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TEACHING VOCABULARY TO YOUNG LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE WITH REGARD TO DYSLEXIA AND ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER CHARACTERISTICS

Diplomová práce

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Prohlašuji, že jsem svou diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla v ní všechny zdroje, které jsem použila.

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Abstract

The diploma project deals with teaching English vocabulary to young learners with regard to the specifics of teaching children with dyslexia or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder characteristics. Apart from the review of teaching methods, syllabuses and frequency lists concerning teaching vocabulary, the project clarifies such concepts as *learning* versus *acquisition* or explains the concept of *learning burden* of a word in the context of ESL or EFL teaching. The practical part consists of a case study of the Czech boy during his integration in the Irish elementary school. The findings of the content analysis of the case study, applied teaching methods and lesson plans include verification of the effectiveness of the integration program and recommended methods for dealing with children from a different language and socio-cultural backgrounds.

Introduction

It has been decided a long time ago where my field of interest lays: I have always been interested in ways of learning and acquiring vocabulary of a second language and how to make this process as natural and interesting as possible. When I was about to decide for the most appropriate approach towards the practical part of the thesis, I took into consideration several important facts: during the particular school year, I worked as a language Comenius assistant in an Irish primary school; I was not teaching big groups – on the contrary – I had small groups of 4 pupils maximum; and what became apparent only later – I happened to be a witness of a wonderful progress of one of my pupils which gave me an opportunity to follow him for eight–month period from the very beginning.

In the theoretical part of the thesis, some key terms and aspects are discussed, such as, whether and to what extent it is necessary to distinguish learning vocabulary from its acquisition, which approaches concerning teaching vocabulary to learners of English as a second or foreign language exist, how syllabuses influence the ways of teaching vocabulary or what it means to acquire a word (what is a word in the first place?), how the teacher can help learners learn new words most effectively and what else is involved in learning a word. Due to my teaching experience in the Irish primary school I also discovered some new teaching methods which are, on one hand, specifically designed for the situation in Ireland, but on the other hand, they are transferable to conditions in Czech schools, especially when children with special needs are concerned. One of the methods is working with frequency word lists in order to improve reading skills. Some other methods explore the possibilities of working effectively with a child with specific needs with regard to teaching vocabulary. Apart from the specific needs, especially dyslexia and hyperactivity, I also had to deal with illiteracy of my pupils. These circumstances were significant factors influencing my teaching approach

and choice of methods. However, illiteracy is such a vast and complex area for research that there is not enough space left to deal with it in detail in this thesis.

The practical part of the thesis introduces the host school of my assistantship, my pupils and the teaching methods I used, with special emphasis on the ways of teaching vocabulary to young and/or disadvantaged learners. An important part is devoted to the case study of the pupil I followed for all the eight months of my stay in Tralee along with findings of my work. The practical part also deals with some of the specifics of the Irish school system with the emphasis on the Educate Together system.

THEORETICAL PART

Chapter 1

Is learning and acquisition one thing? What did *learning vocabulary* mean a hundred years ago and what does it mean today? How can a scientific method help with learning vocabulary? What ideas about language and learning do we take for granted today but were quite revolutionary once?

1.1 Making distinction between learning and acquisition

Learning is 'The process which leads to the acquisition of a new skill or piece of knowledge' (Finocchiaro 1989: 208). Usually, there is little or no difference in meaning between learning and *acquisition*. If, however, the focus of our interest becomes a second or foreign language, we will need to make the distinction. When a child is exposed to their first language (in most cases having the same meaning as *mother tongue*), usually by their parents or other caretakers, we talk about *first language acquisition*. It is the ability to acquire language by merely being surrounded by it, without any conscious effort. It happens independently on intelligence and it applies to all children from all cultures. While a *first, acquired language* is spoken among people of one nation and usually bears an official status, a *second or foreign language* is any language someone *learns* after the first language or mother tongue. It requires many years of studying and unless the learner lives in the country where the language is everybody else's mother tongue, they will never achieve the proficiency equal to the one of a native speaker (Finocchiaro 1989).

Crystal (1995: 426) says that to reach the basic proficiency in English, an average adult has to acquire and recognize about 40 speech sounds, several hundreds of their combinations, a vast vocabulary (which can reach 50,000 active words), around a thousand aspects of grammar, very large number of conventions and rules and even more strategies allowing the rules to be slightly or severely bend to create certain effects. What seems to be happening fast and naturally with the first language, does not certainly apply to a second one. In sum, learning is a deliberate process which includes a wide range of teaching and learning methods while acquisition is a subconscious process which takes place independently of the person involved in it.

1.2 Language Acquisition Device

How does the acquisition of language take place? According to many contemporary linguists (e.g. Chomsky 1959, 1965; Aitchison 1976; Pinker 1994 and O'Grady 1997 in L. White 2003: 3), there is an *innate* component to language acquisition in every child. 'Children show creativity which goes beyond the input that they are exposed to,' points out L. White, who undoubtedly based his own ideas on much earlier Chomsky's presumptions (e.g. 1965; 1972). In *The Language Instinct* (1995), Pinker shares Chomsky's opinion (in contrast to structuralists' belief) that language and grammar (meaning *structure* in Chomsky 1965) is a device which every human is already born with, and gives many examples with intention to prove the contradicting opinions wrong. This device is also known as *Language Acquisition Device (LAD)*. Finocchiaro (1989: 208) describes it as 'a theoretical mechanism in the human mind consisting of two parts; (a) the universal rules of all natural languages and (b) the lower–level rules which permit us to learn how the universal rules are expressed in the language we are learning.' It applies to both grammar and vocabulary. The innate component ensures among other things, that we recognize words from noises (Pinker 1995: 125).

Of course, an ESOL learner does not have to know 50,000 words to be able to communicate in a second language, not even a half of them.

How many words are enough and how do we choose the correct ones then? How important is teaching vocabulary, does it have to be taught at all? Can a certain technique of teaching vocabulary influence learners' results? These questions lead us to three areas of study: *teaching methods*, *frequency word lists* and *vocabulary*. They are going to be a subject of another chapter.

Chapter 2

Native speaker's or a second language learner's vocabulary has not always been linguists' main concern. Learner's active (and passive) vocabulary has become a field of study relatively recently. What is more, people did not always learn a second language for the same reasons as they do today. People's needs are always changing; until the beginning of the twentieth century, people had not had many opportunities to communicate with someone from the other side of the world except for travellers and adventurers. The world began shrinking with every new technical invention and the ability to speak someone else's language was, therefore, becoming inevitable for growing number of people all over the world. The major turning point from learning a second language as a mere brain exercise to learning it for more practical reasons can be identified at the end of the eighteenth century.

In the following paragraphs, which summarize historical trends in second language vocabulary instruction, it is demonstrated how the different methods gradually came into existence and what role was assigned to vocabulary, although there is no intention to give an exhaustive insight into every method. It is believed that knowledge of the most frequent and useful words is one of the crucial points in teaching and learning foreign languages. Nation (1990), Zimmerman (1997), Hedge (2000) suggest, in their own way, that in the field of SLA research, vocabulary is still neglected in comparison with other linguistic areas, and that it should receive much greater attention from educators than it has received so far.

2.1 From grammar to vocabulary – a short history tour of teaching methods

How did the vocabulary come to focus of certain linguists and educators if it has not been always so? How did teaching vocabulary reflect the changing approaches during the twentieth century?

There is a consensus that one of the first methods used for teaching modern languages was the *grammar translation method*. Zimmerman (1997) further explains that this method was not meant to teach learners to communicate in a second language since its main purpose was to give them a tool to read classical texts. The learners sat in a probably very dull, big classroom and the only sound for long minutes was scratching of pens and rustle of pages in bilingual dictionaries. They did not even attempt to speak in the target language. Nor their teacher did. There was no need for it – a successful learner was the one who could analyze the syntactic structure of a text.

The grammar-translation method had been criticized for many years mainly because speaking and listening skills were practically excluded. As for learning vocabulary, students had to memorize long lists of new words, which were often very complicated and lacked any kind of grading. This last argument led some critics to begin an investigation of what the most frequently used words were and how to make use of them.

Simplifying or rather choosing a specific scope of vocabulary for the second language learners, however, was not the only step towards the radical change. Another group, called *Reformers*, appeared around Henry Sweet and their main concern was to move the focus from texts and bilingual dictionaries to speaking and phonetic training. The most significant change was that the words used for practising were associated with the real world outside the classroom and lists of isolated words and sentences were intentionally avoided. It suggests that the vocabulary was chosen according to the topics and situations (Zimmerman 1997).

At the end of the nineteenth century, inspired by the Reform movement, one of the *natural* methods was introduced: the *direct method*. Its name comes from the idea that the interaction between a learner and teacher comes directly

from the mother tongue to a second language and the translation phase is skipped. To teach new words, pantomiming, real–life objects, charts and pictures were used in abundance. This method, although revolutionary, elicited from learners only vague and imprecise language and was never really adopted in schools because of that.

Another use of frequency lists came in the thirties with the *reading method* or *situational language teaching* as an opposition to the direct method. It was originally meant to develop reading skills. West, the main propagator of the method in Great Britain, wrote: 'The Primary thing in learning a language is the acquisition of vocabulary, and practice in using it (which is the same thing as 'acquiring'). The problem is *what* vocabulary; and none of these "modern textbooks in common use in English schools" have attempted to solve the problem' (West 1930: 514 in Zimmerman 1997: 9). West saw the major problems in three aspects: usefulness of taught vocabulary, helpfulness of activities, and real mastering of new words. Also other linguists (e.g. H. E. Palmer and A. S. Hornby) believed that language structures should be practised in 'meaningful situation–based activities' (Zimmerman 1997: 10). It was because of growing need for a new concept, which would give language teachers clearer idea what is for the learners of a second language important. For the first time scientific methods were employed to help to select vocabulary and lexical content of language courses, which at the same time began to grow in numbers. Vocabulary 'was considered one of the most important aspects of second language learning' and first efforts were made towards establishing a concept of a syllabus, writes Zimmerman (1997: 10). It means, that for the first time, the vocabulary was to be more than a list of new words. It was to be explored from all possible points of view, sorted, counted and assessed.

Meanwhile some other scientists began to look for a kind of order in language structure. The descriptive linguists turned their attention from diachronic studies of language to synchronic analysis. They tried to find out how the lan-

guages were structured. Many scientists were strongly influenced by the Darwin's evolution theory and behavioral psychology. During the World War II a new approach to pedagogical grammar came to existence: *The audio–lingual method* (Larsen-Freeman 1986).

The founder of audio-lingual method was Charles Fries, who saw the epicentre of a second language learners' problems in the differences in language structure between L 1 and L 2. Learners were taught these structures by examples and doing drills in a form of dialogues rather than by analyzing language and studying rules. The dialogues were learnt through the teacher's initiation and learners' repetition (Larsen-Freeman 1986: 43), which, when put one after another, made so called 'chain drill'. These structures were in other words patterns which were practised with minimum lexical diversity. This way the learners would not be distracted by (sometimes complicated) meanings of too many different words. New words were introduced only to make the drills possible so that their acquisition would not cause any unnecessary distraction. These substitutions gave learners a certain amount of innovation but on the other hand, they led to negative transfer, because most of the words cannot be exchanged just because they are members of the same lexical class, which a novice learner is unlikely to know. There are syntactic features which must be learnt with the words and within a considerable amount of context, too. So once again, the importance of vocabulary was greatly underestimated. It was believed that after mastering the language structure, learners would simply fill the places in each pattern with different words according to their actual need. Fries based the introduction of his chapter on vocabulary learning on Edward Sapir's warning against oversimplification, which was the unavoidable result of learning new words solely through the practised dialogues (Fries 1945: 38 in Zimmerman 1997). Similarly, Rivers (1981: 254 in Zimmerman 1997: 11) warns that, 'learning too much vocabulary early in the learning process gives students false sense of security.' The educators were therefore recommended to practise the structures only with well–known vocabulary.

Due to obvious drawbacks realized by e.g. Rivers herself and admitted fifteen years later (Zimmerman 1997: 13), the audio–lingual method was challenged by yet another one, the *communicative language teaching method,* based on Noam Chomsky's *Generative Grammar* introduced in the 1957 revolutionary publication *Syntactic Structures.* Linguists who adopted Chomsky's point of view started to question themselves what the language is and where the ability to speak and express one's ideas comes from. In contrast to behaviorists' *stimulus* and *response,* Chomsky introduces a concept of speaker's unconscious intuition, an *innate* (i.e. inborn, natural) ability to learn the language embedded deep in a human's brain.

Increasing number of contemporary linguists believe that language is something too complex to be learnt as a habit. One of the Chomsky's arguments is that even though every child is exposed to different amount of the language (both in quality and quantity) and certainly cannot be able to overhear even *once* all possible word combinations, they [the children] come with these new combinations all by themselves. It must mean that every child is already born with some language device which is prepared for the language acquisition and all the marvelously intricate processes related to speaking and thinking (Zimmerman 1997; Bloomfield 1994; Pinker 1995).

It would be unfair to claim that there is only one correct method for all the various grammar points and types of words to be employed. However, with better understanding of what is happening inside our heads, we can always refine the methods we already use.

Chapter 3

Everybody who has learnt a language has experienced that some words were easy to remember and some just would not sink deep enough to stay for long. Sometimes there might be pairs of words that learners always mix; and what is once learnt wrong, can prove very difficult or even impossible to unlearn. On the other hand, there are also many regularities which can make learning new words easier. Because teachers of EFL classes can usually keep a good track of words which their students already know and of those which cause them difficulties, they can very effectively tailor the new vocabulary to learners' specific needs, provided they know how to lessen the 'learning burden' for them, as Nation (1990: 35, 37) puts it.

3.1 Different views of defining a word

What is a word and what does it mean to know a word? To decide what a word is, can save learners much time and energy. For there is more than one way to look at a word. Nation (1990) compares tables of vocabulary size of native speakers made by different researchers and finds that the estimates vary considerably. The most significant factor he sees in the way the researchers define the word. For example, words *certain, certainly, certainty, uncertain,* can be looked upon as four different words or, as a root *certain* plus affixes. If a student already knows how the prefix un– changes the meaning of a word and suffixes –ly and –ty the word class, it will not be too much difficult for them to learn the four words as one plus alterations. However, if students are not aware of these principles, they will have to learn all these four words separately. Unfortunately, it is much simpler to use the latter approach when defining criteria for word counts for computer programs; it would be very complicated to do it otherwise. However, the results give us then only imprecise estimate of the vocabulary size of children of certain age. If we decide to use these counts as guidelines for setting our goals as to how

many words the ESOL or EFL learners should learn, we should bear this in mind. There is, however, another way to find out how big the learner's vocabulary size should be at the end of a course: to use the frequency word list (see Chapter 5).

3.2 Aspects involved in learning a word

What does a learner know when he *knows* a word? What is involved in *learning a word*? Nation (1990) reminds us that there are two types of 'knowing' a word: (a) for *receptive* use (aka passive vocabulary), (b) for *productive* use (aka active vocabulary). Therefore, to answer the question we need to take into account both uses.

According to Nation (1990: 31 - 32), to know a word receptively a learner should be able to know:

✓ what the word sounds like,

✓ what the word looks like,

✓ what the word means,

✓ what other words the word evokes,

✓ in what grammatical patterns the word exists,

✓ with what other words the word collocates,

✓ how frequently the word is used,

✓ where we can commonly meet this word.

To know a word productively a learner should be able to know:

✓ how the word is pronounced,

✓ how the word is spelled,

✓ what word should be used to express certain meaning,

✓ what other words we could use instead of this one,

✓ in what grammatical patterns we must use the word,

✓ what other words we can or we must use with this word,

✓ how often we should use the word,

✓ where we can use the word,

✓ plus everything from the receptive use list.

As we can see, the productive knowledge of words is much more extensive than the receptive one. It is not always necessary to know the word actively. Some words occur so rarely that knowing answers to only some of the points listed above can be sufficient for understanding the message. In other words, the teacher should be able to recognize the importance of each word so that they can economize students' learning time and energy.

Another feature which influences learning a word is its potential *difficulty*. Nation (1990: 33) calls it *learning burden* and defines it as 'the amount of effort needed to learn and remember' a word. What can make a word difficult? According to Nation (ibid) the answer depends on three things:

3.3 Aspects affecting learning a word

1. *The learners' knowledge of English and their mother tongue*
Learners' previous experience and their mother tongue has a great influence on their present learning. If they are presented with many regularities and if their mother tongue consists of similar grammatical or lexical patterns, the opportunity of positive transfer is great. The transfer, however, cannot occur if there is a pattern in the learner's mother tongue which cannot be associated with anything in the second language. For example, the English word *like* is expressed with two words (mít rád) in Czech. As a result, it has become a common mistake of unexperienced Czech learners, who say *have like** because they assume that mere word–for–word translation is sufficient for conveying information. There are whole books devoted to so–called 'Czenglish'. (E.g. Poslušná 2009, Sparling

2008 [online]) On the other hand, if the learner stores both first and second languages as one whole instead of keeping them as two separate units, borrowings and interference can occur. According to Henning's investigations (1973 in Nation 1990), early ESOL learners tend to make connections between new second language words and those they already know, based on their sounds (e.g. *horse* and *house*), rather than to group them by their meaning (e.g. *horse* and *cow* are both domestic animals). Thus, if a second language word sounds similar to a word in the learner's mother tongue, the learner may transfer its meaning or grammatical behavior to the second language word. Such words are commonly called *false friends*. For Czech learners the problematic words are often e.g. *actual*, *concrete* or *argument*. If the learner's mother tongue interferes with the second language, the learner may use some of the second language words in the wrong context or misinterpret a message (Nation 1990).

2. *The way in which the word is learnt or taught*

The teacher has the power to lessen the learning burden of a new word, or do quite the opposite. It all depends on their ability to anticipate a number of possible complications. So for example if two words with similar spelling or pronunciation are introduced together, students will most probably be loaded with unnecessary extra learning. They will have to learn not only what each word means but also remember which is which. Nation (1990) suggests that such potentially problematic pairs should be introduced separately so that students have enough time to fixate one word before being introduced to another. This complication does not relate to similar words only, but also to words with opposite meaning or relating to similar ideas. (Some of the problematic pairs can be e.g. *push – pull, life – live, here – hear, hungry – thirsty, read – write, pen – pencil, learn – teach* and many others.)

Irregularities represent another potential problem. Teachers are advised to avoid them at earlier stages and allow learners to meet with enough opportunities

to discover regular patterns in either spelling, pronunciation or grammar. Similarly, learning burden is lighter when the meaning of a second language word is predictable from its form, overlaps the meaning of a mother tongue equivalent and does not exist in more different semantic concepts. (E.g. ink*, e–mail, robot, book* or *tree* are all words with very light learning burden for Czech learners because except for *book* and *tree* they are very similar to the form of the Czech equivalents, all examples have exactly the same meaning in both languages and they are used in the same semantic contexts, even if there are more of them, as in the word *tree*.) Nation (1990: 49) recognizes three different ways of how teaching can be realized: It can either help learning to take place and result in mastery of English or it can cause that learning indeed takes place but has a negative effect, that is, the learner for instance cross–associates two words sharing certain aspects but having different meaning because they were taught together. Lastly, there is no learning taking place and nothing good or bad is done, which Nation (ibid) calls *neutral teaching*. To avoid either neutral or negative teaching, being familiar with learners' mother tongue and having knowledge of basic English linguistics might help considerably.

3. *The intrinsic difficulty of the word*

Apart from predictability, regularity, patterning and organization of learning, the amount of learning burden of a second language word can be given by its features alone. That is, what part of speech the word belongs to. Researches show that nouns and adjectives tend to be easier to learn than verbs and adverbs (Rodgers 1967) and that understanding the relations between different parts of speech helps learners with their first guess at the word's meaning (Brown 1957 in Rodgers 1967). Nation (1990: 48) also regards receptive and productive use as features of intrinsic difficulty. He claims that, 'learning a word productively is 50 to 100 percent more difficult than learning it receptively' and that learning it for one use does not make learning it for the other use easier. If, for example, a student learns to use the word *chalk* when referring to the tool for writing on the black board,

they will have to learn the same word again when they meet the word in a piece of text about e.g. geological stratum. Knowing how to use the word in one situation does not help with recognizing it in its written form n.b. in another context. This principle leads us to the conclusion that words which are to be met only receptively should be also learnt receptively. Thus, the teacher avoids causing the learning burden to become unnecessarily heavy (Nation 1990).

The way we see a word can make a noticeable difference in how successful teaching of second language words will be. Study of linguistics and knowledge of the learner's language helps the teacher anticipate any potential difficulties concerning teaching vocabulary. Hereby, they can be avoided by careful planning. Finally, the teacher should be aware of how common each presented word is and pay greater attention to those words that occur more frequently. Teachers themselves should use English words only as many times as they are used by their native speakers so that the learners get the most accurate idea of how important a word is and do not overuse or misuse it. The less advanced the learners are, the more regularities and less irregularities should be presented to them. As a result, learners will learn to anticipate and deal with all sorts of predictable features and structures, which will help them to become more independent and self–contained. There is always time for the irregularities and exceptions later (Nation 1990).

Chapter 4

In the previous chapter we looked at some features of a word and how to make learning easier. Now, let us focus on the following questions: Which words will be most useful to EFL young learners? What features should a teacher consider before spending much teaching time on presenting, practising and revising new words? How to ensure that it be a time well spent?

4.1 Criteria for selecting vocabulary for young ESOL and EFL learners

This is the list of criteria Richards (1970 in Nation 1990: 21) recommends to have in mind when preparing word lists for EFL learners:

- frequency,
- range,
- language needs,
- availability and familiarity,
- coverage,
- regularity,
- ease of learning or learning burden.

There are reasons why teachers should use *frequency word lists* to decide which words and in which order to teach. However, there are also reasons why teachers should not use them as the only source of inspiration. In what way are the lists important? Here are their pros and cons:

+ they show which words are useful and should be given special attention,

+ they indicate which words are infrequent and marginal or better be avoided completely,

– there are certain important words which are not included in the first 1000 words or even the first 2000 or 3000 words,

– not all frequency word lists are made specifically with students of certain   age in mind or provide information about the range of words (Nation 1990). (For more on the subject of frequency word lists see the following chapter.)

If the range of a word is wide, the word occurs in many different types of texts on various topics. The wider the range, the better chance there is to recycle the word. Studies show that words that appear in a course book more than seven times will be remembered by most of the students. Conversely, if a word appears only once or twice, the chance that students will still remember the word at the end of the course is very small (Kachroo 1962 in Nation 1990).

If we consider how much time to spend on certain words and what other purpose they can have in language teaching, we speak about language needs. The high–frequency words are worth being spent much time on, the low–frequency words are useful for teaching strategies for dealing with such words. Finally, there are also words which, for example the teacher of young learners should not use at all – the academic or technical vocabulary.

Coverage is 'the capacity of a word to take the place of other words' (Mackey & Savard 1967 in Nation 1990: 21). This feature is very important if we need to explain meaning of words because a word with high coverage (a) can be often used instead of other more complicated or less frequent words, provided that the things or concepts they describe share noticeably similar features, (b) it can form combined words or become a part of a compound word, (c) it is an umbrella word for other words or its meaning includes meanings of other words. High coverage of a word makes it a good candidate for formulating definitions of other

more specific words. These words, however, do not have to appear in the first 1000 words (Nation 1990).

The selection of criteria is determined by the purpose of the list. One kind of a word list would be needed for designing a course with learnability in mind, another for assessing language skills in young learners and a different one for preparing simplified reading materials. One of them are e.g. PM readers – short books or rather booklets which help improve reading skills. They are distributed mainly in Australia and New Zealand but they are very popular in Ireland too. 'PM is the original book banded reading scheme for 4 – 11 year olds offering over 800 carefully levelled fiction and nonfiction books for whole school, guided or independent reading,' explains the PM devoted website (PM 2010). Children learn the fundamentals of reading and handling a book. Later they master a growing number of high frequency words with the help of matching pictures. 'By the end of PM Starters Level 2 and Levels 2/3 children should be able to recognize 25-30 high frequency words and be confident with simple sentence constructions,' (ibid). (For an example of the PM book, see App. 3)

Chapter 5

5.1 Well–known frequency word lists and their applications

Zimmerman (1997) reports, that the first attempt to compile a list of words according to their usage and simplicity, as it has been mentioned previously, was made by Thomas Prendergast and came out in his 1864 book *The Mastery of Languages*. Prendergast's list was based entirely on his own judgement but was later regarded as surprisingly accurate. Decades later, the new technology enabled linguists to conduct research more systematically which resulted in compilations including the list of Edward Lee Thorndike, published in 1944 and the list of Edward William Dolch, prepared in 1936 and published in 1948 in *Problems in reading* (pers. comm., Johns 1977 [online]).

Nation (1993: 193) lists other famous word lists regarding the criteria described in the previous chapter, namely *coverage* and *ease of learning*, such as Richards' Basic English from 1943 or West's definition vocabulary from 1935. According to Nation (1990: 22), 'most famous and most useful list of high–frequency words' is West's General Service List of English Words from 1953 which contains 2000 headwords. Unlike most other lists, this one collects all derivatives of a word under the same headword. This list is also available on websites (e.g. Bauman n.d.). Among other lemmatised lists belongs e.g. Kilgarriff's frequency list of about 6,000 words based on British National Corpus, (Kilgarriff 1996).

Other lists are specifically made for young learners, such as YLE word lists for those who seek an acknowledgement of the level of their proficiency in English. Their main purpose is to ensure that young learners will learn the words relevant to their language needs. There are three of them: Starters, Movers and Flyers. They cover A1 to A2 benchmark levels in relation to the first three levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) of the

Council of Europe. They were compiled from a number of English course books for children from all over the world and they also applied a 'study of the Cambridge YLE spoken corpus which revealed which words candidates actually use during their YLE Speaking Tests,' (YLE word lists 2007 [online]).

Nowadays, if we talk about word frequency, we can also refer to a language corpus, electronically stored and processed set of texts which contains between a million and hundreds of millions of words, a vast amount of all possible word combinations and occurrences which only efficient computers can hold. However, the use of corpuses is more general and they are far more versatile than frequency lists when it comes to their application. There are British National Corpus, Corpus of Contemporary American English, Oxford English Corpus or CO-BUILD, among others, some of them are even publicly available on the internet and very easy to use in their simplest application. They can become a very useful tool and great help for a number of linguistic researches as well as EFL teachers or learners. They also become the basis for monolingual dictionaries such as e.g. Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary.

It might seem that some of the frequency lists are now out of date since words and their meanings always change through time. On the other hand, e.g. Dolch's 220–word list is so basic that there has had to be made only slight changes so far. The list excludes nouns which are listed separately (95 altogether). It is estimated that both the Dolch's lists together constitute 50 to 70 percent of general texts (Dolch sight-word resources 2007 [online]).

5.2 About the Dolch list

For whom is the Dolch list meant? It was compiled from a large number of children's books to provide English teachers in elementary schools and support teachers of ESOL pupils, with the most frequent words. These words are supposed

to be essential for understanding graded texts for beginner readers. However, some linguists consider the list unsuitable for nonnative children because of the difficulties which arise for them when learning the sight words: while the native speakers already know the words orally and are quite familiar with using them in everyday speech, the ESOL learners need extra time to learn not only to recognize the words *by sight* but also what they mean and how to pronounce them (pers. comm., Dolch sight-word resources 2007 [online]).

For example, for a Czech 9–year–old boy who lives in Ireland and is, moreover, practically illiterate in his mother tongue, learning another language brings even more difficulties. While his native peers already have an active vocabulary stock comprising between 4500 and 6000 words (Fries and Traver 1960: 49 in Nation 1990), the Czech boy, who starts with English from the scratch, needs to speed things up a little to be able to join in the regular classwork one day. He will need to learn new words in other ways than by natural acquisition because there are not so many opportunities in the classroom so that he hears and sees all important words several times a day in all possible situations and contexts. Such a list provides his teacher with words the boy will most probably need to know and knowing them will help him to establish the basis for further language learning, especially reading. However, the teaching methods and types of tasks will be different from the ones employed where a native child is concerned.

Because the list is out of copyright today, anyone can easily find it on a number of websites devoted to ESOL, EFL or special needs teaching. As a language support teacher in Irish primary school Tralee Educate Together N. S. during my Comenius assistantship, I had been instructed by my trainer teacher how to work with the Dolch list and I witnessed (and was confirmed of) the importance of a high frequency list literally every day. It became a great help when working

with (a) children whose first language was not English and who were delayed in education, (b) children with some kind of language disorder, (c) hearing–impaired children.

What does make the Dolch list so popular in Ireland? How exactly does it help to young ESOL learners? The answer is contained in the nature of English language itself. The most frequent English words are also the shortest ones. There are many words which can be 'sounded out' (phonetically decoded); but also many *sight words*, which cannot. The Dolch list consists mostly of the latter sort: words which can be recognized as a whole. It is worth learning the sight words because knowing them significantly increases reading confidence in the beginning learners. (Sight words 2010 [online], Dolch sight-word resources 2007 [online], Johns 1977 [online])

Nation (Nation 1993: 193) in his books repetitively emphasizes the importance for EFL learners to build the essential vocabulary stock. His arguments stem from what studies of English (e.g. West 1953, Carol et al. 1971, Hwang 1989 in ibid) have shown, i.e. 'the most frequent first 1,000 words of English cover 74% of written text,' and that, 'the most frequent 1,000 words in spoken English provided coverage of 94% of the running words in informal conversation.' It means, that the effort which the learners put into learning the high frequency words, especially the first thousand of the list, is very well spent, Nation concludes (ibid).

On the whole, a list of most frequently used words together with matching pictures and example sentences for contextualization of the words is a very good starting 'tool kit'. Some of the practical uses of frequency lists will be described in Chapter 7 which is dedicated to dyslexic children, and also in the practical part of the thesis in relation to the teaching methods and types of exercises employed by the language support teachers in ESOL classes in Educate Together schools in Ireland.

6.1 Syllabuses and their various ways of presenting new vocabulary

Every school subject has its own syllabus. There are plenty of types and combinations of them and they are important for both teacher and learner. What does a syllabus look like?

A syllabus is in its simplest definition a list of contents (Ur 1996). In our case, a list of everything that a learner of English language should master within a particular time. Ur (ibid) further explains that we can understand it either to be an official, all–embracing document issued by a government body as a separate document which usually contains all subjects taught at every school level, or a part of a textbook, which typically occupies its first pages and serves both as the list of content and the guide for the teacher or learner.

From all the syllabuses Ur (Ur 1996: 178), Hedge (2000) and Harmer (2001: 296) recognize, we would like to comment on those which are somewhat significant, concerning the approach held towards teaching vocabulary. These are:

- ✦ the grammar/structural syllabus,
- ✦ the lexical syllabus,
- ✦ the functional syllabus,
- ✦ the notional syllabus,
- ✦ the situational syllabus,
- ✦ the topic–based syllabus,
- ✦ the multi–strand/multi–dimensional syllabus.

6.2 Syllabuses and vocabulary learning

In the grammar/structural syllabus, the new words are made in bilingual lists of three columns: words in the target language, their phonetic transcription and their equivalents in the learner's language. There might be some fixed phrases given, too. The words and topics should match the grammar so that it is possible to present and practise certain structures in a meaningful way. It is easy to find a certain word in the list because it is alphabetically ordered. On the other hand, learning new words from such a list is not recommended. Learners should always keep their own vocabulary notes with some other ordering system, e.g. topic–based or mind maps. In courses based on the grammar syllabus, vocabulary is not taught, it is merely given (Ur 1996, Harmer 2001).

In the functional syllabus, any new set of vocabulary is driven from the language functions, i.e. things we can *do*. It is very difficult to grade functions: we cannot grade them according to word frequency because the vocabulary is not the focus of the functions; and we cannot grade them according to the grammar either because the same function can be often expressed in many different ways. The only grading exists within a certain function. For example, *Asking for permission* may require only limited number of words but different levels of mastery of language structures too. Some of them may be beyond the learners' present capabilities even though the vocabulary needed in them consists only of high frequency words. (Students may already know words or phrases such as *have, can, would like* and *never mind* and so they can learn how to ask questions such as *I would like to... Can I open the window?* etc., but not being prepared enough to learn e.g. *Would you mind if I opened the window?*) (Ur 1996, Hedge 2000, Harmer 2001.)

The lexical– notional– situational– and topic–based syllabuses are vocabulary oriented. Apart from that, they 'take a modular format' in contrast to the structural syllabus, which is built in a linear way (Hedge 2000: 350). Modularity

gives the teacher more freedom when it comes to structures, functions and grammatical points since the module is a closed, independent unit and needs not to be followed by any other specific unit. The linear approach, on the other hand, ensures that learners especially at the beginner level acquire the basic grammatical points one by one in a graded way and that nothing essential would be omitted.

In recent years, the most common one has become the multi–strand syllabus. With more dimensions, however, we need an organizing principle. In other words, we need to decide which syllabus will form the course units. To decide which one would be the most appropriate for our students, we have to set the teaching goals first. Without clarifying what the students' needs are, we can hardly plan anything else. Therefore, if, for instance, the focus of a course is to provide the learners with a large number of basic vocabulary so that the pupils are soon able to read graded books and understand basic instructions, we would probably think of choosing the topic–based syllabus, because then we can choose only those structures which would be easy enough to be handled with and focus most of our attention on the lexis (all from e.g. first thousand of high frequency words) and some simple functions. Many frequency word lists were made to help with the choice of the most useful vocabulary, (Nation 1990, Ur 1996, Hedge 2000, Harmer 2001).

6.3 Choosing a syllabus

The choice of a syllabus for a certain ESOL course is determined by the teacher's teaching goals and priorities. To teach young learners, we need to avoid theoretical explanations, in other words, to adopt covert grammar teaching. To teach a young non–native learner of English as a second language first requires learning functions and vocabulary for audio–oral use so that the learner is able to communicate with their teacher and classmates. Soon the focus of learning shifts to the writing skills and productive use of language and finally, the teacher attrib-

utes a certain portion of teaching time to focusing their attention to specific aspects of vocabulary to enhance accuracy in pronunciation and spelling. The way to achieve this goal is determined by the choice of the appropriate syllabus, which would be, in this case, the multi–strand syllabus (Ur 1996, Hedge 2000, Harmer 2001).

6.4 Language Curriculum Reference for Fortnightly Schemes

'Fortnightly schemes constitute the elements of short term preparation which, in general is outlined in terms of content objectives and enabling activities' (Whole School Evaluation Report 2005)

The language support program in Tralee Educate Together N. S. adhered to this curriculum. It lists functions separately for three levels according to CEFR:
A1 (Breakthrough), A2 (Waystage) and B1 (Threshold)

The topics are as follows:
★ Myself.
★ Our school.
★ Food and Clothes.
★ Colours, shapes and opposites.
★ People who help us.
★ Weather.
★ Transport and travel.
★ Seasons, holidays and festivals.
★ The local and wider community.
★ Time.
★ People and places in other areas.
★ Animals and plants.
★ Caring for my locality.

Chapter 7

7.1 Briefly about dyslexia and ADD (ADHD)

There is a very high probability that in every classroom may be at least one child with mild to severe form of some type of specific learning disorder or ADD or ADHD (attention deficit [hyperactivity] disorder) characteristics, which can in some cases combine, (Pollock, Waller et al. 2004). This chapter looks at some specific aspects of teaching vocabulary to children who have learning or attention difficulties, how to help them overcome them and make learning effective. The chapter, however, does not attempt to review all possible causes of the child's learning and attention difficulties, neither it attempts to instruct how to distinguish true dyslexia or ADD from other potential causes of manifestation of the same symptoms, which is beyond the scope of this diploma project.

Here is the list of difficulties a child with ADD (ADHD) characteristics may have as Pollock (2004: 29) gives them:

- inattention (poor concentration)
- impulsivity
- hyperactivity (restlessness)

The manifestation of the symptoms has to last for at least six months and be evident from the early childhood so that we can start thinking about ADD or ADHD (ibid).

7.1.1 How a teacher can help

The following list summarises what Pollock (2004: 24) suggests the teacher can do for a child with ADD in the classroom to ease the child's difficulties and ensure that most learning possible takes place and least harm is done:

- Listen carefully to the child's speech and correct or at least repeat their misused or mispronounced words immediately but diplomatically. Sensitively correct wrong use of words on the spot to avoid that the child makes the same mistake later in written language too.
- Speak clearly, more slowly and face the child; ensure that the child understands. If in any doubt, repeat it in other words.
- Devote some time for exchange news in pairs or groups to develop children's listening habits and social skills.
- Use nursery rhymes, poetry to develop children's awareness of the rhythm in words and sentences. Children can clap or tap the syllables in words they tend to mispronounce.
- Ensure that the child understands the meanings of the key words when they are being spoken to or when they are reading. Visual clues and written summary of what is being spoken can help. It can also be very helpful to provide the child with a list of vocabulary related to the topic being worked on in class.
- A string of requests should be given separately.
- To attract the child's attention when there is a behavioural problem 'Excuse me!' is most appropriate (instead of e.g. informal 'Hey!').
- Ensure that the child understands that different responses are appropriate in different circumstances.
- However, the child often tries to hide their lack of understanding because they believe that it is entirely their own fault and the teacher might be unaware of the true problem of child's poor results!

7.1.2 Difficulties that dyslexic children can meet with

Here is a list of typical difficulties the dyslexic children may have (some or all of them and varying in their seriousness):

- difficulties in recognizing shapes of letters; confusing similar looking letters,
- confusing right and left, poor spacial orientation,
- difficulties with reading and reading comprehension,
- mispronouncing words, confusing similar sounds and words,
- difficulty with rhythm of words and syllable stress,
- weakness in language processing (e.g. misusing words),
- weak short–term auditory memory, discrimination and recall,
- problems with the order of instruction, sequence of events,
- difficulties with grammatical tenses and passive voice,
- poor comprehension of prepositions and connectives,
- problems with sentence structure,
- failure to understand proverbs, euphemisms and idioms or emotional nuances in choice of words,
- difficulty in finding the correct word when speaking,
- need much more time for completing tasks,

(Michalová 2001; Pollock, Waller et al. 2004).

We should always remember that due to their slower progress, as compared to their classmates, the dyslexic children have to (and they usually do) work much harder than their classmates who do not have any special needs. It is also essential that we appreciate their efforts, that we are patient with them and respect them (Pollock, Waller et al. 2004).

7.1.3 Activities to consider when teaching vocabulary to dyslexic children

Learning vocabulary through multi–sensory approach

The more senses the child can use when learning a new word, the better. That is, when new words are introduced, the child should learn a word by as much of the following as possible (Pechancová and Smrčková 1998, Pollock, Waller et al. 2004):

- hear a word and see the matching picture or the real object,
- hear a word and try to see it's picture in the mind's eye,
- recognize the word by its picture (on a flash card),
- copy the word from the blackboard or a handout,
- look–cover–write–and–check (good to make it a routine),
- construct the word from the cutout letters,
- trace a letter made of sandpaper and say the letter's name,
- teacher mouths a word, children try to say it,
- clap hands rhythmically along with saying the word by syllables,
- say how many letters are in a word without looking at it,
- sound out the individual letters of a word backwards,
- recognize a word among other words ('listen and find'),
- read out loud certain words ('look and say'),
- complete words with certain letters left out (e.g. c_t, f_ _t) while the teacher reads them out loud, then read them,
- copy and complete sentences with some letters and words left out,

(Pechancová and Smrčková 1998, Pollock, Waller et al. 2004).

7.1.4 What else can be found helpful:

- using red colour for vowels in written words on flashcards,
- let children use crayons when doing certain tasks for colour coding (e.g. when doing a matching exercise or working with certain words in a text),
- let children write certain tasks in the word editor,
- encourage children to use the word editor's proofreader to check their handwritten homework,
- give plenty of time for every task, make sure that the child starts working on a task immediately,
- last but not least: praise for every little success!

(Pechancová and Smrčková 1998, Pollock, Waller et al. 2004).

The following lists give a summary of activities which can be useful for practising certain skills. It can serve as a quick reference, it is assumed certain amount of familiarity with the activities.

Ordering

- ✦ 'I went to the shop and bought...'
- ✦ 'Under my bed I found...'
- ✦ 'Snap!' – words cut in halves,
- ✦ word dominoes,
- ✦ cut sentences,
- ✦ ordering words according to the first letters or number of letters or syllables,
- ✦ joining dots according to ascending or descending numbers to get a picture,

(Pechancová and Smrčková 1998, Pollock, Waller et al. 2004, Hurtová, Strnadová et al. 2006).

Orientation

✦ using word searches,

✦ finding certain words in the text,

✦ treasure hunt board game,

✦ following and giving directions according to a map,

✦ 'listen and find' activities,

(Pechancová and Smrčková 1998, Pollock, Waller et al. 2004, Hurtová, Strnadová et al. 2006

Revising learner's vocabulary

✦ keeping a 'scrap book' (a kind of portfolio where the child sticks or draws pictures and labels them with matching words based on topics and notions) – for revision and recording the child's progress,

✦ using flashcards and 'pexeso',

✦ keeping an ABC dictionary (one picture for each letter made by the child),

✦ storing the most important or difficult words in the written form on little flashcards kept in a box with the child's name on it and using them for revision in various ways,

✦ using pictures with a scene corresponding to a certain topic and (a) ask the child to describe it (b) ask the child to talk about it, eliciting the vocabulary we want to revise (c) give true or false statements (d) ask the child to 'listen and find', etc.

✦ doing regular spelling tests of 10 to 20 words,

✦ using interactive games available freely on the internet,

(Pechancová and Smrčková 1998, Pollock, Waller et al. 2004, Hurtová, Strnadová et al. 2006).

Concrete examples of methods, practices and activities mentioned above can be found in the cited resources.

If we need an approach which may be useful for teaching children with dyslexia or other specific needs or if we seek a method which ensures that really all the learners in the class are learning, then we may consider the multiple intelligences theory point of view. It shares certain aspects with the multi-sensory approach (e.g. using diversity, employing all senses, caring for the individual needs of the children). However, if we look at the eight ways of learning or thinking (Armstrong 2009: 33), which match the eight different intelligences, we find that the scope of application is somewhat wider. The following list shows various ways we can approach teaching vocabulary, which are derived from the eight ways of thinking that Armstrong describes (ibid):

Learning new words through:

✦ words and context – extensive story reading, listening to audio books, songs and podcasts; discussing,

✦ reasoning – doing puzzles, crosswords, learning interesting facts about the language, playing with words (scrabble, 'pexeso'), gap–filling

✦ pictures and images – watching films, reading illustrated books, going to art galleries

✦ movement and somatic sensation – total physical response, role–play, drama, hands–on learning,

✦ rhythm and melodies – singing songs, rhyming, chanting, going to concerts

✦ social contacts – playing group or competitive games, making new friends through eTwinning or similar projects,

✦ feelings and personal goals – doing self–placed projects, working alone on interesting tasks,

✦ natural forms – doing tasks outside the classroom in the country or green areas of the city, using live animals, plants and other natural objects for demonstration and observation.

Of course it would be impossible to teach all new vocabulary through all the ways listed above at once but it may be possible even in the classical school to choose various ways for every vocabulary topic. (For example, if the vocabulary topic is *animals,* the teacher can take the class to the ZOO, ask certain students to bring their pets and prepare some interesting facts about them and ask other students to make a project together, etc.)

Conclusion of the theoretical part

The findings of the studies reviewed in the chapters above show that vocabulary learning and acquisition in learners of English as a second or foreign language is a complex process which should be given adequate attention and should be controlled by teachers (as opposed to let just happen somehow) and which deserves at least as much attention as learning language structure. There are many ways teachers can use to accomplish their goal (that is, that learning takes place) and every method is valuable in its own way: each one either helps with learning a different aspect of vocabulary or their contribution lies in divergence of approaches to different types of learners. Another very important thing is that the teacher is well informed about the learner's mother tongue, their present knowledge of English, for which purposes the learner studies it and that they always respect learners' predispositions for learning and tailor the teaching methods to learners' specific needs.

PRACTICAL PART

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Chapter 8

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8.1 Hypothesis

A child with different ethnical, cultural and linguistic background can be successfully assimilated in the mainstream class provided he or she has been given regular language support classes in a host country for at least one year's time.

8.2 The field of research

As a student of English language at the Faculty of Education at Palacky University, I participated in the Comenius project I had learnt about from one of my university teachers. For eight months during the school year 2008/09, I had joined a language support team as a Comenius assistant in a small elementary school in Tralee, Ireland. I had as many as two tutors who guided me through the whole stay and whom I could consult whenever I needed to. I cooperated on regular basis with all other classroom teachers, their assistants and with the principal and I also became a facilitator of communication between school and parents of their pupils.

8.2.1 Tralee Educate Together National School (TETNS)

TETNS is a multi–denominational and coeducational elementary school. What does it mean? All children of all social, cultural, religious and nonreligious backgrounds are equally respected and have equal rights of access to the school.

They are also encouraged to explore all kinds of abilities and opportunities. TETNS caters to 114 children from infant classes to the sixth class, in some cases two years are merged. The school teaching staff include 5 classroom teachers, 2 support teachers (so called resource teachers), 2 language assistants, 2 assistants of children with Down syndrome and 4 to 6 additional assistants, who help predominantly in the merged classes. Resource teachers and language assistants work with pupils outside their own class. The enrollment is largely made up of children of migrants, many of whom cannot speak English at all, (Tralee Educate Together N. S. 2010 [online]). For the school year of my assistantship (2008/09), TETNS enrolled children from Nigeria, Ghana, The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Latvia, Kosovo and Georgia. Still, the majority of children were Irish.

8.2.2 About the pupils

About 30 children were placed in the language support program in 2008. (These pupils will be referred to as LSP pupils because these are the pupils I was in everyday contact within the language support program.) In total, I met 16 of them and on average I taught 4 groups of 2 to 4 pupils per day for the period of 8 months. Age of my pupils ranged between 5 and 14 years. The vast majority of them first started to attend school only after coming to Ireland or the UK. Majority of my pupils were Czech Romanies. Most of my pupils had special needs and most of them were, at the time of enrollment, illiterate, regardless the age.

8.2.3 Differences and similarities of the LSP pupils

Although all the LSP pupils attended the language support program to improve their understanding of English, there were considerate differences between their ability to assimilate in the new cultural background. Basically, the younger they were, the faster they learnt English and about cultural surrounding. However, their learning capacity had certain limitations. Since their passive understanding

became good enough to follow what was going on in the classroom, they were far from being able to join in the mainstream class work. The main reason for this was that they could not read or write. Illiteracy in their mother tongue delayed considerably the acquisition of the second language. The older the pupils were, the more difficult the situation became. Not only the teenagers had to catch up with the acquisition of English for longer period, but in the case of the teenage boys, they were also hugely influenced by the culture of their family, knowing that they will always be surrounded by their own community and that they could rely on each other's help and therefore in majority cases they found learning English unimportant. The smaller the motivation to assimilate in the Irish culture was, the weaker the motivation to learn its language became. To sum up, the age, the gender and the strength of family tradition or cultural background were one of the most influential factors in learning the second language.
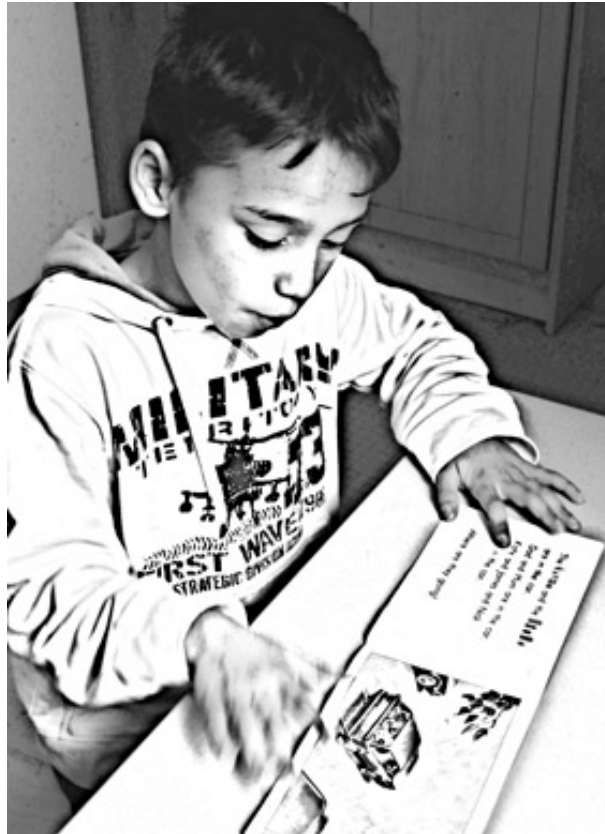
Apart from the factors reviewed above, there were other circumstances which may or may not be related one to another. They concern the child's learning difficulties. Be the cause of them given by genetic predisposition or lack of stimulating activities and attention in the early childhood, the ways we deal with the learning difficulties have much in common. Most frequently, the pupils manifested signs of dyslexia and attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, which are described in Chapter 7.

8.3 This project utilizes the following methods:

1. A case study which helps to understand acquisition difficulties of an individual person, in this instance Anthoney.
2. Content analysis of methods and field notes used within the language support program (LSP).
3. Content analysis of weekly notes on progress of the lessons based on the multi-strand syllabus and Dolch list.

Chapter 9

9.1 Case study: Antony

Anthoney was at the time of my assistantship in TETNS an 8 years old Czech boy, who had never lived in the home country of his parents. Much guesswork needs to be employed when it comes to details about his previous life. According to bits and pieces the teachers know from his elder sisters, who attend the same school (but also remember very little when it comes to earlier events), his family first came to the United Kingdom nine years ago and then moved to the Republic of Ireland. Anthoney was born in the UK. He lives with his mother, grandmother, one brother and six sisters. They speak only Czech and Romany at home, so when Anthoney came to school he did not have any active knowledge of English language neither he could read or write in his mother tongues.

Anthoney was one of a large group of pupils who were placed in the language support program, at the end of which the pupils should be fully integrated in the mainstream classes. He had attended Tralee Educate Together National School since September 2008. He attended the first class and it was probably his first year among wider English speaking community, too. (It is otherwise quite common in Ireland to send children to school when they turn four or five.)

9.1.1 Anthoney within the language support program

All nonnative children are assessed at the beginning of the school year and if their level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (further referred to as CEFR) is lower then B1, they are included in the language support program. All rating is carried out in relation to the first three levels of CEFR and for this purposes, the LSP teachers use The Primary School Assessment Kit (Little, Simpson et al. 2007). It tests all four skills. Children are then divided into small groups and two hours per week up to three hours (i.e. lessons) per day are assigned to them. If the children have more than one lesson within one day, the LSP teachers usually take turns in teaching them (these teachers then collaborate and exchange information on the learners' progress on regular basis). The LSP children are granted the support for two years at maximum but in special circumstances they can get the language support for even a longer period (pers. com). The LSP classes are based (1.) on the Fortnightly schemes, which is a multi-strand curriculum centred around 13 topics – schemes (see Chapter 6), (2.) on the Dolch list (see Chapter 5 and App. 4). Another large area that needed much attention was learning the letters of the alphabet and primary writing or at least copying simple words. Children were also prompted to talk about everyday things in open, friendly and informal conversations. Some of the LSP pupils started from scratch and after several months they could read simplified books and write and communicate in a language different from their mother tongue. It is a result of a collaborative work of the children's teachers, their assistants, language support– and resource teachers together with external professionals and legal bodies.

Anthoney could not say much in English when he came to TETNS, he was automatically assigned the level A1 according to CEFR. Therefore he was granted the maximum amount of LSP classes per week. It is generally expected that during one to two year's period, these children learn the English language to such an extent that they can be fully integrated in the mainstream class. An important fac-

tor is certainly the age at which the child with the support begins. I taught groups of 4 pupils at maximum. Anthoney attended the LSP classes together with another two boys and we met regularly five times a week.

2.1.2 Factors influencing subject's learning

This is a list of factors which in some way influenced Anthoney's learning and acquisition of vocabulary during the LSP:

✦ motivation,
✦ teaching methods,
✦ types of activities,
✦ health,
✦ relations among children,
✦ seating and classroom backgrounds,
✦ school attendance,
✦ keeping things tidy.

Motivation - Anthoney got tired from repetitive work very quickly. Therefore, before we started with e.g. handwriting practice, it had helped if I explained shortly what we were going to do next and what other, more interesting activities laid in front of us. Without motivation, it was almost impossible to keep Anthoney focused on less exciting tasks.

Teaching methods – Anthoney dealt with new vocabulary much better when the multi-sensory approach was employed. It payed off to invest more time in different ways of working with words and sentences (see Chapter 7) because otherwise he got easily confused by two, e.g. similar looking words. The nature of Anthoney's age required covert-grammar way of teaching. If he was repetitively exposed to a specific grammar pattern, he usually started copying that pattern himself.

Types of activities – Some activities required much concentration, such as handwriting, copying words or gap filling. These had to be changed regularly with activities which needed different style of work, such as using pictures and flashcards for eliciting vocabulary, colouring ('listen and colour'), singing a song, exercises which required some movements (Simon says, running dictation, following teacher's instructions, such as 'touch your ears' or 'put the book on the chair' and other)

Health - According to my observations, children's health related directly to their concentration and learning results. If Anthoney had, for instance, a cold, he showed signs of mental fatigue and forgetfulness in greater extent than when he was healthy.

Relations among children - Anthoney attended the LSP classes together with Mirek (6) and later Kevin (7) joined them. According to my observations, whenever Kevin was absent from classes, Anthoney's behaviour improved considerably. Clearly, the two boys were inspiring each other to bursts of laughter or at least giggling which lessened their abilities to focus on the tasks we did. This was, actually, the reason I started using the behaviour chart and with quite satisfactory results too.

Seating and classroom background – The classroom which was placed at my disposal had three doors. In fact, it was a kitchenette and anyone could come in or pass by. One door led to the hall with a classroom at its other end, the second one to the staff room and the third door led directly to another classroom. Therefore, we could hear noises from at least two different sources at once. Whenever someone else came to the room, children reacted in two possible ways: (a) they started to 'show off' and stopped paying attention to what we were doing or (b) they became self-conscious and shy and stopped communicating. The latter concerned predominantly the bigger children (9 and above).

School attendance – Majority of the parents of the LSP children felt only little responsibility for the children's presence at school. As a result, children stayed at home whenever they did not wish to go to school or their parents decided it for them. In general, frequent absences from school led to piling of work the children needed to do and consequently, poorer results because of the broken continuity of practising. Anthoney liked the school but it still did not help to improve his attendance in comparison to those of his LSP classmates who enjoyed the school less.

Keeping things tidy – majority of the LSP children had problems with keeping their books and copybooks clean and whole, they even often lost them. As a result, much of Anthoney's work got lost forever to his and his teachers' disadvantage.

Record keeping was very challenging because (a) Anthoney's copybooks got lost regularly and (b) he was often absent from school. It was like trying to put together bits and pieces of a jigsaw and regrettably, further contact is not possible because, as I was informed in autumn 2009, the family moved back to the UK. For an excerpt of Anthoney's handwriting, see App. 7 and 8.

9.2 Content analysis of methods and field notes used within the language support program:

Here is the list of teaching methods and strategies that I observed and used during my assistantship in TETNS:
Demonstration, multi-sensory approach, covert grammar techniques, motivation, using pictures and flashcards, didactic games, working with texts (from word recognition to copying and handwriting)

Demonstration (if possible, associated with something unusual). There were many opportunities for pupils of TETNS to explore the subject matter by

seeing real things, touching them or feeling them, by paying visits to the other classes in the school, going for a trip or presenting something interesting to their classmates. I also tried to bring the real things to the maximum linguistic use. Every day I tried to draw my pupils' attention to reality, such as weather, their own feelings and feelings of others, to what was happening in the school, etc., and teach them to express themselves in English.

Multi-sensory approach - As mentioned in Chapter 7, this is the most efficient way to teach children with special needs. My pupils were often colouring pictures, cutting and gluing flashcards, and they could play interactive games on the Internet websites devoted to ESOL learning of the alphabet, practicing pronunciation of sounds and sound clusters and even testing their knowledge of vocabulary. I also used work on computer as a means of motivation or as reward for good behaviour because all children were always looking forward to it and enjoyed it very much.

Motivation – not exactly a teaching method but certainly its inherent part. Good motivation was vitally important for improving the pupils' learning results. Motivation was used as a two fold weapon: (a) to discipline learners, (b) to help them learn more effectively. Many of the LSP pupils had very short attention span. They were restless and hyperactive and constantly needed to be reminded of what the rules for good behaviour were. Apart from doing some practice with the computer programs and the Internet, I found a chart of good behaviour particularly effective and helpful solution. It looked like a weekly timetable, every pupil had their own on the wall above the desk and they collected smiling stickers there. The smaller children always started the lesson with counting their stickers because after having collected a certain number of the positive ones they got reword. Thus, sooner or later, everyone had the chance to win a prize. Children's competitiveness could be often transformed very effectively into the means of achieving educational goals.

Using pictures – Independently of the age of the pupils, pictures and photographs were often the only bridge between their mother tongue and the second language. As it was pointed out in the chapter about frequency lists and in Chapter 7, pictures are very useful tool for presenting new vocabulary and they liven up every exercise or reading material. They proved to be very versatile tool and a true motivator.

Didactic games – especially the younger pupils (5 to 9) were very grateful for anything that resembled a game when they practiced vocabulary or grammatical structures. Many of the so called games I prepared myself, usually from pictures, cutout words and sentences or by making word searches and crosswords using simple web applications. The tasks were e.g. 'Find and colour.' 'Listen and show (the word or expression).' 'Match the picture and word.' They were not exactly games but if I presented the exercise this way, with some competitive features added to it, children adopted the idea and treated the exercise as if it was a game, too.

Dealing with written words and handwriting – many methods were related to working with text from simple phrases to short stories. Because, as I mentioned earlier, most of my students struggled with the literacy to varying degrees, I devoted certain amount of teaching time to developing primary reading and handwriting. However, some of my students were as old as twelve or even older, that is, too big to learn the alphabet. For this reason, they soon started to learn to recognize whole words instead. As for the writing, it was even more complicated. The problem with illiteracy is not only in 'being behind with reading and writing' and 'catching up'. The children, now e.g. eight years old had hardly ever held a pencil in their hands before they came to the TETNS and thus even drawing lines and curves made them soon exhausted. It became even more difficult when it came to writing words. The list of difficulties which dyslexic children meet in

their mother tongue (see chapter 7) gives us an idea of what difficulties the non-native dyslexic children had to deal with when they started to learn to read and write in a language other than their mother tongue. From this reason, a considerate portion of the LSP was devoted to handwriting, often closely related to letter- and word recognition. For this, special primary writing materials were used along with gapped words and sentences which I prepared myself (see Appendices).

Tests - in such small groups as the language support teachers usually worked with, the predominant form of testing was the formative assessment. Regular feedback was easily obtained by observing the children's progress during the lesson, by asking them questions and giving tasks that immediately helped to recognize the learners' needs. Since most of the pupils were still struggling with writing letters, written tests were not often the option. Children did not get any marks, they were rewarded with stickers for working hard instead. Otherwise I expressed my satisfaction with the pupils' progress by verbal praise or recommendations of what should be improved. The bigger, however, got dictations of Dolch words, on whose results the teacher decided whether they were acquired or not. Every child also had their own folder with their previous work, which included various exercises, dictations of Dolch words, handwriting exercises or 'Scrap book' (a portfolio for the youngest children, see Appendices).

9.3 Content analysis of weekly notes on progress of the lessons based on the multi-strand syllabus and Dolch list.

9.3.1 Working with the frequency list

As Chapter 5 reveals, there are many uses of frequency word lists and the most popular list for ESL teaching in Ireland is the Dolch word list, sometimes called sight words. For the sake of convenience, the total of 220 words are divided into 11 groups. At the beginning of the school year or whenever a new student

joined TETNS, we always started with the first twenty words of the Dolch list and added another set every two or three weeks. The Dolch list served as guidelines for what the children should know by the end of the first year (not first class though, since many children who started to learn to read and write were as far as the fourth or fifth class).

Because most of the Dolch words cannot be depicted in pictures but constitute a considerable portion of simplified English children's books, the Irish schools believe it is necessary that the nonnative pupils start to practice reading particularly with them. I soon realized that there is no need to worry about conveying their meaning to children since they assimilated them naturally by hearing them being used by their teachers and classmates hundreds of times every day. This is also why such a list cannot be used in the EFL class without changing the teaching strategy. We are talking about words such as *the, I, was, for, that, and, had,* etc., for the whole Dolch list, see the attachments.

9.3.2 The general Dolch list routine:

First, the teacher reads the words to pupils and reminds them of their meaning by giving them into short sentences or phrases. It is necessary to do so because many sight words are homophones or they sound very similar to the unexperienced ears (for more about the learning burden see chapter 3). Then the learners listen to the teacher and repeat the words after her. All my pupils were usually very good at this, they seemed to be naturally good at copying the sound and accent of the new language.

Next, the pupils learn to read them. There is a number of closely related activities listed in Chapter 7 and for the examples of the activities I used during the assistantship, see Appendices.

At the same time, that is, not necessarily only after the ability to read the new words is accomplished, children learn to write them. Sometimes they trace the words first (either with a pencil or with their forefinger on the sand–paper letters). Then they copy the words in various types of exercises.

However, children with learning disorders, dyslexia or hyperactivity or any other special needs, as we can find in Chapter 7, need much more time for the new subject matter to settle down. Therefore, abundant repetition, revision and recycling of all previous words constitute a great part of the lesson.

To see the new words in a context, children followed a series of graded books, which were introduced at the end of Chapter 4. What makes them very special is the fact that they are so many of them and that even children knowing very little English can read them. These so called PM readers are banded into thirteen levels (they are often referred to as PM1, PM2, etc.) and within each level there is a number of different titles. Every level focuses on certain high frequency words and recycles in abundance the most important ones, (pers. com., PM 2010).

Thanks to the fact that the first level of the books contains very few simple high frequency words, my pupils could start *reading books* almost instantaneously. Usually, the book, or rather booklet, included a picture or photograph matching every piece of text (in the case of lower levels this could be one sentence or a very short paragraph). Even though some children often remembered what should have been otherwise recognized, for the time being it was more important that they enjoyed reading (it was, in fact, one of their favourite activities) and were looking forward to moving from one book to another. It also counted as a great motivational component since every advancement towards a higher level made them feel proud. Simplified, heavily illustrated books were very popular and the children often considered reading to be rather pleasure than hard work (which it indeed was but without them noticing it).

9.3.3 The analysis of the weekly notes on progress of lessons based on the Fortnightly schemes and Dolch list. For the notes, (see Appendices).

The last method draws upon an excerpt of weekly notes I made about the LSP children at the end of every week. I decided to choose these notes rather than lesson plans because I wish to keep the primary focus of the analysis on what was done and what difficulties the children and especially Anthony, the subject of the case study, met with rather than on what I intended to do and to what extent it went according to my expectations. To analyze an eight-month progress albeit of a single group of the LSP pupils would need much more space then the diploma project allows. For this reason, I chose to cover a shorter period of four months and the notes which show some progress having been made. As mentioned earlier, much teaching time had to be devoted to revision and thus many words and exercises were being recycled and reviewed.

The questions I will attempt to answer are: Which activities were used? Which of them led successfully to acquisition of vocabulary mentioned in the weekly notes? Which did not? In what way the ability to read the rhyming words and sight words helped the learners if they did not understand the meaning of many of them anyway?

Weekly Notes 1 (see App. 2.1)
Children had been approximately one month at school. The frustration from being among people who could not understand their language began fade slowly away and some of the LSP children started to react to the teachers' questions orally for the first time. During the initial period, demonstration was the most important method and the most helpful too. Even though it resulted in the vague explanation, it was the first step to communication in the second language. Mirek and Anthony could not write then at all. To enhance the boys' handwriting, we started with drawing lines and curves and trace dotted letters. However, it was rather a physical exercise than anything else because neither of them could recognize most

of the letters. For this reason, we worked mainly with the words on flashcards and labels instead. Writing words took too much time and with minimum effect as for conveying the words' meaning. One of the most convenient activities was Scrapbook because (a) it was fun, (b) it engaged more different activities, such as handling the words on the flashcards or strips of paper, cutting, gluing, matching and colouring, (c) every child had their own Scrapbook (or portfolio) and was therefore responsible for its content to greater extent. For most of the LSP children, the copybooks, portfolios and books were first personal items they learnt to be seriously responsible for.

Weekly Notes 2 (see App. 2.3)

Neither Anthoney nor Mirek could truly read the labels in the Scrapbook (see App. 2.2, 2.4) but they could recognize some words 'by sight'. They both are dyslexic, Mirek even showed signs of combined specific learning difficulties. If his progress continues the way it did during my assistantship in TETNS, the ability to recognize some words just by sight will be a considerable achievement.

During the second month they started to recognize the labels on the furniture and objects in the school. They started to learn school rules. For the new words we used flashcards with pictures of the objects related to school and matching words. I spread it all on the desk and they had to find the words they heard and match them to the pictures. At the beginning, they got much help but slowly they started to recognize the words. This activity was very successful. They liked it because there were pictures involved in it and they could also compete who finds more of them first. In Anthoney's case this activity led to true and lasting recognition of words. We already started with the second set of twenty sight words from the Dolch list. Anthoney had difficulties with reading *it, of, was, said, she and they* correctly. He tended to read it as in *site* and he did not recognize *w* very much. Combined sounds such as *sh* or *th* and the letter *y* were too difficult for him then.

Weekly Notes 3 (see App. 2.5)

The boys had already started to read the simplest PM readers, the level one. The sentences in these books were very short and repetitive, e.g. In the trolley... Page 1: 'There's an apple.' Page 2: A picture of a grocery and a girl pushing the trolley and her mother buying some apples. Page 3: 'There's a banana,' and so on. It is probably clear even from this short example that it was quite easy to remember the sentences by heart. Someone may argue that it does not truly help learn to read very much. However, I believe that building the positive attitude towards books is worth closing one eye before the children's innocent cheating. I also noted that the children 'cheated' only from the sheer despair, that is, when they did not have any other option. As soon as they mastered the words and learned to recognize them, they started to rely on their own skills rather then pure guesses.

Copying words remained the main regular handwriting practice. Many worksheets could be prepared on the websites devoted to primary writing. Children could either trace dotted words and match them with pictures (see App. 5) or copy words given at the beginning of the line for several times. These activities belonged to the more demanding ones because they required children's concentration. They were good as a physical exercise but they did not help much to fix the understanding of the words' meaning.

Weekly Notes 4 (see App. 2.8)

Here, the most interesting note is that, 'Anthoney reads most of the words, understands very little of them' (App. 2.8). This was very true for many Dolch list words. As it was mentioned in Chapter 5, the Dolch list bears much greater learning burden for the nonnative children than for the native ones. We all know how difficult it is to learn by heart something we do not understand. Without meaning, the words are just strings of odd shapes to anyone. On the one hand, it was very difficult for the Czech boys to learn to read the sight words. On the other hand, they were not absolutely unsuccessful. With every word they could read their abil-

ity to recognize a new sound pattern grew a little. What supported these patterns were definitely so called 'rhyming words'. (See App. 2.13.)

Weekly Notes 5 (see App. 10)

Again, the mention about Anthoney reading what he believed there is makes me realize how complex process reading is. As if Anthoney could not decide what it was about. In fact, it was probably due to his having ups and downs. As Chapter 7 mentions, dyslectic children give very unbalanced results, Mirek and Anthoney were no exceptions. As for Mirek, he struggled much more than Anthoney. His attention span was very short and he got tired of any activity within a few minutes. However, he was willing to work and trying hard. It cannot be say that he was not trying. Unfortunately, he was missing from lessons very often and this fact did not help to already complicate situation for him.

To understand words about weather, jobs and the days of the week required different types of activities. As for the days of the week, we used a big poster where we wrote the actual date and the day of the week so it had become a routine for the children. They also did a number of exercises in which they put the days in the correct order while they practised handwriting at the same time (see App. 6). However, they had problems with understanding which days are the 'school days' and which belong to weekends. The same problem the boys had with other notions, such as months and seasons. They, for example, had no idea in which month Christmas or Easter is nor which season is hot and which cold. In these circumstances, it was very difficult for them to learn the names for concepts they never spoke about even in their mother tongue. To convey some meaning in these words, we worked with a number of pictures and flashcards. The typical exercise was 'Listen and colour'. Anthoney could finally name all the months in the year (without hesitation too) but still struggled when it came to saying the date.

Weather was another routine which we got used to. At the beginning of every lesson, I asked the pupils how they were (we often started this conversation on the way to 'my' classroom) and what they did the day before or in the class.

The next question, or sometimes just a mark, was about the weather. The weather was always changing and so the boys soon knew what *sunny, windy* or *hailstones* mean.

Jobs, or rather People who help us was one of the boy's favourite topics. Apart from matching flashcards with pictures and words we

Weekly Notes 6 (see App. 12)

The end of the first half of the school year was significant as for Anthoney's progress. The gap between his and Mirek's performance grew bigger and bigger. Anthoney started to sound out three letter words with more confidence and even his performance itself became steadier. However, with the new member of our group, Kevin, other kinds of difficulties arose, as it was already mentioned in Case study. To revise vocabulary I prepared easier word-searches. They, however, proved to do more harm than good. Firstly, children did not like them. Secondly, they seemed to have great difficulties with finding the words which were written vertically. I therefore used them only sparingly.

From the list of words Anthoney found difficult to read we can assume that he was not still prepared for the longer ones. On the other hand, he started to understand them better when he heard them in the context and he used quite a lot of them himself. However, it did not automatically mean that he understood the words on their own. The important thing was, that all three boys started to use English to communicate with other people and they switched into Czech only when they got very excited about something and wanted to share it with me. They showed the same enthusiasm also when talking to the Irish teachers and mingled Czech and English words together – less and less.

CONCLUSION

In my diploma project, as the title prompts, I deal with teaching vocabulary to young learners of English as a second language who have, to various degree, specific learning problems and/or show some of the ADD or ADHD characteristics. From all the teaching methods that are known to us, we should always follow those that help us best to fulfill our teaching goals. The goals will always vary according to the children's needs. The theoretical part reviews types of syllabuses and teaching methods. It implies in what way the syllabuses help to convey learning vocabulary. It also reviews teaching methods which are related to teaching vocabulary and activities that help vocabulary acquisition to take place. It also clarifies the concept of learning and acquisition of vocabulary and mentions different views of what a word is and some of the factors that influence its learning burden (that is, what makes a word difficult to learn). There is also a chapter devoted to frequency word lists and their practical use. The reason I decided to include it in the theoretical part was that one of the frequency lists played an important role during my teaching practice in Ireland, which is explained in more detail in the practical part of the diploma project. The practical part consists, for the most part, of a case study, content analysis of teaching methods and weekly notes on work progress to reveal the most significant factors which influenced vocabulary learning and acquisition in children of migrant parents. The case study describes the experience of a young boy of Czech origin who attended a support language program in order to be later integrated in the mainstream class in the elementary school in Tralee, Ireland, where my Comenius assistantship took place. By the time I am writing these lines, Anthoney, the subject of the case study, living currently in the UK, can use English (although obviously with certain limitations) and communicate with the English speaking community to meet his needs. Eight month's time was sufficient for enough observation and to use wide range of teaching methods to find correlations between some factors and the subject's results. The analysis of the observation and field notes reflects some of the

major issues which a teacher has to deal with when teaching a child from the different language and socio-cultural background with dyslexia, ADD or behavioural problems which often stem from the learning disorders themselves and from the frustration of being among people one does not fully understand. In spite of all the problems the children encounter, the language support program is worth the effort. It helps them not only with the second language acquisition; the mere contact with people, the culture and customs of the host country play indeed an important role in the children's assimilation into the wider community.

The content analysis of the teaching method showed that it is essential to choose the appropriate tools and means for teaching children with specific needs: from the syllabus to the individual activities. The choice of the syllabus should reflect the primary need and the general teaching goal, which was, in Anthoney's case, to activate reading and writing skills. The activities should then lead to that goal and their choice should reflect not only the subject matter being taught but also the child's mental and physical condition, among other things. As the analysis shows, factors such as learner's health or relation to their classmates can influence the learning abilities considerably.

To sum up, the analyses in the practical part show that a child with different ethnical, cultural and linguistic background and with special needs on top of that can be assimilated in the mainstream class largely but not entirely. From the analysis follows that the root of the boys illiteracy and delayed development of all skills lies in the cultural background of his family. However, the boy's mere exposition to the open, patient and devoted teachers of the host school and its friendly atmosphere give him what he will probably need in his life most: self-confidence, positive attitude to education and ability to build successful relationships within the local community.

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APPENDICES

1. The Irish education system

The Irish education system differs from the Czech one in it's structure, which is as follows:

Primary school – for children as young as 4 years or 5 years to 12 years.

Secondary – for children from 12 years to 17 years.

After the first three years, pupils perform a state exam from approximately 10 subjects (the so called Junior Certificate).

The fourth year is called a *transition year*: Children study a variety of subjects and have the opportunity to do some work experience. This can help them to decide which subjects they might want to study for their leaving certificate.

The fifth and sixth: Children perform a Leaving Certificate. They can gain up to 600 points, counted from their six best subjects. The weaker students perform a simpler variety of the same test, called Leaving Certificate Applied. Students can re-sit this test at any time and repeat as many times as they want if they need better results to be admitted to a college or university (for a fee).

2. Weekly Notes

2.1 Weekly Notes 1

Month: October

Week ending: 3. 10. 2008

Theme: Myself

Pupils: Anthoney, Mirek

Time: Mon - Fri 8: 50 – 9:35

Listening and reading:

Can recognize their names on their copybooks.

Can understand basic questions 'What is your name?' 'How old are you?'

Speaking:

Can answer questions about their name, age, family.

One-word answers.

Writing/Activity:

Can trace their name.

Scrapbook - Family (sister, brother, granny, granddad, daddy, mom, baby, son, daughter). – see App. (2.2).

Dolch list:

Dolch 1. Anthoney makes mistakes in reading *it, I, a, for, of, was, said, she, they.* But he can recognize most of the words. Mirek reads Dolch 1 with great help.

Notes: computer:

starfall.com to reinforce letter sounds

*MES-English.co*m

2.2 Weekly Notes – Scrapbook
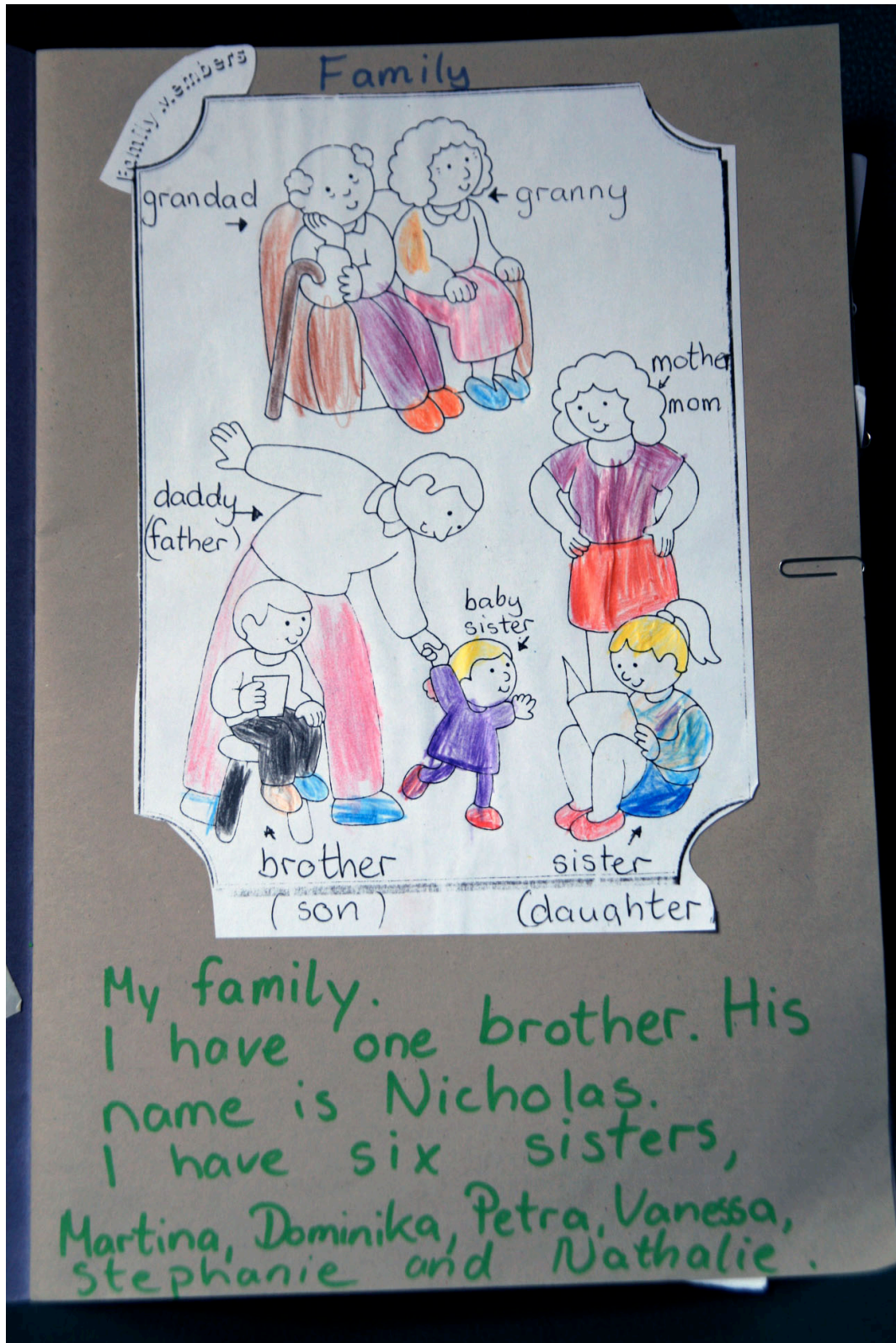
2.3 Weekly Notes 2

Month: October

Week ending: 17. 10. 2008

Theme: Our school

Pupils: Anthoney, Mirek

Time: Mon - Fri 8: 50 – 9:35

Listening and reading:

Can recognize and understand labels around the school & basic school rules.
(blackboard, desk, chair, window, door, toilet, bookshelf)

Speaking:

Can ask permission to use the toilet.

Can use please & thank you.

Writing/Activity:

Can copy key words from the board related to the topic.

Scrapbook - School (pen, book, pencil case, copy book, clock, crayon, rubbish bin). See App. (2.4).

Dolch list:

Started Dolch list 2. Anthoney needs to improve *it, of, was, said, she, they.*

Mirek reads Dolch 1 with great help.

Notes: need to revise Myself.

2.4 Weekly Notes – Scrapbook
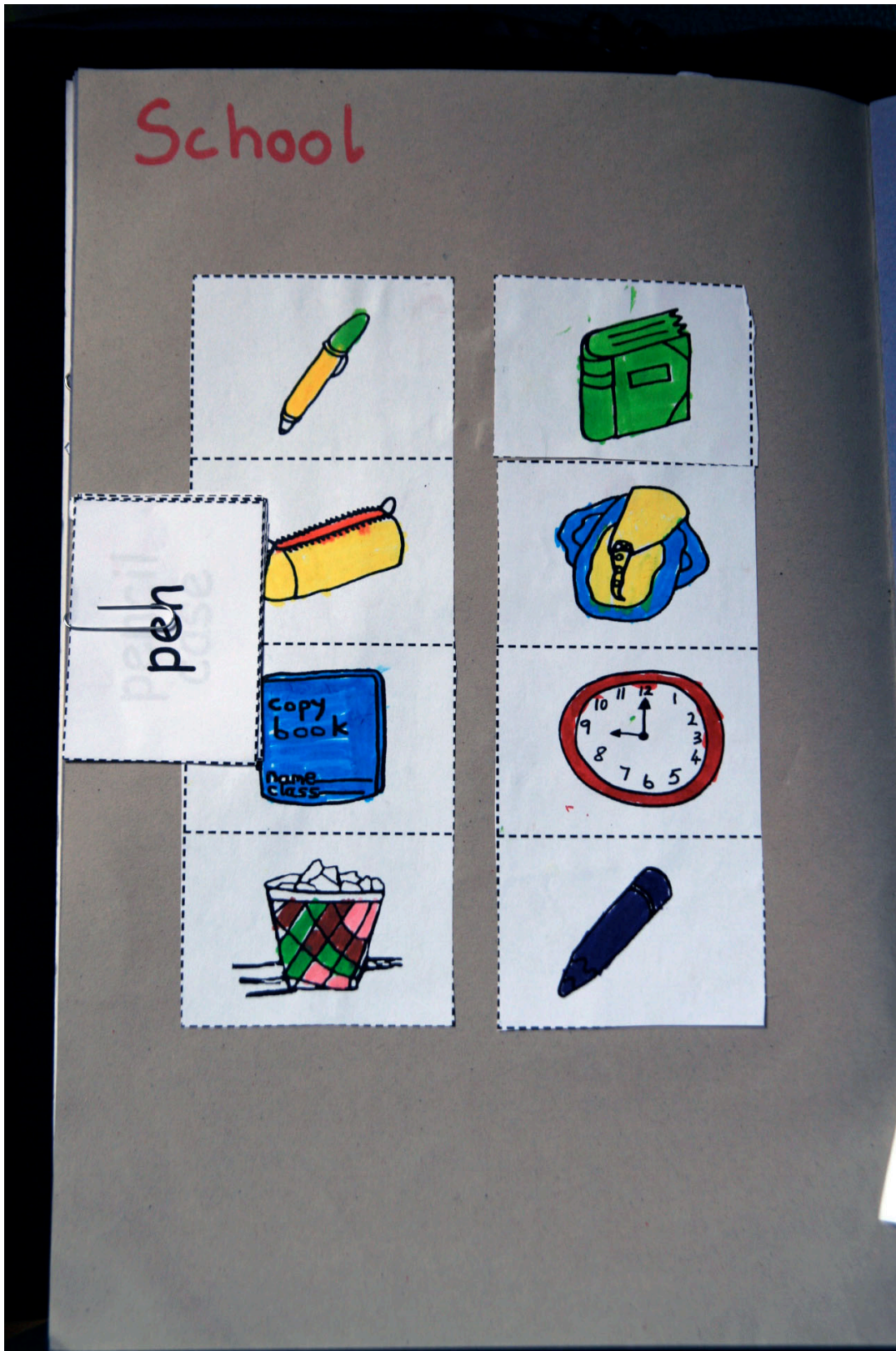
2.5 Weekly Notes 3

Month: November
Week ending: 21. 11. 2008
Theme: What do you like? Food
Pupils: Anthoney, Mirek
Time: Mon - Fri 8: 50 – 9:35

Listening and reading:

PM reader: *In the trolley*

Can say which letter 'apple' starts with

Can name most of the fruit

Revised School and Personal information (Myself).

Speaking:

Can say what they like or don't like. – See App. (2.6).

Can say what they have for breakfast.

Writing/Activity:

Letters: *S, A, I, T, P, N*

Scrap book – see App. (2.7)

Circle the word you hear.

Dolch list:

Dolch list 3, 4 Anthoney – needs more practice on *do, could, one, this, would, them, were*. Mirek – Dolch 1, 2. Very unsteady.

Notes: need more practice on 'I had ... for breakfast.'

2.7 Weekly Notes – Scrapbook
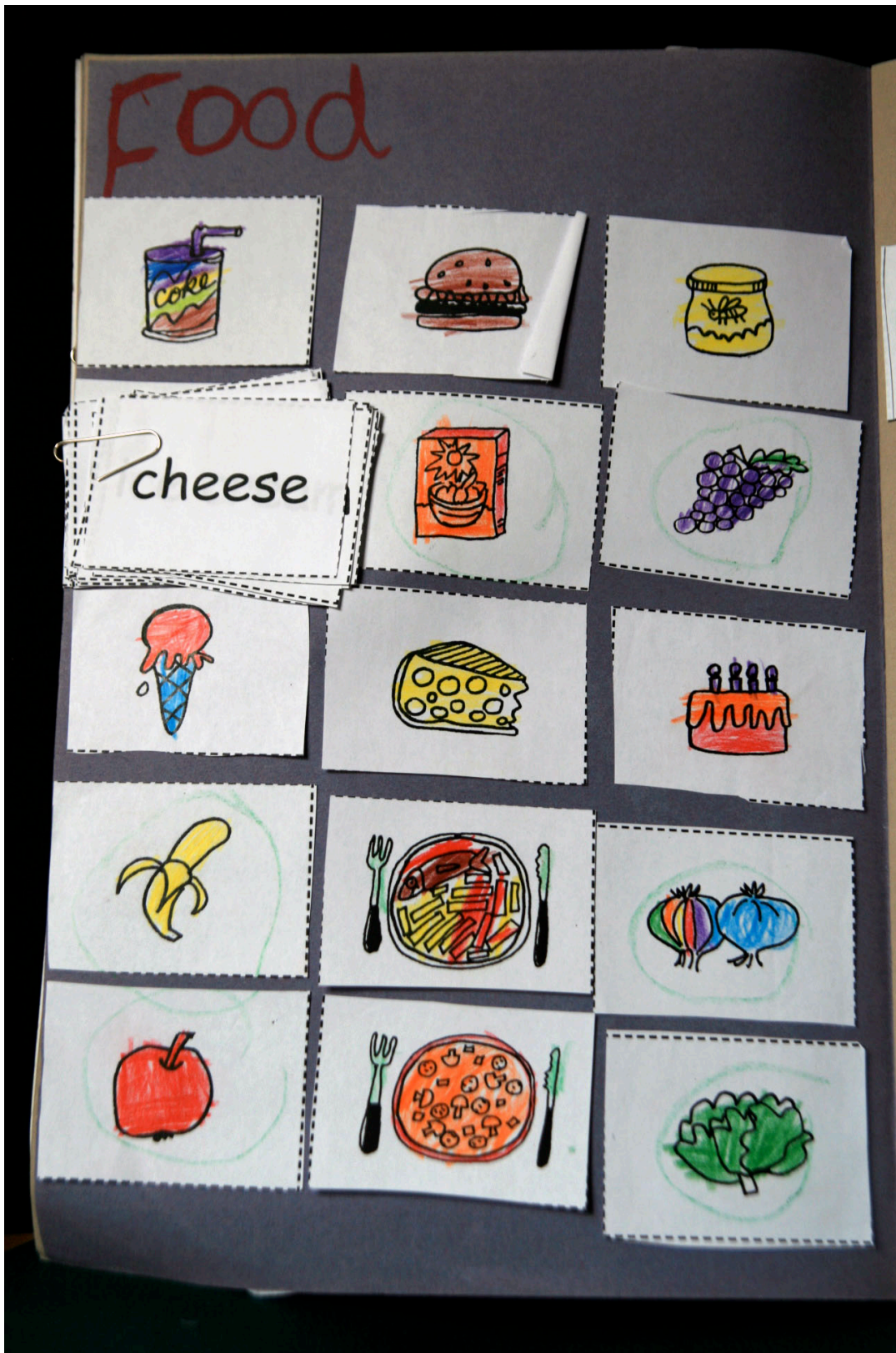
2.8 Weekly Notes 4

Month: November

Week ending: 28. 11. 2008

Theme: What is good for you? School rules

Pupils: Anthoney, Mirek

Time: Mon - Fri 8: 50 – 9:35

Listening and reading:

PM1: *I'm in the...*

Revised food vocabulary e.g. 'What is your favourite meal?' – see App. (2.9).

Speaking:

Can say what they like or don't like, what is good for them.

Can say what the school rules are.

Writing/Activity:

Letters: *C, K, E, H, R, M, D*

Dolch list:

Revised 1 – 4, Anthoney reads most of the words, understands very little of them.

As if on a swing. Sometimes outstanding, sometimes poor.
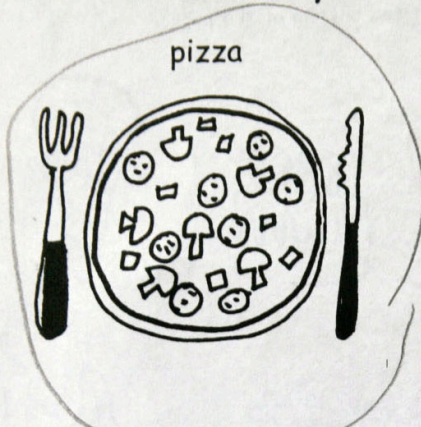
Notes:

Missing a lot this week, managed only introduction to the letters, not fixed. Food –
know most of given fruit, vegetables and other food.
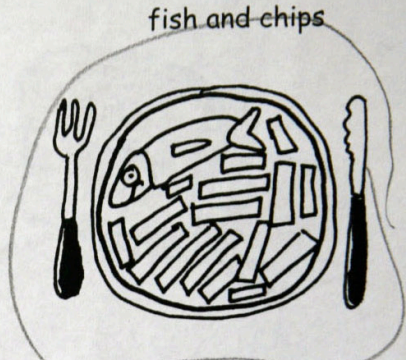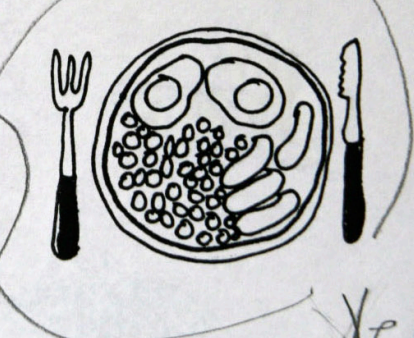
What is your favourite meal?
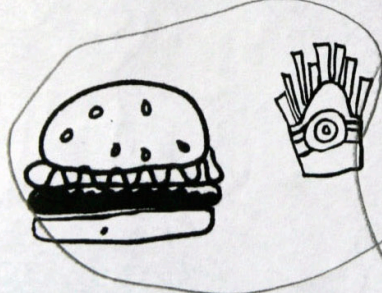
pizza

fish and chips

burger and chips

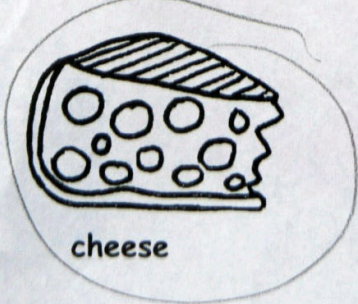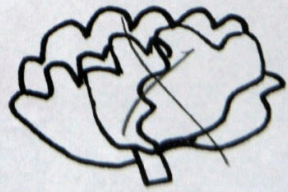sausage, egg and beans

Are these foods good for you?

yes

cheese

lettuce

23

2.10 Weekly Notes 5

Month: January   Week ending: 16. 1. 2009
Theme: People who help us   Pupils: Anthoney, Mirek

        Listening and reading:

Understand questions about weather, days of the week and jobs (People who help us) and recognize basic Jobs when being described.

Mirek reads with great help.

Anthoney sometimes reads what he thinks it might be instead of trying to sound out the syllables. He also gets lost if he breaks the eye contact with the line.

        Speaking:

Can describe the weather.

Can name the days of the week but cannot distinguish school days and weekends.

Can count from 1 – 100 (11 – 100 with help).

Can answer questions about people's jobs.

        Writing/Activity:

Numbers (Mirek with help, sometimes mirrored; Anthoney, OK).

Starfall.com – first letters of words – Anthoney very good! – See App. (2.11).

Can copy words about jobs.

Can circle words they hear (with help).

        Dolch list:

        Dolch list 5, 6 Anthoney – needs more practice on longer words. Tends to read only the first syllable. Mirek – very little improvement in reading, gets tired very soon, little concentration, often ill.

2.11 Weekly Notes – interactive exercise
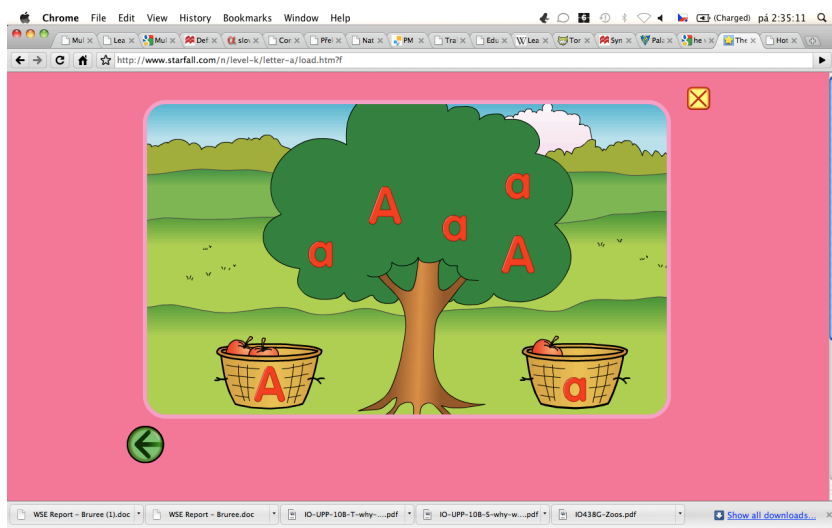
2.12 Weekly Notes 6

Month: January   Week ending: 23. 1. 2009
Theme: Jobs, Weather & Days   Pupils: Anthoney, Mirek, Kevin

Listening and reading:

Can recognize basic jobs, most of the given 3-letter rhyming words. Anthoney can read 3-letter words with a/e/i/o/u in the middle (-en -it -at -ot -un) – see App. (2.13). Mirek can recognize only some of these words and can read them with help. Kevin can recognize A, S, (T), I, N (but not always), understands simple instructions ('Open/close the book,' 'Show me')

PM readers: Mirek can read PM2 (with help), Anthoney PM3 (very good), Kevin PM1 (with a lot of help).

Speaking:

can talk about Jobs when asked for specific information: 'What does a _ do?' 'Where does a _ work? Need prompts.

Writing/Activity:

Can copy the rhyming words, write most of the alphabet. Kevin - S, A, I + Alphabet book. Word-search for vocabulary revision

Dolch list:

Dolch 7 – Difficult: again, before, been, never, today, myself, round

Notes:

Kevin - Numbers - good at 1-9.

2.13 Weekly Notes – exercise

			Anthoney
hen	ten	pen	men
mat	hat	cot	bat
sit	fit	hit	bit
run	bun	fun	sun
hot	pot	dot	got

hen	ten	pea	men
mat	hat	cot	bat
sit	fit	hit	bit
run	bun	fun	sun
hot	pat	dot	got

hen	ten	pen	men
mat	hat	cat	bat
sit	fit	hit	bit
run	bun	fun	fun
hot	pot	dot	got

b   c   d   f   g   h   m   p   r   s   t

3. An example of a PM reader

Look at me

I am _____

Activity **6**

I am painting.

Look at me.

I am counting.

Look at me.

I am singing.

_____ ____ ____.

I am resting.

_____ ____ ____.

PM Starters

4. The Dolch list of 220 high frequent words

List 1	List 2	List 3	List 4
the	at	do	big
to	him	can	went
and	with	could	are
he	up	when	come
a	all	did	if
i	look	what	now
you	is	so	long
it	her	see	no
of	there	not	came
in	some	were	ask
was	out	get	very
said	as	them	an
his	be	like	over
that	have	one	your
she	go	this	its
for	we	my	ride
on	am	would	into
they	then	me	just
but	little	will	blue
had	down	yes	red

List 5	List 6	List 7	List 8
from	away	walk	tell
good	old	two	much
any	by	or	keep
about	their	before	give
around	here	eat	work
want	saw	again	first
don't	call	play	try
how	after	who	new
know	well	been	must
right	think	may	start
put	ran	stop	black
too	let	off	white
got	help	never	ten
take	make	seven	does
where	going	eight	bring
every	sleep	cold	goes
pretty	brown	today	write
jump	yellow	fly	always
green	five	myself	drink
four	six	round	once

List 9	List 10	List 11
soon	use	wash
made	fast	show
run	say	hot
gave	light	because
open	pick	far
has	hurt	live
find	pull	draw
only	cut	clean
us	kind	grow
three	both	best
our	sit	upon
better	which	these
hold	fall	sing
buy	carry	together
funny	small	please
warm	under	thank
ate	read	wish
full	why	many
those	own	shall
done	found	laugh

5. Tracing dotted words and matching them with pictures

6. Notions

Practice

Write the names of the days of the week in the correct order.
Remember to begin each day with a capital letter.

Anthony 20/3/19

3 wednesday	1 Monday
5 friday	2 tuesday
7 sunday	3 wednesday
2 tuesday	4 thursday
1 monday	5 friday
6 saturday	6 Saturday
4 thursday	7 Sunday

64

Cop
Put

84

7. Examples of Anthoney's handwriting
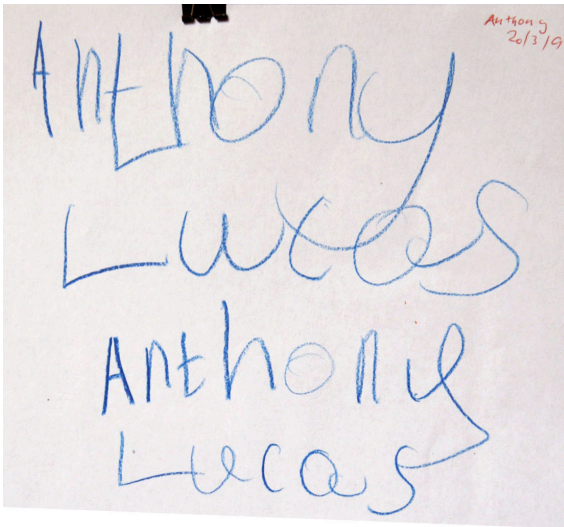
The following pictures illustrate how Anthoney progressed with his handwriting during the eight months of my assistantship:
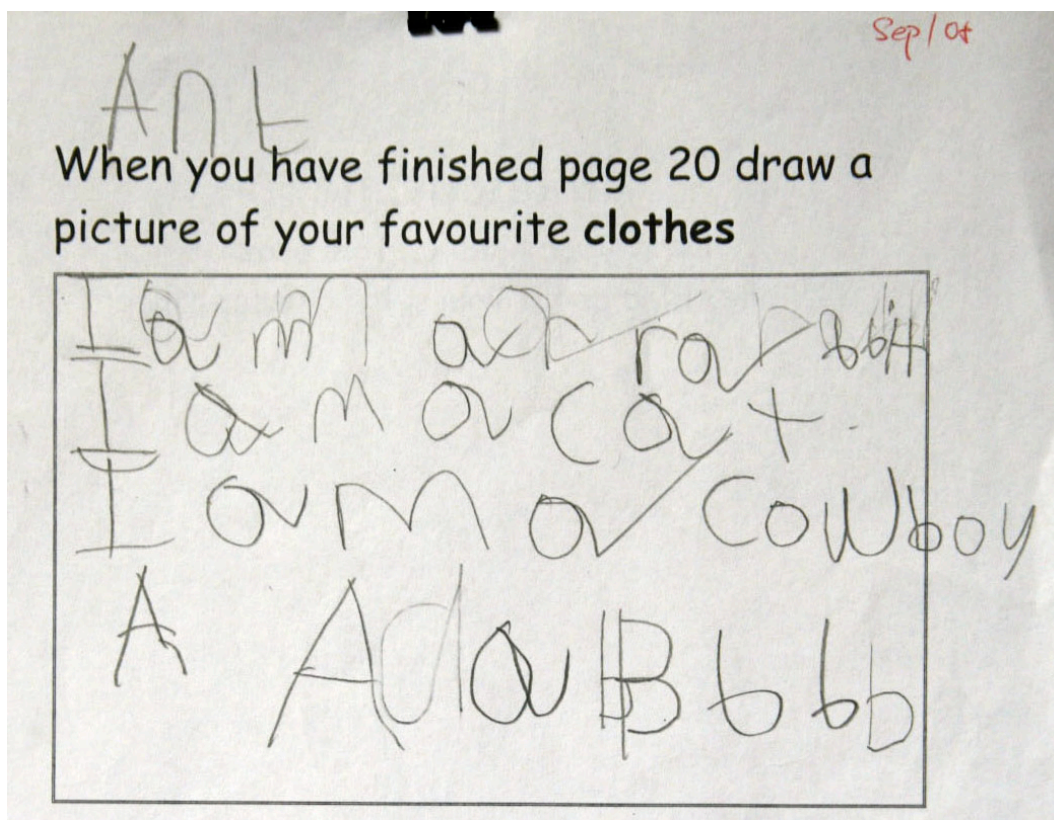
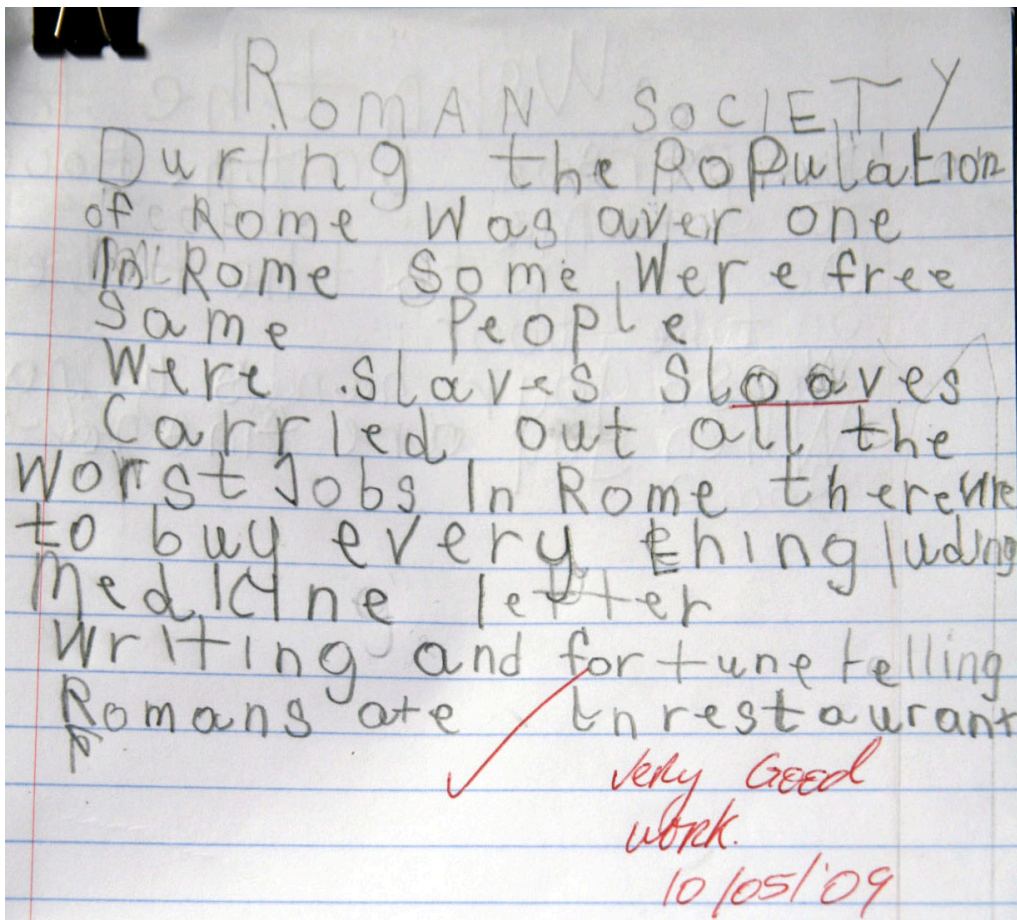Anthoney's handwriting at the end of September 2008

8. Examples of Anthoney's hadnwriting

Anthoney's handwriting in March and May 2009.

ANOTACE

Jméno a příjmení:	Pavla Břeňová
Katedra:	AJ
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Jaroslava Ivanová, M. A.
Rok obhajoby:	2010

Název práce:	Teaching Vocabulary to Young Learners of English as a Second Language with Regard to Dyslexia and ADD Characteristics
Název v angličtině:	Teaching Vocabulary to Young Learners of English as a Second Language with Regard to Dyslexia and ADD Characteristics
Anotace práce:	Diplomová práce pojednává o způsobech výuky anglické slovní zásoby u mladších žáků s přihlédnutím ke specifikům výuky u dětí, jež vykazují znaky charakteristické pro dyslexii nebo hyperaktivitu s poruchou pozornosti. Byla vyhotovena případové studie žáka českého původu, integrovaného do irské základní školy. Výsledkem analýzy studie, použitých vyučovacích metod a rozboru hodin je ověření úspěšnosti integračního programu a vyvození doporučených postupů pro práci s dětmi z jiného jazykového a socio-kulturního prostředí.
Klíčová slova:	Výuka slovní zásoby Osvojení slovní zásoby Integrace dětí přistěhovalých rodičů Dyslexie Hyperaktivita
Anotace v angličtině:	The diploma project deals with teaching English vocabulary to young learners with regard to the specifics of teaching children with dyslexia or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder characteristics. The case study of a Czech boy integrated in the Irish elementary school was carried out. The findings of the content analysis of the case study, applied teaching methods and lesson plans include verification of the effectiveness of the integration program and recommended methods for dealing with children from a different language and socio-cultural backgrounds.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Teaching vocabulary Vocabulary acquisition Integration of migrant children Dyslexia Hyperactivity

Přílohy vázané v práci:	1. The Irish education system 2. Weekly Notes 3. An example of a PM reader 4. The Dolch list of 220 high frequent words 5. Tracing dotted words and matching them with pictures 6. Notions 7. Examples of Anthoney's handwriting 8. Examples of Anthoney's hadnwriting
Rozsah práce:	64 s., 22 s. příloh
Jazyk práce:	Anglický