

Univerzita Karlova v Praze

Pedagogická fakulta

Teaching English to Pupils with Dysorthography

Výuka angličtiny u žáka s dysortografií

Monika Reslerová

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

Vedoucí diplomové práce: Mgr. Klára Uličná, Ph.D.

Studijní program: Učitelství pro střední školy AJ-FJ

2016

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci na téma *Výuka angličtiny u žáka s dysortografií* vypracovala pod vedením vedoucího diplomové práce samostatně za použití v práci uvedených pramenů a literatury. Dále prohlašuji, že tato práce nebyla využita k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

13. července 2016

.....

podpis

Ráda bych touto cestou vyjádřila poděkování Mgr. Kláře Uličné, Ph.D. za cenné rady a ochotu při vedení mé diplomové práce. Rovněž bych chtěla poděkovat všem učitelům, žákům a specialistům, kteří se účastnili výzkumu, a umožnili tím vznik praktické části této práce, a také své rodině, která mě všestranně podporovala během celého studia.

NÁZEV:

Výuka angličtiny u žáka s dysortografií

AUTOR:

Bc. Monika Reslerová

KATEDRA:

Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

VEDOUCÍ PRÁCE:

Mgr. Klára Uličná, Ph.D.

ABSTRAKT

Práce přibližuje téma dysortografie ve výuce angličtiny se zvláštním zřetelem k druhému stupni základních škol. Teoretická část práce obsahuje přehled základních informací o specifických vzdělávacích potřebách, dále o specifických poruchách učení, jejich příčinách a projevech. Následuje popis dysortografie a jejích možných dopadů na osvojování anglického hláskování a gramatiky, společně se seznamem doporučených přístupů, metod, technik a pomůcek, které mohou být užitečné při výuce angličtiny u žáků s dysortografií. Praktická část práce představuje vícečetnou případovou studii, která byla provedena mezi zkušenými učiteli angličtiny na školách, které věnují zvláštní pozornost dětem se specifickými vzdělávacími potřebami. Výzkum je zaměřen na zkušenosti a know-how učitelů a porovnává je s doporučeními popsány v teoretické části.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

specifické poruchy učení, dysortografie, výuka anglického jazyka, gramatika, pravopis

TITLE:

Teaching English to Pupils With Dysorthography

AUTHOR:

Bc. Monika Reslerová

DEPARTMENT:

Department of English Language and Literature

SUPERVISOR:

Mgr. Klára Uličná, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT:

The thesis relates the issue of dysorthography in connection to EFL instruction with a special attention paid to lower secondary schools. The theoretical part of the text contains basic information on special educational needs, followed by a chapter on Specific Learning Difficulties, their causes and symptoms. The concept of dysorthography is explained and its possible consequences on acquisition of English spelling and grammar described, followed by a list of recommended approaches, methods, techniques and aids which can be useful for teaching English to dysorthographic pupils. The practical part of the text gives an account of a multiple-case study which was carried out among experienced English teachers at schools that pay special attention to children with SEN. The research is focused on the teachers' experience and know-how and compares the obtained data to the recommendations given in the theoretical part.

KEYWORDS

Specific Learning Difficulties, Dyslexia, Dysorthography, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, grammar, spelling

Contents

Introduction.....	1
1. Theoretical part.....	2
1.1 Terminological issues.....	2
1.2 Special Educational Needs.....	4
1.2.1 Rights of SEN pupils and requirements of the Framework Educational Programme.....	5
1.2.2 Inclusive education.....	7
1.2.3 Differentiation and Individualization.....	9
1.3 Specific Learning Difficulties.....	10
1.3.1 Definition.....	10
1.3.1.1 Characteristics of a good definition.....	11
1.3.1.2 Overview of definitions.....	13
1.3.2 Causes of Specific Learning Difficulties.....	14
1.3.3 Psychological deficits.....	16
1.3.4. Accompanying problems.....	17
1.3.5 SpLDs in the context of foreign language instruction and learning.....	19
1.4 Dysorthography.....	19
1.4.1 Dysorthography and English spelling.....	21
1.4.1.1. Problems and errors.....	22
1.4.1.2 Solutions.....	23
1.4.2 Dysorthography and English grammar.....	31
1.4.2.1. Problems and errors.....	32
1.4.2.2 Solutions.....	33
2. Research.....	40
2.1 Research goals.....	40
2.2 Methodology.....	41

2.3 Research sample.....	43
2.4 Case 1.....	44
2.4.1 School 1.....	44
2.4.2 School psychologist.....	45
2.4.3 Observations.....	47
2.4.4 Interview with Petr.....	50
2.4.5 Interview with Teacher X.....	51
2.4.6 Summary and interpretation.....	53
2.5 Cases 2A and 2B.....	55
2.5.1 School 2.....	55
2.5.2 Remedial teacher.....	56
2.5.3 Case 2A.....	59
2.5.3.1 Observations.....	60
2.5.3.2 Interview with Cyril.....	61
2.5.3.3 Interview with teacher Y.....	62
2.5.4 Case 2B.....	65
2.5.4.1 Observations.....	65
2.5.4.2 Interview with Lukáš.....	67
2.5.4.3 Interview with teacher Z.....	68
2.5.5 Summary and interpretation.....	71
2.6 Overall interpretation of the two cases.....	74
Conclusion.....	77
Works cited.....	78
Appendix 1 – grammar mind-map.....	82
Appendix 2 – Word order chart.....	83
Appendix 3 – Interview questions for psychologist/remedial teacher.....	84
Appendix 4 – Interview questions for pupils.....	87

Appendix 5 – Interview questions for teachers.....88

Appendix 6 – Observation sheet.....91

Introduction

In the Czech Republic, the first foreign language taught to most children is English. It is a language that opens the way to an enormous amount of information, to many foreign cultures, to international communication. But what if a child suffers from a learning disorder which complicates acquisition of English to a great extent? Dysorthography, the Specific Learning Difficulty in orthography, can constitute an obstacle to learning English and being successful in English lessons. The wish to map the possibilities of English teachers to help dysorthographic pupils in mastering the language has inspired the author to choose the topic of the thesis. The text is focused on lower-secondary schools, however, most recommendations are applicable to elementary and secondary schools as well.

The theoretical part of the text features an introduction to the issue of special educational needs (SEN), rights of pupils with SEN and current tendencies in education connected to the topic. It is followed by a chapter on specific learning difficulties (SpLDs), their causes and symptoms, which enables the reader to gain an insight into the conditions underlying the difficulties that SpLD pupils may experience in English lessons. The third chapter deals with dysorthography, its influence on learning English as a foreign language (EFL) and possible solutions that English teacher may offer to help dysorthographic pupils.

The practical part is constituted by a research carried out at two lower-secondary schools with a long tradition of special care for SpLD pupils. It relates experience and know-how of three experienced English teachers, who have encountered many dysorthographic pupils during their career. Information about the real situation of dysorthographic pupils and their teachers provided by the research constitutes material for comparison between the recommendations given in professional literature and the everyday reality at schools.

1. Theoretical part

The theoretical background of the text is constituted primarily by the conception of dysorthography and specific learning difficulties as it is understood by Czech experts on the issue (Zelinková, Pokorná, Jucovičová, Žáčková and others). The Czech perspective is compared to and completed by the point of view of British, American and Australian authors, whose texts relate the specific problems connected to the English language, which are not treated in detail by their Czech colleagues.

1.1 Terminological issues

The terminology in the domain of Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) can seem quite confusing. Not only are there terms taking different meanings in different contexts, but there are also discrepancies between the terminology in different languages. In the German context, for example, the expressions *Legasthenie* and *Kalkulasthenie* are used instead of the words with the prefix *dys-* which are employed in English, Czech and other languages. The term *dyslexia* exists in English, as well as in Czech (*dyslexie*), but its interpretations differ. Whereas in English, it usually designates the whole span of learning difficulties connected to language use, such as difficulties in reading, handwriting, grammar or spelling, in Czech there is a separate expression for each area of troubles: *dyslexie* stands for reading difficulties, *dysgrafie* for handwriting problems and *dysortografie* for troubles with orthography. Even in Czech literature, however, the word *dyslexie* is sometimes used to refer to all language-connected specific learning difficulties in general, analogically to the English term. Furthermore, special education experts in English speaking countries know the term *dysgraphia*, although they do not employ it so frequently. But again, the English term has a wider meaning than the Czech one, because it usually describes not only difficulties in handwriting, but also in spelling and expressing ideas in writing.

The question arises, in this text, which terminology should be employed. The theoretical background of the thesis is based primarily on the Czech approach to the SpLDs,

but perspectives of British, American and Australian authors are taken into consideration as well. Although the text is written in English, it deals with the situation of education in the Czech Republic. The Czech terminology has therefore been opted for, despite the fact that some of the terms are not used in English.

The English equivalents of Czech terms are employed, if they exist. Otherwise the Czech terms are translated in English, and the resulting words are then used in the meaning of the original. That is the case of the word *dysorthography* which hardly ever appears in English-written publications, and is only rarely featured in English translations from languages which use this term (Spanish, French, Czech and others).

As for English equivalents of Czech words that have different meaning in each of the languages, they are used in the sense of the Czech terms throughout the thesis, if not stated otherwise. To facilitate the reader's approach of the text, a summary of frequently used terms, their Czech counterparts and English explanations follows:

English term used in the text	Czech equivalent	notes
Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs)	specifické poruchy učení	
Specific Behavioural Difficulties	specifické poruchy chování	A.D.D., A.D.H.D.
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	specifické vzdělávací potřeby	
dysorthography	dysortografie	Specific difficulty in orthography
dyslexia	dyslexie	Specific difficulty in reading
dysgraphia	dysgrafie	Specific difficulty in handwriting
dyscalculia	dyskalkulie	Specific difficulty in arithmetic
dyspraxia	dyspraxie	Specific difficulty in motor skills
dyspinxia	dyspinxie	Specific difficulty in drawing

dysmusia	dysmúzie	Specific difficulty in music
Individual Educational Plan (IEP)	individuální vzdělávací plán	
Framework Educational Programme (FEP)	Rámcový vzdělávací program	
School Educational Programme (SEP)	školní vzdělávací program	
remedial teacher	speciální pedagog	
pedagogical-psychological counselling centre	pedagogicko-psychologická poradna	

1.2 Special Educational Needs

The expression “pupils with special educational needs” covers three groups in the Czech curricular and legal documents. It concerns

disabled pupils (physical disabilities, visual and auditory impairments, mental disabilities, autism, speech defects, multiple disabilities and developmental disorders affecting learning or behaviour), pupils disadvantaged in terms of health condition (physical weakness, long-term illness and mild health disorders leading to learning and behavioural problems) and pupils disadvantaged in terms of social position (family background with low socio-cultural standing, at risk of pathological social phenomena, in court-mandated institutional educational care or in a protective facility, refugees and asylum seekers). (Ministry, *FEP*, see also Education Act¹²)

A fourth group is often mentioned along with these three, which is that of gifted pupils, who need special care as well to fully develop their potential, although it is realised by different measures.

1 The amendment of the Education Act n° 82/2015 about education of pupils with special educational needs is going enter into effect in September 2016. It redefines the term pupil with special educational needs as a pupil who „needs to be provided with supportive measures to be able to fulfil his or her educational potential or to apply and use their rights on a basis equal to the others. Supportive measures mean necessary adjustments in education and school services appropriate to the state of health, cultural environment or other life conditions of the child, pupil or student“ (section 16, subsection 1). This thesis, however, originated was written the second term of the school year 2015/2016, and therefore deals with the legal documents which were in effect by then, if not stated otherwise.

2 All quotations from texts in other languages than English have been translated by the author of the thesis.

1.2.1 Rights of SEN pupils and requirements of the Framework Educational Programme

SEN pupils are a vulnerable group, whose access to education is complicated by various obstacles. It is why their rights need to be specified by the Law and why special attention is paid to them in curricular documents. According to the *Education Act*, SEN pupils are entitled to

an education the content, form and methods of which correspond to their educational needs and possibilities, on the creation of necessary conditions enabling such education and on the advisory assistance of the school and the school advisory facility. When admitting disabled pupils and students, and pupils and students who are disadvantaged in terms of health conditions, and when such pupils and students complete their education, adequate conditions corresponding to their needs shall be specified. When evaluating pupils and students with special educational needs the nature of their disability or disadvantage must be taken into account. (Parliament of the Czech Rep, section 16, subsection 6³)

Furthermore, disabled pupils and those disadvantaged in terms of health are entitled to adapted conditions during admissions and when they complete their education. Disabled pupils are also granted free use of special textbooks, special didactic and compensatory teaching aids, as well as the use of alternative ways of communication, such as braille print or sign language.

An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is designed for SEN or extraordinarily gifted pupils who have been diagnosed as such by a school advisory facility (pedagogical-psychological counselling centre or special education centre). IEPs are based on the school educational programme and respect the pupil's needs and the recommendations of the school advisory facility.

3 The above mentioned amendment states that SEN children, pupils and students „have the right to be provided free supportive measures by the school and the school facility.“ Such measures comprise counselling, adaptation of organization, content, evaluation, forms and methods of education and school services, adaptation of admission and completion conditions, use of compensation aids, special textbooks and communication systems, adaptation of the expected outcomes, individual educational plan, assistant of the teacher, other pedagogical worker or interpreter and architectural and technical adaptations of the school area. (for the complete list, see section 16, subsection 6 of the Education Act Amendment n° 82/2015)

According to the Education Act, headteachers “may establish the post of teacher's assistant for classes or study groups where a child, pupil or student with special educational needs is educated” (Czech Rep., section 16, subsection 9). The regulation n° 73/2005 gives further specification of the role of a teacher's assistant. In case of SEN pupils with disabilities (including pupils with dysorthography), an assistant is supposed to help the pupils to adapt to the environment of the school, to assist them in their preparation for lessons and during the lessons, to communicate with them and to assist the teachers in the educational process. Personal needs and transport of pupils with serious disabilities may also be attended to by the assistant (section 1).

The FEP specifies in more detail what requirements schools need to meet in order to provide SEN pupils with conditions conform to their rights. It states that for successful education of disabled or physically disadvantaged pupils, it is essential for schools to:

- observe health aspects and respect the pupil's individuality and needs;
- enable the use of all supporting measures during the pupil's education;
- apply the principle of the differentiation and individualization of the educational process when organizing activities and determining educational content, forms and methods;
- provide specialists for teaching subjects of special educational care;
- respect the type, degree and level of disability or disadvantage when assessing the outcomes of teaching;
- remove architectural barriers and perform any necessary changes to or adaptations of the school environment;
- work together with the pupil's parents or statutory representatives, school counselling facilities and specialised school counselling staff or with specialists from other areas (in particular when preparing individual education plans);
- work together with other schools which educate pupils with health disabilities or physical disadvantages;
- promote pupils' gifts and talent by providing the appropriate educational offer. (Ministry 1, 122)

In addition, when educating disabled pupils (and pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties make part of this group), schools should:

- provide a higher time allotment for those subjects which require additional time because of the pupils' disabilities;
- enable the application of the maximum weekly time allotment established by the Education Act for each grade level in order to include subjects of special educational care;
- adapt and formulate the expected outcomes for the educational fields in the individual periods in order to make them realistic and attainable for these pupils in light of their abilities, and adjust the selection of subject matter to these outcomes;
- if the pupil's health disability objectively prevents the realization of the educational content of all or part of an educational field contained in the FEP, enable the replacement of all or part of the relevant educational content in the SEP with related or different educational content which is better suited for his or her educational abilities;
- make use of alternative forms of communication
- if needed and in accord with currently binding legal regulations, allow an assistant teacher in the classroom or study group. (Ministry 1; 122)

As it may be deduced from the above-mentioned requirements of the FEP, educating SEN students puts great pressure on headmasters and teachers. There are demands at the material level (e.g. architecture, teaching aids), at the level of personnel (e.g. teacher's assistant, remedial teacher), organization (e.g. including subjects of special care, cooperation with other schools) and methodology or class management (e.g. individualization, differentiation, adapted assessment).

1.2.2 Inclusive education

The topic of special educational needs is closely connected with that of inclusive education. Tannenbergerová defines inclusion as an educational system “which allows all children to attend common elementary and lower-secondary schools, ideally in the locality of their residence” (5). However, the concept of inclusion is not restricted to the organisational or legal act of allowing SEN pupils to be educated alongside their peers. Inclusion concerns attitudes of all the participants of the process of education. It requires an individualised approach to pupils, which is reflected not only in “instruction, but also the organization and philosophy of the school” (Tannenbergerová, 5). There are various arguments for

implementing inclusion. Some of the frequently mentioned are: justice and equality of all citizens, human rights, higher standards of achievement for SEN pupils, development of cooperation and social development of all the pupils.

Inclusive education has been a trend (on the national and international level) since several decades. *The National Programme of Development of Education in the Czech Republic* from 2001 already states that “eliminating segregated education of children with special needs and their integration in mainstream education” is a crucial tendency (Ministry 4; 57). Nevertheless, it is often emphasised that inclusion is rather a process of approaching an ideal than a state of affairs⁴. It is therefore not surprising that a very similar statement appears in the *Strategy of educational policy of the Czech Republic until 2020* although significant changes have already been made in the domain since 2001. “Reducing external differentiation” and “integrating pupils into the mainstream education” is labelled as one of the priorities in the document (Ministry 3; 15).

Nevertheless, inclusive education is still quite a controversial issue for the public and for experts in the Czech Republic. Apart from those who support pro-inclusive measures (individuals, schools, parents' associations, etc.), there are also those who point out a problematic nature of such a tendency. Recently, there has been lively public debate about the amendment of the Education Act n° 82/2015 and cancellation of the attachment to the FEP EE for pupils with mild mental retardation⁵. Opponents of pro-inclusive educational policy often express fear that disabled pupils will not be as content and successful in common schools, as they would in specialized schools. Concern is also expressed that development of intact children were not slowed down by the presence of disabled pupils in the class. In addition, unreadiness of schools and teachers is repeatedly evoked.

Inclusion is often discussed in connection to more severe disabilities (mental retardation, autism, hearing or visual impairment, etc.) rather than SpLDs. But despite the fact that presence of children with SpLD in mainstream schools and classes is very common, the gradual transformation of the school system into an inclusive one does have consequences on

4 See for example Ainscow et al. or Tannenbergerová.

5 For further information, see <http://www.eduin.cz/tag/novela-skolskeho-zakona> and <http://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/zakladni-vzdelavani/pruvodce-upravenym-rvp-zv-od-zari-2016>

their education as well. Pokorná claims that segregating SpLD children in specialised classes “does not correspond to the inclusive perspective” (172). She believes that “it is advantageous for pupils with learning difficulties, if they stay in their original class and are provided with systematic training” (172).

Apart from shifting the opinion on SpLD classes, the promotion of inclusive education influences the position of children with SpLDs in mainstream classes by bringing changes in culture of schools. These changes, which are a prerequisite for successful inclusion, concern values and attitudes, such as acceptance of difference or commitment to offering educational opportunities to all (Ainscow et al., 14).

1.2.3 Differentiation and Individualization

It has already been implied in the preceding chapter that inclusive practice goes hand in hand with individualized approach to pupils. Individualized and differentiated instruction is based on a common-sense assumption that each pupil has different needs and that educational content, forms and methods should be tailored to these needs. Differentiation means adjusting instruction to the needs of different groups of pupils (according to their level, pace, interests, learning style, etc.). Nevertheless, such groups are still heterogeneous to a certain extent, which is why the concept of individualization has been introduced. Individualization is a kind of “total differentiation”, it means adapting instruction to the needs of every individual pupil (Kasíková et al., 153-154). Teachers are not only expected to take into consideration disadvantages of students with SEN, they are supposed to respect each pupil's needs and particularities. In this perspective, each pupil has “special” educational needs because the configuration of internal determinants influencing the educational process (e.g. interests, character traits, capacities, deficits, learning style, sensory preference or environmental factors) is unique in each person.

1.3 Specific Learning Difficulties

In the Czech legal and educational discourse, Learning Difficulties represent a

subcategory of disabilities, therefore pupils with SpLDs qualify for the status of pupils with SEN. If instruction is to be adapted to the needs of these pupils, it is important for teachers to know about characteristics, causes and consequences of SpLDs. There are various approaches to SpLDs among experts and literature on the issue is extensive. The following chapters bring only a simplified overview of contemporary information in the domain, and the reader is invited to consult the bibliography for more detailed sources.

1.3.1 Definition

A universally valid definition of SpLDs has not been formulated yet, and it seems improbable that such a definition should appear in the near future. It is due to several factors: causes of the syndrome have not been satisfactorily explained yet, terminology and approaches differ across countries (see chapter 2.1) and across domains (medicine, psychology, special education, law).

Medical terminology does not use the preposition *dys-* or the term *learning difficulties*. *The International Classification of Diseases* (ICD-10) published by the World Health Organization operates with the term *Specific developmental disorders of scholastic skills*. According to the ICD, these are

disorders in which the normal patterns of skill acquisition are disturbed from the early stages of development. This is not simply a consequence of a lack of opportunity to learn, it is not solely a result of mental retardation, and it is not due to any form of acquired brain trauma or disease. (WHO)

The group is further subdivided into specific reading disorder (F81.0), specific spelling disorder (F81.1), specific disorder of arithmetical skills (F81.2), mixed disorder of scholastic skills (F81.4) and other disorders (F81.8, F81.9).

Psychology, special education and legal documents usually employ the term *Specific Learning Difficulties, Differences or Disabilities*. The scope of disorders classified under the term SpLDs varies greatly among organisations and authorities. In the context of the the U.S. IDEA Law⁶, Specific Learning Disabilities include “such conditions as perceptual disabilities,

⁶ Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004

brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia” (U.S., sec. 602, 30). The British Dyslexia Association uses the expression Specific Learning Difficulties as an umbrella term for “dyslexia⁷, dyspraxia (DCD⁸), dyscalculia and A.D.D. / A.D.H.D.” In Czech special education, the concept of Specific Learning Difficulties is usually understood in a more narrow sense, including only dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysorthography, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and occasionally dyspinxia and dysmusia (see Zelinková, Jucovičová, Michalová). Although A.D.D. and A.D.H.D.⁹ are often treated together with SpLDs, there is the special term *Specific Behavioural Difficulties* referring to them.

Even the term dyslexia is sometimes used to designate SpLDs in general. As Selikowitz writes, “the word [dyslexia] has been used very inconsistently. Some still use it separately for reading disorders, others for a combination reading and writing problems, whereas others use it for all the types of Specific Learning Difficulties” (17). It is for this reason that selected English definitions of dyslexia will be quoted in the rest of this chapter alongside those of SpLDs, because the concept of dyslexia in its widest meaning is actually quite close to the Czech view of SpLDs.

1.3.1.1 Characteristics of a good definition

In her article *Paradoxes in the Definition of Dyslexia* (applicable on definition of SpLDs as well), Uta Frith argues that it is necessary for a good definition to include four layers of causes, symptoms and influences. The layers include a biological, a cognitive, a behavioural and an environmental one (see picture 1). The biological level comprises brain and neurological functioning, the cognitive one covers mental processes and learning mechanisms, the behavioural one includes reading and spelling problems in case of dyslexia and other problems (counting, handwriting etc.) when other SpLDs are concerned. The environmental aspects comprehend socio-economic and instructional factors (DysTEFL, 13).

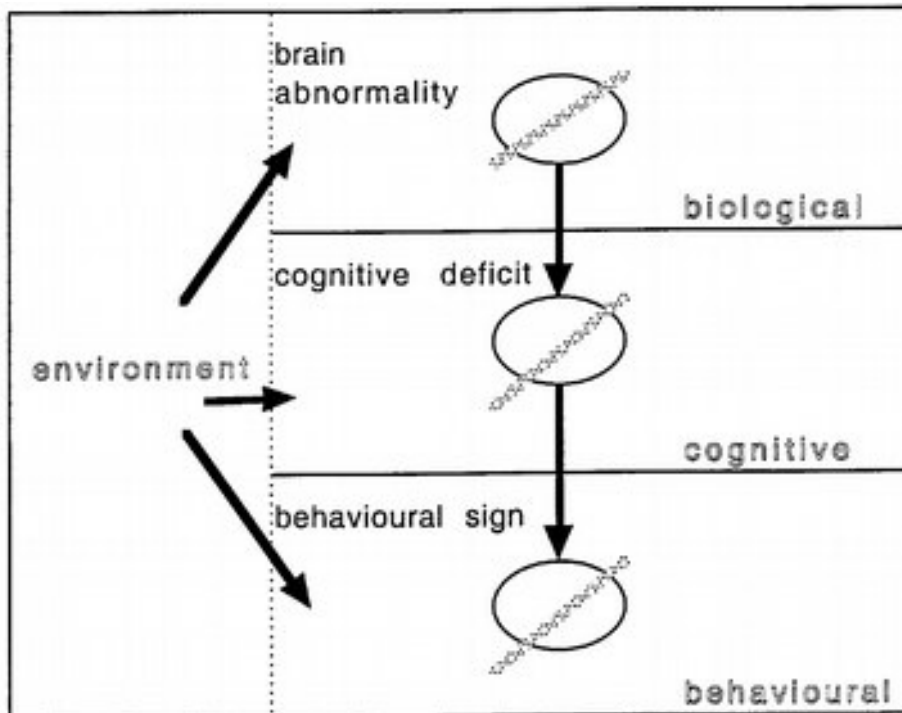
This means that Specific Learning Difficulties are defined by the means of description

7 In the broader meaning

8 Developmental Coordination Disorder

9 Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

of their biological causes (and symptoms), the differences of cognitive processes between individuals SpLD and the intact population, the manifestation of these differences in the performance of people with SpLD and the influence of environment, especially family background and teaching methods, on these three levels. Some definitions also mention conditions contraindicating the diagnosis of SpLD in a person suffering from similar symptoms and the life-long character of the syndrome.



Picture 1 – General causal model of a developmental disorder of neuro-cognitive origin

(Frith 196)

As Frith emphasises, a definition that only reflects one of the levels is incomplete and can lead to wrong conclusions. According to a definition based solely on the behavioural signs (e.g. reading problems) and disregarding neurological and cognitive factors would, any individual with such symptoms should be diagnosed as dyslexic. But there are other factors that can cause bad reading performance than SpLDs, such as emotional disturbance, inadequate instruction or unstimulating family environment. On the other hand, there might be a person showing neurological and cognitive signs of dyslexia and performing well in reading. In such a case, we may be dealing with a person of high general ability whose other talents compensate for the dyslexia-based cognitive deficits. It is clear that such a person

should be diagnosed as dyslexic, even though their reading problems have not manifested themselves (yet). With appropriate remedial teaching, such person would possibly be able to fully develop their potential without wasting their intellectual resources on compensating the deficits. The biological and cognitive levels of definition are not sufficient in themselves either. Although it is quite probable that a neurological defect will manifest itself in a cognitive dysfunction, it is not unavoidable, due to brain plasticity. As for cognitive deficits, they may be caused, just as behavioural symptoms, by various phenomena and not just neurological factors.

1.3.1.2 Overview of definitions

In the Czech context, the development of the conception of SpLDs has been greatly influenced by Zdeněk Matějček, who defined SpLDs as “inability or limited ability to learn to read, write and count by the means of common methods of instruction in the case of adequate intelligence and sociocultural opportunity” (Matějček qtd. in Jucovičová, 7).

A more recent point of view is represented for example by Zelinková, who adopts the definition from International Perspectives on Dyslexia:

[Specific] learning difficulties is a term referring to a heterogeneous group of difficulties which manifest themselves in acquisition and use of language, reading, writing, listening and mathematics. These difficulties have individual character and arise from dysfunctions of the central nervous system. Although SpLDs can co-occur with other handicapping conditions (e.g. sensory impairment, mental retardation, behavioural disorders) or environmental factors (e.g. cultural differences, insufficient or inadequate guidance), they are not a direct consequence of these conditions or influences. (qtd. in Zelinková, Poruchy 10)

On the international scene, a definition formulated by a group of experts and used by the International Dyslexia Association and others is frequently quoted. It states that

dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. (Definition Consensus Project)

Although the IDA definition only treats reading and writing problems, it manifests all the four levels of description and could be extended to an SpLD definition, if the description of cognitive deficits and behavioural signs of the disorders were expanded.

The already mentioned IDEA Law defines Specific Learning Disabilities as disorders in 1 or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. [...] Such term does not include a learning problem that is primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. (U.S. Cong., sec. 602, 30)

The definition featured in the IDEA Law has been increasingly criticised for not being based on psychological, educational or medical research (Pokorná 18).

The following definition by the British Dyslexia Association is more precise in pointing out the neurological origin of SpLDs, but it stays quite vague in the description of the behavioural signs. According to BDA, SpLDs are conditions which

affect the way information is learned and processed. They are neurological (rather than psychological), usually run in families and occur independently of intelligence. They can have significant impact on education and learning and on the acquisition of literacy skills. (What are SpLDs)

1.3.2 Causes of Specific Learning Difficulties

In spite of the causes having been partially treated in the chapter on definitions, it will be beneficial to give a more detailed account of the issue because the treatment of SpLDs is closely connected with their causes.

The answer to the question of the causes of the SpLDs is not unanimous among the experts. However, there is a general consensus, as we have seen in the quoted definitions, on the neurological basis of the disorders. The origin of such neurological impairment is subject to ongoing research, which has up to now resulted in several hypotheses which are not necessarily in contradiction.

Heredity is one of the options often mentioned by scientists. A child born in a family with history of SpLDs is more likely to suffer from such a disorder than children with intact parents and relatives. Although there may be environmental factors in the family that would contribute to recurrence of the disorder among the family members, evidence for a hereditary transmission is quite strong (Siegel).

It is not known which gene or genes are responsible for SpLDs, but differences especially on chromosomes number 6 and 15 have been observed in individuals with SpLDs (Siegel). A high testosterone level in early stages of life is also supposed to have negative influence on neurological development leading to SpLDs (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 24).

Whatever the underlying causes of SpLDs may be, they manifest themselves on the neurological level. The individuals with SpLDs have been proved to have different form, structure and functioning of the brain. As far as the form is concerned, a majority of adults who are good readers have an asymmetrical brain, the left hemisphere being bigger than the right one. It has been observed, however, that brains of most dyslexic people have either equal-sized hemispheres or bigger right hemisphere (Pokorná 71). Abnormalities were also found in the brain stem, a part of the brain responsible for communication between the hemispheres, which is smaller and shorter in a dyslexic brain. This causes complications in the interaction and impulse transfer between the hemispheres (Siegel). Further differences were observed in the density of the neural network in some parts of the brain, and thanks to imaging techniques, it has been confirmed that different places of the brain are activated when a dyslexic person performs specific tasks. Yet another brain abnormality is pointed at by Nicolson and Fawcett, authors of the Cerebellar theory, who claim that the main cause of dyslexia lies in abnormalities of the cerebellum (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 24).

1.3.3 Psychological deficits

Neurological abnormalities of individuals with SpLDs are connected with deficits in mental processes. The main mental dysfunctions of people with SpLDs include perceptive deficits (visual, phonological), cognitive deficits (e.g. attention, memory, language,

mathematical reasoning), and motor and sensomotor deficits (fine and gross motor skills, eye movement, articulation) (Jucovičová and Žáčková 5). These can be accompanied by a deficit in automatization processes, insufficient integration of cognitive operations or time organization deficit (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 28).

Phonological deficit is an important factor which plays a significant role in poor linguistic performance of people with SpLDs (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 129). It manifests in problems with analysing individual sounds in a word and identifying rhymes, there can be insufficient phonological memory or low phonological speed name, i.e. difficulty in recalling words (Pokorná 79-80).

Visual deficits complicate especially reading, but they have a negative influence on the acquisition of other scholastic skills as well. SpLD learners may have the impression of letters and numbers “moving” on the page, word boundaries or lines may seem blurred. In some cases, learners have long iconic persistence which means that the visual image of a letter stays in the mind so long that it conceals the following letter(s). SpLDs are sometimes connected to poor right-left orientation, or even general spatial orientation and low ability to perceive visual details. These defects may result in confusion of letters, numbers and signs similar in shape (b-d, w-m, 6-9, 3-8, 1-7, etc.) in reading, as well as in writing (Jucovičová 13).

Deficits in language and speech concern the already mentioned fast recall of words and rhyming ability. Furthermore, SpLDs can affect sense of language, there can be limited mental lexicon, expressive problems and difficulties in articulation (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 28). These difficulties are most acutely felt in native and foreign language instruction, but they have a negative influence on the pupil's performance across the subjects. In addition, limited mental lexicon diminishes the capacity of the memory. It is also important how wide the range of meanings that a person is capable to assign to a word is. Richness of meanings connected to individual words facilitates comprehension and helps memorization because a dense network of meaning relationships can be created between the stored facts and words (Pokorná 15). Unfortunately, problems in reading comprehension often lead to discouragement and aversion to reading. At the same time, limited reading means a handicap in enriching one's mental lexicon (Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom* 5). People with SpLDs may

therefore find themselves trapped in a vicious circle.

Automatization is an extremely important process at school, as well as in everyday life. Automatization of cognitive skills saves mental capacity for other operations. When writing for example an essay, pupils who have not automatized spelling will spend a great amount of their energy on recalling the correct letters to form words and will probably pay little attention to other grammatical issues and the content of their writing. For SpLD learners, automatizing knowledge and skills may take a long time, and even when automatization seems to have been successful, the acquired piece of knowledge or skill may be lost after a longer period of not being used (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 29).

1.3.4. Accompanying problems

Apart from the direct consequences of the above-mentioned deficits on acquisition of scholastic skills, secondary problems are often brought to the lives of people with SpLDs. They may experience struggles with self-organisation (Pollock 154), time-management or spatial orientation, they may feel overloaded with information and unable to concentrate (Pokorná 186). It is not uncommon that SpLD pupils lose their personal belongings, cannot say what day of week it is or forget instructions (Zelinková and Čadík 39). They may seem slow, clumsy or careless, and it is extremely important for teachers to know that such troubles are related to the diagnosis.

It is also essential for the teachers to be aware of the increased amount of intellectual effort that pupils with SpLDs must make when doing a task that may seem simple to the others (Pollock 173). If this is not taken into consideration, and instead of letting such a pupil have a rest, the teacher makes him or her work during the break to catch up with the rest of the class, exhaustion increases and the pupil's attention and pace in the following lessons will probably be even lower. To prevent such situations, teachers should assign such tasks to SpLD pupils that they are capable of completing in the time given, which leads us back to the necessity of differentiated instruction.

Pupils with poor spatial and temporal organization and deficient sequencing ability

will benefit from getting clear instructions (complicated instructions preferably divided into individual steps), being helped to organize their work and effectively use the time given for a task or a set of tasks (Pollock 21; Michalová 50).

Furthermore, individuals with SpLDs often have poor self-confidence and quickly succumb to stress (Moody qtd. in Michalová 60). School results and self-confidence are in a two-way relationship: bad results trigger poor self-confidence and poor self-confidence prevents pupils from achieving results adequate to their capacity. Problems that SpLD students have with self-esteem are caused not only by their weak performance at school and unpleasant comparison to their peers. They mirror the attitude that the family, teachers and peers take to the child (Michalová 60). Weak self-confidence and the sense of failure can “result in negative attitude to school and education, and lead to school phobias, truancy and psychosomatic problems” (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 46). Pupils who feel ashamed of their bad results sometimes try to hide their problems by disturbing or clowning during lessons.

It is therefore desirable to support SpLD pupils' self-confidence and teach them to appreciate their own qualities and abilities. The teachers should not wait for a significant improvement to be made, but try to appreciate partial success as well, in order to keep the SpLD pupils motivated by showing them that they are making progress and that their effort pays off (Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 123).

1.3.5 SpLDs in the context of foreign language instruction and learning

Learning a foreign language is an intellectually demanding task, and in may become a nightmare for SpLD pupils, if their special needs are not taken in consideration. The language-related SpLDs (dyslexia, dysgraphia and dysorthography) can be especially hard to deal with in foreign language classroom.

On the other hand, the presumption that every child with a SpLD diagnosis, who has struggled in native language lessons, will encounter even greater troubles in foreign language learning does not, fortunately, always prove true. If the difficulty was caused primarily by immaturity of perceptive functions and if these have been developed thanks to remedial

teaching, foreign language learning can take place without serious problems (Zelinková *Poruchy* 161). Unfortunately, things do not progress in this way for all SpLD pupils, and for many of them, appearance of foreign language lessons on their timetables means additional difficulties to deal with.

It is not surprising that reading and spelling in a foreign language constitute a major problem for SpLD learners (Kormos and Smith 67). The grapheme-phoneme correspondence varies across languages, and in foreign language lessons, pupils are expected to learn to match sounds to combinations of letters different from those that they know from their native language. This makes reading and writing even more difficult to master (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 173). Especially languages with deep (or non-transparent) orthographies (i.e. with irregular grapheme-phoneme correspondences) are likely to cause troubles to SpLD learners (Kormos and Smith 67).

Nevertheless, the difficulties are not limited to reading and spelling. As Kormos and Smith mention, SpLD learners, particularly those with severe difficulties, may “fall behind in almost every component of language proficiency.” Problems may concern reading, listening, or writing, acquisition of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Kormos and Smith 67).

1.4 Dysorthography

Dysorthography is one of the language-bound SpLDs, and has a significant impact of foreign language learning. It often, though not necessarily, co-occurs with dyslexia (Michalová 29; Selikowitz 66) or dysgraphia (Smečková 93), which may cause additional problems in the learning process.

The concept of dysorthography is not featured in English-written works, and Czech authors do not pay special attention to the relationship between dysorthography and learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Therefore, information about dysorthography in the context of the Czech language is given in the following paragraphs, preceding its application on English, and EFL in particular.

Dysorthography is a specific learning difficulty in orthography, which manifests itself

in spelling problems and complications in grammar acquisition (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 43). It is based on dysfunctions of auditory perception, such as auditory discrimination (discrimination of length, pitch or timbre of sounds), auditory analysis and synthesis, auditory orientation and auditory memory (Jucovičová and Žáčková 6). The most prominent characteristic of dysorthographic writing are so-called specific dysorthographic errors. A list of such errors in the Czech language comprises:

- vowel quantity discrimination (a-á, e-é, etc.)
- discrimination of syllables dy-di, ty-ti, ny-ni
- discrimination of sibilants (s, š, c, č, z, ž)
- omission, insertion or transposition of letters or syllables
- observance of word boundaries
- confusion letters similar in shape and/or sound (b-d, u-n, m-n)

(Zelinková, *Poruchy* 43; Jucovičová and Žáčková 63)

A significant number of such errors occurs especially during the first years of school attendance, and it tends to diminish as the child gets older. However, symptoms of dysorthography “are not easy or quick to eliminate or compensate,” and “it happens that even after remedial training some difficulties persist” (Jucovičová and Žáčková 63). He or she may still experience difficulties in language learning and will probably need more time for written tasks than their classmates. If he or she is constantly under pressure, the specific dysorthographic errors may reappear (Michalová 30).

In addition to the specific errors mentioned above, dysorthographic pupils struggle with application of grammar rules. In Czech, they have troubles employing e.g. i-y or s-z correctly, although they know the rules by heart and can apply them orally. In this context, the Czech special education experts often speak of poor sense of language. According to Žlab, sense of language means “the ability of a child to apply, with more or less accuracy, grammar rules without their theoretical acquisition“ (qtd. in Zelinková *Poruchy* 156).

The deficit in the sense of language may also account for difficulties at more complex

levels of written expression. For individuals with dysorthography, it can be hard to structure their thoughts in writing. Sentence structure and word order may be incorrect even in the writer's native language. Words are sometimes used in an inappropriate context, repeated or omitted. There may be digressions from the subject and lack of coherence in longer texts (Zelinková, Čadík 26).

1.4.1 Dysorthography and English spelling

Apart from native language, dysorthography tends to complicate foreign-language learning as well. Because of auditory and phonological deficit, pupils with dysorthography often struggle in foreign languages, “especially in those depending on auditory perception and discrimination, where the written form differs significantly from the spoken one” (Jucovičová and Žáčková 54).

English has a deep orthography (Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom* 8), which means not only that the written and the spoken form are very different, but also that one sound can be spelt in several ways (e.g. *feed, weak, receive, people, brief, feline*), and in return, one letter or combination of letters can be pronounced in various ways (e.g. *brought, cough, trouble, couch*). Although there are general rules that enable us to predict how words could be spelled, they are quite complex and subject to many exceptions. This, of course, is not easy for any learner – native or not, with or without SpLDs – but for learners with dysorthography, who may struggle even with recognising individual sounds of a word, this can prove extremely demanding.

1.4.1.1. Problems and errors

Not all the specific dysorthographic errors recognised in Czech apply to English. Due to a different phonemic inventory of English, its learners are spared the troubles in discriminating between the syllables *dy-di, ty-ti, ny-ni*. None of the consulted books mentions problems in short and long vowel opposition, and it seems not to pose significant problems to English learners either. Reasons for the absence of difficulties in this area would probably

have to be sought in the phonetic and phonological structure of the language.

The most frequently mentioned English spelling troubles identical to the Czech ones are substitutions, omissions, insertions and transpositions of letters and syllables (Selikowitz 69 ; Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 91). Selikowitz mentions five categories of spelling errors in English native learners with specific difficulty in orthography: phonetic, visual, insertion and omission, sequencing, and irrational errors (69). The phonetic type covers spelling which resembles the original word but would be pronounced differently. The examples given by Selikowitz include *lap* instead of *lip*, or *goase* instead of *goose*¹⁰. Errors based on deficits in visual perception result in incorrect spelling, which would be pronounced identically to the original word, such as *lite* for *light*, or *grate* for *great*¹¹. Omission and insertion errors are due to lexical or phonological deficits, and can concern letters or syllables. Thus *before* can be spelt as *beflore* or *bicycle* as *bycle*. Sequencing errors mean transposition of letters in a word, and result in spelling, such as *brigde* instead of *bridge*. Finally, irrational errors include those that cannot be classified in any of the preceding categories, for example *ritt* instead of *right*, or *lift* instead of *laugh*, and are usually connected to more complex language disorders (Selikowitz 70).

Spelling rules of the native language are likely to interfere in acquisition of English spelling by dysorthographic learners (Thompson 10). The word *light* written by a Czech dysorthographic learner may not only be spelt as *lite*, as mentioned above, but also as *lait*, or perhaps even *lajt*. Similarly, the Czech grapheme-phoneme correspondence applied to English words may result in *kud* for *could*, or *lak* for *luck*.

The difficulty in dividing words appears in both languages. Nijakowska gives the following examples: *a nother* for *another*, *firstones* for *first ones*, or *halfanhour* for *half an hour* (*Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 91). To what extent this problem applies to EFL learners, and how it reflects different teaching methods is a question. Native speakers and EFL learners taught via naturalist methods mostly encounter new words orally, as a part of sentences or multi-word expressions, and it is not surprising that dividing sentences into

10 All the examples of misspelt words in this paragraph are taken from Selikowitz, pages 69-70.

11 Discussion whether such mistakes are symptoms of dysorthography, rather than dyslexia, exceeds the extent of the thesis. The reader is encouraged to consult the bibliography for sources of more detailed information.

words can be difficult for them in writing. It would be interesting to examine to what extent these difficulties appear in EFL learners who have are taught new words in isolation with written support, or for whom unknown words encountered in an utterance are demarcated, explained and written down.

1.4.1.2 Solutions

Good remedial teaching, to which every pupil diagnosed with dysorthography has a right, should help him or her eliminate specific errors made on the basis of phonological and visual deficits (sibilants, vowel quantity, dy-di, ty-ti, ny-ni). Thanks to remedial teaching, many dysorthographic children learn to deal with the rest of the specific errors as well. But even with good care of special-education experts, some of the pupils still struggle with spelling when they come at lower secondary school and later on (Jucovičová and Žáčková 63).

What can a foreign language teacher, English teacher in particular, do for such students? Possibilities are limited. It cannot be expected from language teachers that they will do remedial teaching in their lessons. They have neither qualification, nor time to do it. But there are approaches and techniques that can be beneficial to dysorthographic learners of EFL.

The following list of suggestions for teaching spelling to EFL dysorthographic learners is compiled of information from multiple sources (Nijakowska, Zelinková, Jucovičová and Žáčková, Pollock, Kormos and Smith, and others). It includes recommendations from the area of remedial teaching, general classroom instruction, native and foreign language instruction. The list represents a selection of only such recommendations which are applicable to EFL classroom instruction at the lower-secondary level. It is divided into four categories: multisensory approach; phonological and morphological structure; errors, examination and assessment; and accommodation and compensation measures.

Multisensory approach

As Nijakowska claims in *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom*, the fact that

children with dyslexia¹² require a multisensory approach in teaching and learning is nowadays widely known and commonly accepted (124). Zelinková explains why involving multiple sensory channels (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile) in teaching and learning is effective:

The more senses are involved, the more paths bring the piece of information in the brain, the more activated are the relevant brain areas, and the more they influence each other. Thus the chance of remembering the new piece of knowledge. (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 167)

Kormos and Smith add that “the parallel use of several sensory channels [...] aids anchoring information in the memory not only for students with an SpLD but also for learners with no apparent learning difficulties” (127). Furthermore, children with auditory and phonological deficits (including children with dysorthography) experience difficulties in processing spoken information and memorizing (Kormos and Smith 127). Multisensory instruction enables them to perceive information via other sensory paths.

Principles of multisensory teaching constitute the essence of approaches and methods used for teaching spelling to native learners, such as the Orton-Gillingham Approach, Alpha to Omega, The Hickey Multi-sensory Language Course, or the Bangor Dyslexia Teaching System, as well as those used for L2 or foreign language learners, e.g. Multisensory Structured Learning approach, or Multisensory Structured Metacognitive Language instruction (Kormos and Smith 126; Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 124). Application of multisensory principles to teaching and learning English spelling can take a form of the following ideas:

- Tracing words, or typing them on a keyboard

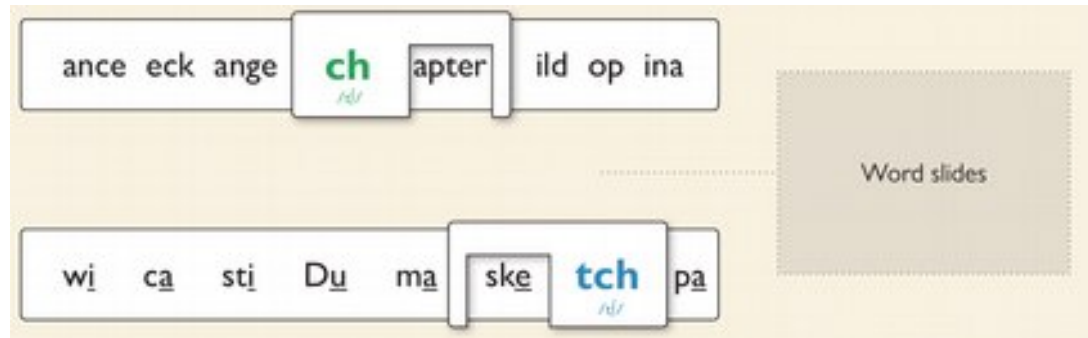
Pupils whose visual and auditory processing is deficient, or whose sensory preference is kinaesthetic can reinforce their mastery of spelling by tracing words on the desk, in the air, or typing or on a keyboard (Kormos and Smith 133; Zelinková, *Poruchy* 103)

- Letter cards and movable teaching aids

12 In the broader sense of the word

Another way of joining movement to the sensory ways that are more favoured in school teaching is to manipulate paper cards with letters to form words. A similar technique using word cards can be employed to practise word boundaries.

Nijakowska suggests various movable teaching aids (e.g. flip cards or word slides) for teaching sound awareness, spelling, and word formation (*Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom 5*).



Picture 2 – word slides
(Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom 5*)

- Highlighting letters

Šigutová suggest highlighting difficult groups of letters, vowels, and the like to facilitate spelling acquisition (Šigutová qtd. in Zelinková, *Poruchy 173*).

- Look-say-cover-write-check

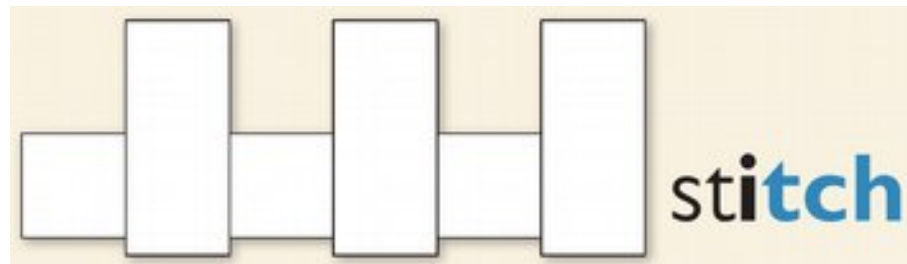
If a pupil fails to understand phonological rules, or if he or she struggles with applying them to a difficult word, this method can help them to learn the spelling of the word globally. At first, the pupil looks at the word (visual perception), reads it out aloud (this step can be accompanied by looking at a picture), says individual letters of the word aloud (auditory and visual), writes the word in the air or on a friend's back with finger (kinaesthetic and tactile), covers the word, and finally writes it down and checks the result against the model. If there is a mistake, the whole process starts again (Zelinková, *Poruchy 173*).

- Memorizing the shape of difficult words

Techniques based on memorizing the shape of words are useful in similar cases to

the previous one. Tracing the shape of a word involves sight and motion and can be accompanied by auditory perception as well.

Learning spelling of a word on the basis of its shape is also the principle of graphic models recommended by Nijakowska (*Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom 4*). The learner is encouraged to notice in what sequence “tall” and “short” letters appear in the word.



Picture 3 – Graphic model of a word
(Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom 4*)

Word structure

Due to their weak sense of language, dysorthographic learners struggle with deducing rules from examples, and they “greatly benefit from explicit explanations on how to pronounce sounds, and on how sounds correspond to letters and spelling rules” (Kormos and Smith 130). It is why many American remedial programmes take “advantage of the sound/symbol relationships inherent in the alphabetic system of writing” (Orton Academy) and rely heavily on teaching phonics (Zelinková, Poruchy 169). The underlying structure of words does not only concern the phonological level, but also their morphological structure. Being aware of word-formation rules helps pupils to observe regularities in spelling (Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom 18*). The following suggestions may be useful for teaching word structure:

- Practising words in groups based on sound/symbol similarities

Words which rhyme and which only in one letter can be practised together:

e.g. *can – tan – man – fan*

(Zelinková, *Poruchy* 173).

It is also possible to focus on one out of several possible graphic representations of a sound and practise words featuring the same spelling of the sound:

e.g. *catch, stretch, kitchen, Dutch*

(Pollock 91-93)

This kind of grouping is not convenient for vocabulary presentation in EFL lessons. New words of a unit or a lesson are usually related by meaning or by the context in which they are presented (article, dialogue, etc.), not by form. Moreover, teaching similar-sounding words in one lesson may result in the pupils' confusing them (Kormos and Smith 133). But classifying known words according to their written form may be a good way of revising vocabulary, which will develop the pupils' phonemic awareness and spelling skills at the same time.

Nijakowska suggests numerous teaching aids convenient for systematic practice of letter-sound correspondences, such as word-slides¹³, dominos or spelling-choice stickers (*Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom* 14-17).

- Identifying the number of syllables in words

Analysis of number of syllables, accompanied by finger tapping or clapping to follow the multisensory principle, is recommended in various sources (e.g. Zelinková, Nijakowská, Pollock). It may be particularly useful for dysorthographic learners who tend to omit syllables in long and complicated words.

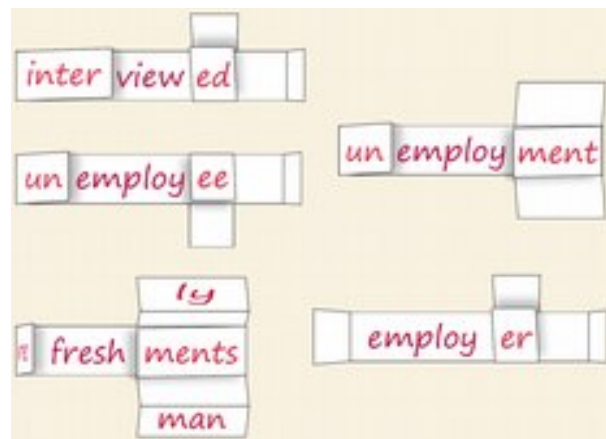
- Teaching morphological structure

Teaching EFL to SpLD learners should have a synthetic/analytic character and be structured (Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 126). These two requirements result, among others, in morphological structure and word-

¹³ See picture 2.

formation rules being taught. Words may be divided into parts (prefixes, suffixes, roots, etc.) and put back together, word-formation processes (composition, derivation, blending, etc.) concerning the words can be analysed.

Teaching aids, for instance word-formation charts or movable aids, are recommended by Nijakowska in *Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom*.



Picture 4 – Word-formation movable teaching aids
(Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom* 19)

Examination, assessment and error correction

Pupils who experience difficulties in EFL lessons may easily get discouraged if their results do not reflect their effort. It has already been mentioned how important it is to appreciate even partial success in SpLD to keep them motivated and not to undermine their self-respect. Appropriate assessment based on adapted examination forms is therefore crucial for dysorthographic pupils. The following list features aspects which should be taken into consideration when assessing dysorthographic learners:

- Oral examination

With regard to the difficulties experienced by dysorthographic learners, oral examination gives them a better chance to show their knowledge. Oral examination should be preferred to written tests, or at least the two forms should be alternated (Jucovičová and Žáčková 54).

- Extended time for written examination

It is important to realise that even if dysorthography has been compensated in a pupil, he or she will still need more time to carry out written tasks. Lack of time will only put additional pressure on such a pupil and will lead to needless errors (Michalová 30). Moreover, permanent lack of time for task completion may cause the pupil to adopt a guessing strategy instead of trying to recall rules and information (Jucovičová and Žáčková 54).

- Limited amount of writing in tests

Tests requiring a extensive writing are susceptible to disadvantage individuals with dysorthography (Nijakowska et al. 107). If it is possible, the amount of writing should be limited in testing dysorthographic learners. It is another way of reducing the consequences of the increased amount of time and effort which dysorthographic pupils need to complete written tasks. Their version of a test can have the form of, for instance, gap-filling exercises where the missing words are those containing the grammatical phenomenon being evaluated.

- excluding specific dysorthographic errors from assessment

When correcting a dysorthographic pupil's test, the teacher should not include the errors resulting from the SpLD in assessment (Jucovičová and Žáčková 54). In case of more serious difficulties, even phonetic spelling should be assessed with tolerance (Jucovičová and Žáčková 54). Otherwise, the specific errors are very likely to overshadow the pupil's state of knowledge of the tested phenomenon and discourage him or her from studying and revising. Nevertheless, even if the specific errors are not assessed, they should be corrected, so that the learner is made aware of them (Jucovičová and Žáčková 54).

- Error correction in writing

It is recommended not to use red colour for correction because it “attracts attention of the pupil who may retain the wrong form” (Zelinková, Poruchy 107). In addition, red colour is often used for highlighting points to memorise in remedial teaching. Incorrect words can be underlined in pencil and the pupil asked to self-correct

(possibly with some support from the teacher, or didactic materials). It is also possible to stick a piece of paper over incorrect word and write the correct version above it in green (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 107; Jucovičová and Žáčková 54)

Although tolerant assessment of weak performance of dysorthographic pupils is generally advocated, it should be mentioned that a limitless tolerance to weak performance can be detrimental to them. As Pokorná writes,

parents are sometimes lulled by knowing that their child cannot end up repeating a grade and that he or she will safely pass through compulsory education. [...] They do not realise that their child will not be well prepared for future life. And, of course, the child's ignorance is similar, if not even worse. (170)

Accommodation and compensation measures

Some of the consequences of dysorthography can be prevented, or at least be moderated thanks to compensating aids and accommodations. These can be implemented in the EFL lessons, when writing a test and/or when doing homework.

- Reducing note taking

Taking notes is a highly demanding activity for pupils with dysorthography because of their deficits in concentration and memory, difficulties in concentrating on several things at once and insufficient automatization spelling and grammar (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 29-30). If they are focusing on writing things down, they do not have enough mental capacity for thinking about the content of the message. It can be helpful if they get ready-made notes from the teacher and are only ask to highlight keywords or add information which they find crucial. It is also possible to allow the pupils to use voice recording devices. In that case, they do not have to worry about note taking, they can concentrate on the content of the lesson, possibly write down several keywords and then replay the recorded lesson at home when revising. There is a great variety digital voice recorders and recording pens. An overview of such devices can be found for instance at <https://bdatech.org/what-technology/small-portable-devices>.

- Spell checkers and electronic dictionaries

Although spelling errors are tolerated to pupils with dysorthography at school, it will not probably be the case when they come of age and leave the school system. That is why it is advisable to teach them how to use to use spell checkers and electronic dictionaries effectively (Thompson 11). Using such software for auto-correction may turn out to be a crucial skill for them later on when they may need to produce flawless texts. A list of spell checkers which may be useful to dysorthographic individuals is available at <https://bdatech.org/what-technology/spell-checkers>.

1.4.2 Dysorthography and English grammar

Understanding grammar rules, recalling and applying them in writing is difficult for dysorthographic pupils in their native language. Similar problems can appear in foreign language learning. In foreign language lessons, written and spoken production often requires observance of various grammar rules at the same time, it is accompanied by the necessity to recall vocabulary and, in writing, spelling. Dysorthographic learners who struggle with multitasking may feel lost in such situations.

Weak sense of language often prevents dysorthographic pupils from being able to infer rules from examples (Žlab qtd. in Zelinková, *Poruchy* 156). Storage of grammar rules in the memory can be slow and less successful if they are delivered via deficient sensory channels (Kormos and Smith 129). Dysorthographic pupils “often take more time to process language information” and cannot be expected “to absorb information at the same pace as their peers” (Crombie 2). Furthermore, they “often struggle with grasping abstract linguistic constructs” (Kormos and Smith 134). All these factors make learning grammar a demanding task for dysorthographic pupils, and it is a big challenge for English teachers to find ways of helping them to succeed.

1.4.2.1. Problems and errors

Compared to the Czech language, which has quite a complicated system of declension

and conjugation, the basics of English grammar may seem easy. Nouns do not change their form according to grammatical cases (apart from the genitive case), the formation of plural is far more regular than in Czech. In comparison to Czech, the English conjugation patterns are not difficult, but there are other points, such as different system of tenses, aspects, formation of questions and negatives or the passive voice, which make things obscure for Czech learners of EFL. Apart from the problem of deciding which tense/aspect to use, pupils often hesitate in its formation. The system of auxiliary verbs is more extensive than in Czech and is further complicated by syntactic rules. The verbal part of the predicate of a clause can be divided into several words, which have to appear in a given order and may be separated by other words representing different syntactic functions.

Both morphology and syntax often cause troubles to dysorthographic pupils. Their “use of inflectional, grammatical morphemes is sometimes considerably reduced. [...] Correct use of the third person singular present tense marker '-s', the progressive aspect marker '-ing', tense markers, regular and irregular plural markers, the comparative marker '-er', the superlative marker '-est', the adverb marker '-ly' as well as suffixes can constitute a source of perceivable confusion“ (Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 93).

For dysorthographic learners, “the most pronounced problems in understanding syntactic structures can concern questions, relations between direct and indirect objects as well as the passive voice” (Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 93). Pupils with dysorthography “may demonstrate poor familiarity with syntactic rules, pertaining to the transformational complexity and length of the sentences; as a consequence, they may produce less structurally advanced sentences – mostly short, positive, declarative and in the active voice. Often, numerous syntactic mistakes occur, including grammatically incorrect sentences and inappropriate use of parts of speech” (Nijakowska, *Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 93)

1.4.2.2 Solutions

Various English-written sources agree on the necessity of grammar being taught explicitly to learners with SpLDs, even though pointing out the communicative function of

grammar should not be forgotten (Kormos and Smith 134). It does not mean that they cannot be asked to infer rules from examples, but even after they have “discovered” the rules themselves, they should be provided with clear and systematic recapitulation (Schneider and Crombie qtd. in Kormos and Smith 134). Moreover, they may be unable to infer the rules without sufficient support due to their weak sense of language. Providing such support can, for instance, take the form of “thought-provoking questions” which lead the pupils “to 'discover' the patterns” (Schneider and Crombie 17). It is usually beneficial for dysorthographic learners if grammar is taught in their native language and if foreign-language grammatical phenomena are compared or contrasted to their native language (Nijakowska et al. 81).

It is also important to present and practice grammar in a structured, sequential way. It means that grammar material should be ordered from the most easy to the most complex and connections should be established systematically between the learners' knowledge and new information (Schneider and Crombie 17). A new grammatical phenomenon should only be presented to a dysorthographic pupil when the previous one has been mastered (Kormos and Smith 134).

All that has been said about reasons for involving multiple senses in learning as well as consequences of multisensory instruction applies to grammar teaching as well. Adding visual support and activities involving movement in grammar presentation and practice facilitates dysorthographic pupils' learning.

Nevertheless, dysorthographic pupils' success in learning grammar does not only depend on how it is presented and practised, but also on how much and how often it is practised. As Nijakowska stresses, “frequent recapitulation [...] is a must” for such pupils (*Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 123). Kormos and Smith recommend extensive practice to be provided in different settings (127). Overlearning and thorough practice are given equal importance by other authors (Schneider and Crombie, Zelinková, Jucovičová and Žáčková and others).

The following passage contains suggestions for presentation, practice and examination

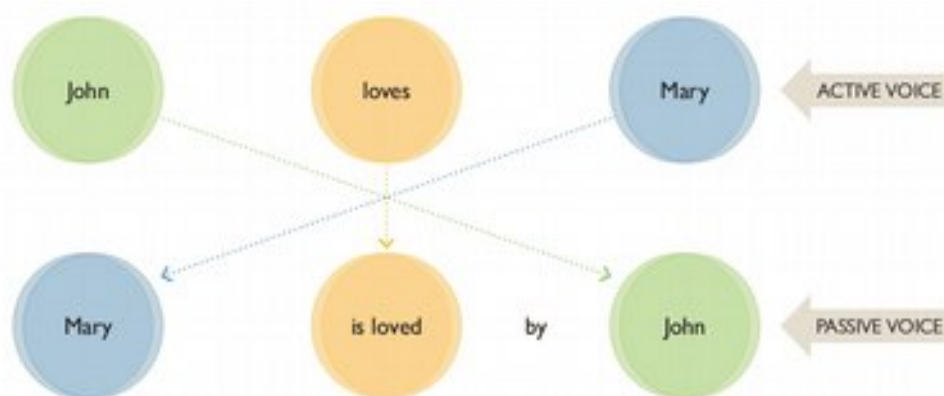
of English grammar. It is divided into three parts: schematisation and multisensory techniques; principles of practice; examination and assessment.

Schematisation and multisensory techniques

Although grammar should be taught explicitly in a systematic way do dysorthographic learners, “use of complicated grammar terminology is to be avoided” (Kormos and Smith 134). A possible way of doing it is to employ various coding methods or schematise grammatical rules and constructs, so that the pupils have visual support for abstract concepts (Thompson 11).

- **Colour coding grammatical devices**

Colour-coding can be a useful means of avoiding use of linguistic terminology, or if it is not possible or appropriate to avoid it completely, systematic use of colour-coding can make more comprehensible for dysorthographic learners. The purely intellectual concept will then have a visually perceivable form which will make it easier to handle. One of the possible colour-coding systems is presented in Schneider and Crombie. They suggest using different colours to stand for parts of speech and different shades of the same colour for different grammatical categories (number, tense, etc.). Other colour-coding methods are suggested by Nijakowska.



Picture 5 – Example of colour coding by Nijakowska
(*Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom* 20)

- **shape coding**

Shape coding means using different geometrical figures to represent linguistic categories, syntactic functions or other concepts that need to be visualised. As with colour-coding, it is necessary for teachers to be consistent in the way they uses shapes, so that they always represent the same notion. Teachers can either develop their own shape-coding system or use an already existing one.

One of the options is a complex technique called Shape Coding, designed originally for children with Specific Language Impairment by Susan Ebbels¹⁴. “The system includes use of colours, arrows and shapes” (Shape Coding). Words are underlined in a colour reserved for the part of speech they represent, and the lines can indicate additional information, such as tense, aspect or number, if they are wavy, double or end in an arrow . In addition, words or groups of words are closed in a geometric shapes which represent a syntactic functions.



Picture – Example of a sentence in Ebbels' Shape Coding system

- sentence frames, model sentences

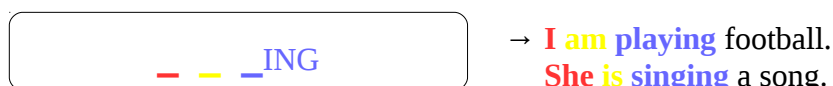
Operating with multiple grammatical categories and rules at the same time, which is laborious and often impossible for pupils with dysorthography, can made easier by providing sentence frames or model sentences (Nijakowska, Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom 20). Sentence frames are patterns in which the pupils the words they need to form a grammatically correct sentence. They can look like the following examples:

Somebody is doing something.	→ I am playing football. She is singing a song.
Do/Does like ?	→ Do you like ice-cream? Does he like strawberries?

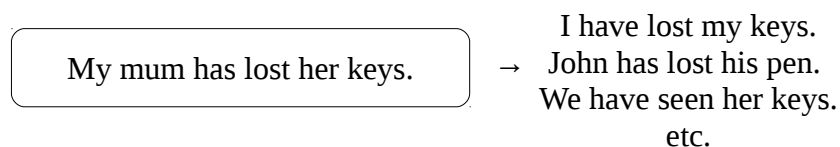
Combination of a sentence frame and colour coding can result in the following

¹⁴ For more information, see <http://www.moorhouseschool.co.uk/shape-coding>.

example from Nijakowska et al. (80):



Sentence models have a similar function, but the pupil needs to substitute the words with those he or she needs:



- mind-mapping

Mind-mapping is another multisensory technique. Mental maps can be drawn in colours and completed by pictures. When using it, pupils can trace the way across the map with their finger or imagine they are walking on the map. It can serve to “take notes, summarise a lecture or lesson, assemble ideas, manage a project, brainstorm or even understand a text. It is also an effective aid for preparing and doing a speech by providing discourse markers and the structuring the overall plan (Golliet 85). In grammar teaching, mind-mapping can be useful to schematise application of a grammar rule, to visualise the process of question formation, the system of tenses, etc. Grammar mind maps can be found for instance at www.grammarmindmaps.com, www.mappio.com, or www.biggerplate.com¹⁵. Nevertheless, it is more efficient if pupils make their own mind maps or similar aids (Jucovičová and Žáčková 46). They can store them in “their own *grammar portfolios* which are at their disposition” if they need to consult them (Jucovičová and Žáčková 46). Mind maps can be either drawn on a piece of paper or created with mind-mapping software. Free online mind-mapping editors can be found, for instance, at: www.text2mindmap.com, www.bubbl.us, mindmeister.com.

- tense cards

Tense cards are another kind of grammar aids that can be added to the pupils' grammar

¹⁵ See appendix 1 for an example of a grammar mind map.

portfolios. They can contain rules of formation and use of a verbal tense and be used either to practise a single tense or to contrast several tenses (Nijakowska et al. 81).



Picture 6 – Present simple tense card

(Nijakowska et al. 81)

- word cards, or similar interactive whiteboard activities

Creating one's own sentences from word-cards is a multisensory activity useful for SpLD learners (Thompson 11). According to the variety of words and word forms provided, the pupils focus on word order only or to choosing the right words and word forms as well. Such an activity spares the pupils the troubles with spelling and handwriting, which could disturb them, and provides a scaffolding for those who find sentence creation to difficult. Similar activities can be done on an interactive whiteboard. “Such as tasks in which students have to order words to form sentences, are also enjoyable and useful means of teaching and practising grammar (Kormos and Smith 134).

Principles of practice

Practising grammar rules should follow the general principles mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It should be structured, sequential and multisensory.

- focus on one phenomenon at a time

When practising a new grammar rule, such techniques should be used that allow the dysorthographic pupils to focus on the one rule only (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 106). Gap-filling exercises or manipulating word cards can be a good option.

- providing oral practice first

At first, let the pupils practise new grammar without having to write (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 106), so that they do not have to focus on spelling. It is a good idea to

provide visual support in the form of sentence frames, models, colour or shape-coding or word-cards.

- grammar overviews or similar aids

Dysorthographic pupils should be allowed to use grammar overviews, mental maps or similar aids, possible stored in their grammar portfolios, that enable them to complete tasks correctly (Jucovičová and Žáčková 46).

Examination and Assessment

When assessing dysorthographic pupils' performance in the domain of grammar, it is important for the teacher to keep in mind the following points:

- extended time for written examination

As it has already been mentioned, pupils with dysorthography need more time to complete written tasks. They will probably slower than the majority of their classmates in applying grammatical rules. Insufficient amount of time for writing tests stresses the pupils needlessly and leads to a great number of errors (Michalová 30).

- restrict the amount of writing in grammar tests

Reasons for excluding tasks requiring extensive written production from grammar tests and consequences of including them are the same to those mentioned in the chapter 1.4.1 on spelling.

- avoid multiple-choice exercises

Assigning multiple-choice exercises to dysorthographic learners, though it might seem a good choice because such exercises do not require any writing, is not recommended. Exercises where pupils are supposed to choose the correct version out of several options can be confusing for SpLD learners (Kormos 135).

In conclusion the theoretical part of this text, the reader asked once more to keep in mind that none of the approaches, methods, techniques or aids described above is universally applicable. Two pupils with the same diagnosis do not have to have, and are very likely not to have, identical needs. It is a role of teachers to get to know their pupils, so that they can choose appropriate ways of facilitating their English learning.

2. Research

The practical part of the thesis consists of a research mapping the experience of three English teachers with teaching dysorthographic pupils in the environment of mainstream lower-secondary classes.

2.1 Research goals

The research was conducted in order to bring a more concrete view of the problem of dysorthography in English lessons at lower-secondary schools in the Czech Republic. It was designed to give some insight into the issue by mapping the situation and experience of three English teachers at two lower-secondary schools specialised on pupils with SEN, especially SpLDs. The aim of the research was to obtain information about experience and know-how of the teachers, whose contact with SpLD pupils has been intense and who can draw on traditions of the school and experience of their colleagues and to compare it with the recommendations of experts outlined in the theoretical part of the thesis.

The research worked on the assumption that there is a gap between theory and practice in the domain of teaching English to dysorthographic pupils and that only a minimum of the recommended approaches, methods and techniques is applied in the conditions of mainstream classes. The hypothesis was based on the author's personal experience, as well as on a description, given by Nijakowska, of problems concerning “transforming the educational research into teacher practice” (*Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 115).

Apart from proving or disproving the hypothesis, the research should bring information about causes of the potential discrepancy between theory and practice. Furthermore, since the research focuses on teachers with extensive experience in teaching dysorthographic learners, it could reveal some of their personal findings which could be inspirational for researchers and for other English teachers as well.

2.2 Methodology

The research was carried out as a multiple case study. The decision to adopt this method was taken upon considering the goals of the research, the character of the research questions and the accessibility and cooperation of schools, teachers and pupils corresponding to the criteria of the topic.

As Yin writes, “case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (18). When an individual English teacher's approach to teaching dysorthographic pupils is to be studied in detail, it is hardly possible to separate it from the context. Conditions influencing the case are multiple. To name just some of them, there is the climate and specialisation of the school, the teacher's colleagues and their opinions on the issue, the teacher's personality and attitude to the profession or individual characteristics of all the pupils with dysorthography whom the teacher has ever worked with and who have influenced his or her perception of the diagnosis. It would be naive to try to separate the observed phenomena from the context and to attribute them a universal value. The methods and techniques which have proved successful to the observed teachers within the particular context cannot be expected to be equally efficient in different settings, neither are they the only possible way of teaching dysorthographic pupils.

According to Yin, “case studies are the preferred method when “how” or “why” questions are being posed” (2). The question underlying this research is: *How do particular experienced English teachers deal with dysorthographic pupils at lower-secondary school schools?* The following sub-questions are implicitly present: *What problems do the pupils encounter? Do the teachers pay special attention to these problems? If they do to, why? If they do, how do they help the pupils overcome the obstacles? What limitations are there? What inspires and helps the teachers in their work with dysorthographic pupils?*

During the research, the first question was permanently accompanied by the following questions concerning the possible gap between theory and practice mentioned in the preceding subchapter: *Does the teachers' experience and know-how differ from what is*

described in theory? If it does, how and why? These questions helped to shape the observation sheet which is divided in two parts. The first page is reserved for a minimally structured observation and has served for marking down any situations relevant to the issue that arose in the lessons, thus enabling the researcher to notice, among others, techniques, approaches or methods used by the teachers' which do not appear in the theory. The second part of the observation sheet was designed in order to record those aspects of the teachers' instruction that correspond to the theoretical part. It is more structured, divided into sections, each of which is reserved for a particular approach, method or technique described in the theoretical part of the thesis¹⁶.

To ensure multiple sources of evidence, data obtained from lesson observations were completed by information acquired via interviewing the teachers, the dysorthographic pupils and the remedial teacher or psychologist. Apart from data verification, the interviews with pupils, the remedial teacher and the psychologist had two more functions: they have provided better understanding of the context (the teachers being influenced by the environment of the school, as well as the needs of the pupils), and brought additional interesting information on the issue.

The research began with the observations, which were carried out as first in order to avoid possible influence of the interviews on the teachers' and the pupils' behaviour in the lessons. Three English lessons given by each teacher were observed by the researcher, using the observation sheet designed to capture important phenomena concerning the topic. In case of any doubts about the meaning of a situation which arose during the lesson, the teacher or the pupil were inquired about it immediately after the lesson.

Between the observations, the interview with the psychologist (in the case of school 1) or remedial teacher (school 2) was carried out. Observations having been completed, the dysorthographic pupil was interviewed. The interview with the English teacher took place as the last part of the research. Together with the observations, it constituted the central part of the whole process, and it was important for the researcher to have developed understanding of the context to be able to conduct the interview efficiently.

¹⁶ The observation sheet can be found in appendix 6.

Results are presented beginning with those obtained in the interview with the school psychologist or remedial teacher. The account of the first interview is followed by a description of the observed lessons, summaries of the interviews with the pupil and the English teacher and an interpretative summary of the case.

2.3 Research sample

The schools where the research was carried out were chosen on the grounds of their focus on SEN pupils. Both the schools have a history of specialised classes for pupils with SEN, mainly with SpLDs. It can be assumed that general awareness of SpLDs among the teachers of the two institutions is high. Furthermore, the intensity of experience with teaching pupils with SpLDs should be reflected in the teachers' and the schools' 'know-how' in this domain.

The current approach of the two schools to SpLD pupils is not identical. Whereas School 2 has abandoned the tradition of specialised classes for SpLD pupils and reorientated to their inclusion in ordinary classes, School 1 still runs specialised SpLD classes, alongside regular ones. It is possible, however, for the pupils of school 1 to pass from the specialised to the regular classes and vice-versa, if there is a need to do so.

As it has been mentioned, there is a trend in education nowadays to reduce specialised schools and classes and promote common schooling for intact children and their peers with SEN. It is one of the reason why the research, as well as the whole thesis, deals with the issue of dysorthography in the context of mainstream classes. All the teachers who participated in the research teach in mainstream classes.

Another point that was taken account of in the choice of schools is the fact that both the schools have the expanded version of the school counselling department. It means that apart from the obligatory staff, there is also a special pedagogue and/or a psychologist. These experts, who cooperate with the teachers and give them methodological recommendations, are a great source of useful information on working with SpLD pupils in the inclusive environment.

2.4 Case 1

2.4.1 School 1

School 1 is a nursery, elementary and lower-secondary school, currently attended by approximately 700 children and employing 55 teachers. The elementary and lower-secondary sections are divided into ordinary classes and classes for pupils with SEN, mostly SpLDs. The SEN classes are taught by teachers who are qualified not only as teachers of particular subjects, but also as remedial teachers. The specialised classes are smaller (up to 12 pupils). The forms and methods of instruction are chosen with regard to the pupils' special needs, but the educational content is the same as in the ordinary classes.

Pupils with SpLDs can be integrated in ordinary classes, if their parents or guardians require it. In such a case, the pupils are educated according to an individual educational plan and assessed according to the same criteria as the pupils in SEN classes (i.e. 5% higher tolerance in comparison to the pupils without IEP).

Pupils, teachers and parents can use services of the school psychologist, who is present at the school five days a week. Her responsibilities lie in the area of diagnostics, counselling and intervention. Care for children with SEN is an important part of her work. She carries out preliminary diagnostics of SEN in pupils who appear to suffer from a handicapping condition and recommends examination in the pedagogical-psychological counselling centre. She tries to detect areas of possible improvement in individual pupils and discusses it with them, their teachers and parents.

Apart from the focus on SpLD pupils, the school puts emphasis on the pupils being actively involved in the school life. The school's web page states that the children have the opportunity to talk to the teachers about anything happening at the school and participate in its functioning and development. The atmosphere of the school is described as relaxed and based on open communication between all the people involved.

2.4.2 School psychologist

The school psychologist is qualified in psychology and special education. She has worked in the domain of educational psychology for twenty years. Apart from the post of school psychologist, which she has held for ten years, she has the experience of working at a pedagogical-psychological counselling centre.

Interview

According to the psychologist, the school's approach to pupils with SpLDs is “very welcoming” because the school runs specialised classes that are “adapted for children with SpLDs or other difficulties by the means of special programme, composition and teachers.” Nevertheless, she also mentions a disadvantage of this arrangement: “Unfortunately, as there are children who are weak, it influences the level of demands placed on pupils in regular classes.” She finds that less is expected from the pupils than it could be.

According to the psychologist, the core of her responsibilities concerning SpLDs lies in three areas: she is a “diagnostician, who detects a problem and gives it a name”, then it is expected from her that she will provide teachers with advice on “how to approach the [SpLD] child in the lessons” and tell the parents “how to work with the child at home.” But she points out that she does not “tell the teachers how to deal with dysorthography – these are well-known things.” She focuses rather on “looking for space for improvement in the child's individual learning processes,” for aspects that could be worked on, so that the child would “perform better, although he or she has a SpLD.”

She does not participate in the creation of IEPs. The teachers get recommendations from the psychologist from the pedagogical-psychological counselling centre, who comes regularly to the school. But the two psychologist, who are former colleagues, “cooperate closely.”

When talking about accommodations, the school psychologist insists on the importance of respecting the teachers' authority. She says: “There are accommodations for SpLD pupils, but the choice of particular ways of doing it is up to individual teachers. One

should not attack their authority. They get recommendations from the counselling centre and then they do what they want.” Another advantage of letting the teachers decide, as she sees it, is in the teachers closeness to the parents and importance of their cooperation: “If the teacher persuades the parents that a particular technique is the best thing for their child, it's great, and the techniques can be diverse.”

As to the particular problems of dysorthographic pupils in English and ways to help them, she says that it is a domain in which she is not “too sure” because she does not know the language well enough and does not “work with the children in this way.” She supposes, nevertheless, that problems will be based on the fact that dysorthographic pupils “lack sense of language, in general, and the problem will influence in foreign language learning.” Language is an “abstract matter, and they sometimes cannot even imagine it, so they get lost.” Spelling is particularly problematic, according to her: “It's very confusing that words are spelt and pronounced differently. They [dysorthographic pupils] struggle even with 'spell as you hear it' writing in Czech, so English is the problem to the power of two.”

According to her experience, children with dysorthography are not capable of “looking at the grammar system from the bird's eye view.” It would be extremely helpful for them to work with what she calls “a crib”. It would be a kind of a mental map where the process of applying grammatical rules and respecting their hierarchy would be schematised. “If the pupils use this mental map again and again, it will get photocopied in their head. Then they will find their way and apply [the rules].” The psychologist talks about the aid in connection to learning Czech orthography, but she presumes that a similar aid could work for English as well, if it were adapted to its grammatical structure. She suggests that it would be great, if someone who knows the language and its methodology designed such a map. Grammar outlines have a similar function, according to her, but they are confusing for dysorthographic pupils because they feature different grammatical phenomena.

The psychologist is not aware of any discrepancy between what is described in professional literature and what really happens at schools, but she mentions a problem that she encounters frequently: “I often meet children who have been diagnosed with dysorthography, but I find out that they do not have sufficient knowledge. There might be perceptual

underdevelopments, but there is lack of knowledge too. If we cling to the idea of perceptual deficit and disregard the level of knowledge, we can distort the whole case. We will say that the child is dysorthographic and grant them accommodations and concessions which will hold them back in the end. These children will not progress as much as they could. ”

As an inspiration for teaching English to SpLD pupils, the psychologist mentions work of PhDr. Kamila Balharová, who is a remedial teacher, English teacher and methodologist. She runs her own web page (www.kaminet.cz) with a section on English for SpLD pupils. There are grammar and vocabulary presentations and exercises for pupils, tips and tricks for teachers and other useful information.

Three essential recommendations for teachers are formulated by the psychologist, based on her experience. The first is “not to assess only written performance but oral as well.” The second is “to teach the child to use an aid, a “crib”, because the goal is to teach it [the rules, the language], to automatize it, to have it imprinted in the child's head.” The third recommendation is addressed to parents: “I would appeal to the parents that dysorthography does not mean that the child will get better marks, and they can have a rest and do nothing. If the school is forthcoming, they should respond to it and practice with the child at home. It is more difficult for these children, but that's the way it is.”

2.4.3 Observations

Context

Teacher X has seven years' professional experience. She has taught at primary as well as lower-secondary level, but is specialised for the lower-secondary one. Apart from English, she teaches Czech and History and holds the post of the school's methodist of prevention.

Petr, the observed and interviewed pupil, attends the 9th year. He has been diagnosed with dysorthography. The teacher says that he shows interest in the subject and practises English in his free time with his father. Petr's writing features quite a significant number of letter omissions, insertions and transpositions, some words are spelt phonetically. His handwriting is sometimes difficult to read.

Observations

Three English lessons taught by the teacher X were observed. All the three observations took place in a group composed of the less advanced pupils from two regular 9th year classes. There are 24 pupils in the group in total, but the highest number present in the observed lessons was 19.

The first lesson was focused on reflexive pronouns (grammar presentation, exercises), the majority of the second was spent on writing a test, followed by a listening activity. The third lesson consisted of test correction and a listening activity.

Petr is among the pupils with the best results in the group. He is seated at the front desk with another boy who has an SpLD. During the lessons, Petr is active, responding to the teacher's questions. His answers show quite a good mastery of the subject with occasional errors in grammar.

Grammar presentation in the first lesson is done in lockstep. The teacher writes the reflexive pronouns on the board and then she elicits the rules of use as well as regularities in the word formation from the pupils. They copy the notes from the board and do several exercises. When giving instructions, the teacher calls on individual pupils to translate them, choosing mostly those who seem not to be paying attention or pupils with SpLD. There is quite a lot of writing, and not all the pupils seem to manage to do all sentences in the exercises. Petr manages quite well. He does not copy all the notes, he only writes down several keywords in his exercise book. When asked to comment on this practice he says that he copies “what he finds important” and only writes down the whole text, if the teacher explicitly asks him to do so.

When the pupils are completing the exercises, they are encouraged by the teacher to help each other, to explain the grammar to their neighbours, which some of them do. Petr and his neighbour discuss the exercises quite often, but it is mostly the neighbour who asks for advice and Petr who gives it. To check the answers, the teacher either asks a pupil to say it and write it on the board, or she writes it herself.

The test written in the second lesson consists of exercises on grammar (2nd conditional,

reflexive and object pronouns), word formation (negative prepositions, noun to adjective derivation) and a reading task with true/false statements (containing the grammar and vocabulary of the unit). All the exercises are gap-filling, except for one containing sentence transformation. Pupils with SpLDs do not have to write the whole sentences, they only write down the verb and the objective pronoun of each sentence in this exercise. Before letting the pupils start writing, the teacher asks one of them to read and translate instructions to each exercise. She reprimands Petr who starts writing instead of listening to the instructions. There are workbook exercises assigned for those who will finish the test earlier than others.

During the test, the teacher monitors the pupils' work and corrects those who have misunderstood instructions to an exercise, or draws their attention to incorrect sentences. She asks Petr and his neighbour, if they need help. The neighbour asks for meaning of a word, and the teacher gives him hints, so that he figures out the meaning. If someone has a question, they put up their hand, and the teacher comes and discusses the matter with them. In the meantime, the teacher assigns different work to a foreign student, whose level of English is far below that of his classmates, and assists him.

When all the pupils have finished writing the test (pupils with IEP are allowed more time, but Petr hands the test in among the first without having spent much time on proofreading), they do a listening activity. Parts of a recording are played, and the pupils are asked to retell in Czech what they have understood. Petr is called on for a part of the text and does quite well.

At the beginning of the third lesson, the teacher distributes the tests and tells the scoring criteria for both the pupils with IEP and the rest of the class. Petr gets a 2. A reading exercise follows. After reading the text silently, individual pupils are asked to translate parts of it orally.

Then they listen to a song and try to fill in the missing words in the lyrics. Petr is the only pupil to claim that he does not need the recording to be replayed a second time, and he shows astonishment at seeing that his classmates need to hear the recording again. He has understood all the words correctly, but he has misspelt some of them.

When a pupil, who was absent in the last lesson, finishes writing the test, the teacher goes through it with the class. She summarizes the main problems and gives correct answers and explanations. Then she assigns an exercise in the workbook to the pupils who do not have any questions and pays individual attention to those who need to discuss the test further with her.

2.4.4 Interview with Petr

Petr expresses high motivation for learning English. He speaks about internal factors (enjoyment that he takes in learning the language) and instrumental motivation (English is useful for communication on holidays abroad and on game networks). He is not sure about usefulness of English for his future life, but supposes that it will be “good to know it.” Although he does not mention it directly, the example of his father appears to be an important motivational factor as well. Petr says: “I started learning English with my father, then when he was too busy, I took private lessons for one year and then I just began to enjoy it.” He also mentions his father's helping him to practise English conversation and learn new vocabulary. When revising for vocabulary tests, his father tells him sentences containing the new words. Petr expresses his wish for vocabulary to be taught “in sentences” and “without Czech” at school as well. He would also appreciate, if the English lessons were carried out in English only.

Petr considers listening skills and oral expression to be his strong points. He sometimes struggles with grammar, especially when he starts “thinking about it too much”, he is better at it when he “takes it normally.” Writing skills and mastery of spelling are not mentioned by Petr at all during the interview.

When asked about special rules and adapted tasks given to him in English lessons, Petr speaks about additional activities that he and several other pupils get because they are “a bit more advanced”. He says that it is “good from the teacher to do so”. He does not mention the fact that he is allowed more time to write tests, presumably because he does not use this right. Adapted assessment criteria do not occur to him either in this context.

To the question about dysorthography, he replies by a guess that it could “have something to do with attention” and then says that he does not know what it means.

2.4.5 Interview with Teacher X

When talking about individualisation and differentiation (mentioned in the quotation from the EFP), the teacher talks solely about the approach to SEN pupils. She emphasises the importance of “giving feedback, checking if they have understood the exercise correctly and assisting them more [than the other pupils]”. She also mentions correcting the specific errors, but adds that according to her experience, the pupils, having completed an exercise, “just close the workbook and do not open it any more”.

According to the teacher, the school's policy in assessing SEN pupils has changed. Before, the teachers prepared different tests for SEN pupils. Now the same test are given to all the pupils, but the assessment criteria differ. Results are expressed as percentage, and the limit for getting a certain mark is 5% lower for SEN pupils than for the others. This means that to get a the best mark, an intact pupil needs to obtain at least 91%, whereas for a SEN pupil, it is enough to have 86%. In addition, the SEN pupils are given more time to complete tests.

The main area of problems of dysorthographic pupils learning English is, in the teacher's opinion, „omitting and switching letters.” She also mentions listening comprehension as a possible source of troubles for dysorthographic pupils, but remarks that “it is all connected to the richness of vocabulary,” and that “it is not Petr's case.”

The specific dysorthographic errors are corrected by teacher X, but do not influence marking in ordinary tests. The teacher explains: “If there is a redundant or a missing letter, but the word is correct otherwise, I accept it in normal tests, but not in vocabulary tests.” When talking about error correction, the teacher remarks: “Actually, I do not know why we do not do it in English, but in Czech tests, we correct the specific errors in green, for the pupils to see them.”

The content requirements are identical for the SpLD pupils and the intact ones. The teacher is not aware of using any special aids. She mentions that they “use computers with

educational software, but for the whole class”, not only for SEN pupils. She adapts worksheets graphically for SpLD pupils, so that they have more space for writing. In younger classes at the lower-secondary level, she prints out vocabulary lists for them, so that they do not have to copy them down. Differentiated tasks are only assigned to children at the elementary level. The teacher gives the example of an exercise where SpLD children fill in missing letters or unjumble letters of a word, instead of filling in whole missing words.

The teacher describes an organisational measure that has proved successful in one of the lower classes. It consists in a talented pupil being seated next to each pupil with SEN. “The talented pupils complete the tasks faster and then help their neighbours.” When inquired about the talented pupil's reaction to the arrangement, she says that they “are O.K. with it.” Even Petr, who shares the desk with a dyslexic pupil is, according to her words, “glad to be able to help his neighbour, although he has a SpLD himself.” She has tried to differentiate the instruction in the 9th year by creating a group of SpLD pupils who worked together. But Petr was “utterly miserable” about the arrangement, he did not want to be separated from the class and work in the “weaker” group.

Questions on differentiation and class management lead the teacher to comment several times during the interview on the influence that the size of the class has on the teacher's possibilities. She claims that “it is impossible to differentiate methods of instruction in a class of 24 pupils.”

Individual educational plan is created for each SEN pupil every year. The IEP is devised by subject teachers on the basis of a report from the pedagogical-psychological counselling centre. Teacher X designs the part on English for all her SEN pupils by herself. When the IEP is ready, it is submitted to the pupil's parents for consultation and approval. Then it is deposited at the guidance counsellor and evaluated at the end of each term.

Teacher X has participated in a course on SpLDs and the Czech language accredited by the Ministry of Education as a further education of pedagogical workers. She does not study professional literature on the topic, but she consults the school psychologist or the guidance counsellor, who is an English teacher and remedial teacher at the same time, if

needed.

She considers the most important principles to be followed by teachers of dysorthographic pupils to be: “individual approach”, “tolerance of errors” and “patience”.

2.4.6 Summary and interpretation

School 1 leaves the responsibility for appropriate education of integrated SpLD pupils on individual teachers. The only universal policy applied by the school consists in modified assessment criteria and higher time allowance during tests. Individual educational plans are designed by the subject teachers on the basis of reports from pedagogical-psychological counselling centre.

It was mentioned in chapter 1.2.2 that cooperation is a crucial means and a goal of inclusive education. The teacher X encourages cooperation between the pupils in her lessons. She lets them discuss things that they do not understand, or even asks them explicitly to explain difficult points to each other in pairs. In one of her classes, she has seated SpLD pupils next to advanced ones, and the arrangement proved successful in enhancing cooperation and enabling the SpLD pupils to keep up with the rest of the class.

Teacher X is aware that people with SpLDs often experience difficulties in following instructions. She asks SpLD pupils without reading disorders to read instructions to exercises or activities and makes sure that SpLD pupils are paying attention. She asks SpLD pupils directly if they have understood and pays more attention to them when providing corrective feedback during activities. This is exactly what is emphasized by Michalová and what was indicated in chapter 1.3.4 on accompanying deficits of SpLDs.

The school psychologist supposes that the teachers have adequate knowledge of the issue and know the appropriate methods for teaching these pupils. She prefers to concentrate on giving advice concerning areas of unused potential in individual pupils than basic methodological recommendations. The teacher X emphasises the importance of knowing individual pupils' needs, strengths and preferences as well. The fact that priority should be given to individual needs over general recommendations is one of the basic principles of

remedial teaching (Zelinková, *Poruchy* 74).

The role of parents in helping a dysorthographic child is emphasised by both the psychologist and the teacher X. Parents need to support the child in studying at home, if they want him or her to progress. It is closely connected to the requirement of extensive practice advocated by most authors (see chapter 1.4.2.2) The positive influence of such support can be seen in Petr's case as the teacher X points out. Practising English with his father not only helps Petr to achieve good results, but it also boosts his confidence and motivation. Petr is aware of his English skills being above the group's average and wishes to get challenging tasks, so that he can progress.

The psychologist supposes that the main problems of dysorthographic pupils in English will concern spelling and application of grammar rules, the pupils' sense of language being weakened. The teacher X speaks about spelling problems in relation to dysorthography too, but she does not mention problems related to grammar acquisition. Petr, however, talks about grammar being his weaker point and about getting lost when he starts analysing it.

The fact that Petr does not mention spelling or writing as an area of difficulties is surprising. It may be due to the fact that spelling errors are tolerated to him in ordinary tests. When asked about special rules applying to him, it did not even occur to Petr that he is assessed according to different criteria than the majority of the class. One of the possible explanations is the fact that, in the environment of School A, adapted assessment of SpLD pupils is perceived as such a natural thing that pupils do not regard it as a “special rule”. Adapted assessment fulfils its purpose in the sense of not letting the SpLD-bound errors overshadow Petr's real state of knowledge and skills and preventing him from feeling frustrated and discouraged, which could happen, if he got bad marks constantly due to the specific errors. On the other hand, his unawareness of spelling being one of his weaknesses is not a good thing for his future life (see chapter 1.4.1.2).

The teacher X does not use any specific methods or techniques for pupils with dysorthography or other SpLDs. Spellcheckers and electronic dictionaries are not used in her lessons either. This may be attributed to the fact that children who feel the need for such

treatment can be placed in specialised classes. Alternatively, the great number of pupils in the group or lack of time or information on the teacher's part could play a role.

The psychologist confirms what Jucovičová and Žáčková claim about ready-made grammar summaries: “They are usually not very efficient for children with dysorthography. They are stuffed with detailed information and sometimes rather put off than help” (46). The psychologist suggests an alternative aid in the form of a mental map which would help the pupils realise the hierarchy of grammar rules and prevent them from forgetting to apply any of them. Her description of the map shares several features with some of the aids mentioned in chapter 2.4.2.2. She emphasizes the visual character of the aid and its highly structured treatment of grammar and insists on dysorthographic pupils to be allowed to use it lessons and even during examination. Nevertheless, the described aid is only an idea which has never been realized by the psychologist.

2.5 Cases 2A and 2B

2.5.1 School 2

School 2 is a nursery, elementary and lower-secondary school without specialisation on particular subjects or groups of pupils. Nevertheless, it is well-known for its inclusive climate and practice. There is a great number of children with various SENs among the pupils. The elementary and lower-secondary level have a capacity of 500 pupils and the pedagogical staff comprises approximately 35 teachers.

Pupils with SENs are integrated in regular classes. The school employs two remedial teachers who give remedial lessons, provide methodological counselling for the teachers and cooperate with the children's parents. Collaboration between the school and the local pedagogical-psychological counselling centre is intense, a psychologist from the centre comes regularly to the school to diagnose and observe pupils with SENs.

In its educational programme, as well as on its web page, the school advertises its preference of activating methods of instruction, such as problem-based learning, project-based

learning, cooperative learning or drama in education. Philosophy of the school is based on three pillars: meaningful contents of education and development of personality; meaningful classroom and free-time activities; and meaningful relationships.

2.5.2 Remedial teacher

The remedial teacher has been in the professions for ten years. She is responsible for all the integrated pupils of the school and the school's integration programme. She gives remedial lessons to SEN pupils, cooperates with their teachers, parents and the psychological-pedagogical counselling centre.

Interview

The remedial teacher describes the school's approach to children with SpLD as “welcoming”. According to her words, the school “is an inclusive one, but not just now, when it all [general promotion of inclusion and legislative measures connected to it] started, but for more than ten years.”

Specialized classes for SpLD children that used to exist at the school were closed down and all the pupils have been integrated to regular classes. Special attention, however, is paid to SEN pupils, as the remedial teacher says. “They have remedial lessons once a week, they can take free afternoon catch-up lessons, there is a Feuerstein's Instrumental Enriching programme (addressed especially to children with ADHD or attention, memory or organisation disorders). At the elementary level, the children can have catch-up tutoring instead of a lesson with their class. The children with articulation difficulties [...] are treated by a speech therapist. [...] The pupils are taken care of in many respects.”

Until now, creating individual educational plans for SEN pupils has been the remedial teacher's task. If possible, subject teachers contributed to IEP creation, but sometimes they only supplemented a draft or discussed the ready-made IEP with the remedial teacher, because “there are 60 pupils with IEP at the school, which is an enormous number compared to other schools,” and it is impossible for the subject teachers to participate on the whole process of

creation of every IEP.

Before, the IEPs were articulated as recommendations to teachers, but now “they are centred on the children. An IEP states the goals that the child is supposed to attain with some support, because children often tend to abuse it. They think that if they have SENs, they do not have to do anything, or that have the right to get good marks only. Or it is their parents, who interpret it like this.”

The new IEPs are designed for the children to “make progress and see if they are making it.” The teachers “can then say to the child: Look, you have got such-and-such support, you have all you need, but you are still not making any progress. What is wrong? Perhaps you need to start doing something.”

From September 2016 on, the IEPs are going to be created by subject teachers on the basis of prescriptions of the counselling centre. The remedial teacher says that “things will be easier” for them, and thanks to the close cooperation between the school and the counselling centre, the IEPs will still reflect each child's specific needs. She supposes, however, that for other counselling centres it may be a problem, considering “the number of schools they will need to communicate with about every individual SEN pupil.”

The remedial teacher says that “dysorthography manifests itself in learning English in an entirely different manner [than in Czech].” Omissions, transpositions or additions of letters occur, but they may be symptoms of dyslexia, as well as of dysorthography¹⁷. [In English, the pupils may struggle with] stress placement perhaps. Or grammatical categories.”

Lack of sense of language is an obstacle for dysorthographic English learners as well. According to the remedial teacher, dysorthographic pupils not only have troubles inferring a grammatical rule from examples, “they are often incapable of transposing it. You tell them the rule, they apply it to a particular word, but if you give them a similar example afterwards, they do not realize that it is the same thing.” In language lessons, explicit, “classical instruction suits dysorthographic pupils better” than inductive methods where the pupils are

¹⁷ The causes of the same problem are different for each SpLD, according to the remedial teacher: “In dysorthography, the main cause of troubles is in deficient auditory discrimination. The child does not, for example, perceive the sound at the end of a word, and consequently does not write it down. In dyslexia, it is visual perception that is deficient.”

supposed to infer rules from examples.

For teaching SpLD pupils, there are “special teaching methods. It is recommended to involve as many senses, as possible – sight, hearing, movement, dramatization. The child is then more likely to remember things, because he or she has a deficit in one of the senses.”

The remedial teacher's recommends English teachers: “to tolerate phonetic spelling, if a letter is missing or substituted, or if the pupils write it as they hear it, as long as the form resembles somewhat the original word. The point is to find out, if the child knows, if he or she has the knowledge. And then, when he or she writes it down or reads it, you must expect some errors to be there.”

“It is recommended to choose the ways [of practice or examination] that suit the child. A child, who is a good reader, but is dysorthographic, may prefer reading and gap-filling, getting written information, transcribing... A dyslexic, on the contrary, will make many errors in transcriptions, of course, but oral examination will be convenient for him or her. Some children, who have multiple deficits, need a combination of these techniques. The difficulties are never “pure”. There usually are additional difficulties, so it is a sort of package that is to be worked with as a whole. ... But it is important to seek ways of putting across the information to the child and ways of obtaining them from them during examination. But the ways differ from child to child.”

In the remedial teacher's opinion, „children with SpLD should only start learning English when the difficulty has been at least partly compensated in Czech. ... Sometimes the children are not capable of coping with Czech, they struggle in grammar, terminology, writing, reading, text comprehension... And if they start learning English in such a state, they do not know what they are doing. ... But at present, English is obligatory.”

The remedial teacher does not see a contradiction between the recommendations given in professional literature and everyday reality at schools. She says that it is rather “a matter of the school's possibilities. Education of SpLD children is demanding. They need extra care to do well at school. They need more time and individual attention, which is impossible with a big number of children. [In regular lessons,] you can see to several things, but you cannot

really ensure the SpLD children's development or compensate the difficulties. And that is the sense of the remedial lessons. It is like physiotherapy. If parents want their child to prosper, they have to be cooperative. If all they want is a sort of maintenance treatment, then the child can just come to remedial lessons once a week and have a tolerant teacher, but he or she will struggle with the problem all the time. It will take up his or her time, it will be annoying, it will be a complication at work or at secondary school, etc.”

“Basic literature on SpLDs (Matějček, then Pokorná Jucovičová, Žáčková and many others), is useful. It is good to have a theoretical background, but then it is also good to use one's own imagination, to create one's own teaching aids or come up with particular ways of working with individual children.”

The remedial teacher says that although she is very busy, she feels the need to extend her knowledge by studying. But what inspires her most are the SpLD children themselves. “When working with them, one discovers many things, it pushes the theoretical knowledge that one has to a new level. One keeps looking for new ways because every child is an original. Although there are three types of SpLDs, the problem is specific in each child, they struggle with different things or have it combined with other difficulties.” As a possible source of information, she also mentions a seminar that could be useful for English teachers. It is organised by Dyscentrum in Prague and it is focused on TEFL to children with SpLDs. More information can be found at <http://www.dyscentrum.org/cizi-jazyky>.

To the question on essential points that a teacher of a dysorthographic pupil should bear in mind, the remedial teacher says that “it depends on the state in which the child comes to the teacher. If there has been no remedial teaching, then the advice would be to not to ruin the child. To tolerate as much as possible, to encourage them not to give up. Not to discourage them, simply. Such children often give up, they are tired of being the worst all the time, although they work hard. ... It is important to appreciate every little success.”

2.5.3 Case 2A

English is the only subject taught by teacher B. She is qualified for the lower-

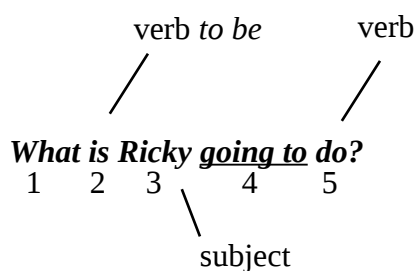
secondary level and has been in the profession for 10 years. The observed lessons took place in a 6th year class. There were 17 pupils present in all the lessons.

Cyril has been diagnosed with dysorthography without any accompanying SpLDs. According to the teacher, he is good at English, but he does not study hard which prevents him from getting better results.

2.5.3.1 Observations

The lessons were run in English most of the time. Cyril was quite active but occasionally disturbing. At the beginning of the second lesson, he did not have his books prepared on the desk, which he was reprimanded for by the teacher. When he was called on, he usually gave the correct answer, but sometimes did not understand English instructions. When a classmate sitting next to him did not know an answer, Cyril told him.

All the lessons were focused on grammar. The pupils practised the structure “going to” and learnt to use the verb “have to”. Grammar was partly presented by the teacher and partly elicited from the pupils. Upon the teacher explaining the conjugation pattern of “have to”, Cyril remarked that “it was easy”. Verb forms and model sentences were written on the board and the pupils asked to copy them in their notebooks. The model sentence for “going to” question was divided in parts labelled by terms and numbers:



The majority of exercises and activities were done orally with partial written support on the board or in the textbook. The pupils sometimes worked in pairs, but most activities were individual.

When the pupils were asked to write down several sentences according to a model in the textbook, the teacher monitored them and checked whether they had understood the

instructions correctly, paying special attention to Cyril and other SEN pupils. Cyril did not manage to do the required number of sentences in time.

There was a miming and guessing activity employed to revise vocabulary and the structure “going to”. Apart from this, the pupils did not move much, except for some of them being called to write something on the board.

Cyril was asked to read instructions in English twice. He read with interruptions and in a funny voice. When the teacher told him to stop clowning, he continued reading but broke off because he did not know how to read the word “does”. The teacher then asked him, if he had understood, and he replied negatively, so the instructions were translated by another pupil.

2.5.3.2 Interview with Cyril

Cyril does not have any doubts about usefulness of English. He says that he learns it because “it is the global language and one can make oneself understood everywhere with it.” He has already used it many times in real life, especially when tourists asked him for directions. When asked if he will need English in future, he answers “Sure!” without stopping to think. Nevertheless, if he did not have to study English, he would “rather learn Russian because he likes it and because it is good.”

As to his strong and weak points, he says: “I get good marks for tests, if I make effort. But I am not very good at speaking.” He admits that “laziness” could be the obstacle to his improvement. The two things that help him most during English lessons are “concentration and cooperation with friends.” He explains the second point: “We talk, but we do the whole task.”

When revising for tests, Cyril writes down the new words, covers them and tries to recall them. He says that he does not like “to be examined by anyone else” when revising. If he finds out that he does not understand something, he either looks it up in the textbook or has it “explained by a classmate” because they “help each other.”

The first thing that comes to his mind when thinking about desirable changes in

English lessons is his behaviour. Otherwise, he is satisfied with the English lessons. He complains, however, about teachers in general being unfair: “If anyone is talking in the lesson or does something wrong, it is always my fault. It annoys me, but I have already got used to it.” He says that he does not get different tasks than the rest of the class and that he only gets “more time to write tests or fewer exercises to do” in Czech lessons. But he says that he does not need such measures in English because he is “among the best three or four pupils of the class, so it is all right.”

The word „dysorthography“ sounds familiar to him, but he does not know what it means. When he is told that dyslexia is a difficulty in reading, and asked to guess what the problem of dysorthography could be, he says that “it could be a difficulty in listening [comprehension].”

2.5.3.3 Interview with teacher Y

For the teacher Y, individualization and differentiation is mostly connected to the content of education. She says that “children should be given tasks that they can manage.” Although it is not always possible, she tries to give appropriate tasks to children with difficulties by “either selecting only some aspects of a topic for them to learn, or by not working on a topic with them at all, just acquainting them with it. [...] In younger classes, it is always possible to choose something, to make it easier. But in the 8th year, the passive and the second conditional are too demanding for some of the pupils.” In such a case, the teacher only requires them “to complete a sentence according to a formula. They have a kind of chart and they see what they are supposed to write in the main clause and in the subordinate one. All is prepared, they just need to put things in the right places.” And instead of doing other exercises, which the teacher finds too difficult for them, they revise vocabulary or learn irregular verbs.

The organisational form that the teacher Y finds the most convenient for differentiating instruction is working in homogenous groups divided according to the pupil's level of English and their potential to learn certain things. However, “it is demanding to prepare, and such lessons often fall apart. [...] It is necessary to have the lesson well prepared,

if one wants the pupils to work in groups. One needs to plan the activities, so that the stronger group is given information about the topic and continues working on a task without supervision. In the meantime, one helps the IEP pupils. An then, it is difficult again to give them individual work, so that one can check the other group. It does not make sense without checking the task. There is not always enough time to do it in the lesson. In such a case, it is necessary to get back to it the next time.“

According to the teacher, the main area of difficulty for dysorthographic pupils in English is spelling, because they “switch letters or spell as they hear.” That is what Cyril does. He also confuses [the linguistic category of] person and then has to think a lot about what to use, whether do or does.” But she emphasizes that, despite Cyril not having any other SpLDs, “dysorthography is usually combined with other SpLDs, and then it is more complicated.” She talks about another pupil who has several SpLDs, including dysorthography and who “is often absent-minded. But that is perhaps due to the fact that English is difficult and demanding for him. It is all interconnected.”

Grammar is taught in “a traditional way” in the teacher Y's lessons. She gives a general presentation of the issue and than they “create sentences on which the rule is explained. [...] Everything is written down on the blackboard.” For dysorthographic pupils, she uses charts that the English teachers have designed in cooperation with the remedial teachers. The charts help pupils “to imagine, to visualize the structure and to reinforce its mastery. It has proved successful¹⁸.”

As to vocabulary and spelling, the teacher finds it good when dysorthographic pupils write new words in their vocabulary notebooks. “I do not require it from the stronger pupils, but I think that it is great if these [dysorthographic] children do it, because it makes them practise spelling and [see] how the language works. We also do spelling exercises for the children to see what a word looks like. They fill in missing letters in words, first there is just one letter missing, then two, three...”

The school does not have a universal policy for examination and assessment of SpLD students. It is up to individual teachers. The teacher Y recommends gap-filling exercises

¹⁸ For an example of such a chart, see Appendix 2.

because “it is easier for them [dysorthographic pupils]. They already have a text and do not have to write all themselves. They can, for example, have a verb written down and only put it in the correct tense.” She prefers oral form to the written one when examining dysorthographic pupils. “They perform better orally because you can give them hinting questions.” Specific dysorthographic errors are not included in the assessment. Words with “one or two letter transpositions are accepted in tests.”

The teacher does not set time limits for test writing to any of pupils, with or without SpLDs. “They get as much time as they need.” In longer tests, she assigns less tasks to pupils with SpLDs. “I choose just the tasks that I think they will manage. But it has happened to me many times that when I let them choose among the exercises, they could for example skip two out of ten, they chose the more difficult ones, which I would not have asked them to do. And they did quite well. It can be disputable what we think is easier for them. It is misleading because we do not reveal how much they actually know. [...] So I let them choose the exercises.”

Individual educational plans are designed by the subject teacher and the remedial teacher, who „sit down and discuss what the child is and is not capable of, what he or she has to fulfil, what duties he or she has. And there [in the IEP] are also tasks for the parents to fulfil. If the plan is being observed, the teachers accept the errors and concessions. But if the child does not fulfil [...] the duties, prepare for lessons, or if the parents do not supervise the child at home, we have another meeting and discuss whether it makes sense for the child to have an IEP if he or she does not study. It has already happened.”

The cooperation between individual teachers and the pedagogical-psychological counselling centre is not frequent, but a psychologist from the centre comes regularly to the school and the teachers can consult her. On the contrary, the cooperation with remedial teachers is intense. “They are always at hand, and if a problem emerges, it can be discussed immediately.” The English teachers also share knowledge and experience with each other. “One gets surprised by things all the time, and naturally, it is talked about with the others.”

The things that are beneficial to dysorthographic pupils, according to the teacher, are:

oral examination with hinting, the above-mentioned charts and vocabulary notebooks. And, as she points out, „all depends on the parents. If a child has an IEP, the more the parent should study with the child at home. But often it is the contrary. If someone has an IEP, they [think that they] do not have to do anything. And that is the most common mistake.“

2.5.4 Case 2B

Teacher Z has been in the profession for 25 years and has taught English at primary as well as lower-secondary level for the last 12 years. At the beginning of her career, she worked as a remedial teacher and a teacher in specialised classes for pupils with SpLDs because she is qualified in special education.

Lukáš attends the 6th year. He has dysorthography without any additional SpLDs. His writings do not feature many specific dysorthographic errors, but he often forgets '-s' in plural and in third person present simple, confuses do/does, or forms multi-word verb forms incorrectly. According to his English teacher, he is quite bright, but does not study much and is often absent, which is why his results are not good. The teacher tries to motivate him by telling him that he is bright and could perform well, if only he wanted.

2.5.4.1 Observations

The first lesson began with approximately five minutes of revising. The pupils were asked to read a list of irregular verbs in their workbooks. The teacher gave extra assistance to Lukáš and read the verbs out to him. Then the class wrote a vocabulary test. When giving instructions, the teacher repeatedly turned to Lukáš or another SpLD pupil to rephrase what she had said. Lukáš was the third to hand the test in. Later on, the teacher said that he had done well, but that it was thanks to the long time given for revision.

The test was followed by a game focused on vocabulary of the unit (TV). The game was oral and consisted in recalling words faster than the classmates. Lukáš was the winner. Then the teacher gave a recapitulation of the structure going to and its use. She wrote the following scheme on the board and helped the pupils by pointing at the appropriate number

when they were struggling to form a sentence correctly:

to be

going to

visit
play

①

②

③

The structure and the vocabulary were practised in several exercises from the textbook and the workbook. The pupils who finished earlier than the rest of the class were assigned additional individual or group work.

In the second lesson, new vocabulary was presented (housework). The pupils were first supposed to look at pictures in the textbook, listen to isolated words connected to the pictures and repeat them. Then the words were practised on an interactive whiteboard in a game of pairs. Lukáš seemed quite absorbed in the game.

A presentation of the verb *have to*, its meaning and use in sentences followed. The teacher provided written support on the board in the form of model sentences suggested by some of the pupils and read them out in a rhythmical way. After that, all the pupils formed and wrote down their own two sentences using the verb and the new vocabulary. Then they were supposed to work in pairs and ask yes/no questions to find out what kind of housework their partner has to do. When explaining the activity, the teacher demonstrated the question-answer exchange with a pupil who had seemed to be daydreaming before. In the end, the pupils were asked to write down similar sentences about their mother.

Then the teacher recapitulated the grammar while the pupils looked at a grammar page in their workbooks and highlighted important information. The teacher demonstrated a possible way of doing it by circling keywords in red on the interactive whiteboard. Individual work was assigned afterwards. It was a worksheet containing three exercises focused on appropriate use of third person singular forms (have/has and do/does). The first two exercises (affirmative and negative sentences) only required filling in the auxiliary verb, the third consisted in creating whole sentences (questions).

There were considerable differences between the pupils in the pace and ease with

which they completed the exercises. When there was confusion among some pupils about what to do in the last exercise, the teacher told them to “go spying” to their classmates. Meanwhile, the teacher monitored the class and assisted the pupils who were struggling. Those who finished the individual work got a sheet with the correct solution to check their answers and then did a speaking activity (“find someone who”) in groups of three. Those who were fast and still had spare time at the end of the lesson were assigned a pairwork activity with adjective word-cards.

There was a moment when pupils were working on three different tasks. Some of the pupils managed to complete all the three tasks in the lesson, others did not even finish the first one. Lukáš completed the written exercises in a hurry, with many mistakes and did not check if his answers were correct. Then he joined his friends who were already doing the speaking activity. The teacher did not notice it, but at the end of the lesson, she collected the worksheet to correct them at home.

The last lesson was devoted to a test. There were five pupils (all the SpLD pupils and two weak pupils) who got a modified version with abridged exercises. The test contained a “bonus exercise” for those who finish early.

First of all, the class went through the instructions together with the teacher. The instructions for each exercise were read and translated by a pupil and commented by the teacher. The teacher also elicited “overviews” of what should be kept in mind when completing particular exercises (e.g. for an exercise on derivation of adverbs from adjectives, such an overview contained “exceptions, double l and y → i). Moreover, she emphasised strategies, such as referring to example sentences, asking if something is not clear or completing easy exercises first and then getting back to the difficult ones. When the pupils were writing, she monitored and asked struggling pupils hinting questions.

2.5.4.2 Interview with Lukáš

Lukáš would learn English even if he did not have to. At present, he mostly uses the language when playing computer games, but he also watches films in the original version

without subtitles. In the future, he would like to study abroad, and is aware that English will help him to make himself understood. He also thinks that he will need English for programming.

He does not know what could prevent him from getting better in English, if not the fact that he does not study much. It helps him to revise with his mother. He explains: “She does not know the pronunciation very well, so I teach her. I do not revise for vocabulary tests, I usually remember all the words. If there is a bigger test, I revise for 15 minutes. I read the new subject-matter and mum examines me.”

Lukáš comments on his feelings in the lessons: “I feel tired, but not just in English, in all the subjects. Lessons usually bore me. And when writing a test, I am nervous.” He is not aware of being given different tasks than the rest of the class or of any special rules applying to him. The word dysorthography does not sound familiar to him.

2.5.4.3 Interview with teacher Z

According to the teacher Z, differentiation and individualization are “a good thing, but there must be conditions for it. The ideal number of pupils in a class, for the teacher to be able to differentiate well, would be twelve, fifteen at most.” She adds: “And I do not know, if it is really possible, when one works full-time, to be prepared in such a way for each lesson.”

How to differentiate instruction according to the pupils' level has been a big question for teacher Z: “All my career, I have tried to find the most efficient ways of doing it. I have tried many possibilities.” Although she still uses them occasionally, additional differentiated materials have not proved to be ideal, because the teacher was “flooded with paper, could not remember what task was given to whom, and therefore could not give feedback. And without feedback, it is no use doing the tasks.” At present, she mostly lets all the pupils work with the same material (e.g. text or exercise), but sets different tasks. The aim is to “modify the assignment, so that the material is fully exploited.”

The teacher Z alternates the criteria for dividing pupils into groups. She says: “Either I have the stronger pupils work together, and when they are working on their own, I can assist

the weaker ones. Or I ask the stronger to work with the weaker, for example one strong pupil can guide two weaker ones. It is possible as well, but I cannot do it too often because the stronger ones want to progress. Having to take care of their weaker classmates all the time would tire them.”

As to the manifestations of dysorthography in English, teacher Z says: “For me, it [different SpLDs] is all interconnected. The children are usually not dysorthographic only. They mostly switch letters in spelling. [...] And they are slower, definitely, they cannot keep up with the others. They might have far greater problems to remember grammatical rules and combine them [that the other pupils].” This can result, for example, in difficulties “not to forget the verb be and the -ing in the progressive form”, to remember to use “-s in present simple” or “to choose the right auxiliary verb.” According to the teacher, pupils with dysorthography “are able to memorize a rule, but it takes more time, and as soon as they start learning new things, they stop applying it. Combinations of tenses are problematic for them.”

The teacher emphasises the importance of the pupils' being able to use various sources of information. She explains: “I try to teach them to use available materials to make their work easier. I focus on this a lot. [I want them] to know where they can find a clue, a hint. All the things that they can use and that will help them.” The pupils are asked to highlight important information in grammar outlines in the workbook. The teacher encourages them to look at it when they need. She also points out usefulness of examples in instructions to exercises: “I teach them to notice if there is the scheme [of a particular structure] which can help them.”

For teaching sentence structure and word order, the teacher Z uses charts that she has created¹⁹: “There is the usual SVOMPT²⁰, but I also have a chart on question formation. There are model sentences, and on the other side of the sheet, the pupils write their own sentences in an empty table. It is hard to teach them to use the charts, but then they can use it from the 6th to the 9th year.”

In tests, spelling errors are tolerated to a great extent by teacher Z. She says: “If the

¹⁹ For an example of such a chart, see appendix 2.

²⁰ subject – verb – object – manner – place – time

word has an acceptable form, if I can see that the pupil knows it, I accept it. And the more, if the child has a SpLD.” The teacher gives enough time to all the pupils, not only those with SpLDs. Some tests are abridged for SpLD pupils: “I only assign them six exercises out of ten, for example. [...] Or even during a test, when I see that a pupil has done three sentences correctly, that they have a good command of it, I tell them to move on to the next exercise, [...] so that they have time to do other things.” She also helps SpLD pupils when they write a test by pointing out that they have, for example, forgotten to apply a rule.

Individual educational plans are designed by the remedial teacher on the basis of recommendations of the pedagogical-psychological counselling centre. Teacher Z is “acquainted with the IEPs” and knows “about the needs of individual children.” Although she consults the IEPs for recommendations, she mostly relies on “how the children react in the lessons.”

Discrepancies between the theory of SpLDs and the everyday reality at school are not perceived by teacher Z. Nevertheless, she comes across misapplications of aids used for pupils with SpLDs: “If it is prescribed to a lower-secondary pupil to use a buzzer or a reading frame, it is a nonsense, in my opinion. I do not agree with applying techniques devised for the elementary level to older pupils. The disorder should be partially compensated by then, and the pupil should know alternative ways to manage [the problematic phenomenon] or be able to ask for help.” At the lower-secondary level, the techniques cannot “be as playful as at the elementary school, there is not enough time for it.”

Another problem encountered frequently by teacher Z concerns lack of effort on the part of SpLD pupils. She says: “If the children do not do anything, if they are absent a lot, if they do not study at home, what accommodations should I offer them? It is extremely difficult, and not everyone realises.” Some pupils abuse the fact that they have an IEP: “They try to manipulate you, they require concessions all the time, although they do not need it. [...] Accommodations are sometimes detrimental to pupils. Some of them are bright and could manage more, but they do not want to because they know that they have the right to accommodations. But that is a problem of what they are told at home.”

According to teacher Z, the most important things for teaching dysorthographic pupils are: “getting to know the pupil [...] and trying to tailor the instruction to their needs as much as possible,” “reserving one's time for them,” “tolerating errors which are not important,” and “supporting the pupil.” Support is crucial because “it is a way to win the pupil for wanting to learn.” If possible, the pupil should be motivated positively, should be told that he or she is strong and can make it. If positive motivation fails, the pupil should be “put into motion” even by the means of bad marks. But with some pupils, it is not possible at all.

2.5.5 Summary and interpretation

At school 2, children with SEN are taken care of by teachers, special education experts (remedial teachers, speech therapist) and a psychologist, who cooperate closely with each other and with the pupils' parents. IEPs are a product of this interaction. To prevent misinterpretations of the IEP's role in a pupil's education and motivate pupils and their parents to work systematically, IEPs are formulated as goals for the pupils to achieve with specific support from the school. Consequently, the teachers can refer to the IEPs, if there are inadequate requirements or insufficient intensity of work on the part of pupils or their parents.

Both the English teachers, together with the remedial teacher, insist on the importance of effort on the part of the pupils and their parents. Unfortunately, it is this particular point that often causes problems. The teachers see unused potential in Cyril and Lukáš. Both the boys are aware of their effort being insufficient and talk about it in the interviews.

The teachers Y and Z interpret differentiation and individualisation primarily as modifying educational content according to the pupils' needs. They talk about high demands that content differentiation places on a teacher's preparation for lessons. Consequently, it is not possible for them to differentiate as they would wish to in every lesson, especially because they work full-time and cannot devote much time to lesson preparation. They both try, however, to differentiate, and the most common way of doing it for them is dividing pupils in groups. While teacher Y only works with homogeneous groups (pupils at the same level together), teacher Z alternates homogeneous groups with heterogeneous ones, in which advanced pupils help their weaker classmates.

Another aspect in which the two teachers differ is the role of cooperation between pupils in the lessons. The teacher Z encourages it, she asks pupils to explain difficult things to each other or look in a classmate's exercise book, if they are not sure what to do. In teacher Y's lessons, pupils mostly work individually, and is what Cyril complains about in the interview. It has already been mentioned several times that cooperation is crucial for inclusive education. The teacher Z seems to be more aware of this fact than her colleague.

Spelling errors are tolerated by both the teachers in all tests under the condition that the incorrectly spelt word is still recognisable. Lukáš is aware of spelling being one of his weaker points, but Cyril does not mention it at all. The reason behind Cyril's unawareness could be the tolerant attitude of his English teacher to spelling errors, but in such a case, the question arises why it works differently for Lukáš.

While the teacher Z does not pay special attention to spelling improvement of SpLD pupils, the teacher Y assigns them spelling exercises which consist in filling in missing letters to words. It is a technique that was not mentioned in the list of solutions for spelling practice, but it has proved efficient to the teacher Y.

Both the English teachers, as well as the remedial teacher, agree on the fact that grammar should be taught in a systematic, organised way to dysorthographic learners. Explicit grammar teaching is convenient for them, and it is exactly how the teachers present grammar in their lessons. The abstract system of the language should be schematised or visualised, so that the pupils can grasp it. It is why charts have been designed, which are used to teach sentence structure²¹. There are versions of the charts for different tenses and moods. Both the teachers are positive about the efficiency of this aid for pupils with weak sense of language, including dysorthographic pupils.

It is emphasised by the teacher Z that (not only) dysorthographic pupils should be trained to use various aids, use model examples and look for information in any materials available. She insists on the pupils' reading example sentences in instructions to exercises, especially when the exercise makes part of a test. Furthermore, she teaches the pupils to use grammar overviews in their workbooks, which are gone through and highlighted in the

²¹ For an example of such a chart, see appendix 2.

lessons.

The preceding two paragraphs sums up almost all the general characteristic of the recommended approach to teaching grammar to dysorthographic learners presented in chapter 1.4.2.2. Moreover, the teachers used their experience and knowledge of problems of dysorthographic learners to create their own teaching aid which they have been using successfully since then.

The remedial teacher, unlike the two English teachers, spoke about the multisensory approach (emphasised in chapters 1.4.1 and 1.4.2) being recommended for teaching SpLD children. In the observed lessons of the teacher Y, activities involving various senses were scarce. The only activity involving movement was the game, the visual sensory pathway was only stimulated in activities involving reading but such activities were usually not combined with much auditory input. The lessons of the teacher Z involved more various combinations of senses. Use of pictures and colours was accompanied by auditory perception. Occasionally, activities even involved movement in the form of word-card manipulation or articulation of words.

The remedial teacher and teacher Z emphasize the need of struggling SpLD pupils to be appreciated. Especially pupils with severe disorders or pupils who have not got appropriate remedial care may get easily discouraged, if – despite their hard work – they still perform badly in comparison to their peers. It is the role of teachers to appreciate the pupil's effort and give them positive feedback even on the merest progress that they make.

Respecting individual needs of every pupil is a point that all the three teachers insist on. The remedial teacher mentions the great variability of SpLDs, which are hardly ever “pure”. Even in two children with the same diagnosis, the proportion of various deficits is very likely to be different. The teacher Z emphasises that a teacher should get to know each SpLD pupil's needs and preferences to be able to approach them in an adequate way. It is a statement almost identical to the following sentence from Schneider and Crombie:

Knowledge of individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses as well as interests (and their specific needs) is essential to ensure that the foreign-language teacher can adapt to meet the requirements of the young people. (19)

The remedial teacher remarks that uniqueness of each child is what makes her work interesting. According to her, it is good for teachers to have basic theoretical knowledge of SpLDs, but it is also important for them to let each child inspire them and use their imagination to find ways of approaching individual children.

2.6 Overall interpretation of the two cases

The teachers are aware of the general principles of approaching SpLD learners in the classroom that are recommended in literature on the issue, and they observe them quite conscientiously. Accommodating measures concerning examination and assessment employed by the teachers reflect the recommendations given in literature as well.

It has been repeatedly emphasised by the respondents that SpLDs manifest differently in each child. Various combinations of deficits, together with personality traits, interests and influence of the environment determine a unique set of needs in each pupil, which must be taken into account. It is useful for teachers to know what is recommended for teaching dysorthographic pupils, however, applying ready-made procedures found in books without considering if they are appropriate and efficient for a particular pupil is not a good solution. According to the respondents, a teacher's role consists in getting to know a pupil and adapting instruction to him or her, be it by the means of recommended methods or techniques, their modifications or products of the teacher's own pedagogical creativity.

All the three English teachers pay special attention to providing clear instructions, checking the pupils' comprehension and giving feedback in the course of activities. They often call on SpLD pupils (if they are not dyslexic) to read and translate instructions, or ask them if they know what they are supposed to do. Dysorthographic pupils are also given intensive support when working on written tasks. The teachers ask them scaffolding questions to guide them to the solution and give them feedback on the correctness of their procedure.

Furthermore, the respondents also agree on the need to encourage dysorthographic pupils, who are not making great progress despite working hard. It is important to appreciate every partial success of the pupils to make them notice that they have made a progress and

show them that their effort pays off. Nevertheless, all the three teachers also speak about insufficient effort being a frequent problem of SpLD pupils, who often perform worse than they could because they rely on their right to adapted assessment. The psychologist and the remedial teacher insist on the role of parents to support their children in studying systematically.

Presenting grammar in an organised way that enables dysorthographic pupils to grasp the system of the language is considered essential by the teachers. All of them present grammar explicitly and provide visual support on the blackboard (model sentences) or in grammar summaries in the workbook. The psychologist and the teacher Z see the capacity to look up information or use an aid (such as a grammar summary) as crucial for dysorthographic pupils, and the teacher Z trains them systematically in doing so.

As far as examination and assessment are concerned, the teachers' approach to dysorthographic pupils mostly respects principles similar to those enumerated in chapters 2.4.1.2 and 2.4.2.2. The written and spoken form of examination are alternated, so that dysorthographic learners can demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Knowing the consequences of putting pressure on dysorthographic pupils by determining time limits when writing tests, all the teachers grant them as much time as needed. In addition, the teachers Y and Z give them abridged versions of tests.

Although none of the respondents is aware of any discrepancies between the theory and practice of teaching English to dysorthographic learners, some differences between the two domains have proved to exist during the research. When it comes to the approaches and methods of instruction, techniques employed and didactic aids used, the observed reality does not correspond much to the recommendations described in the theoretical part of the thesis. None of the English teachers has spoken about multisensory approach, and only lessons of teacher Z featured more activities involving several senses. Most aids and techniques mentioned in chapters 2.4.1.2 and 2.4.2.2, such as movable devices, spell checkers, mind-mapping, colour or shape coding, have not appeared in the observed lessons.

The fact that they were not mentioned in the interviews with the English teachers

either (the only respondent to talk about mind-mapping was the psychologist) may suggest that the teachers are not informed about them. Nevertheless, this is not the only possible explanation. It may also be the case of the teachers being satisfied with the current state of affairs and feeling no need to integrate such novelties in the lessons. However, the repeatedly mentioned complaints about having to teach in excessively large classes and problems connected to working full-time and being overloaded with tasks seem to suggest a different explanation. Incorporating the above-mentioned aids and techniques in the lessons could be time-consuming and the dysorthographic pupils may need a lot of time and support to learn to use them, which the teachers could not grant them under such conditions. Furthermore, literature on SpLDs is extensive and research on the issue is carried out continuously. If the teachers find it hard to find time for preparing differentiated lessons, they may also be unable to save time for studying extensive materials. As Nijakowska writes, “indeed, one can be truly confused with the massive amount of conflicting research outcomes, competing theories and alternative treatments offered in the study of dyslexia” (*Dyslexia in the Foreign Language Classroom* 115).

Conclusion

Although dysorthography is usually mentioned in relation to acquisition of the Czech orthography, it is a condition that complicates acquisition of foreign languages to a great extent as well. Dysorthographic pupils often struggle with spelling and grammar, but other areas, such as vocabulary acquisition, may be affected too. The thesis relates the issue of dysorthography in connection to EFL instruction with a special attention paid to the lower secondary level.

Possible problems of pupils with dysorthography in spelling and grammar have been described in the theoretical part of the text, followed by lists of recommended approaches, methods, techniques and aids which can be useful for such pupils. In the practical part of the text, a multiple case study which was carried out among experienced English teachers at schools paying special attention to children with SEN was described and interpreted relating the teachers' experience a know-how and comparing it to the recommendations given in the theoretical part.

The general problem of large classes and numerous duties imposed on teachers has proved to have a negative influence on the care for pupils with dysorthography in English lessons. The possibilities of differentiation and individualisation are limited by these two conditions and the teachers feel forced to confine their care for SpLD children to partial measures. It has been shown that even at schools with above-standard services for SEN pupils and with teachers committed to the task of teaching pupils with SpLDs, the conditions are not ideal for them to employ special methods and techniques for teaching dysorthographic pupils. It seems that implementing the recommended methods and techniques will have to be postponed until some structural changes are made in the educational system.

Works cited

Ainscow, Mel et al. *From Exclusion To Inclusion: Ways Of Responding In Schools To Students With Special Educational Needs*. Manchester: CfBT Education Trust, 2013. Print.

Crombie, Margaret. "Foreign Language Learning and Dyslexia". *Languages Without Limits*. 8th April 2016. Web.

Czech Republic. Parliament. "Act N° 561 On Pre-School, Basic, Secondary, Tertiary Professional And Other Education" (School Act). Translation Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, 2004, *MŠMT*. 15th June 2016. Web.

"Definition Consensus Project". *International Dyslexia Association*. 10th February 2016. Web.

Thompson, Moira. *Dyslexia and Modern Foreign Languages*. Stirling: Dyslexia Scotland, 2007. Web.

European Commission. *Education and Training Monitor 2015: Czech Republic*. 4th July 2016. Web.

Frith, Uta. "Paradoxes In The Definition Of Dyslexia". *Dyslexia* 5 (1999): 192–214. Print.

Golliet, Odile. *L'anglais pour les dyslexiques. Pour parents, professeurs et accompagnants des élèves dyslexiques*. Lyon: J. André, 2011. Print.

Heumann, Judith E. "Inclusion: The Challenge, The Opportunity". *Inclusion: Policy And Practice*. Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1999. 5-18. Print.

Hudson, R.F., High, L. Al Otaiba, S. *Dyslexia and the brain: What does current research tell us?* *The Reading Teacher*, 60(6), 506-515. Web.

"International Statistical Classification Of Diseases And Related Health Problems", 10th Revision. *World Health Organization*. 2016. 7th May 2015. Web.

Jucovičová, Drahomíra. *Specifické poruchy učení a chování*. V Praze: Univerzita Karlova, Pedagogická fakulta, 2014. Print.

- Jucovičová, Drahomíra, and Hana Žáčková. *Dysortografie*. Praha: D H, 2008. Print.
- Jucovičová, Drahomíra, and Hana Žáčková. *Reedukace specifických poruch učení u dětí*. Praha: Portál, 2008. Print.
- Kasíková, Hana. *Reformu dělá učitel, aneb, Diferenciace, individualizace, kooperace ve vyučování: (Pohledy pedagogické)*. Praha: Sdružení pro tvořivou dramaturgii, 1994. Print.
- Kasíková, Hana, and Jana Straková, eds. *Diverzita a diferenciaci v základním vzdělávání*. Praha: Karolinum, 2011. Print.
- Kormos, Judit, and Anne Margaret Smith. *Teaching Languages to Students with Specific Learning Differences*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2012. Print.
- Michalová, Zdeňka, and Ilona Pešatová. *Specifické poruchy učení a chování v inkluzivním prostředí základní školy*. Liberec: Technická univerzita v Liberci, 2011. Print.
- . "Dlouhodobý záměr vzdělávání a rozvoje vzdělávací soustavy na období 2015-2020". *MŠMT*. 7th July 2016. Web.
- . "Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education". *MŠMT*. 7th May 2016. Web.
- . "Regulation n° 73 on Education of Children, Pupils, Students with Special needs and of gifted and talented children, pupils and students" (as amended). *MŠMT*. 20th June 2016. Web.
- . Strategie vzdělávací politiky České republiky do roku 2020. *Vzdělávání 2020*. 17th May 2016. Web.
- Nijakowska, Joanna. *Dyslexia in the EFL Classroom*. Pearson, 2014. 21st May 2016. Web.
- . *Dyslexia in The Foreign Language Classroom*. 1st ed. Bristol: Multilingual matters, 2010. Print. Second Language Acquisition. Print.
- Nijakowska, Joanna et al. *DysTEFL - Dyslexia For Teachers Of English As A Foreign Language: Trainer's Booklet*. Cham: Druck Verlag Ernst Vögel, 2013. Print.
- Pokorná, Věra. *Vývojové poruchy učení v dětství a v dospělosti*. Praha: Portál, 2010. Print.

Pollock, Joy, Elisabeth Waller, and Rody Politt. *Day-To-Day Dyslexia in The Classroom*. 2nd ed. New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2004.

Schneider, Elke, and Margaret Crombie. *Dyslexia And Foreign Language Learning*. London: David Fulton, c2003. Print.

Selikowitz, Mark. *Dyslexie a jiné poruchy učení*. Vyd. 1., české. Praha: Grada, 2000. Print.

Siegel, Linda S. "Perspectives On Dyslexia". *Pediatrics and Child Health* 1.9 (2006): 581–587. Web.

Smečková, Gabriela. "Terminologické vymezení a klasifikace specifických poruch školních dovedností" in *Základy speciální pedagogiky*. Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, 2012. 89-96. Print.

„Shape Coding“. *Moor House School and College*. 24th April 2016. Web

Šojdrová, Michaela et al. *Rovný přístup ke vzdělávání v České republice: situace a doporučení*. Praha: ČŠI, 2014. 11th June 2016. Web.

Tannenbergerová, Monika. *Průvodce školní inkluzí, aneb, Jak vypadá kvalitní základní škola Současnosti?*. Praha: Wolters Kluwer, 2016. Print.

"The Orton-Gillingham Approach". *Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practicioners and Educators*. 6th April 2016. Web.

United States. Cong. House Education and the Workforce. "Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004". 108th Cong. Pub. L. 446, H.R. 1350, pt. A. Washington: GPO, 2004. *The Library of Congress*. 14th April 2016. Web.

"What Are Specific Learning Difficulties". *British Dyslexia Association*. 10th February 2016. Web.

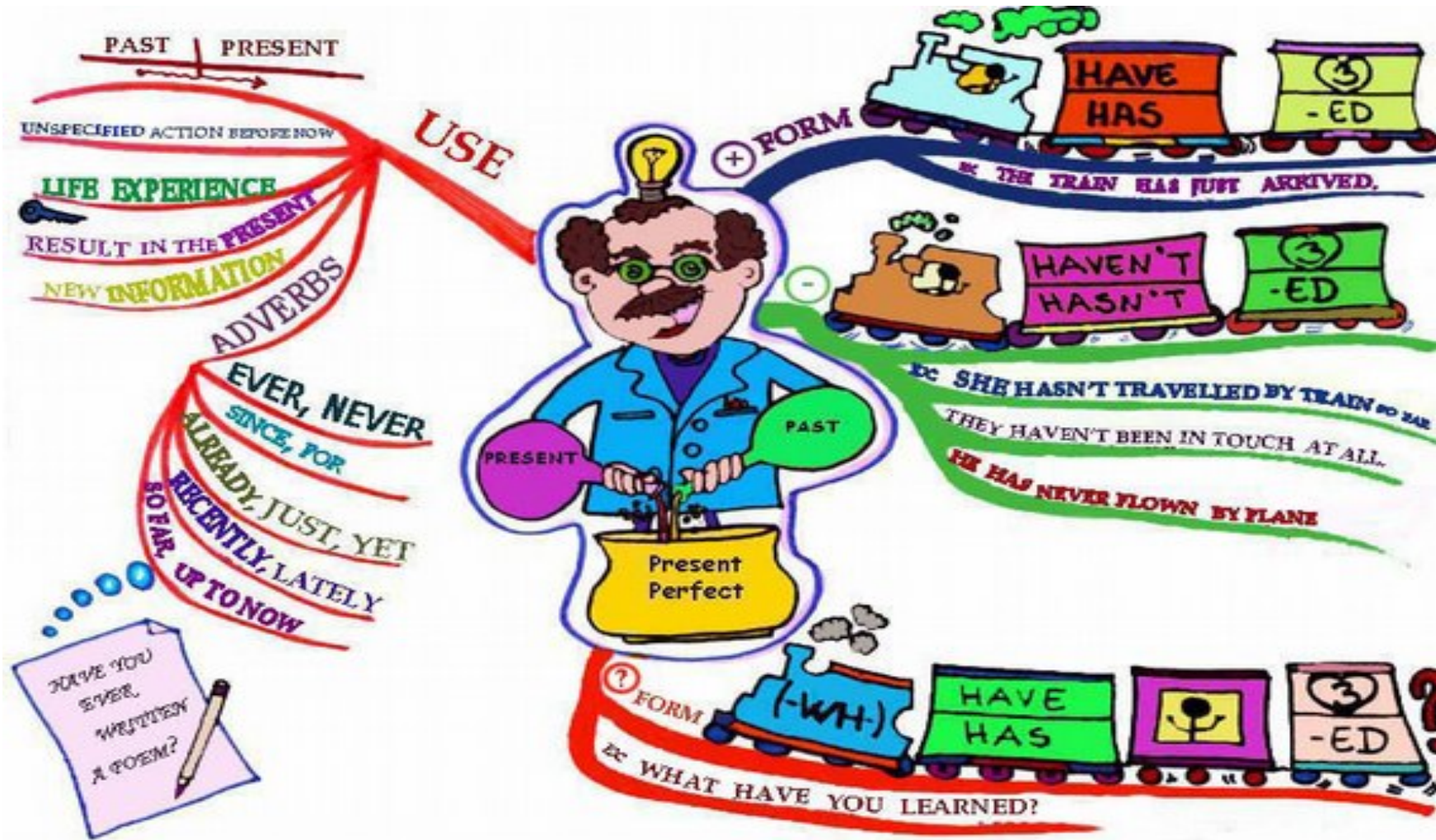
Yin, Robert K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 4th ed. Los Angeles, Calif.: Sage Publications, c2009. Print.

Zelinková, Olga. *Cizí jazyky a specifické poruchy učení*. Havlíčkův Brod: Tobiáš, 2006. Print.

---. *Poruchy učení: dyslexie, dysgrafie, dysortografie, dyskalkulie, dyspraxie, ADHD*. Vyd. 12. Praha: Portál, 2015. Print.

Zelinková, Olga, and Miloslav Čedík. *Mám dyslexii: Průvodce pro dospívající a dospělé se specifickými poruchami učení*. Praha: Portál, 2013. Print.

Appendix 1 – grammar mind-map



COPYRIGHT: Ana Todorovic-Redetic

Appendix 2 – Word order chart

Word Order and Question Formation

	Wh- word	Auxiliary	Subject	Verb	Object	Adjuncts			
						Manner	Place	Time	
YES/NO QUESTIONS			I	study	English	hard	at home	every day.	
		Do	you	study	English	hard	at home	every day?	
		Does	he/she	study	English	hard	at home	every day?	
		Did	they	study	English	hard	at home	every day?	
		Must	we	study	English	hard	at home	every day?	
		Should	she	study	English	hard	at home	every day?	
		Will	they	study	English	hard	at home	every day?	
WH- QUESTIONS	What	do	you	study		hard	at home	every day?	
	How	do	you	study	English		at home	every day?	
	Where	do	you	study	English	hard		every day?	
	When	do	you	study	English	hard		?	
	Why	do	you	study	English				
				you	study	English			with my son.
	Who	do	you	study	English				with?
SUBJECT QUESTIONS			Who	studies	English	hard	at home	every day?	
			Which of you	doesn't study	English	hard	at home	every day?	
			How many of you	study	English		at home	every day?	

Appendix 3 – Interview questions for psychologist/remedial teacher

	Questions in Czech	Questions in English
EXPERIENCE	Jak dlouhou máte praxi v oboru?	How long have you worked as a school psychologist?
	S kolika žáky s dysortografií jste během své praxe pracovala? (přibližně)	How many pupils with dysorthography have you encountered during your career? (approximately)
SCHOOL SYSTEM OF CARE FOR SPLD PUPILS	Jaký je obecný přístup Vaší školy k problematice SPU? (diagnostika, reedukace, integrace/inkluze, opatření)	What is the school's general approach to SpLDs? (diagnostics, remedial teaching, integrations/inclusion, measures)
	Jaká je Vaše role v tomto systému?	What is your role in the system?
	Jaká je Vaše role při tvorbě IVP?	What is your role in the creation of Individual Education Plans?
DIFFICULTIES OF DYSORTHO-GRAPHIC PUPILS	Jaké jsou podle Vaší zkušenosti potíže dysortografiků v angličtině? Které jsou nejvýraznější?	According to your experience, what difficulties do pupils with dysorthography deal with at lower secondary school? Which are the most prominent ones?
APPROACHES, METHODS, COMPENSATION TECHNIQUES	Konzultují s Vámi učitelé metodické otázky spojené s výukou žáků s dysortografií? Čeho konkrétně se týkají? Jaká je Vaše odpověď?	Do teachers consult you about methodological questions connected to teaching dysorthographic pupils? What do the questions concern in particular? What answers do you give?
	Jaká obecná doporučení byste dala učitelům angličtiny, který má ve třídě žáka s dysortografií?	What general recommendations would you give to English teacher who teach in a class with an integrated dysorthographic pupil?

	<p>Jakým způsobem (jakými metodami a technikami) může učitel angličtiny takovému žákovi pomoci zlepšovat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hláskování ? • přesmykování, zaměňování a vynechávání písmen? • oddělování slov? • osvojování slovní zásoby? • pořadí slov ve větě? • tvorbu složených slovesných tvarů? • organizaci textu? 	<p>How (by means of what methods and techniques) can an English teacher help pupils with dysorthography improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spelling? • reversals, confusion and omission of letters? • word boundaries identification? • vocabulary acquisition? • word order? • formation of complex verbal structures? • textual organization?
	<p>Jaké kompenzační techniky doporučujete? (pomůcky, úprava obsahu či hodnocení, delší časové limity, atd.)</p>	<p>What compensation techniques do you recommend? (didactic aids, modification of content or evaluation, higher time allotment, etc.)</p>
RESOURCES	<p>Jaká literatura/kurzy/přednášky/vzory Vás v práci s dysortografií inspirovaly?</p>	<p>What literature/courses/lectures/models have inspired you in working with dysorthographic pupils?</p>
	<p>Narazila jste na rozpor mezi teorií popisovanou v odborné literatuře a každodenní praxí ve škole? V čem spočívá? Jak ho řešíte?</p>	<p>Have you encountered a discord between the theory described in academic literature and pedagogical reality? What does it consist of? How do you cope with it?</p>
COMMENTS SUMMARY,	<p>Pokuste se zformulovat několik vlastních zásadních poznatků o práci s žáky s dysortografií (například formou několika hesel či rad).</p>	<p>Try to formulate several essential findings of yours about working with dysorthographic pupils (e.g. in the form of mottos or pieces of advice).</p>

	Chtěla byste něco dodat?	Do you wish to add some further comments?
--	--------------------------	---

Appendix 4 – Interview questions for pupils

	Questions in Czech	Questions in English
MOTIVATION	Proč se učíš anglicky? Už jsi někdy angličtinu využil mimo školu? Myslíš, že ji v budoucnosti využiješ? Kdybys nemusel, učil by ses ji?	Why do you learn English? Have you ever used English outside school? Do you think you will use it in the future? If you did not have to, would you learn it anyway?
DIFFICULTIES, LEARNING STRATEGIES, PREFERENCES	Co ti v angličtině jde a co je pro tebe naopak těžké?	What are you good at in English and what is difficult for you on the contrary?
	Co ti překáží v tom, aby se ti v angličtině dařilo lépe? Co ti pomáhá?	What prevents you from being successful in English? What helps you?
	Jak se připravuješ na hodiny angličtiny? Na písemky?	How do you prepare for English lessons? For tests?
	Kdybys mohl něco změnit na hodinách angličtiny, co by to bylo? Proč?	If you could change anything about your English lessons, what would it be? Why?
FEELINGS	Jak se v hodinách angličtiny cítíš? Proč?	What are your feelings during English lessons? Why?
INDIVIDUÁLNÍ PŘÍSTUP	Platí pro tebe během hodin jiná pravidla, než pro zbytek třídy? Jaká? Proč? Vyhovují ti?	Are there different rules that apply to you and to the rest of the class during the lessons? What ones? Why? Do they suit you?
	Dostáváš někdy jiné úkoly než zbytek třídy? V hodině? Na doma?	Do you sometimes get different tasks than the rest of the class? During the lesson? As homework?
INFORMOVANOST	Co víš o dysortografii?	What do you know about dysorthography?

Appendix 5 – Interview questions for teachers

	Questions in Czech	Questions in English
EXPERIENCE	Jak dlouhou máte praxi v učení angličtiny? Ve školství i jinde.	How long have you taught English? In the school system and elsewhere.
	S kolika žáky s dysortografií jste během své učitelské praxe pracovala? (přibližně)	How many pupils with dysorthography have you encountered during your career? (approximately)
EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK	RVP vyžaduje „uplatňovat princip diferenciaci a individualizaci vzdělávacího procesu při organizaci činností, při stanovování obsahu, forem i metod výuky.“ Co Vás k tomuto výroku napadá?	The Framework Educational Programme requires teachers to „apply differentiation and individualization of educational process in organization of activities, determination of contents, forms and methods of instruction.“ What does this quote make you think of?
CLASS MANAGEMENT	Jak organizujete vyučování, abyste mohla žákům se SVP věnovat potřebný čas, prostor a pozornost?	How do you organize lessons in order to give enough time, space and pay enough attention to SEN pupils?
DIFFICULTIES OF DYSORTHOGRAPHIC PUPILS	S jakými problémy se žáci s dysortografií na druhém stupni podle Vaší zkušenosti potýkají? Jaké jsou nejvýraznější?	According to your experience, what difficulties do pupils with dysorthography deal with at lower secondary level? Which are the most prominent ones?
APPROACHES, HES,	Jaké obecné přístupy se Vám osvědčily při práci s dysortografií?	What general approaches have proved useful to you in teaching pupils with dysorthography?

METHODS, COMPENSATION TECHNIQUES	Jaké přístupy či metody, které mohou pomoci dysortografikům, používáte pro celou třídu?	What approaches or methods that can help pupils with dysorthography do you apply for the whole class?
	Jaké používáte kompenzační techniky? (pomůcky, úprava obsahu či hodnocení, delší časové limity, atd.)	What compensation techniques do you use? (teaching aids, changes of educational content and evaluation, longer time limits, etc.)
	<p>Pomáháte žákům s dysortografií zlepšovat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hláskování slov? • přesmykování, zaměňování a vynechávání písmen? • oddělování slov? • osvojování slovní zásoby? • pořadí slov ve větě? • tvorbu složených slovesných tvarů? • organizaci textu? <p>Pokud ano, jak?</p>	<p>Do you help pupils with dysorthography to improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spelling? • reversals, confusion and omission of letters? • word boundaries identification? • vocabulary acquisition? • word order? • formation of complex verbal structures? • textual organization <p>If you do, how?</p>
RESOURCES	Jak využíváte individuální vzdělávací plán žáků? Podílela jste se na jeho tvorbě?	How do you use individual educational plans of pupils? Have you participated on its creation?
	Jaká literatura/kurzy/přednášky/vzory Vás v práci s dysortografiky inspirovaly?	What literature/courses/lectures/models have inspired you in working with dysorthographic pupils?

	Narazila jste na rozpor mezi teorií popisovanou v odborné literatuře a pedagogickou praxí? V čem spočívá? Jak ho řešíte?	Have you encountered a discord??? between the theory described in academic literature and pedagogical reality? What does it consist of? How do you cope with it?
	Využíváte při práci s žáky s dysortografií spolupráci se ŠPP, PPP, SPC či jinými institucemi nebo osobami? V čem spolupráce spočívá?	Do you cooperate with School counselling centre, pedagogical-psychological counselling centre, special-education centre or other institutions or people? How do you cooperate?
SUMMARY, COMMENTS	Pokuste se zformulovat několik vlastních zásadních poznatků o práci s žáky s dysortografií (například formou několika hesel či rad).	Try to formulate several essential findings of yours about working with dysorthographic pupils (e.g. in the form of mottos or pieces of advice).
	Chtěla byste něco dodat?	Do you wish to add some further comments?

Strategies, approaches, techniques, aids	teaching phonological rules	Accommodations
	teaching word structure	
	multisensory activities	
	phonetically or morphologically grouped words	more time for completing tasks
	<i>look-say-cover-write</i>	
	teaching aids (grammar summaries, letter or word cards , IWB etc.)	given to the pupil (text, ppt presentation) or the lesson recorded by the pupil
	explicit grammar presentation	
	mind-mapping	
	colour or shape coding	oral practice or examination
	clarifying instructions/corrective feedback	
mnemonic devices		