the lesson to make the learners active after their Easter holiday. The game can be a base for a discussion and (or) a writing task which I am going to describe in the following text. The game also requires cooperation in teams.

The teacher needs to gather and prepare a lot of things in advance: adhesive plasters, small bottles of eye drops, bandages, crepe paper, tubs of ointment, tablets and capsules, red face colours (see the section 'Material Needed') and the card with instructions that the teacher will read to the pupils (see Appendix H).

Learners work in two teams and each team chooses one 'patient' to sit on a chair. The task of each team is to follow the teacher's instructions and to perform them on their model. For example, if the teacher says "*put the bandage on his left knee*", each team has to take the bandage and put it around their 'patient's' left knee. Before the beginning of the game, each team is given a bag with the stuff they need and they are told in advance what to do. It is also important to give them some time to put the objects out of the sack and to have a look at them. The teacher has to say that the red face colour stands for the blood and that the drops, ointment and tablets or capsules must not be opened, they are just to be given into the 'patient's' hands. There is no time limit. The aim is to perform the tasks correctly so that, for instance, the *bandage* is on the *left knee*, not on the *right ankle* or the 'patient' is given *tablets*, not *capsules*.

After all the orders are performed, the models get together and the results are compared. It is also convenient to prepare two pictures of the injuries in advance for the

pupils so that they can see what the final ‘treatment’ should look like. If there are mistakes, the teacher can read the orders that were wrongly performed once more and ask for the correct solution. Each mistake means one penalty point awarded to the team who made it. The team with the least (or no) penalty points will be declared the winner.

#### Possible follow-up activities:

This game can be a perfect base point for a discussion. Teacher can ask the pupils questions such as: “*What has happened to the patient?*” or “*Are the injuries serious?*”, “*Was the treatment of the injuries right?*” Or the teacher can ask a question about each injury: “*What has happened to his arm/knee/eyes/forehead...?*” and thus elicit the answers requiring the use of present perfect: “*He has broken his arm*”, “*He has hurt his eyes.*”, “*He has cut his knee*“. Other possible answers could be: “*His feet are itchy*”, “*His eyes are a bit red*”, “*Somebody hit his nose.*” etc.

Another possible task for learners might be to think up a story about what happened to the patient. The story should be as interesting or as funny as possible. This task can be done after the game or the learners can get it as homework. If the teacher wishes to revise some vocabulary, he or she can give the pupils the words to mention them in the story. However, there should not be too many given words as pupils might get discouraged from the task. I think that five words are the maximum.

#### ***Game’s Course***

Before the beginning of the game, I divided the pupils into two teams with seven members in each. Each team chose one ‘patient’ who sat on the chairs in front of the classroom. In the meantime, I placed two bags with the necessary stuff (see the section ‘Material Needed’ above) each one on a different table in front of the two patients and I told the teams to gather around their table to have a look at the objects. I explained them the aim of the game as well as what to do with the drops, ointment, tablets and capsules. I warned them not to open any of them. I explained that the red face colour stood for the blood. The pupils were told that no time limit is set for the game and that the aim is to perform their tasks correctly and precisely and thus all members of the team must discuss each task and check if it was correctly done. Each member should perform one order I was to give so that all pupils had a chance to touch an object and try to put it on the right place.

However, I told them to be quick and not to delay the game intentionally. I said that if they did so, I would continue giving the orders regardless the team's pace.

After setting the rules, the game could begin with the first instruction: "*Put the plaster on his forehead.*" Each team then started to perform the task. I was very glad to see that all the members of each team were interested in the task and participated in it. Of course, there were some pupils who were more active than the others but generally, they discussed the tasks with other members of the team. However, I saw one girl performing two orders and thus I reminded the learners that each one was expected to perform one task. In the middle of the game, learners began to speak very loudly and I had to calm them down because otherwise, they would not hear me giving another order. Since then I made the game faster. I also noticed two girls speaking Czech and doing nothing by the end of the game. At the end, the teams were to make their 'patient's' nose bloody, which was the best and the most amusing task for them. Two girls took charge of it and they painted almost all the 'patients'' face. Fortunately, the boys (the patients) were calm and in the end of the game, they went to wash the colour out without a word of anger.

Before the end of the game, we compared the results and I was very happy to see that none of the teams did any mistake. I also prepared a picture of a boy with all the injuries mentioned.

After we did the game, we discussed the injuries together. I asked the questions mentioned in the 'Possible follow-up activities' above. Pupils made sentences such as "*He had an accident on his bike*" or "*He fell off a ladder*". When I asked them to precise the injuries they treated, the pupils began to repeat the accidents and thus I had to give them an example of the sentence: "*He has got a plaster on his forehead because **he has cut** it.*" I wrote the sentence on the board and asked the pupils what other words connected to injuries we could use instead of *cut*. The answers were, for example, *hurt, broken, swollen, itchy*. I said that *hurt* and *broken* are perfect but *swollen* and *itchy* are adjectives to be used differently in a sentence and I gave an example: "*My cheek is itchy*" and I rubbed my cheek. The pupils understood and began to form their own sentences about the boy's injuries. Pupils made some mistakes such as "*He has got itch on feet*" instead of "*He has got rash on his feet*".

Then I told them to think up, in their teams, a short but funny story about what happened to the boy. I gave them dictionaries and 5 minutes to perform the task. As one team was faster than the other one, I set them an exercise from their textbook. I had to give

the other team two minutes more to finish the task. When they were ready, we could begin to read the stories. The first team transformed the boy into a bird that was shot and fell down from the sky. The other team's boy had a bike accident and he fell into a ditch full of nettles. I also prepared a story to compare their suggestions with the 'real' story (see Appendix I).

### ***Reflexion***

This game was interesting for the pupils as they could work with the real objects and do practical tasks. It was really something extraordinary for them because they could stick a real plaster on their classmate's forehead or wrap a bandage around his knee. Although they did not have to pronounce or write the words, the pupils practised their receptive oral skills as first it was necessary to understand what I say. I found this game very practical as the knowledge of the vocabulary used can help them in the real life. Moreover, as it was shown, the game can be a base-point for discussion and other activities in which pupils practise the English language orally or in its written form. The pupils also learn to take responsibility for their team and to do the task as a team.

The disadvantages of the game are noise and the fact that not all pupils may be equally involved. As it was mentioned above, in one of the teams there were two girls that began to speak Czech by the end of the game and they did not help their team.

## **6.5 Guess What I'm Drawing**

### ***Characteristics of the Class 7.A,C***

The language class 7.A,C consists of 15 students from two classes (7.A and 7.C). There are learners of different abilities but the majority of them are rather less skilful or not much interested in the English language and thus their level of knowledge is quite low. There were also problems with the learners' behaviour. Especially four girls sitting at the back of the classroom were often very noisy, impolite and disruptive during the lessons and the behaviour of one boy was sometimes inadequate (for example, he suddenly stood up and lightly punched his classmate or he began to shout suddenly). However, there were six students who were very cooperative and interested in English though they have

problems with understanding its spoken form. Two students from the class were very good at English.

### ***Material or Equipment Needed***

- **blackboard, whiteboard or interactive whiteboard**
- **chalk or marker**
- **10 word cards (or picture cards)** with the vocabulary to practise (*e.g. drawer, shower, armchair, bathroom, lamp, roof, garage, sink, mirror, chimney*)

### ***Game's Description and Rules***

In this class, I employed the game called ***Guess What I'm Drawing*** based on the game ***Sketching quiz*** presented by Carrier<sup>131</sup>. I mentioned this game in Chapter 4.8.3 as a kind of both cooperative and competitive game. The game is based on practising or revising vocabulary and it is suitable for all types of learners. It engages learners' visual memory, creativity and drawing skills. Thanks to the game, learners also train the pronunciation of words as only the correct spoken form of word is counted. As the game requires team work, pupils have to cooperate with each other and help the team to score points. The rules of a fair-play have to be observed as well and no insults or cheating is tolerated. Pupils thus develop the right social comporment.

First of all, the class is divided into two teams. Each team then groups together and chooses the first 'painter' whose task is to draw the picture of an item shown to him or her by the teacher. The two painters must be shown the card with the given word at the same time so as to have equal opportunities. The other members of each team then have to guess the word or expression drawn on the board. They can look at both the drawings at the same time. The first team to guess the word scores one point. Correct pronunciation is necessary. The game thus continues with other two 'painters' coming in front of the class. The winner is the team that scores the most points.

### ***Game's Course***

The aim of the employment of this game in the lesson was to revise vocabulary connected to the topic *house* in an amusing and interesting way. First of all, I told the

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<sup>131</sup> (Carrier, 1980, p. 30)



pupils that we were going to play a game and that they had half a minute to go through the vocabulary we discussed in the previous lessons (house and furniture). After the time limit, I told the pupils that we were going to play a game called ***Guess what I'm drawing*** and I explained them the rules of the game. I asked that one member of each team came to the blackboard and when they were both next to me I showed them the first word (*lamp*). They quickly started to draw the picture of a lamp. Generally speaking, all the members of each team were keen on guessing the word but not all wanted to go drawing. I did not insist on each member going to the blackboard and thus it was up to the team to agree on the order in which they would take turns. I only tried to make sure that no member is omitted if he or she wanted to draw. It sometimes happened that a painter did not understand the given word and so I decided to give him/her a dictionary to find it out. Thus the painter who knew it got the advantage of time. The points were written on the blackboard by the 'painter' whose team just scored. The game continued until the last word was guessed. At the end, we counted the points and I asked the pupils about their impressions. I told them that I was very satisfied with their participation in the game and with the nice drawings but I also underlined the idea of a fair-play and reprimanded those who cheated because it spoiled the game. In the course of the game, I saw two girls (both mentioned above as being disruptive and rude) with their textbooks opened in order to find the English expression of the given word. However, they did not seem guilty and they did not apologize.

### ***Reflection***

The game was a success because the pupils really liked it and took an active part in it. At first I worried whether I would manage the pupils' noisy behaviour. Fortunately, they were so engaged in the game that there was almost no problem with this. However, there were difficulties arising from the bad knowledge of vocabulary. Although they had had homework where they were to revise words connected to the topic and they had also practised it, the pupils sometimes did not recall the English expression while guessing the word. Thus, when nobody was able to recall it, I gave each team one dictionary to look the English word up. However, no points were given for finding it. Altogether, I had to pass the dictionaries three times for the words *drawer*, *sink* and *mirror*. The game was thus a good feedback as I realised that some pupils haven't learned the vocabulary yet. For those learners, the game could be a great motivation for learning the vocabulary and for the

pupils who were successful in recalling the appropriate English word, the game could be both fun and a means of revision.

There was also a little problem with one girl who was very loud and teased the other team inadequately by shouting at them and using vulgar words. I had to give her a little talking to and she stopped. I also noticed that she and her classmate cheated – I saw them looking into the vocabulary page in their workbook by the end of the activity.

When the game was over, I asked the pupils to tell me their impressions about what they liked or disliked about the game. They agreed that the game was amusing but that they had sometimes problem to draw the picture and to find the English word for it. I then praised them for having played a good game but I reprimanded the girls for cheating and we briefly discussed the importance of a fair play.

## 7 Thematic Lesson Plans

In the following text, I introduce three thematic lesson plans all based on the topic *movies*. I chose this topic because it is more or less familiar to all the learners and I also thought that it would appeal to them. In the thematic lesson plans, I use the film ‘Alice in Wonderland’ which is based on the novel ‘Alice in Wonderland’ by Lewis Carroll, a famous English writer, who was a very good language games creator as well. My aim was to show how one topic can be adapted for three different classes as well as to explore how the different classes respond to same activities.

This Chapter includes several short activities that I employed in three different classes of a grammar school (3.A, 1.B and 6.A) where I had my teaching practise. The brief characteristics of the classes are provided in the following subchapter. The aims of each lesson plan are briefly discussed and the lesson plans are then displayed in the Appendix K. I created most of the activities myself and with each knowingly borrowed activity the source is cited. The worksheets for the activities used in the thematic lesson plans are provided in Appendix J: *Movie Activities* and a brief reflection over the employment of each activity in the given class is provided in Appendix L: *Description of Activities Used in Lesson Plans*.

For each class I tried to choose such activities that would correspond to the level of the learners and their abilities. Some activities are used in more than one thematic lesson plan in order to see how different classes respond to the given activity. As the class 3.A was not much active during my practise, I tried to make their thematic lesson more attractive by approaching it as a competition in which the learners were divided into three groups. Thus I thought the learners would not be shy or inactive and they would willingly cooperate within the group so as to win.

I also asked the students to fill in a questionnaire related to the activities of the thematic lessons and to the employment of activities and games during their normal lessons of the English language. The results of the questionnaire are summed up at the end of this chapter. The questionnaire is then displayed in Appendix M.

I acknowledge that all the pictures related to the movie ‘*Alice in Wonderland*’ directed by Tim Burton (see Appendix J, Activities 9, 10 and 14) are the property of **The Walt Disney Company Limited** (Disney Enterprises) and were used in the thesis only for didactic purposes. The internet sources from which the pictures were taken are cited in the Appendix J, below the pictures, and appropriately acknowledged in the Bibliography.

## **7.1 Profile of the Classes**

- **Profile of the class 3.A**

In the class 3.A there were 16 pupils, the majority of which were not much willing to cooperate and communicate in English during lessons. On the whole, the class had problems with formation of complex phrases as well as with the translation and quick reaction to my questions. Some students, especially two boys and two girls sitting near each other, were often noisy, they even shouted and were rude one to another, and sometimes it was not easy to calm them down or to get them interested in a task. They did not seem interested in learning English and they belonged to weaker students. On the other hand, there were several students who were very active and assiduous, which helped a lot to raise the working moral of the whole class. These were especially girls. There were two boys that could be considered talented. Among the students there was also one dyslexic boy who, though very slow and shy, was very hardworking and kind. The atmosphere in the lessons was not as relaxed as in the other classes, which might have been caused by the overall character of the class 3.A. Teachers say that the class is not coherent and the students are often rude and do not cooperate during lessons. The talented students are then disadvantaged as it is not easy to work in such an atmosphere.

- **Profile of the class 1.B**

The class 1.B belongs to the Stage 2 of the grammar school. Students of this class did not have problems with the English language. The class was always prepared for each lesson. They were very cooperative and friendly and the lessons with them were very productive and enjoyable. They are used to work and pay attention during the English lessons. Only when they are given a group or pair work they have the tendency to start talking in Czech. It is therefore important to walk among them and monitor their work. There were two girls that often did not know what the class was doing because they were talking to each other. One of them belonged to the few weaker students of the class and was sometimes a bit tactless. However, they continued working without any remark when they were reprimanded. Among the best students of the class belonged a boy called David, who had a talent of acting, which promoted the friendly atmosphere in the class. He was excellent at improvisation as well as at making dialogues.

- **Profile of the class 6.A**

In the class 6.A there were a lot of hardworking and talented students who enjoyed learning the English language. This class is parallel to the class 1.B. Generally speaking, the students were active and cooperative and they formed a nice and calm group with friendly relationships among its members. They were also intelligent and talkative and so there was no problem with the discipline or work setting. There were few weaker students who made mistakes especially in grammar and had problems with expressing themselves in English but even those pupils tried to keep pace with the others and did not disturb during the lessons. The class was very good at pair work and making dialogues.

## **7.2 Aims of the Lesson Plans**

In the following text, the aims of the lesson plans will be briefly mentioned and the learners' point of view on the lessons and their activities will be presented. All the lesson plans were based on the same topic – *movies*. During the lessons, learners revised vocabulary from the given field (e.g. movie genres) and also learned some new words through interesting activities. They practised different language skills as well as competencies such as cooperation, problem-solving or the ability to express one's opinion.

Lesson plan 1 that was designed for the class 3.A, was focused on learners' ability to discuss and solve problems in groups and in pairs. As they performed the tasks especially in groups, the emphasis was put on cooperation and group discussion. Different activities were employed for this purpose, for example the matching activities and guessing and describing a plot of a movie. Learners also tested their knowledge of the field of movies through the *Movie Quiz*. During the lesson, pupils practised oral production and comprehension. The lesson was animated with the song Alice which was introduced at the end of the lesson.

Lesson plan 2 (class 1.B) was focused on oral production as well as oral comprehension and learners were to develop especially their speaking skills as several activities based on description or giving opinion was employed. They were encouraged to take an active part in a discussion. Learners worked individually or in pairs and they also practised their social skills such as cooperation, tolerance and problem solving. They were also encouraged to use their creativity or imagination, especially in the activity where they

were to dub a scene from the movie. Thanks to this activity, learners could try how it is to be a dubbing artist.

The lesson plan 3 was also based on oral production and comprehension but it also contained an activity developing productive writing skills. In this activity, learners worked in pairs and were to write a brief characteristic of one character from the movie and then present it to their classmates. They were also encouraged to take an active part in a discussion, for example they discussed the characters and the movie poster. Learners recycled general vocabulary and they revised but also learned new words connected to the topic *movies*.

For more detailed description of the lesson plans see Appendix K.

In the following text, learners' point of view on the thematic lessons as given in the questionnaires is provided and few remarks about the employment of activities in their normal lessons of the English language are made.

### **Learners' Point of View (Questionnaire)**

As it was already mentioned before, I asked the learners of each class to fill in a questionnaire related to the activities of the thematic lesson and to the employment of activities and games during the lessons of English. The questionnaire was anonymous and its sample is displayed in Appendix M. In the following paragraphs the information received from the questionnaire are summed up.

First of all, learners responded to the questions concerning the thematic lesson. All learners liked the lesson, except from one respondent from the class 3.A. As I have already mentioned in this chapter, I tried to motivate the pupils from this class by turning the lesson into a competition, however, this one respondent mentioned that he does not like competitions and therefore the lesson was not attractive for him. The others appreciated the thematic lesson, and a lot of them stated that it was a nice enlivening of ordinary English lessons. They especially liked the topic (movies), various interactive and original activities, interesting visual and audial materials, the possibility to work in pairs and/or in groups and the collectiveness. Two learners from the class 3.A and 1.B liked the lesson but they added that they would not like to do this every lesson.

Concerning the most difficult activity of the thematic lesson, two learners from the class 3.A mentioned *Activity 4 (What movie is it?)* and some of them mentioned that it was because they did not know the English titles of the films (this was however the problem for

many other students and I also had to use the computer to check the English title of one film I did not know). Only two learners mentioned *Activity 2 (Associate the word with its definition and an appropriate image)* and two other students named *Activity 5 (Movie Quiz)*

For most of the learners of the class 1.B, the most difficult activity was *Activity 11 (Dubbing)*. Some of them did not have enough time for preparation, others just did not have any idea what the characters should say.

A lot of students from the class 6.A did not mention any exercise that caused them difficulties. Only one of the learners found it difficult to match the genres to their definitions and the correct picture (*Activity 2*), which was the same activity that caused problems to one pupil from the class 3.A. The reason was that both of them did not understand some of the words.

On the other hand, the easiest activity was for most of the pupils of the class 3.A the *Activity 2*, for the class 1.B it were *Activity 10 (Describe a movie poster)* and *Activity 7 (Find your partner)* and for the class 6.A it was also the *Activity 2* and then *Activity 6 (Find the missing words of the song)*.

The learners also named some new words they learned, among the most mentioned in the classes 6.A and 1.B (those classes had very similar thematic lesson) were: *caterpillar, hare, knave, raven, plot, grin, to star in*. On the other hand, most learners of the class 3.A did not remember any new word they learned, and many of them stated they knew almost all the vocabulary.

All the respondents spoke during the thematic lesson plan and they had many possibilities to express themselves. They have the same opportunity during the normal lesson as well, because their teacher asks them many questions so that those who want can speak.

However, the thematic lesson differed from their normal lesson a lot as the learners stated that they do not play any games (or hardly ever) and that they do not much use the computer during their lessons. Sometimes, they do the crosswords and they often discuss some topics, they often make dialogues and they sometimes work with their magazines. Some students also added that they sometimes watch a video or listen to English songs. Most of the time, they work with the textbook and do some exercises from photocopies that the teacher prepares for them.

According to the answers to the question number 10, from all the activities the learners do in the lessons of English, most of them enjoy doing crosswords, listening to

and working with English songs and films, making dialogues or having a conversation and describing pictures. Some learners also mentioned listening activities based on filling information in a text. The students of the classes 6.A and 1.B also prefer the activities which give them place to express their opinions.

As far as the cooperation of learners is concerned, the class 3.A prefer working in pairs and on the contrary, the least favourite is the work with all the class. Globally, the learners of the classes 6.A and 1.B enjoy working in groups but they do not like to work individually. Cooperation in pairs is also very popular among them. Generally speaking, all the three classes prefer activities based on communication and cooperation rather than the competitive ones.

The last question concerned the usage of the interactive whiteboard. The learners have not used it yet and so they do not have much experience with this device. However, except for four pupils, they believe that if they sometimes used it, the lessons could be more interesting.

To sum up, it is obvious that the learners from the classes I taught do not play many games during the lessons. However, they do many interesting activities from which they most enjoy crosswords, dialogues in pairs or in groups, conversations, reading articles from magazines and listening to English songs. They sometimes watch videos (especially short documents about some topic related to English language or English speaking countries). The thematic lesson was thus a nice enlivening for the learners during which they could practice and show their vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary skills (as well as other language skills) in an interesting and enjoyable way.



## 8 Research

The aim of this Chapter is to present the results of my research. In the research, I tried to find out the teachers' opinion on employment of games and activities developing vocabulary in English as well as what games and activities they usually use in their lessons of the English language.

In the first part of this chapter, I briefly introduce the research and mention the methods used for collecting the data. Next, the characteristic of the research sample is provided and this is followed with the analysis of the interviews. Information got from the interviews are then summed up in the final part of this chapter.

### 8.2 Methodology of the Research

The aim of the research was to explore how vocabulary games and activities in English language education are perceived and employed by experienced teachers and what contribution the teachers think the games and activities bring to learners. The main hypothesis to be proved by the research is that *'Well-chosen and well-organised games and activities help to elicit learners' spontaneous use of language as well as they stimulate learners' interest and activity in the lesson'*. The second hypothesis to be proved is that *'Well-chosen games and activities develop learners' personality and competencies'*. The research also tried to explore what the most frequently used games and activities are but also to get to know less common games and activities that are used by individual teachers.

As the aim of the research was to gain teachers' opinion on the issue which is very complex and requires more time for discussion and explanation, and because not every question could be answered in a simple way, I employed qualitative interviewing method for collecting the data so as to obtain as accurate data as possible and avoid possible problems with returnability of questionnaires. Indeed, as Gavora<sup>132</sup> states *"Interview is the research method that allows to capture not only facts but also to get a deeper insight into the motifs and attitudes of the respondents. (...) Interview is given preference over the questionnaire in the case that there is a big probability of a low returnability of the questionnaire."*

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<sup>132</sup> (Gavora, 2008, p. 138-139, own translation)

Each of the respondents agreed to be interviewed and an appointment about the date and place of the interview was agreed with the respondent in advance. Each respondent was also informed that the interview will be recorded. Five respondents agreed to be recorded but two of them did not wish the interview to be recorded, which I had to respect. The two respondents (T3 and T6) are therefore not quoted in the text. All the teachers agreed with the use of their games and activities for the purposes of the thesis.

The employment of semi-structural interview allowed me to ask the respondents a basic set of questions that I prepared beforehand (see Appendix P) but also to ask additional questions their answers raised. The succession of questions was not strictly given, as for example one question elicited answers for two more questions without them having been asked. I always tried to let the respondents talk about the issue freely and to ask the questions in the right time. The aim was to make them feel at ease and comfortable.

## 8.2 Characteristics of the Teachers

At the beginning of each interview, information concerning the years of practice and type of school were provided by the teachers. The basic information gained is presented in the following table:

	Gender	Years of practice	Type of school
<b>Teacher 1 (T1)</b>	F	20	Elementary school
<b>Teacher 2 (T2)</b>	F	35	Elementary school
<b>Teacher 3 (T3)</b>	F	15	Elementary school
<b>Teacher 4 (T4)</b>	F	7	Elementary school Language school
<b>Teacher 5 (T5)</b>	F	17	Grammar school
<b>Teacher 6 (T6)</b>	M	6	Grammar school
<b>Teacher 7 (T7)</b>	M	7	Language school

It can be seen, that the research sample consists of teachers of both gender and of different length of teaching practice. Furthermore, four of them teach at elementary school and two of them at grammar school. As it was already mentioned, except from T3 and T6, all of the respondents agreed to be recorded during the interview.

There is one respondent who does not teach at any of these types of establishment but is a teacher and owner of a successful language school. This respondent (T7) has wide experience with teaching different groups of learners, including pupils and students that this thesis is focused on. I include his point of view on the issue of employment of games and activities in the lessons of English because he widely employs them with his learners. His participation in the research can give interesting ideas about the use of games and activities in English.

To sum up, the research sample varies in gender, length of teaching practise and type of school they teach at. The diversity of the research sample can be considered beneficial for the purposes of the research.

### **8.3 Analysis of the Interviews**

This subchapter presents the teachers' point of view concerning the employment of games and activities in the lessons of English. First, the question given to the teachers is introduced and then the teachers' opinions are presented and their ideas are often quoted. There are altogether ten questions. The results of the research are then summed up in the next subchapter.

#### ***Question 1: How much emphasis do you put on the presentation and (or) revision of vocabulary in English language education?***

This question tried to find out what the teachers' approach to vocabulary as to a language skill is and how much emphasis they put on its presentation and revision during the lessons of English.

T2, T3 and T6 assessed that vocabulary is highly important and that they put a great emphasis on its presentation and revision. Similarly, T1, T4 and T7 put big emphasis on vocabulary and they view its knowledge as very important. T4 stated that she teaches especially young learners (children) and thus "...*mainly vocabulary is employed and a lot*

*of repetition...Concerning the repetition, children need to change work and thus different forms of vocabulary revision must be used.”*

For T5, vocabulary is *“utterly a contextual thing, where learners should get the new vocabulary from the context of what is being talked about or from some dialogues they are practising...I prefer the vocabulary within activities not as a primary work in a lesson.”* Concerning the vocabulary in a context and in its spoken form, he puts medial emphasis on it. The context, he said, could be a topic, a text, a dialogue and others. T5 then specified his point of view on vocabulary as a part of English language education: *“Everything is connected to each other, it cannot be said that I put great emphasis on vocabulary...Of course that I put great emphasis on vocabulary but I, as well, put emphasis on the meaningfulness of what they (learners) say, so as it was in correct relations, so as it was in the code of English, not in the code of Czech, so as it had the right slang and the right intonation...”*. He also added that *“English is sound. In England people talk to you. The disproportion between the written and the spoken form is so big that pupils often have difficulties with the written form of the word but they have no problem with its spoken form. With the lower grades I rather test them verbally, especially concerning the difficult words.”*

**Question 2: How often do you employ vocabulary games and activities into the lessons of English language?**

This question is then exactly aimed at the employment of games and activities and it tries to discover whether the teachers use games and activities during their lessons of English language and how often they do it.

Generally speaking, all the teachers employ vocabulary games and activities in their lessons. T1, T4 and T7 employ them every lesson, especially at the beginning of it in order to stimulate learners' activity. T2 also uses activities and games every lesson but not with each class she teach. T2 mentioned: *“It surely depends on the class. If it is a class with whom it is possible, it can be at the beginning of every lesson for a little while, in fact. But there are also classes where it is not possible with the game...It is about the children...They do not manage it from the point of view of discipline...that the lesson is thrown into a complete disarray....”*

T3, T5 and T6 play games or do other interactive activities often but not every single lesson. T6 who teaches both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of a grammar school adds that she

uses them more with the younger students (Stage 1) and that the words she revise through games and activities are always connected to what the class did and how the words are used in practice.

**Question 3: *For what purpose(s) do you usually use vocabulary games and activities in the lessons of English language?***

In this case I tried to explore what didactic purposes teachers use vocabulary games and activities for in a lesson. By the purposes I meant: stimulation of activity, presentation or practise of new vocabulary, revision or recycling of vocabulary. The aim was also to get to know whether the teachers use games and activities for relaxation after some demanding task or after long concentration and sitting at the desk.

All teachers agreed that they use games to revise new vocabulary and to stimulate learners' activity, especially at the beginning of the lesson. For example, T1 stated: *"I use activities at the beginning of the lesson to make pupils plunge into English and to make them active. I employ activities based on the topic we discuss at the time in order to practise it in an amusing way...so that everyone got involved and could touch the cards or pictures, for example. With the little ones I do more kinetic activities because they need to move more."*

T2 and T3 often use games for presentation of new vocabulary and for recycling of vocabulary.

Only T2 and T5 agreed that they sometimes use games and activities just for relaxation and T2 stressed the fact that there is always some didactic purpose in it. She says: *"...It derives from the situation...the situation is always different. If there is a difficult grammar, you need to ease it, take a little rest and do a little bit of fun and then we can move forward again...With the little ones there are different songs that involve movement and that they like such as 'Head and Shoulders' and so on. Sometimes just a song is sufficient and this is popular especially among the older pupils... The song with a task to do but a little one so that it was a relaxation not a hard work."* Moreover, T2 confirmed that she uses games and activities for all the purposes mentioned at the beginning of this section.

On the contrary, T7 never uses games just for relaxation nor for presentation of new vocabulary. As far as the presentation of new vocabulary is concerned, he stated: *"The only purpose I use a vocabulary game or an activity for is to emphasise what we have*

*already done. I don't like to use a game to introduce something new.*” T5 is of the same opinion: *“The game should not be about learning new things...such as vocabulary. This is what I think. Games are about practising, about consolidating skills...”* He uses games and other activities in order to *“...put together the attractiveness of lessons, which means different form of teaching than the frontal one where I would stand and they would sit... to make the regime a little bit different for them... not to let the subject become 'stale'.”* He then adds another purpose of using games and activities and this is *“...consolidation of language skills.”*

To sum up, all the teachers use games and activities to stimulate their learners' activity and to revise vocabulary that was already discussed. Only two teachers mentioned that they use games for presentation of new vocabulary and only one mentioned that she employs games and activities for relaxation, stressing the fact that there is always some little didactic purpose in it. All the teachers use games and activities to make their lessons varied and more attractive for learners.

**Question 4: *What vocabulary games and activities do you usually use? Could you give concrete examples of the games and activities?***

The aim of this question was to explore what kind of activities and games are the most employed by the particular teachers and to get to know what the most common ones are among the teachers.

<b>Game or activity</b>	<b>Teachers using them</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Dialogues and Role plays</b>	All teachers	7
<b>Matching activities</b>	All teachers	7
<b>Pass the Bomb!</b>	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T7	6
<b>Scattered words/ sentences</b>	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5	5
<b>Crosswords</b>	T1, T2, T3, T4, T6	5
<b>Word Search or Word Hunt</b>	T1, T2, T3, T4, T6	5
<b>Whispered Words</b>	T1, T2, T3, T4, T6	5
<b>Pelmanism (pairs)</b>	T1, T3, T4, T5	4
<b>Story Cubes</b>	T1, T4, T5, T7	4

<b>Activities on interactive WB</b>	T1, T2, T3, T5	4
<b>Domino</b>	T1, T2, T3, T4	4
<b>Songs</b>	T1, T2, T3, T4	4
<b>Projects</b>	T1, T2, T3, T4	4
<b>BrainBox</b>	T1, T4, T7	3
<b>Guess the Mime (Pantomime)</b>	T1, T3, T4	3
<b>Guess the Word (Describe the meaning)</b>	T2, T4, T7	3
<b>Bingo !</b>	T2, T3, T6	3
<b>Taboo</b>	T4, T7	2
<b>Guess Who I Am</b>	T2, T4	2
<b>Spot It! / Dobble</b>	T4, T5	2
<b>King</b>	T1, T3	2

Other games mentioned by individual teachers were: *Star*, *Vampire* (T1), *What's in My Pocket?*, *Guess Where I'm Living*, *Bricks* (T2), *Hangman* (T3), *Jeopardy*, *Sorry!*, *Guess What I'm Drawing*, *10 Things You have...*, *Find your Partner*, *Shopping List* (T4), *Ostrich Game*, *Scrabble*, *Monopoly*, *Shiritory*, *Dixit* (T5), *What's Yours Like?* (T7). For a brief description of the games or links to related sites see Appendix N.

As it could be seen, T5 uses several board games that are not used by other teachers. He said that he likes to employ new things or new games that are original: “(...) *In this field you have to be original. If I can give advice ... choose games that you consider amusing, that you would enjoy (...). What I like I pass on to learners. I really don't like to teach them games that are ...let's say...didactic for someone but that don't 'carry away'. I like to use games that are both didactic and that 'carry away'. This is the best combination.*” That is also the reason why he employs games such as *Monopoly* or *Dixit* especially during his lessons of English conversation (with students of the second stage of grammar school). He explains: “*Monopoly in English is quite nice because there are many useful expressions from real life on the cards. For example 'inherit', 'mortgage', 'beauty contest'. Moreover, the instructions are in English... it's quite a useful game. (...) Learners*

*can see how the vocabulary in English, that they had theoretically, now can be employed in order to buy houses and buildings... (...). We also explain the unknown words and they remember them.”*

T4 also lets her learners make activities themselves and as well as T1 and T3, she tries to use real objects as much as possible in her lessons. T1, T2, T4 and T7 often employ games that involve movement so that the learners get ‘refreshed’ and because some learners, especially the small ones, find it hard to sit at their desk the whole lesson. All the teachers also widely employ different pictures, flashcards and cards with words or letters that are then matched together. Almost all of the teachers (except T2 and T6) also agreed that they create some games or activities on their own, often with some inspiration in games or activities already done.

The teachers (except T4, T6 and T7) also use the interactive whiteboard for employing games or activities. The teachers agreed that learners like the interactive whiteboard but that they (the teachers) do not use it every lesson. T4, T6 and T7 would like to use the interactive whiteboard but they do not have the possibility because of technical reasons. Moreover, T7 mentioned: *“I would probably use it as a ‘carrot’.(...) ...like if you behave, we would use interactive whiteboard...I like the interactive whiteboard because it does involve more multimedia and I don’t like it because ...invariably there are lot more written materials and creative things we can do in class together as a group...(...). I like to sit down in a circle on the floor and do the activity together...from my point of view...because I need to talk to them...”*

To sum it up, as it can be seen, the most widely used games and activities developing vocabulary are dialogues and role plays as well as different matching activities and the game called *Pass the Bomb* which is considered very amusing and time-saving. It can be also noticed that each teacher has his or her preferred games or activities that he or she usually employs in the lessons.

**Question 5: *What do you think are the advantages of employing games and activities in lessons of English language?***

All the teachers agreed that games and activities in general are a very good **motivator** for learners. Generally speaking, learners like them because it is something different from doing exercises in their textbooks or from frontal teaching method. They



agreed that games and activities help to make children **active** and **involved**. Learners also get the chance to **express themselves**.

One of the biggest advantages for T1, T2, T4, T5 and T7 is that learners can **experiment with the language** and use it without fear of getting a bad mark if they fail. The games should therefore never be evaluated by mark.

Furthermore, T1, T2, T3, T4 and T7 mentioned that games and activities usually **engage more senses** at the same time and thus take into account different types of learners (e.g. auditory, visual, kinesthetic). T4 commented: “...*the learners must be enabled to say it (the word)...to touch it. To see it on the paper is not enough, we need to engage more senses...so that they can touch it, smell it, taste it...The more senses they use the better.*”

T2 and T6 also see the advantage of some games and activities in their employment for **relaxation** after some hard work at the desk, usually after some grammar exercises. T2 said: “*The games help me to ‘start them up’ and then we can continue.*” Both of them also mentioned that **quick reactions** and **quick thinking** can be practised through them.

T2, T5 and T7 mentioned the **practicality** of games and activities for real life. T5 said: “*In my opinion, game is an imitation of life. (...) I think that game is one of the most important things for language education because in foreign language education there are not many opportunities to induce real-life situations...and that is what games can do excellently.*” T2 states that “...*thanks to games and activities, pupils can see the practicality and usefulness of the foreign language and also the words will be recalled more easily as they may find a new connection that wouldn’t be found by drilling...(...)...and they become sure of the use of the given words...(...)...I always tell them not to be afraid to speak. In the real life, in the foreign countries you must speak, don’t be afraid of making mistakes.*”

T7 then said: “*It gives the students or the child a chance to kind of show off a little bit. The second thing is that it challenges **critical thinking**. Working in team...solving a specific problem as a team...it allows coming together.*”

T1 as well as T2 mentioned that vocabulary games or activities can develop **inter-subject relations** as well.

Moreover, T5 pointed out that games help him to monitor the **class climate**: “*thanks to the games I can observe the climate in the class. The way they cooperate, the way they behave to each other. And this helps a lot the teacher to manage situations when,*

*for example, not everything goes in the class as it should or when the teacher needs to improve or enhance something quickly. When the students sit at their desks as normally, you can hardly recognize it. (...) The teacher who is able to play with children is a teacher...he or she stops being the 'pedant'. And it certainly helps to **improve the relationship between the teacher and the learners**...and also between the learners themselves...but only if you manage to couch the game in the right way...It helps to get to know the learners better."*

In fact, all the teachers agreed that games and activities help to develop learner's personality and **competencies** needed in the real life. They specifically mentioned these skills: *Solving problems and working on the task, providing and accepting help, choosing strategies and coming to conclusion, being able to discuss things and reach an agreement, cooperating and working together, presenting the task and giving opinions, being tolerant...* The teachers especially stressed the social and working competencies.

**Question 6: What are the disadvantages or possible problems connected to employment of games and activities in English language education?**

First of all, almost all the teachers stressed the point that the game or the activity should be well prepared and thought out in order to fit the learners. For instance, T7 said: *"One of the risks and the biggest risk of these games is **not understanding your audience and developing a negative effect**... (...) A good preparation will save you a lot of time at the end."* T5 affirmed the importance of a good preparation but he also added that a good organization and management of the game or activity is equally important.

Furtherly, T2, T3 and T6 mentioned **noise** and **time** as other possible problems. It may happen that, for example, children get too involved in the game or that the teacher does not estimate the time needed for the game or activity in the given class. The same problem has experienced T1 who sometimes introduces vocabulary games that are meant for a few minutes but that suddenly take the whole lesson because the pupils like it.

Another problem can be the **discipline**. T1, T2, T3 and T4 agreed that pupils often behave inappropriately, they quarrel or they are rude to each other even within the teams and that it is sometimes hard to calm them down. They state that it really depends on the relationships between children and T2 even mentioned that there are classes with which she does not play games because of their behaviour. Nevertheless, T1, T4 and T2 think that

in such kinds of situation, games and activities may help the pupils to come together and to get to know each other from different point of view.

Next, T3 mentioned the fact that when the teacher employs a group work or an activity, some learners may not participate and cooperate with his/her group and may just have a 'free time' without the teacher realising it.

As far as a group activity or a group game is concerned, T2, T3, T5 and T7 mentioned that the teacher cannot supervise all the students at the same time and thus it can happen that the pupils **speak Czech** instead of English in order to facilitate the task. *"The negative side of a group activity for vocabulary review is the fact that you really can't hear the pronunciation and while you can check it, it's finished. It's not interactive and the kids are probably not gonna speak English together. They're not gonna do that. Children desire to be understood at any cost. That's why they'll speak English with me... because they desire to be understood. I believe it, personally."* (T7)

T5 comments on it similarly: *"...There is one big disadvantage of homogenous Czech group and that is if they do not understand each other, (...) they will use Czech immediately."* He advises: *"It will be necessary to exert influence on learners so that they use English constantly but influence them in a way that you make them 'get carried away', that they can see you using English and you carry them away by setting them a good example. (...) If you ...plunge yourself into the game, if you play with them spontaneously, they will join it. It is an important point...The teacher must play with them..."*

### **Question 7: Do you prefer cooperative or competitive types of games? Why?**

In this case, the preferences of teachers differ. Three of them (T1, T2 and T3) definitely prefer cooperative games, another three teachers (T4, T5, T7) use both equally and T3 said that she uses both types of game but it always depends on the class and on the pupils in the given class.

T1 and T2 do not like to use competitive games especially because of their competitive character and because they do not respect learners' pace. T2 states: *"Certain children will always be the last ones even though they learn...they learn but they are slower (...)I don't want them to be eliminated from the game...A lot of them then feels uncomfortable in the game. The children are hard-working but they are shy. This then leads to a mutual 'pigeonholing' among the pupils...like...'Well, we are better than them, we will win' (...)."* T1 is of the same opinion: *"I employ the cooperative games and*

*activities in order to enable the slower or less-skillful pupils to show off*". T1 always tries to make balanced groups in which the members cooperate one with each other. She also mentioned: *"At the end of an activity or a game I praise all children that actively participated in it...it is important to mention that they all managed to do the given task and that they did it together."* T6 also prefers to employ cooperative games because in her opinion they are more beneficial for learners as they develop the cooperation and let more learners 'show off'.

When preparing a game or an activity, T5 in fact does not reflect upon its competitive or cooperative character, he rather reflects upon its suitability for the given class as well as he reflects upon its effectiveness and attractiveness for learners. He also takes into consideration the character of the class.

T3 often uses competitive games with the 'sport-classes' of the elementary school she teaches at but on the other hand, she does not use them much in 'un-sport classes' where there are rather shier or slower pupils. She also pointed out that it is always better if the pupils can form the groups themselves, where they are among their friends and are not shy. However, she states that it really depends on the class. She also mentioned that pupils of the first stage of elementary school prefer competitive games, which was confirmed by T4 as well.

T7 also employs both types of games but he prefers *"team competitions"* the most. He likes when pupils are divided into power-balanced groups and when they are to come up with the answer together as a team. In team competitions, a time limit is set for the task and each member of the team has to know the answer. He is also convinced that for competitive games, there must be a good balance of power within each group whereas for cooperative activities it is more convenient to put together pupils of equal 'power': *"Let the weaker kids try it together, they'll try to solve it. But let them try to do it on their own terms."* T7 also said: *"The worst thing you can do with the child is to embarrass the child."*

#### **Question 8: Do you correct learners' mistakes during a game or an activity?**

Generally speaking, the teachers try to avoid correcting mistakes while playing a game or doing an activity and they rather do some correction at the end of it. None of them corrects every mistake. The teachers correct just those that they consider serious or worth mentioning or. According to them, it certainly depends on the type of activity or game.

They agree that if the game or an activity is based on oral expression or if it is a competitive game/activity and game/activity focused on speed (or time limit) they do not correct the mistakes during its playing or doing.

For example, T5 said: *“They would not tell me anything if I immediately corrected them. When they are to speak, I give them a certain possibility to express themselves in order for them to see that it is possible to breathe through language.”*

Similarly, T2 assessed: *“I don’t correct pupils while playing a game because I would stop them and they would be afraid...so I, for example, take some notes. However, I tell them in advance that I will take notes...for example, when something engages my attention or that I liked something...and then I say that this or that appeared...(…)...so in this way but certainly not to interrupt them.”* T2 also said that she rather lets the learners realise the mistakes themselves. Therefore when they talk about some mistakes at the end of the game or activity, she asks *“You said ‘He have’, is it correct?”* and the learners usually realise the mistake.

T7 also agrees that as far as the role play games or interactive speaking games and activities are concerned, the mistakes made while performing the task should not be corrected immediately. However, he does a kind of correction in the situation when it is not possible to make any sense of what has been said. He states: *“If I see the other children are lost, if the word order does not make any sense, I will try to paraphrase it as best as I can to do a reflection for the child so that the child see how it was received...(…) Give them the possibility to say it correctly, give them space to correct themselves.”* He would immediately correct reading mistakes (for example while playing the game ‘BrainBox’) or mistakes in ‘matching games’ or ‘filling into a gap’ activities. He never tells the right answer first, he rather lets the learners find and correct the mistake themselves. He uses paraphrasing or giving options. For example, if a learner says ‘Gold is cheap’ he asks ‘Gold is cheap or expensive?’ He also points out that what will be corrected depends on the level of learner(s) and on the scope of the lesson.

T6 also corrects some mistakes immediately while for example describing a picture and T4 corrects vocabulary mistakes immediately when doing an activity focused solely on practising the new vocabulary (its pronunciation) with the whole class so that it was repeated correctly by the others. This is important for a good and correct retention of the words.

**Question 9: What sources do you draw inspiration from while choosing a game or an activity? Do you create your own games?**

Among the most widely used sources the teachers mentioned were book publications (e.g. activity books and game books), internet, foreign language textbooks or manuals and colleagues. Except from T6 and T4, all teachers often take part in seminars that are also very inspiring for their work.

T4 stated that, unfortunately, she hardly ever takes part in seminars because of time constraints and she also mentioned that she has already had one negative experience with it: *“It was a seminar for directors of kindergartens and it seemed to me ...as it was a representation of a school, of ‘what’s English’ and that was all. No ideas or inspiration...”*

As far as the cooperation with colleagues is concerned, T5 views the situation quite satisfying, though he would like to see more sharing of ideas among the colleagues. However, he said that the situation is understandable as *“the teachers are burdened by paperwork.”* Also other teachers view the cooperation in a positive way and they like sharing ideas with their colleagues.

T5 often draws inspiration from American or English websites focused on education (e.g. websites of universities or high schools) or on English as a second language (ESO) and he also uses the magazine *‘English Teaching Forum’*<sup>133</sup> which he finds very enriching. He also said that he avoids making copies but that he makes PowerPoint presentations quite often.

A lot of teachers also use English magazines such as *‘Bridge’*, *‘Gate’* or *‘R&R’* where there are also many interesting activities to do. The magazines *‘Gate’* and *‘R&R’* correspond to the levels A1/A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and that are therefore suitable for elementary schools or for elementary learners. The magazine *‘Bridge’* is destined for grammar or secondary schools and for the levels B1/B2 of the CEFR.

**Question 10: What is your opinion on the following statement: „Well-chosen and well-organised games and activities elicit learners’ spontaneous use of language as well as they stimulate learners’ interest and activity in the lesson.“**

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<sup>133</sup> Available at: <http://americanenglish.state.gov/english-teaching-forum>

The statement above tried to sum up the idea that games and activities help to motivate learners and gain their interest in a lesson, which provokes their active involvement in the task and their spontaneous use of English.

All the teachers participating in the research agreed with the statement and they stressed the importance of *well-chosen* game and activity. Some of the teachers commented on it.

For example, T1 agreed with the statement but to a certain extent. She said that one of the biggest problems is the use of Czech during some games and activities and especially with some classes. She also added that in some classes there can be pupils who will not take an active part in the game or activity and she also said that sometimes, we already know that these children do not work and that they will not be willing to cooperate. The same opinion was expressed by T2 who affirmed: *“The game must be well set beforehand. If it is not well prepared and thought over, children will tend to use Czech.”*

T4 stated that pupils will get involved in the game or an activity actively if they enjoy it: *“If they enjoy it, they will want to do it....Nevertheless, it may happen that one pupil influences the whole class. It depends on the pupil’s personality and the way how he expresses himself in other areas than within the languages”* If there really appeared such a pupil, T4 would talk to him alone and would like to know what his or her opinion on the given situation is and what he or she would suggest to do in order to learn the subject matter.

T5 absolutely agreed with the statement but he also stressed the importance of good preparation and organisation of a game or an activity. T7 then confirmed the statement with these words: *“I think that the statement as given there is one hundred percent correct. Well-thought-out, well-chosen activities and games will elicit spontaneous reactions from children in the positive way to make them use vocabulary during a lesson. Absolutely.”*

#### **8.4 Summary of Research Results**

The aim of the research was to explore how vocabulary games and activities in English are perceived and employed by experienced teachers and what contribution the teachers think the games and activities bring to learners.

It was proved that all the teachers employ vocabulary games and activities in their lessons of English and they agree that their use is beneficial for learners. It was explored that teachers always adjust a game or an activity to the level and character of the class. Although the teachers mentioned several disadvantages or possible problems that the employment of games and activities in the lessons of English can have (e.g. noise, indiscipline, tendency to use Czech, time, demanding preparation or organisation for the teacher, unwillingness of some learners to join the game or the activity), the majority of the interviewed teachers agreed that if a game or an activity is *well-chosen* and *well-organised* and also well-prepared, the problems can be prevented. The game or the activity can then be very beneficial for learners. The fact that the teacher must know his/her learners well was also stressed.

Moreover, the research presented the most frequently used games and activities among the interviewed teachers as well as those that are less common and could be therefore inspiration for other teachers.

The research proved that the employment of games and activities in the lessons of English has numerous advantages such as motivation and active involvement of learners. It was also mentioned that games and activities engage more senses at a time and this helps better retention of vocabulary. Among other advantages mentioned by the teachers there were development of learner's critical thinking and other important competencies, possibility of expressing oneself, spontaneous and meaningful use of language and the development of other language skills. The two initial hypotheses were therefore confirmed.



## IV. CONCLUSION

The thesis focused on the role and function of vocabulary games and activities and the possibilities of their employment in the English language education.

The theoretical part introduced some important facts connected to the concepts of foreign language education within the framework of Czech educational programmes and provided a brief insight into the field of vocabulary, its teaching and learning. In relation to that, the importance of active involvement of learners in the educational process was stressed. Games and activities were then introduced and at first treated from general point of view. Subsequently, their use for didactic purposes was dealt with and their benefits for foreign language education were discussed. Furthermore, classification of activities and games developing vocabulary was introduced at the end of the theoretical part.

The research for the practical part of the thesis then proved that vocabulary games and activities are widely employed by the teachers of both elementary and secondary grammar schools. It can be affirmed that the results of the research correspond to the theoretical knowledge presented in the first part of the thesis. It was agreed that well-chosen and well-organised games and activities are very beneficial for learners of both types of school. It was also exposed that the teachers use vocabulary games and activities for different purposes in the lessons, but most frequently for revision of vocabulary and to stimulate learners' activity. The teachers appreciate games and activities for their ability to motivate and engage learners' interest as well as for the fact that they help to actively engage learners' senses and thus make the learning process more effective and enjoyable. One of the biggest advantages of games and activities is that learners are encouraged to experience the language, to use it actively and practically and they can thus see its meaningfulness. Moreover, games and activities do not provide learners with ready-made information. On the contrary, they often tend to engage learners' critical thinking and knowledge to fulfil the given task. It was also agreed that if a game or an activity is well-prepared and well-organised, it can favourably affect the learning atmosphere and develop different learners' skills and competencies. Some vocabulary games and activities also involve movement and can be thus used for relaxation after some demanding tasks or especially with young learners who need to move and change activities more often. The research has also shown that some teachers prefer cooperative types of games to competitive ones because, according to their experience, cooperative games take into consideration different types of learners and enable the less skilful or slower ones to 'show

off'. In this type of game, learners practise their social and communicative skills and they also learn to help each other and to be tolerant.

Employment of games and activities was generally perceived as very beneficial to learners, it was yet convenient to mention some problems that their use can bring. It was said that learners have the tendency to be noisier during games and activities and that this can also bring problems with their behaviour. Nevertheless, it was pointed out that the problems can usually be anticipated and the activity or game can be adjusted so as to avoid the problems. It was mentioned that the problems may occur when the teacher does not know his/her learners well and chooses an inappropriate game or activity or when he/she does not handle the problematic situation. The crucial role of the teacher as a good organiser and a good manager was therefore stressed.

The practical part of the theses also introduced several games and activities that were used in the lessons of English language at elementary and secondary grammar schools. The aim of this section of the practical part was to apply the theoretical knowledge of the first part of the thesis and to show how the given games and activities can be employed in the English lessons as well as to explore the benefits they can bring to learners. Each game and activity was analysed and reflected so as to provide a clear idea about its course. Moreover, the worksheets I made for the games and activities and that are displayed in the corresponding appendices are considered a big contribution of the thesis. From the experience gained, I can confirm that vocabulary games and activities are very helpful and beneficial for development of learners' language and other skills but I also have to point out the teacher's crucial role as an organiser and a manager. For me, as the beginning teacher, it was not always easy to manage the learners' behaviour in the course of certain games and activities.

The diploma thesis offers many interesting ideas about the employment of vocabulary games and activities in the lessons of English and it provides many reasons why they should be included in English language education. The thesis can be very useful and inspiring to those who like to make their English lessons varied and interesting.

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## **Appendices**

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## ***Appendix A: Knowing a Word***

As it was already indicated, learning foreign language vocabulary is not exactly an easy task. If one really knows a word, his knowledge does not comprise only the meaning of the word and its pronunciation. There is much more to be learned about a word in order to be able to use it properly and meaningfully and so avoid possible ambiguities or embarrassing situations. A good teacher of the foreign language must be aware of what the knowledge of word involves and help the students gradually develop their vocabulary competence. As the field of word knowledge is very complex and different linguists have various approaches to describe it, the following text is based on Thornbury's<sup>134</sup> representation of word knowledge that he divides into **several components**. Other authors will be mentioned as well to provide a global view of the matter.

First of all, as Thornbury<sup>135</sup> suggests, *“at the most basic level, knowing a word involves knowing its form, and its meaning.”* As the words in English language are pronounced differently from how they are written, the learner should be able to distinguish both the word's **written** and **spoken form**. There is a competent reason for insisting on good pronunciation and spelling. For example, it would be strange if a farmer said that he has a /ʃɪp/ in his fold as the listener would not probably expect a ship to be in a fold but on the sea or on a lake. The farmer made a phonetic mistake as he did not prolong the vowel in the word “sheep” (/ʃi:p/) and therefore he accidentally used a different word. A common phonetic mistake of the Czech learners is also wrong pronunciation of the words “bear” and “beer”, which might cause really big ambiguities. The same is the importance of correct spelling in writing as if one does not know the written form of the words, the whole text becomes unintelligible or it is, at least, hard to read. Common minor spelling mistakes are made in words containing double letters (“recommend”, “blood”, “happiness”, “coffee”, “professor”) or in words such as “wonderful” (not “wonderfull”), “receive” (not “recieve”) etc. More serious mistakes are those that really impede the comprehension, which is for example switching the words that resemble phonetically: “chicken” and “kitchen”, “isle” and “aisle”, “break” and “brake” or “principal” and “principle”. Moreover, over the influence of the mother language, Czech learners have the tendency to write the words as they are said and pronounce them as they are written. Basic

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<sup>134</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 16)

<sup>135</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 15)

spelling and pronunciation rules should therefore not be omitted while teaching the foreign language, although they are not hundred percent applicable.

Another crucial component of word that the learner needs to know is its **meaning**. Schmitt<sup>136</sup> presents Drum's and Konopak's definition of meaning "*... at the most basic level, meaning consists of the relationship between a word and its referent (the person, thing, action, condition, or case it refers to in the real or an imagined world). This relationship is not inherent; rather, it is arbitrary until formalized by the people using the word.*" People give words their meaning by connecting and associating them to objects, actions etc. Thus when a word is pronounced one can imagine what it refers to as he has the concept of the thing, action, etc. in his head. "*To describe the meaning of a word, then, we need to describe the concept.*"<sup>137</sup> If the word "sheep" is said, one commonly imagines a four-leg animal with a thick woolly coat. The concepts may slightly differ from person to person (as for example one imagines an entirely white sheep whereas the other one has the concept of a white sheep with black spots) but this, basically, does not impede the comprehension. Words can have direct relation with their referents, which is the example of onomatopoeic words ("moo-moo", "murmuring") or they can refer to a single and unique entity ("Eiffel Tower", "Canada", "Usain Bolt"). However, as it could be seen above, most commonly, a word does not have only one single referent and therefore more concepts can be meaningfully associated with it. This is the case of the words representing or belonging to some category: "cat", "vehicle", "hasty", "fast", "surprise", "astonish" etc. Many words have also slight boundaries between them, which causes big difficulties to learners. In order to precise the meaning of words and help learners to understand them and consequently use them correctly, the teacher may employ so-called *componential analysis* which "*describes words in terms of shared and non-shared semantics features, these features themselves being only expressible as words.*"<sup>138</sup> For illustration, McCarthy<sup>139</sup> presents Channel's grid for "being surprised".

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<sup>136</sup> (SCHMITT, McCARTHY, 2000, p. 23)

<sup>137</sup> (SCHMITT, McCARTHY, 2000, p. 23)

<sup>138</sup> (McCARTHY, 1990, p. 93)

<sup>139</sup> (McCARTHY, 1990, p. 3)

**Table 1.** Channel's semantic grid for "being surprised"

	affect with wonder	because unexpected	because difficult to believe	so as to cause confusion	so as to leave one helpless to act or think
surprise	+	+			
astonish	+		+		
amaze	+			+	
astound	+				+
flabbergast	+				+

Indeed, making sense relations between words by identifying their common or different features, or nuances of meaning, may be very fruitful and enriching way of vocabulary learning. Another usual way of demonstrating those kinds of relations between words is introducing them as *synonyms* ("say" and "tell"), *antonyms* ("dirty" and "clean"), *polysemes* (the word "head" can represent a lot of meanings such as part of body, measurement, a person in charge of a group of people, of an organization or a school, etc.), *hyponyms*<sup>140</sup> that Thornbury<sup>141</sup> divides into words that are hierarchically at the same level - *co-hyponyms* ("apple", "orange", "pineapple") and words that are *superordinate* to other words ("fruit" in this case).

Concerning the **meaning** of a word, when learning the foreign language, one can come across a word that refers to a thing or some phenomena that does not exist in his culture or the meaning of which just does not correspond to the meaning of the mother language's equivalent. Allen<sup>142</sup> is there convinced of the importance of experience with the culture whose language we learn: "*Since full understanding of a word often requires knowing how native speakers feel about what the word represents, some meanings cannot be found in a dictionary. It is necessary to know something about the customs and attitudes of native speakers if we are to know what words really mean to them.*" A word that does not have its proper Czech equivalent is for example "beefeater". One who does not know what the word "beefeater" means to English people, could imagine a man who likes eating beef, but he would not probably expect it to be a guard of the Tower of London. The word "please" is also a tricky one for the Czech learner as it does not fully correspond to the

<sup>140</sup> words that are members of a class

<sup>141</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 10)

<sup>142</sup> (ALLEN, 1983, p. 4)

Czech “prosím”. A native English speaker’s reaction when someone thanks him would never be “Please”, he would say something like: “You’re welcome”, “Don’t mention it” or “Don’t worry”. For a successful communication in the foreign language, it is really important to know what the words refer to and what their meaning(s) are in the given culture.

Another important component of word knowledge are according to Thornbury<sup>143</sup> the **grammatical behaviour**. Concerning the grammatical behaviour, we distinguish eight parts of speech (verb, noun, adjective, adverb, pronoun, preposition, conjunction and interjection). One word may belong to more than one part of speech as in the case of the word “must” that can be both a verb (“I must go to the store to buy some cheese.”) and a noun (“Regular exercise is a must.”). This word formation process is called *conversion*. The most frequent conversion is that from nouns to verbs (“email” and “to email”, “name” and “to name”, “ship” and “to ship” etc.). In order to use words meaningfully and grammatically correctly, different *grammatical forms*, or *inflexions*, must be also taken into consideration as they modify the grammatical meaning of the word. Thus, the word’s “say” inflexions are: “say”, “says”, “saying”, “said”. A learner must choose the right grammatical form according to what he wants to express by the utterance or phrase.

A **derivative** is then “a word that results from addition of an affix to a root, and which has a different meaning from the root.”<sup>144</sup> Thus, as Thornbury<sup>145</sup> demonstrates, the word’s “play” derivatives are: “play”, “player”, “replay” and “playful”. *Derivation* is another way of word formation and if learners know how the suffixes and prefixes are used to form a new word, their vocabulary will be a lot richer. People learn more easily when they can see the relations between words and Thornbury<sup>146</sup> states that according to research, “the mind groups the different forms of the same word together”. Therefore, the teacher should not neglect presenting words in their *word families* which is “the base word plus its inflexions and its most common derivatives”<sup>147</sup> as in this example: “friend”, “friends”, “friendship”, “friendly”, “unfriendly”, “friendless”.

**Collocation** is the kind of close relationship between words which appear frequently next to or near each other at a time. McCarthy<sup>148</sup> assumes that “the relationship

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<sup>143</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 16)

<sup>144</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 4)

<sup>145</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 4)

<sup>146</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 4)

<sup>147</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 4)

<sup>148</sup> (McCARTHY, 1990, p. 12)

*of collocation is fundamental in the study of vocabulary; it is a marriage contract between words, and some words are more firmly married to each other than others.*” This relationship is however not so tight as the one of the compound words (“armchair”, “grown-up”, well-known”, “afternoon”) or multi-word units (“bits and pieces”, “by the way”, “set up” and idiomatic expressions such as: “it costs an arm and a leg”, “let the sleeping dogs lie”, “piece of cake”). As Thornbury<sup>149</sup> suggests, collocation “...*is best seen as part of a continuum of strength of association*”. Frequent English collocations are, for example, “strong wind”, “heavy rain”, “fascinating book”, “see a doctor” or “pay attention”. The importance of knowing the collocations of words is stressed by McCarthy<sup>150</sup>: “*Languages are full of strong collocational pairs and, therefore, collocation deserves to be a central aspect of vocabulary study.*”

Another component of word knowledge is the **register** of the word, both spoken and written. McCarthy<sup>151</sup> describes it as “... *relationship between the content of a message, its sender and receiver, its situation and purpose, and how it is communicated.*” Indeed, we choose such words that are appropriate to the given situation or context. For example, one does not speak the same way with his friends and his teachers, there are also specific words connected with different fields of interest such as football, computers, philosophy, medical science etc. We choose a different register while writing an essay, a postcard or a notice as well as when we have a phone-call, an interview or an important business appointment. For each of these situations a different register is chosen in respect of observance of social customs and traditions as well as for the purpose of mutual comprehension. For instance, one can say to his friend “Hi guy! What’s up?” but it would be highly inconvenient to talk like that to one’s boss. One had better show more respect by saying: “Good morning, sir! How are you today?” In short, by knowing a word’s register, a learner avoids embarrassing moments and misunderstanding.

The last component that Thornbury<sup>152</sup> presents is the word’s **frequency** which says “*how often and where words occur, and what sorts of environments.*”<sup>153</sup> McCarthy assumes that “*the most frequent words in any language will be the most useful ones for learners of that language, and therefore the best to start off with, in order to give the*

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<sup>149</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 7)

<sup>150</sup> (McCARTHY, 1990, p. 12)

<sup>151</sup> (McCARTHY, 1990, p. 61)

<sup>152</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 16)

<sup>153</sup> (McCARTHY, 1990, p. 66)

*learner a basic set of tools for communication.*”<sup>154</sup> Indeed, when starting to learn a foreign language, first words to be learned would be those that can be used for basic communication: “hello”, “good morning”, “day”, “nice”, “thanks”. The teacher would not start with words such as: “screw”, “appalling”, “bewildering” or “adjourn”. Thus frequency lists and corpuses are created in order to show which words are used the most and where. Those frequency lists are after careful consideration used by creators of syllabuses or learning materials in order to provide learners the sets of words needed for achieving a certain level of vocabulary knowledge for appropriate communication.<sup>155</sup>

To sum it up, when teaching and learning a new word it is necessary to put it into some context so as to demonstrate its important features and therefore facilitate a learner’s comprehension of the word. As it was outlined, knowing a word is indeed a complex process of distinguishing meanings, use, relations, forms and others. The crucial role of the teacher is not only to get their students to acquire as many words as possible, but most importantly the task is to help them understand (or know) the words, their meanings and use, their interconnections, similarities, differences and effects.

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<sup>154</sup> (McCARTHY, 1990, p. 66)

<sup>155</sup> (McCARTHY, 1990, p. 66)

## Appendix B: Weather forecast cards

Day	Monday
Weather	It is raining.
Temperature	It is 15 above zero.
Clothes	Umbrella, boots, tracksuit
<p>- "Good morning, here is the <b>weather forecast</b> for (Monday)."</p> <p>- "On Monday it is (hot and sunny)."</p> <p>- "It is (twenty) <b>above/ below</b> zero."</p> <p>- "Put on your (T-shirt, sunglasses and shorts or skirts)."</p>	

Day	Thursday
Weather	It is cloudy.
Temperature	It is 20 above zero
Clothes	Shorts, T-shirt, trainers.
<p>- "Good morning, here is the <b>weather forecast</b> for (Monday)."</p> <p>- "On Monday it is (hot and sunny)."</p> <p>- "It is (twenty) <b>above/ below</b> zero."</p> <p>- "Put on your (T-shirt, sunglasses and shorts or skirts)."</p>	

Day	Tuesday
Weather	It is sunny and hot.
Temperature	It is 26 above zero.
Clothes	Sunglasses, shirt, swimsuit
<p>- "Good morning, here is the <b>weather forecast</b> for (Monday)."</p> <p>- "On Monday it is (hot and sunny)."</p> <p>- "It is (twenty) <b>above/ below</b> zero."</p> <p>- "Put on your (T-shirt, sunglasses and shorts or skirts)."</p>	

Day	Friday
Weather	It is stormy, it is raining.
Temperature	It is 20 above zero.
Clothes	Raincoat, boots, socks.
<p>- "Good morning, here is the <b>weather forecast</b> for (Monday)."</p> <p>- "On Monday it is (hot and sunny)."</p> <p>- "It is (twenty) <b>above/ below</b> zero."</p> <p>- "Put on your (T-shirt, sunglasses and shorts or skirts)."</p>	

Day	Wednesday
Weather	It is windy.
Temperature	It is 8 above zero.
Clothes	Anorak, sweater, winter hat
<p>- "Good morning, here is the <b>weather forecast</b> for (Monday)."</p> <p>- "On Monday it is (hot and sunny)."</p> <p>- "It is (twenty) <b>above/ below</b> zero."</p> <p>- "Put on your (T-shirt, sunglasses and shorts or skirts)."</p>	

Day	Saturday
Weather	It is snowing.
Temperature	It is 10 below zero.
Clothes	Scarf, winter hat, gloves
<p>- "Good morning, here is the <b>weather forecast</b> for (Monday)."</p> <p>- "On Monday it is (hot and sunny)."</p> <p>- "It is (twenty) <b>above/ below</b> zero."</p> <p>- "Put on your (T-shirt, sunglasses and shorts or skirts)."</p>	

Day	Sunday
Weather	It is sunny and it is cold.
Temperature	It is 8 below zero.
Clothes	Scarf, hat, coat
<p>- “<i>Good morning, here is the <b>weather forecast</b> for (Monday).</i>”</p> <p>- “<i><b>On</b> Monday it is (hot and sunny).</i>”</p> <p>- “<i><b>It is</b> (twenty) <b>above/ below</b> zero.</i>”</p> <p>- “<i><b>Put on</b> your (T-shirt, sunglasses and shorts or skirts).</i>”</p>	

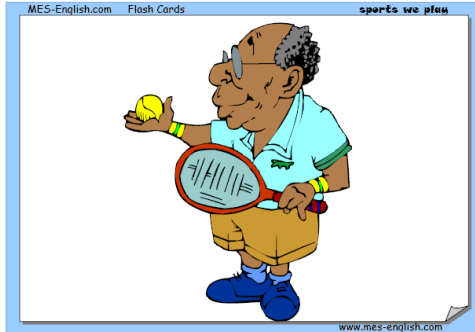


*Appendix C: Weather cards*

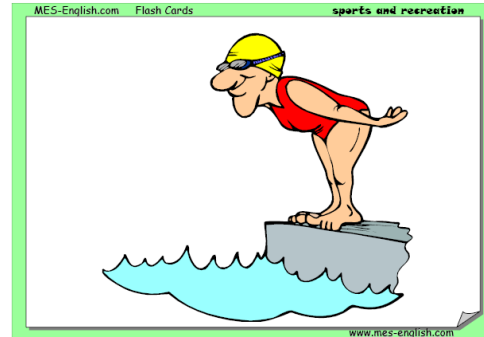
<b>Day</b>						
<b>Weather</b>						
<b>Temperature</b>						
<b>Clothes</b>						
<i>What is the day, please?</i>			<i>What is the temperature?</i>			
<i>Can you spell it, please?</i>			<i>What are the clothes?</i>			
<i>What is the weather like today?</i>						

## Appendix D: Flashcards (activities)

### Playing tennis



### Swimming



### Walking



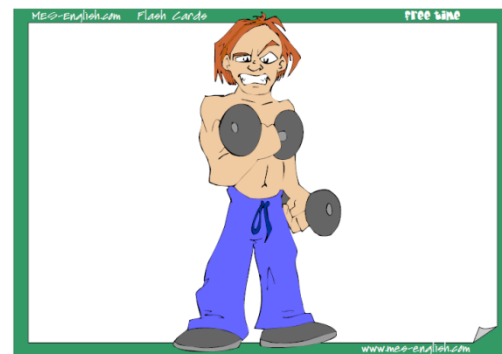
### Playing cards



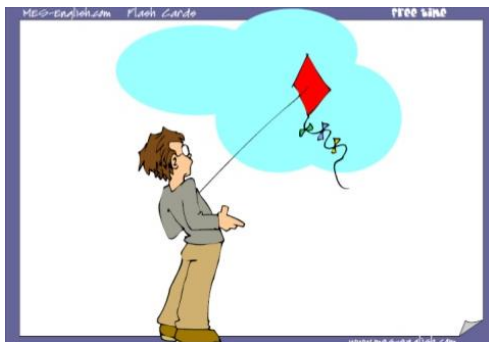
### Skiing



### Going to the gym



### Flying a kite



The pictures were taken from: <http://www.mes-english.com/flashcards.php>

*Appendix E: Models representing weather and temperature*



## *Appendix F: Cards for jury*

### **Card A**

Generally, you like the outfit but you don't like an item of clothes the model is wearing. Use the words **TOO** and **ENOUGH** while making a comment on the chosen item of clothes.

### **Card B**

You are amazed by the outfit the model is wearing. Express your enthusiasm and say for what occasion the outfit is suitable. Make a comment about the material as well.

### **Card C**

You are disappointed by the outfit the model is wearing. Express your disappointment, use the words **TOO** and **ENOUGH** while commenting on the outfit.

### **Card D**

You quite like the outfit the model is wearing but the colours don't match perfectly. Comment on it and make a suggestion on how to improve the outfit by using different colours.

### **Useful expressions:**

- I think that ...
- In my opinion ...
- It fits you well.
- It suits you.
- It is amazing, extraordinary, well done ...
- It takes my breath away!
- The azure blouse goes well with the deep blue skirt.
- I can't stand it.
- It is terrible, tasteless, too extravagant...
- It is too... (small)
- It is not ... (long) enough.

### *Appendix G: Sample sentences for presenters*

- *Let me introduce Lucy.*
- *She is wearing the latest outfit of our collection called „Summer Sky“.*
- *She is wearing a light blue silk top.*
- *She is also wearing a black skirt made of cotton.*
- *She has got high-heeled leather boots that fit the outfit.*
- *She has got silver bracelet and silver earrings both with leaf motif.*
- *We hope that you enjoyed our presentation.*

*Appendix H: Equipment for learners*



## Appendix I: Teacher's card

### A) Orders

- Put the *plaster* on his forehead.
- Put the *bandage* on his left knee.
- Put the *plaster* on his right arm to fix it.
- Take the *drops* for his eyes.
- Take the *ointment* for his feet.
- Take the *tablets (painkillers)* for his back.
- His nose is *bleeding*.

### B) Picture of the injuries



### C) The Story:

Thomas was at his lover's apartment on the second floor of an old house. They wanted to spend the night together. Suddenly, they heard her husband's voice. Thomas took his shirt and shorts and he jumped off the window. However, it was too high from the ground and he broke his arm and cut his knee. He had to run through the rouses because the husband started to follow him. He thus hurt his forehead and his feet became itchy. Unfortunately, the husband got him and punched Thomas to his nose. Thomas's nose started bleeding and he burst into tears. His eyes were a bit red.

## ***Appendix J: Movie Activities***

### ***Activity 2: Associate the word with its definition and an appropriate image***

#### **A) Genres:**

ADVENTURE          DRAMA          WESTERN          SPY FILM          WAR FILM  
SCI-FI          FANTASY          HORROR          COMEDY          BIOGRAPHY  
ROMANTIC COMEDY          CARTOON          MUSICAL

#### **B) Definitions:**

The film uses its action scenes preferably to display and explore exotic locations in an energetic way.

A serious film. It shows situations or events that are highly emotional, tragic, or turbulent.

Film that deals with the subject of fictional espionage. It shows the espionage activities of government agents and their risk of being discovered by their enemies

Form of fiction that imaginatively uses scientific knowledge (for plot, setting, theme)

Films with fantastic themes, usually involving magic, supernatural events, make-believe creatures, or exotic fantasy worlds.

Very scary film where blood and violence often appear.

Funny film that makes you laugh.

Funny film about love.

Film with animated characters.

Film with lots of singing and dancing .

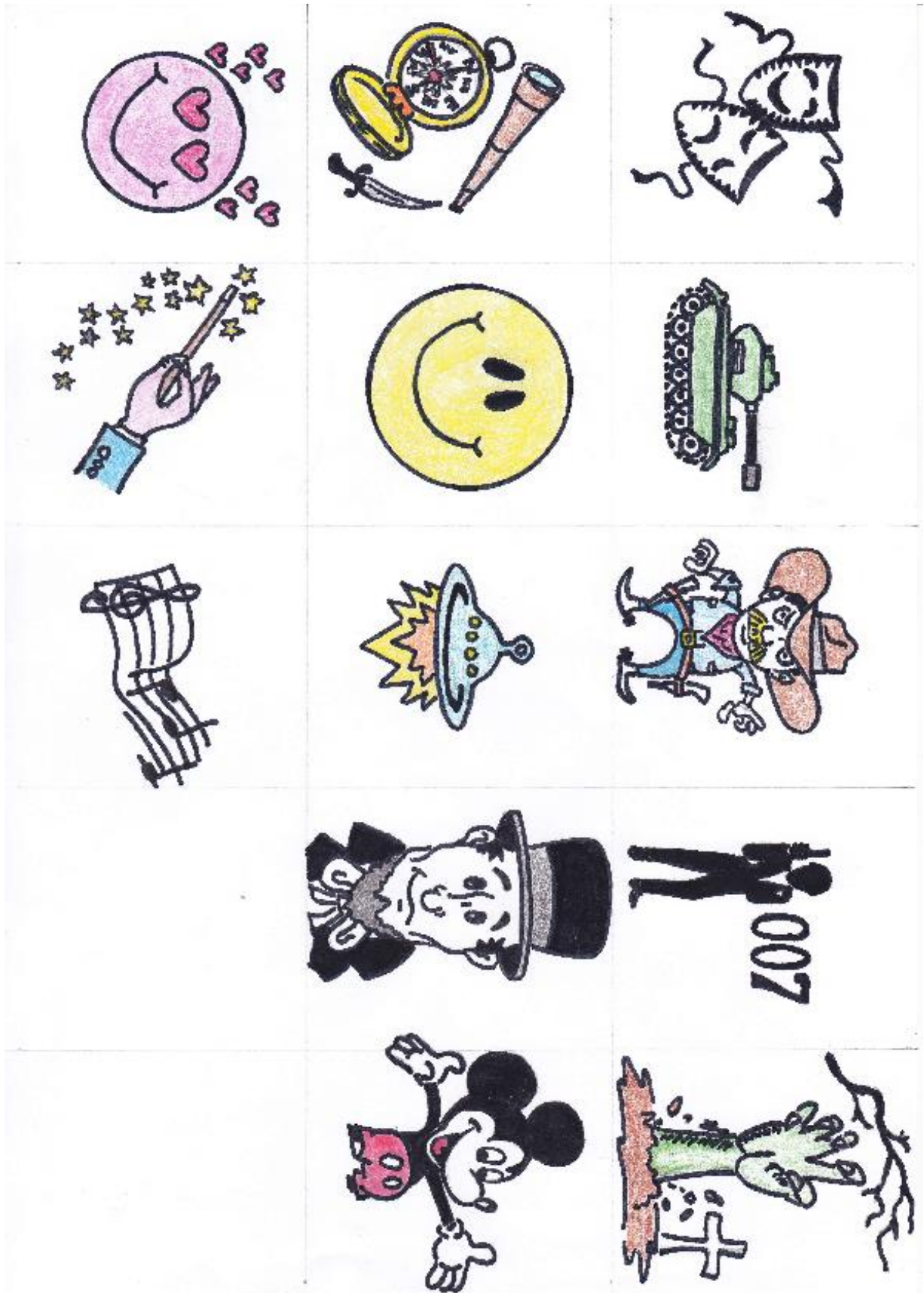
Cowboy film.

Film containing battles and fighting.

Film based on someone's life (usually a famous person).



C) Pictures:



*Activity 3: Match the title of the film with the appropriate genre (PowerPoint Presentation)*



*Activity 4: What movie is it?*

**Plot 1**

It's a fantasy movie. It's about a boy who grew up without parents and to whom strange things happen. He lives with his aunt, uncle and a fat cousin. One day, on his eleventh birthday, a letter is sent to him. The letter says that he was admitted to the school of magic in Hogwarts. However, his aunt and his uncle do not want to let him go there. He then gets to know that a different world exists and it's the world of magic where he is famous for the scar on his forehead. He becomes a pupil of Hogwarts and meets new friends with whom he spends a lot of great fun. Together, they experience a lot of dangerous situations too. Especially while fighting Lord Voldemort. Daniel Radcliffe is starring in it. The movie is very famous and popular.

*(Harry Potter and the Philosophers' Stone)*

**Plot 2**

It is about a princess that is chased away from her home by her evil step-mother who is a queen. The queen tells a hunter to kill the princess but he does not have the heart to do it and he lets her go. The princess finds a little shelter where she spends the night. However, she gets to know that it is a home of seven little men. The dwarfs are first confused but then they become to like her very much and let her stay with them. However, the evil queen finds her and tries to kill her. Fortunately, a handsome prince comes to save her life by a kiss.

*(Snow White)*

## Activity 5: Movie Quiz

### MOVIE WORLD - QUIZZ

- 1) Harry Potter had an animal called Hedwig. What kind of animal was it?  
a) a dog                      b) a sparrow                      c) an owl
  
- 2) Who is **not** starring in *The Pirates of the Caribbean*?  
a) Johnny Depp      b) Keira Knightley      c) Cate Blanchette
  
- 3) What were the pirates always searching for?  
a) a boat                      b) a treasure                      c) women
  
- 4) Who is Shrek?  
a) an ogre                      b) a donkey                      c) a handsome young woman
  
- 5) How do we call the short filmed advertisement for a movie?  
a) a trailer                      b) a trailer                      c) the subtitles
  
- 6) Who directed the film *Alice in Wonderland*?  
a) Steven Spielberg    b) Tim Burton                      c) Quentin Tarantino
  
- 7) Which film company has a mountain as its logo?  
a) Universal                      b) Paramount                      c) 20th Century Fox
  
- 8) Complete the film title: Lord of the \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 9) Who is a „scream queen“?  
a) an actress who screams a lot, for example in a horror film  
b) a movie queen who likes ice cream  
c) neither of the two possibilities
  
- 10) A person who performs dangerous acts in a film, television programme, etc... in place of an actor is called:  
a) double man                      b) madman                      c) stuntman

*Activity 6 : Find the missing words of the song*

**“Alice” by Avril Lavigne**

Tripping out

Spinning around

I'm u\_\_\_\_\_

I fell down

yeah, I \_\_\_\_\_ down

I'm freaking out

So, w\_\_\_\_\_ am I now?

Upside down

And I can't stop it now

You can't stop me now

Ooh ooooooh ooooohhh

I, I'll g\_\_\_\_\_ by

I, I'll s\_\_\_\_\_

When the world's crashing down

When I fall and hit the

g\_\_\_\_\_

I will turn m\_\_\_\_\_ around

Don't you try to stop me

I, I won't c\_\_\_\_\_

I found m\_\_\_\_\_

In Wonderland

Get back on

My f\_\_\_\_\_ again

Is this r\_\_\_\_\_?

Is this pretend?

I'll take a stand

u\_\_\_\_\_ the end

I, I'll g\_\_\_\_\_ by

I, I'll s\_\_\_\_\_

When the world's crashing down

When I fall and hit the g\_\_\_\_\_

I will turn m\_\_\_\_\_ around

Don't you try to stop me

I, I won't c\_\_\_\_\_

I, I'll g\_\_\_\_\_ by

I, I'll s\_\_\_\_\_

When the world's crashing down

When I fall and hit the g\_\_\_\_\_

I will turn m\_\_\_\_\_ around

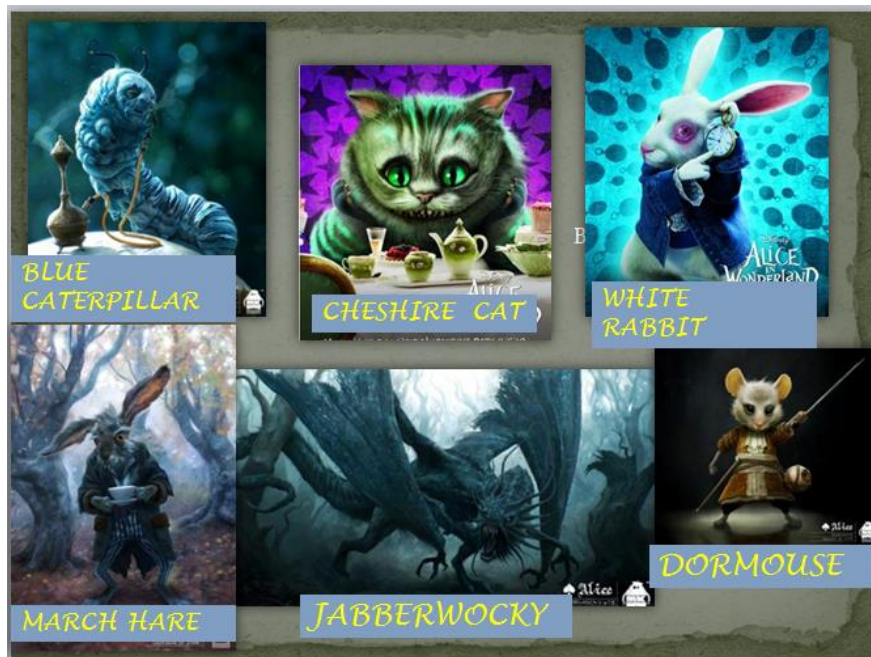
Don't you try to stop me

I, I won't c\_\_\_\_\_....

*Activity 7: Find your partner*

TRAILER	A short filmed advertisement for a movie.
ACTOR/ACTRESS	A person who acts in a play, film, broadcast, etc.
DIRECTOR	A person who is responsible for making a film and who tells the actors, actresses and other staff what to do.
CARTOON	A short humorous film in which the characters are drawn.
HORROR	A film which tries to make the audience very frightened. There can be blood and very scary scenes.
COSTUMES	It is what the characters of a movie are wearing. In other words „clothes“.
SUBTITLES	The text of dialogue, speeches, operas, etc., translated into another language and projected on the lower part of the screen.
STUNTMAN	A person who performs dangerous things in place of an actor in a film.

*Activity 9: Give names to the characters (PowerPoint Presentation)*



The pictures were taken from: [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1014759/mediaindex?ref\\_=tt\\_pv\\_mi\\_sm](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1014759/mediaindex?ref_=tt_pv_mi_sm)

### Activity 10: Describe the movie poster



The poster is taken from: <http://thesefantasticworlds.com/2014/02/25/top-10-fantasy-movies/alice-in-wonderland-movie-poster/>

### Activity 11: Dubbing

#### Dubbing handout

**H:** It's you.

**D:** No, it's not. McTwisp brought us the wrong Alice.

**M:** It's the wrong Alice!

**H:** It's absolutely Alice. You're absolutely Alice. I'd know you anywhere. I'd know him anywhere. (BOTH GIGGLING)

**H:** Well, as you can see, we're still having tea. And it's all because I was obliged to kill Time waiting for your return.

You're terribly late, you know. Naughty.

Well, anyway, Time became quite offended and stopped altogether. Not a tick ever since. (LAUGHING)

**A:** Time can be funny in dreams.

**H:** Yes, yes, of course, but now you're back, you see, and we need to get on to the Frabjous Day. -Frabjous Day! -Frabjous Day!

**H:** I'm investigating things that begin with the letter "M." (WHISPERING) Have you any idea why a raven is like a writing desk?

**Activity 13: Teaser - fill in the gaps and find the speakers**

1. There is a place like no place on Earth. Some say to survive it you need to be \_\_\_\_\_ a hunter. Which I \_\_\_\_\_, I am.
2. I need a pig here! I love a w\_\_\_\_\_ pig beneath my aching \_\_\_\_\_.  
Stop \_\_\_\_\_!
3. It is im\_\_\_\_\_!

**Activity 14: Describe the movie character**

Character traits – charakterové vlastnosti

adventurous  
ambitious  
amusing  
brave  
courageous  
faithful, loyal  
friendly  
funny  
generous  
honest  
intelligent  
kind  
modest  
nice

patient  
polite  
reliable  
self-confident  
sensible  
sensitive  
shy  
sincere  
aggressive  
arrogant  
careless  
cowardly  
impatient  
lazy

mean  
moody  
nervous  
possessive  
rude  
selfish  
silly  
stubborn  
stupid  
unreliable  
merciless  
always late  
cruel  
hateful



Name

Gender

Age

Friends

Enemies

Hair colour

Eye colour

Other physical aspects:

Character traits:

Her life:





Name

Gender

Age

Friends

Enemies

Hair colour

Eye colour

Other physical aspects:

Character traits:

His life:

## *Appendix K: Thematic Lesson Plans*

### **Lesson plan 1: Movies**

**Class:** 3.A

**Lessons:** 1

**Date:** 19.5.2014

**Topic:** Movies (vocabulary and speaking activities)

**Educational Aims:** discuss and solve problems in group and in pair, observe the rules of a 'fair play', express one's opinion

**Didactic and Pedagogical Aims:** to recycle vocabulary about *movies*, to practise oral production and comprehension, cultural point (see the activity *Movie Quiz*)

:00    **Introduction**

:00    *Activity 1: Brainstorming*

:05    **Film genres**

- divide learners in three groups

*Activity 2: Associate the word with its definition and an appropriate image*

- each group is given cards with 13 genres, their definitions and images
- the task is to match each genre with its right definition and the appropriate image
- the first group to fulfil the task scores one point

*Activity 3: Match the title of the film with the appropriate genre (PowerPoint Presentation)*

- the task is to match each of the 13 films displayed in the PowerPoint Presentation with the appropriate genre from the previous exercise
- pupils write their answers on a sheet of paper - give 3 minutes for preparation
- each group can score a point for each correctly matched movie
- before checking the answers, the groups exchange the sheets of paper with the answers and we correct them aloud together

: 20    *Activity 4: What movie is it?*

- first, I will tell the plots of two movies and the pupils will try to **guess** the title of each one (one point for each guessed movie)
- then, they'll **work in their groups and prepare a film plot**

- each team is given the handout *At the Movies*<sup>156</sup> – make sure they understand all the movie vocabulary (*Plot, Climax, Reviews, to star in..*) and tell them to mention as much of these items as possible
- the group gets one point for each good and comprehensive definition (film plot)
- the group gets one point for each guessed movie

: 30 **Activity 5: Movie Quiz**

- the task is to complete the quiz about movies
- pupils work *in pairs* (or group of three) within their groups - each group has the same number of pairs
- give 4 minutes, then check together
- each group scores one point for each pair that did no more than one mistake

: 35 **Evaluation of the ‘movie competition’**

- the group that scores the most points is the winner

: 36 **Activity 6 : Find the missing words of the song**

- pupils listen to the song „Alice“ by Avril Lavigne
- the task is to fill in the missing words in the text
- the song is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YI4m-l2yRZA>

: 40 **Questionnaire**

- pupils are asked to fill in the questionnaire

## **Lesson Plan 2: Movies**

**Class:** 1.B

**Lessons:** 1

**Date:** 19.5.2014

**Topic:** Movies (vocabulary activities)

**Educational Aims:** solve problems in pair or individually, be tolerant, take an active part in a discussion and do not be afraid to express one’s opinion, perform before the others and develop productive skills

**Didactic and Pedagogical Aims:** to recycle vocabulary concerning the topic *movies*, to revise prepositions of place (see Activity 10), to practise oral production and oral comprehension, cultural point (especially Lewis Carroll, Tim Burton)

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<sup>156</sup> The worksheet is available at: <http://bogglesworldesl.com/lessons/MovieLesson.htm>

- :00 **Activity 1: Brainstorming**
- : 01 **Activity 7: Find your partner**
- each pupil gets one card (either word or definition)
  - pupils then go around the class and their task is to find his/her partner with the corresponding card (e.g. the pupil who is 'Trailer' must find the other one who is 'A short filmed advertisement for a movie; a preview')
  - pupils use only English language to find their partners
  - we will read the words and the definitions at the end of the activity
- : 06 **Discussion**
- show the picture of **the poster of the movie 'Alice in Wonderland'**
  - ask questions: *Do you know this film? Who is the director? Who is starring it? Have you seen the film? Do you know the novel on which the film based? Who is the author?*
  - tell some basic information about Lewis Carroll
- : 10 **Activity 8: Teaser**
- tell the pupils that they are going to watch the teaser of the movie
  - write the questions below on the blackboard
  - questions: *What is the film about? What is the Wonderland? Who lives there? Who is Alice? What happened to her? What other characters could you see or were mentioned?*
- teaser 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMiCJefpn9Q>
- teaser 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjMkNrX60mA>
- play it 2x if necessary
- (the purpose of this activity is to understand the spoken discourse with the help of visualisation)*
- :17 **Activity 9: Give names to the characters (PowerPoint Presentation)**
- show learners the pictures of the characters without names (slide 1)
  - students give the names to the characters themselves but give them clues if necessary
  - then reveal the names
  - attention to: *HARE x RABBIT; CATERPILLAR, HATTER, TWINS, KNAVE* (spodek)
  - ask students: *Which character do you like the most/the least? Why?*
- :20 **Activity 10: Describe the movie poster**

- this activity helps to revise the vocabulary from the field of **literature/movies** and also to revise words that appeared in the previous activity

- look at the poster once more and answer the questions:

*What feeling gives you the picture? Is it **real** or **imaginary**? Is it **scary** or **funny**? What **surrounding(s)** can you see? What **characters** can you see? Are there any animals? What **genre** could the film be according to the poster? Describe the picture in a more detail. Would you like to live in that place?*

(elicit answers such as: *There are a lot of things in the poster...We can see several characters and there are also the animals. The surrounding is quite extraordinary, bizarre, dreamy as there are mushrooms bigger than humans...There are plants as well, for example the rose with a human face, a fern, trees without leaves... there are doors on the left side but we can't see where they lead to...There is also a castle behind the Hatter and a river in a valley behind the Red Queen. Behind Alice, there is a table on the left...*)

- discuss the poster together (or in pairs), ask students concrete questions if necessary

: 25 **Activity 11: Dubbing**

- let the students make pairs and tell them that they are going to remake the script of a scene from the movie 'Alice in Wonderland'

- the scene is taken from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJ2mDYlcXnM>

- play the scene once

- distribute the **script of the scene**, do not translate it, it is only a guideline to help students to write their own (remade) script

- the task is to dub the scene according to the film genre written on the script

(different pairs have different genres: e.g. *horror, romantic film, sci-fi, comedy, parody*)

- division of roles is up to them, they can add more sounds etc...but all members should participate in the creation of the script!

- then play the scene two or more times and give 5-10 minutes for the preparation

- when they are ready, chose 1 group to dub the scene (play it without the sound)

: 44 **New word 'GRIN'**

- ask students the questions: *Who is the Cheshire cat? What is strange about him?*

- let students draw a **grin** and write there 'GRIN' (they can compare their grins for fun)

## Lesson Plan 3: Movies

**Class:** 6.A

**Lessons:** 2

**Date:** 19.5. 2014

**Theme:** Movies

**Educational Aims:** solve problems in pair or individually, be tolerant, take an active part in a discussion and not to be afraid to express one's opinion, perform before the others and develop productive skills

**Didactic and Pedagogical Aims:** to recycle vocabulary concerning the topic *movies*, revise prepositions of place (see Activity 10) and vocabulary connected to physical appearance and character traits, to practise oral production and oral comprehension, cultural point (especially Lewis Carroll, Tim Burton)

: 00 *Activity 1: Brainstorming*

: 05 *Activity 7: Find your partner*

- PP get a card with a definition or with a word
- PP go around the class and find his/her partner
- read the words and the definitions at the end of the activity

: 10 **Film genres**

- divide learners in three groups

*Activity 2: Associate the word with its definition and an appropriate image*

(see Lesson Plan 1)

: 15 *Activity 3: Match the title of the film with the appropriate genre (PowerPoint Presentation)*

(see Lesson Plan 1)

: 20 *Activity 12: Find the Czech title of the film*

- the students try to guess the Czech translation of the movies mentioned in the *Activity 3* or they provide their own translations
- give the students some clues if necessary (e.g. give the learners dictionaries or translate some unknown words)

: 25 *Activity 4: What movie is it?*

(see Lesson Plan 1)

- : 40    **Discussion**  
          (see Lesson Plan 2)
- : 45    *Activity 8: Teaser*  
          (see Lesson Plan 2)
- : 50    *Activity 13: Teaser - fill in the gabs and find the speakers*  
- each student will get the **worksheet** to the **teaser 2**  
- The task is to fill in the gabs and try to find the speaker for each utterance  
- play the teaser twice (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMiCJefpn9Q> )  
- check it together
- : 55    *Activity 9: Give names to the characters (PowerPoint Presentation)*  
          (see Lesson Plan 2)
- : 57    *Activity 14: Describe the movie character*  
- students make pairs and each pair draws one **character from the movie** ‘Alice in Wonderland’  
- the task is to look again at the trailer and describe the character – write a brief ‘curriculum vitae’ (things to mention: *sex, approximate age, place of living, physical description, character, friends, describe briefly his/her story – students can imagine it if they don’t know the story...*)  
- students can use the **adjectives from the list** I give them  
- distribute the dictionaries  
- give 10 minutes  
- read the descriptions and briefly discuss them together
- : 75    *Activity 10: Describe the movie poster*  
          (see Lesson Plan 2)
- : 77    *Activity 6 : Find the missing words of the song*  
          (see Lesson Plan 1)  
- students listen to the song and write down the missing words  
- Play the song 2x, then translate the song together
- : 85    **Questionnaire**



## *Appendix L: Description of activities used in thematic lessons*

The thematic lesson plans included these activities: **Brainstorming** (Lesson Plan 1, 2 and 3), **Matching** (associating) (Lesson Plan 1 and 3), **Find the Czech title of the film** (Lesson Plan 3), **Find your partner** – cooperative speaking task (Lesson Plan 2 and 3), **What movie is it?** (Lesson Plan 1 and 3), **Movie Quiz** (Lesson Plan 1), **Describe the character** (Lesson Plan 3). We also described a **movie poster** (Lesson Plan 2 and 3) and we were working with a **movie teaser** (Lesson Plan 2 and 3) and the **film song** “Alice” for which I prepared the activity called **Find the missing words** (Lesson Plan 1 and 3). The class 1.B also tried to **dub a scene** from the movie ‘Alice in Wonderland’ (Lesson Plan 2).

In the following text, the activities used in the thematic lessons are described and the learners’ reaction to them during the lessons as well as the students’ opinions expressed in the Questionnaire are presented. Worksheets for the activities are displayed in Appendix J.

- **Activity 1: Brainstorming**

I used this activity at the beginning of each thematic plan. Brainstorming incites and motivates learners to think about the topic and to use their imagination to recall objects or notions connected with it and consequently to name these in English. It is a suitable and quick activity for a brief revision of vocabulary that is already known to the learners and its great advantage is that all learners are involved and can contribute with their words.

I gave each learner one minute to write down as many words as they could think of concerning films/movies. This activity revealed the differences in knowledge of the vocabulary between the class 3.A and the classes 6.A and 1.B. The class 3.A recalled some basic vocabulary such as actor, actress, action, film star, horror, etc. They did not think of many words compared the other classes. On the contrary, the classes of the second stage of grammar school could name a lot of film genres (documentary, adventure, sci-fi, etc.), words such as subtitles, soundtrack, dubbing, doubler, camcorder or trailer and they also named some films in English (e.g. ‘Lord of the Rings’, ‘Next’). Some students from the class 6.A found this activity difficult because they could think of many words but they did not have time to write everything down. Nevertheless, this activity was very useful and motivating for learners. Moreover, all learners participated in the task.

- **Activity 2: Associate the word with its definition and an appropriate image (Matching)**

In the thematic lesson plans, I used this matching activity with the class 3.A and 6.A (Lesson Plan 1 and 3) in order to revise basic film genres. The activity consisted in associating

film genres with their definitions and the appropriate picture. The learners were divided into three groups and each group got an envelope with cut out genres, definitions and pictures. The advantage of this activity is that learners can touch the items and physically arrange them into the right categories.

The class 3.A did the task actively and with interest. They especially liked working with pictures. However, two of the three groups had some problems to understand the definitions and so I sometimes had to help them with the translation of some words into Czech. I think I could have given the pupils dictionaries for this task. Another problem was that not all pupils within the groups participated in the activity. Some of them did nothing and let the other members of the group do all the task. It was therefore important to walk among the pupils and monitor their participation. Maybe this task should have been done in pairs so that each pupil felt the necessity to be active. However, this same activity worked very well in the class 6.A, where the students were also divided into three groups. Although there were some words they did not know, this class did not have problems with the global comprehension and they did the task very quickly. At the end of this activity, it was important to check the answers and translate the unknown words.

- *Activity 3: Match the title of the film with the appropriate genre* (PowerPoint Presentation)

Another matching activity consisted in associating the film title with the appropriate genre. I chose the titles intentionally so as the learners could deduce the genres from them, for example, in the title ‘Adventures of Robin Hood’ the word ‘adventures’ can indicate an adventure film. All the genres used there were already discussed in the previous exercise. To make the activity more interesting, I used the PowerPoint Presentation where I displayed the 14 movie titles. The titles started to appear one after another.

This activity was quite popular among the learners of both the classes as they recognised some film titles and were quite successful in finding the appropriate film genre. The class 3.A also wanted to translate the titles into Czech. I found it very useful to have a dictionary available for the learners so that they could check the meaning of words.

- *Activity 4: What movie is it?*

In this activity introduced in the classes 3.A and 6.A (Lesson Plan 1 and 3) learners could practise their receptive and productive oral skills as well as their ability to summarise a movie plot and provide basic information. In a team, they were to prepare a brief but meaningful

description of a movie plot where they should also employ the vocabulary learned or revised in the previous activities. The activity also practises sentence formation and grammar.

Learners first had to guess titles of the two films the plots of which I read them. All learners listened to me attentively and tried to figure out the movie that I was talking about. They liked guessing the movies and I could see their enthusiasm when they guessed it correctly. There was no problem with finding the English title of the film 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' as it was well known for most of the learners. However, the English expression for 'Sněhurka' would not be correctly guessed without some help as the learners stated that they had never heard it before.

Then I distributed all learners the worksheet '*At the Movies*'<sup>157</sup> and we quickly discussed the basic vocabulary (e.g. *starring in, setting, take place, plot, climax, reviews*). The learners worked in three groups and each group had to present one or two other plots without saying the title of the film(s). The other groups then had to guess it. The worksheet '*At the Movies*' gave the learners a guideline (genre, actors, setting, plot, climax, reviews) that helped them to summarise the plot. The younger learners, the class 3.A, were allowed to just fill in the gaps of the text with appropriate information about the film they chose to describe. The class 6.A tried to use their own words with the help of the vocabulary from the worksheet. One point was scored for each well described movie or for each movie guessed correctly.

Many learners preferred guessing the movie to describing the movie plot because it was difficult for them to recall all the information such as actors starring in it. They also found it hard to find the English title of the movie as they knew it rather in Czech. Some learners from the class 3.A also mentioned that it is hard to think of a film that everybody would know, however, this was the reason why the learners worked in groups. This activity was according to the reactions of the learners from 3.A the most difficult. They often made mistakes in tenses while describing a film plot (e.g. switching from present to past tense or forgetting "-s" in the third person singular present simple) and they sometimes had difficulties with the word order.

The class 1.B also made some mistakes in grammar but this did not severely impede the comprehension. Generally, they provided very good descriptions that could be easily guessed. Among the movies mentioned, there was for example 'Armageddon', 'Spiderman', 'Transformers' or 'Titanic'. Apart from recycling vocabulary and grammar, this activity is very good for practising oral production skills.

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<sup>157</sup> (Language for Talking About Film , online, available at: <http://bogglesworldesl.com/lessons/MovieLesson.htm>)

- **Activity 5: Movie Quiz**

I created the Movie Quiz especially for the class 3.A (Lesson Plan 1) and it was introduced after the *Activity 4(What movie is it?)* as a kind of ‘chill-out’ activity. The pupils worked in pairs and circled the right answers to ten questions about movies. They were given five minutes to do the quiz. Important and interesting movie vocabulary was included in it (e.g. *starring in, trailer, advertisement, to direct, a film company, stuntman*). One point was given to each pair that made no more than one mistake.

The pupils enjoyed this activity, they like quizzes very much and so there was no problem with them working on the task. The quiz was a good means of calming the learners down after the noisier discussion about film plots. Even though they did not know all the vocabulary, most of the students were able to deduce the meaning of unknown words, for example there was no mistake with guessing the meaning of the expression *scream queen* or *search for*. On the contrary, many pupils made mistake in the last question as they thought that the person who performs dangerous acts in a film is called a *double man*. This activity was very successful and adequate to the level of the pupils.

- **Activity 6 : Find the missing words of the song**

This activity employed in the Lesson Plan 1 and 3 (classes 3.A and 6.A) was related to the theme song of the movie ‘Alice in Wonderland’ performed by Avril Lavigne. The learners listened to the song and tried to fill in the gaps in the text. I played the song two times and then we checked the solutions together. Unfortunately, we did not have enough time for reading and translating the song and thus we only translated the expressions in which the missing words appeared. This activity was one of the most popular among the pupils.

- **Activity 7: Find your partner**

*Find your partner* is an activity based on vocabulary, cooperation and speaking (see Lesson Plan 2 and 3). Each learner first draws a card with either word or its definition. Students then walk around the class and make pairs, one of the pair is the word (e.g. trailer, actor, horror, subtitles, costumes) and the other one is its definition. The learners use only English language to find their ‘counterpart’ and they can ask questions such as ‘*Who/what are you?*’ or ‘*What do you have on your card?*’ Learners discuss whether they belong to each other or not and this can be a great fun for them. It is important that each word had its definition in the game so that everyone had a partner. All the students have to take an active part in the task as they have to walk around the class and speak to the others.

I introduced this activity at the beginning of the lesson as a ‘warm-up’, because I considered it not difficult and very motivating. When each learner found his or her partner, we sat down into a circle and each pair read their cards in order to check if they did the task correctly. Students liked this activity.

- **Activity 8: Teaser**

This activity was used in the classes 1.B and 6.A (Lesson Plans 2 and 3). Students practised oral comprehension with the help of visualisation via the teaser of the film ‘Alice in Wonderland’. They also practised their speaking skills as they had to give answers to some questions I asked them. I wrote the questions on the blackboard before the visualisation so that the learners could focus their attention on the important information (see Lesson Plan 2). Then, the students watched two teasers of the movie on the basis of which they could find the answers to the questions.

The students did not have any problems with the comprehension but some of them had difficulties with expressing themselves in English. Moreover, they very often forgot the final “-s” in the third person singular present simple.

- **Activity 10: Describe the movie poster**

I employed this activity in the Lesson Plan 2 and 3 (classes 6.A and 1.B). This activity is focused on learners’ ability to describe a picture and to employ the vocabulary they have learned (e.g. *hare, caterpillar, hatter, twins, knave...*). It also incites learners to express the feelings that the picture or poster evokes in them. This kind of exercise is even a part of exams such as FCE. Useful vocabulary (e.g. prepositions of place, the structure ‘*there is/are*’, expressions such as ‘*I can see...*’, ‘*I think...*’, ‘*In my opinion...*’) can be thus revised thanks to a movie poster which can be for learners more motivating and attractive than ordinary pictures.

I projected the poster of the movie ‘Alice in Wonderland’ via the overhead projector so that everyone could see it on the big screen. The classes 1.B and 6.A described the poster quite well, beginning with global aspects and then going into more details using an appropriate vocabulary (e.g. *in front of, below, on the left,...*) but it was necessary to give them a guideline at the beginning and ask them several questions about the poster during the task. The learners were not given any time for preparation, because they are used to the exercises of this type (e.g. describing pictures, comparing pictures) and their English was at a high level. This activity was a kind of discussion because everyone could say what he/she thought and could see in the poster. However, several students did not seem to be interested in the task and did not participate. Some of them said just a few words. The next time it may be more effective to let

students work in pairs and then choose some pairs that would present their description in front of the class.

- ***Activity 11: Dubbing***

This activity is considered the most challenging but also the most amusing of all the activities employed in the thematic lesson plans. Because of its demanding character, I decided to do this activity with the class 1.B, which I considered the most cooperative and active. The students of this class have very good performing skills as well.

The activity consists in dubbing a short scene of the film 'Alice in Wonderland' (Lesson Plan 2). In this activity, students become the 'dubblers' of the film characters. They use their creativity and knowledge of English language to change original utterances of the characters. Learners work on the task in pairs. I first experienced this kind of activity while taking place in one-day course for teachers or students of French language at Alliance Française in Pardubice.

First of all, I told the students that they were going to dub a scene from the film 'Alice in Wonderland' according to the film genre they would draw (e.g. horror, sci-fi, romantic film, parody). After watching the scene (it took one minute), I divided the students in pairs and distributed them the script of the scene with a film genre written on it. Thanks to the script the students could better orient themselves in the scene, they knew how the characters took turns, and so they could 'remake' it more easily. I played the scene three times and then ten minutes were given to learners to do the task.

The learners were working on their task with interest (except from two girls who were ready in five minutes but their 'remade scene' consisted just in reading the original script). The students could also use dictionaries to do the activity. When they were more or less ready, I played the scene without the sound and they tried to 'dub' the characters. Although they did not manage to follow up the speakers precisely, many students used very good vocabulary and made nice performances that well reflected the film genre they got. Two of the students performed an excellent dialogue that made the whole class burst into laugh. The pair dubbed the scene into a romantic film and thus in their version, the mad Hatter tried to persuade the young Alice to marry him. It was fun and pleasure to watch some of the performances. However, I think that several pupils needed more time for preparation and it would be also more convenient if each pair could work with a computer so as to stop and return the scene according to their needs.

- **Activity 12: Find the Czech title of the film**

This activity was used as a follow-up of the *Activity 3*. Learners tried to think of the Czech title for each film with the help of some words translated into Czech that I write on the blackboard. The students made very good translations and were interested in the task. This exercise is quite interesting because it can motivate the learners to pay more attention to English titles of films and also compare them with the Czech ones. This can be a good way how to enlarge learners' vocabulary outside the classroom.

- **Activity 13: Teaser - Fill in the gaps and find the speakers**

Another activity connected to the teaser of the film 'Alice in Wonderland' was filling in the gaps of the three utterances taken from the teaser (see Lesson Plan 2 and 3). Learners practised their receptive oral skills and spelling of words. They were distributed a sheet of paper with the three utterances. The students had few seconds to go quickly through the utterances. After then I played the *Teaser 2* and in the meantime, learners had to fill the missing words in each sentence and determine the speaker of each utterance.

The students from the class 1.B needed to watch the teaser two times whereas for the class 6.A one projection was sufficient. Both classes did a good job and they also found the three speakers. They really enjoyed watching and working with the teaser because for them it was something new and attractive.

**Activity 14: Describe the movie character**

This is another activity focused on students' ability to describe a person and it also revises vocabulary connected to this topic, for example words describing physical appearance (e.g. *tall, little, dark haired, skinny...*) or those describing character traits (e.g. *kind, modest, cruel, violent ...*). I did the activity with the class 6.A that I considered very creative and skilful (Lesson Plan 3). The aim was to work in pairs and describe one of the characters from the movie 'Alice in Wonderland' according to the points given in the worksheet (see Appendix J).

First of all, it was necessary to make learners familiar with the movie and so before doing this activity the learners watched two teasers of the film 'Alice in Wonderland' and they associated names to the main characters in the PowerPoint presentation that I prepared (see Appendix J). It was not difficult to recall the story and the main characters because as I anticipated, almost everyone from the class had already seen the movie before we watched it together and the others at least knew what the story was about. I also prepared a list with many useful adjectives related to character traits (e.g. *adventurous, brave, amusing, sensible...*) and I gave each pair a dictionary.

After that, each pair drew one worksheet with one of the main characters of the movie and they had ten minutes to describe the character according to the teaser we watched, the picture on the worksheet and their imagination. It was not necessary to know any details; the students could think it up or deduce it from the previous activities related to the movie. They had some points to mention (e.g. name, age, friends, enemies, her/his life...). When they were ready, each pair presented their movie character.

This activity was appreciated by the students because they could use their imagination and make funny descriptions of their movie character. Dictionaries were very useful for this task, especially for the part when the learners had to write something about the character's life. When the students presented their work, we had a lot of fun. They even wanted to keep their worksheets.



## Appendix M: Questionnaire on thematic lessons

### Dotazník

- 1) bavila tě hodina? Proč ano/ne?  
ANO,  
  
NE,
- 2) Lišila se nějak tato hodina svými cvičeními a aktivitami od typických hodin anglického jazyka?  
Pokud ano, napiš v čem.
- 3) Co se ti na hodině líbilo nejvíce? Co se ti naopak nelíbilo?
- 4) Jaké cvičení se ti zdálo nejtěžší? Vysvětli proč.
- 5) Jaké cvičení se ti zdálo nejjednodušší? Vysvětli proč.
- 6) Naučil(a) ses při hodině nová slovíčka? Uveď příklady v angličtině.
- 7) Dostal(a) ses v hodině ke slovu?
- 8) Dostáváš se ke slovu při běžných hodinách angličtiny? Jak často?
- 9) Hrajete někdy při hodinách angličtiny hry či se věnujete aktivitám, jako jsou např. křížovky, písně, filmy, dialogy? Jak často (nikdy, málokdy, často, každou hodinu)? Pokud ano, napiš jaké (můžeš rozepsat slovy)
- 10) Jaké hry nebo jiné aktivity tě v hodinách angličtiny baví nejvíce? (udělej žebříček oblíbenosti)
- 11) Při plnění úkolu nejraději pracuješ: (označuj jako ve škole 1-4: 1 - nejraději, 4 - velice nerad(a))  
  
individuálně (jen ty sám)      ve dvojicích      ve skupinách      s celou třídou
- 12) Jaký typ her a aktivit preferuješ? (zakroužkuj)  
a) spíše komunikativní, kde můžeš spolupracovat s ostatními  
b) spíše soutěživé, kde se poměřují síly
- 13) Používáte při hodinách angličtiny interaktivní tabuli? Myslíš, že by hodiny byly zajímavější, kdybyste ji používali častěji?

## **Appendix N: Activities and games used by the teachers**

- **BrainBox**<sup>158</sup> – This board game is described as ‘*the ten minute brain challenge*’ and must be played at least in pairs. It consists of playing cards (the number varies with different titles), one sand timer and a die. The player who is on turn has to look at a card for ten seconds and then answer a question based on the roll of a die. For more information see <http://www.brainbox.co.uk/>.
- **Bricks** – during this game, pupils usually work in pairs. One member of each pair goes to the teacher who shows them a simple object made of Lego pieces (bricks). They then have to describe the object in detail to his/her partner. They must mention the number of bricks, colors of individual bricks, shapes, etc. so that the partner could draw it as precisely as possible.
- **Dialogues and Role plays** (see Chapter 4.7.1.3)
- **Dixit** (see the website : [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dixit\\_%28card\\_game%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dixit_%28card_game%29))
- **Find your Partner** (see Appendix J, Activity 7)
- **Guess What’s in My Pocket** – the teacher has an object in his/her pocket and the learners have to ask ‘yes/no questions’ in order to find out what the object is.
- **Guess What I’m Drawing** (see Chapter 6.5)
- **Guess Where I’m Living** – it is a very similar game to the game *Guess Who I Am* or *Guess What’s in My Pocket*. In this game the teacher or a learner thinks about one concrete place on the Earth and the others ask ‘yes/no questions’ to find out the name of the place.
- **Guess Who I Am** – In this guessing game a learner thinks about a person (or a thing, animal) and the others ask him/her ‘yes/no questions’ in order to find out who (or what) he/she is.
- **King** (see Chapter 4.8.4.1)
- **Matching activities** ( see Chapter 4.7.1.2)
- **Ostrich Game** – in this game, two learners are chose and a word (or picture or a phrase) is stuck on the back of each one. The learners then try to find out what is written on the back of his/her opponent. In order to find it out, they must really look on the back of the opponent but there is one problem-they must use only one leg. They thus try to trick the opponent in order to ‘get on his/her back’. This is a kind of chill-out game.
- **Pass the Bomb!** (see Chapter 6.2)
- **Projects** (see Chapter 4.7.1.1)

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<sup>158</sup> (Wyatt, G., The Green Board Game Co Ltd, High Wycombe, 2013)

- **Scattered words/ sentences** – teachers usually scatter cards with English words around the class. Learners then go around the classroom, write the words into their exercise books and translate them into Czech. Sometimes, they have only some letters of the word on the card and they have to fill other letters and write the right word. Another possibility is to scatter the words of a sentence and the learners have to find all the words and put them into the right order to create the sentence. This can be also done in pairs or individually if we give each pair or each learner cut out words from a sentence and they have to put it together on their desks.
- **Shiritori** – a game similar to *Word Chain* (for more information see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shiritori>)
- **Songs** – most teachers use songs for calming the students down or for relaxation but they often prepare some task for the learners too. For example, they leave out some words from the text or they change the order of stanzas.
- **Spot It! (Dobble)** – The game consists of a set of cards where there is always only one matching symbol between two cards and the task is to spot the symbol as the first one (for more information see <http://www.dobble.cz/>).
- **Story Cubes** (see Chapter 4.7.1.1, *Stories* or consult the webpages <https://www.storycubes.com/> )
- **Star** (see Chapter 4.8.2.3)
- **Taboo** – in this game, learners draw a card with a word that they have to describe to the others and there are also three or four more words on the card that they cannot mention while describing the given word. The player who guesses the word scores a point. The game can be played individually, in pairs, in groups or as the whole class.
- **Things You Have...** - in this game, learners try to think up ten items that people can have in their...pocket, purse, car, house, bedroom, garden, etc. A time limit of one minute is usually set.
- **What's Yours Like?** – during this game, learners sit on the floor in a circle. One of the learners, designated as the guesser, is asked to leave the room for a little while and in the meantime the others think of something they all have (e.g. eyes). The guesser then joins them. One learner after another then says: *Mine are blue...Mine are green...Mine are brown...etc.* according to what color are their eyes. The learner has to guess the word *eyes*.
- **Whispered Words** (see Chapter 4.8.1.3)

## *Appendix O: Why do we forget?*

It is generally known that new information, or new words, can be forgotten if they are not revised and practised. *“It has been esteemed that up to 80 per cent of material is lost within 24 hours of initial learning.”*<sup>159</sup> The curve of forgetting then slows down with time. There are also some theories that try to find reasons of why we forget.

One of the theories explaining the phenomenon of forgetting is called **decay theory**. It says that unless we revise new information regularly, it will not be retained nor recalled.

On the other hand, the **cue-dependent forgetting** is a theory which states that words do not disappear from our memory, they are placed and stocked there but their recalling may not be possible for us. The problem is thus the recalling not a real loss of information. In fact, some hint can help us to recollect it quickly.

**Interference** is another factor that has an impact on storage of new items. It really depends on activities that learner is involved in before or after the learning process. Learners tend to forget old words while learning new ones even more quickly when the new words are similar to those recently learned.

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<sup>159</sup> (THORNBURY, 2002, p. 26)

*Appendix P: Questions for interview*

**Questions**

1. How much emphasis do you put on the presentation and (or) revision of vocabulary in English language education?
2. How often do you employ vocabulary games and activities into the lessons of English language?
3. For what purpose(s) do you usually use vocabulary games and activities in the lessons of English language?
4. What vocabulary games and activities do you usually use? Could you give concrete examples of the games and activities?
5. What do you think are the advantages of employing games and activities in lessons of English language?
6. What are the disadvantages or possible problems connected to employment of games and activities in English language education?
7. Do you prefer cooperative or competitive types of games? Why?
8. Do you correct learners' mistakes during a game or an activity?
9. What sources do you draw inspiration from while choosing a game or an activity? Do you create your own games?
10. What is your opinion on the following statement: „Well-chosen games and activities elicit learners' spontaneous use of language as well as they stimulate learners' interest and activity in the lesson.”