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ÚSTAV ANGLISTIKY A AMERIKANISTIKY

Techniques of Teaching General English
Vocabulary at Secondary School Level

DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto práci vypracovala samostatně a pouze na základě uvedených pramenů.

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Děkuji vedoucí diplomové práce Doc. PhDr. Jarmile Mothejzíkové, CSc. za cenné náměty, rady a připomínky k textu. Mé poděkování patří také Gymnáziu Jaroslava Vrchlického v Klatovech a Křesťanskému gymnáziu v Praze Hostivaři. Zejména mám na mysli vedoucí předmětových komisí, kteří ochotně podpořili můj výzkum, jejich spolupracující kolegy a v neposlední řadě samozřejmě studenty, kteří otevřeně odpovídali na otázky obsažené v dotazníku.

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1. Introduction; Field of study, terminology

1.1 Introduction

This thesis deals with a few selected problems connected with English vocabulary teaching at Czech secondary schools. Its first theoretical part deals with the background of the process of learning in general. Further, the author presents the results of her research. A study on the situation of English lessons at two distinct Czech secondary schools is followed by a brief overview of a segment of Czech textbook market.

Out of the vast domain of vocabulary teaching and learning two aspects have been chosen for further considerations based on the research. First of all, we are interested in the current state of Czech textbook market, specifically in the sphere of additional materials for English vocabulary acquisition. How much does it correspond to students' needs? And the other way round: to what extent are learners able to profit from the offer? Is learner independence fostered enough under the conditions of Czech educational system? These and other questions will be discussed on the basis of our research results. Secondly, with regards to the category of 15-20-year-old students, this paper aims at giving some useful hints for teaching vocabulary with emphasis on students' self-instruction. Besides its principles, attention will be paid to the key rules of the Lexical Approach, a method introduced in late 1990s by Michael Lewis. Our aim is to project the combination of some aspects of these two methods (Self-directed Learning and the Lexical Approach) as one possible way of presenting English language in an interesting and effective manner complying with the target group of older secondary school students.

1.2 Field of study

Although the field of study is restricted to the two above mentioned domains of language teaching, there is a need to specify some of its aspects and explain a few notions that are crucial for our discourse. First of all, who is secondary school student under Czech conditions? The author works with two near categories. The survey is primarily oriented on the category of four-year secondary school students, i.e. young people who have started their secondary education after leaving any nine-year primary school. In addition, the survey covers students of the same age following their eight-year secondary school education that was started at the age of twelve. In any case, the age of all the students is between fifteen and twenty years.¹ The research has been made only at schools providing universal secondary education.² These schools are structured primarily as preparatory institutions for university studies.³

Other criteria for our study are students' age and a minimal amount of three lessons of English language per week. (Unfortunately, the second criterion must compensate for the criterion of quality of instruction guaranteed only partly by the educational system of our country, but above all by teachers themselves. No matter how important, the qualitative view is inapplicable here.) In the questionnaire (see Appendix A/B) the students were asked to give both facts about the structure of their English lessons and their own opinions and suggestions for their improving. Their responses

¹ For the sake of simplicity the category is also called "older secondary school students" in this paper.

² Grammar school - In Czech "gymnázium".

³ The results of our survey are, however, to some extent valid also under the conditions of various schools giving special secondary education (economic, technical, pedagogic et al.), since Czech educational system does not make much difference in this aspect except for more specialized vocabulary taught at these schools which is sometimes compensated by weaker emphasis on grammar issues.

show some interesting tendencies in English education both on the sides of teachers and learners. Except for pointing them out the author also compares the situation of the two sample schools. In final part of this work the reader is provided with concrete hints for English teaching based on the use of Self-directed Learning and the Lexical Approach.

For the purposes of the second research it is crucial to specify the notion of "additional" or "complementary" materials for vocabulary teaching and learning. These terms refer to all materials used both in in-class vocabulary teaching and students' home work. The only limit is the requirement for the students to have any other course book used during class work. The role of such a basic manual is only complemented (e.g. by the means of specification or enlivening of the subject matter) by the use of other materials. The difference is essential and has its consequence. (If we, for some reason, refer to any basic material, it will be clearly pointed out in the text.) Whereas the basic materials should be graded, the complementary ones, on the other hand, can be linear, but always up-to-date and well related to the course content.

The author's concern is focused on the situation in Czech bookstores. Therefore, she maps books and recordings. The written, visual and acoustic materials involved in the market survey are both of Czech and foreign production.

1.3 Terminology

At the background of our field of discourse there are a few notions with variable usage. With regards to this fact, the author's choice of particular use will be explained in this chapter. Referring to the process of English language education we stick to the abbreviation TEFL.⁴ Since Czech

⁴Teaching of English as a foreign language

conditions do not require the distinction between the terms "foreign language" and "second language", in this paper we use simply "L2" for English and "L1" for Czech.⁵ For a similar reason of double interpretation we avoid the abbreviation TESOL.⁶

As for "applied linguistics", we follow the Czech concept covering various areas of science, i.e. not only language education, but also I.T. etc. Since the widely European word "didactics" is not much used in English speaking countries, we will always refer to its content as to English teaching process. Even if we use the word "teaching", an adequate response on the side of learners is presumed. However, at some points it is necessary to divide this process in two. In these cases we make explicit difference between teacher's and learner's participation.

Although the leading subject matter of this work is vocabulary, other levels of language (i.e. phonetics and grammar) and cultural issues of English speaking countries are also mentioned here. The author uses the linguistic platform (and terminology) of Prague Structural School. Above all, the "langue/parole" distinction is taken for granted. Further, we distinguish "clause" from "sentence" (combination of clauses). If the term "sign" is used, it is specified if it is being referred to a phoneme, a letter, a word or any other unit.

Another differentiation is essential in case of "method" and "technique". This thesis uses the concept of method as an overall plan for language presentation. Technique, on the other hand, takes place directly in the classroom as concrete realization of one of the aspects involved in the plan

⁵ In numerous countries, on the other hand, it is important to distinguish foreign language (any other language than speakers' mother tongue) from second language (language taught and used for special purposes such as official contact etc.).

⁶ TESOL means either Teaching English to speakers of other languages or Teaching English as second or other language.

defined by a method. Each technique consists of exercises / activities that are responsible for internalisation of a concrete aspect of subject matter in students' memory. As far as methods are concerned, we follow the rough distinction communicative vs. grammar-translation methods. However, we regard them rather complementary than competitive, since they are two extreme positions of the same effort, each of them consisting of a number of distinct approaches. As for the terminology dealing with techniques, it also has its vague issues. One of them especially calls for explanation. It is the distinction of "repetition" (a mechanical technique frequently used for example in audio-lingual method) vs. "revision" (we express the same meaning, but thanks to a different context we never use the same form).

There are three more terms widely used in the domain of vocabulary learning that must be mentioned here because they are often mistaken. We should always differentiate "transfer" (issues from different levels of language that are brought from mother tongue to foreign language) from its hyponym "interference" referring solely to negative transfer. The third term to be explained is "feedback", frequently misinterpreted by referring only to testing or teacher-student communication. Is the feedback given to one another by students necessarily less effective?

1.4 Final remark

At the end of this chapter we would like to express many thanks to all the co-operative secondary school teachers who prepared excellent conditions for the survey, mainly by motivating their students. The respondents themselves, of course, deserve the same thanks for their open and inspirational responses.

2. Memory and Other Brain Processes Concerning Vocabulary Learning

Let us start this section with a quotation from I. Thompson:

It is difficult to think of any educational goal for which the ability to retain information is unimportant. Since language learning is another instance of learning in general, memory is also central to the acquisition of linguistic skills. The ability to understand spoken and written language, and to produce it in speaking and writing depends on the ability to recognise and retrieve information stored in memory, and the difficulty in carrying out such tasks is often contingent upon the weight of memory demands that they require. (Thompson in Wenden-Rubin 1987, p. 43)

In this section we will discuss basic steps of the process of memorising, pointing up their reference to vocabulary acquisition. It will also be contributed to the terminology section in Chapter 1. The steps explored are involved in the four-step sequence **Attention -> Encoding -> Storage -> Retrieval**.

2.1 Encoding

Encoding is the first necessary step to remembering. One possible definition of encoding is "translating incoming information into a mental representation that can be stored in memory" (Intelegen I: Memory - Theories and Processes /

Encoding).⁷ Emphasis is put on the attention of the subject which, thanks to many different filters, is selective. This, however, does not mean that the subject willingly avoids noticing certain issues. On the contrary, he or she registers all messages from its surroundings, but only the meaningful ones are put into memory. Memories are thus affected by the amount or type of attention devoted to encoding.⁸

Once attention is achieved, we can speak about input. Mc Carthy remarks that in L1 children come across first with spoken input, whereas with L2 learners it is expected that written and spoken language will play equally important roles right from the start. Some adult learners, especially self-trained ones, even have to cope with the lack of spoken input at the beginning of their learning process (Mc Carthy 1990, p. 37).

Input is either conscious or informal. As it will be obvious from Research Results (Chapter 5), students themselves tend to maximise benefits of the latter in vocabulary learning by watching TV programs in English, listening to BBC or to British and American pop-music.

Intelegen mentions three types of the encoding process: **structural encoding** (with emphasis on the physical structural characteristics of the stimulus), **phonemic encoding** (with emphasis on the sounds of the words) and **semantic encoding** which is considered the deepest of the three process types (Intelegen II: Human Memory Encoding, Storage, Retention and Retrieval / Human Memory: the Science / Encoding).

The structural, phonemic and/or semantic nature of encoding influences the effectiveness of verbal learning. Gérard de Montpellier comments on the similarity of motor

⁷ Since two hierarchized references were used within this internet source, we are now referring to them as to Intelegen I/II. Each reference has its entry in Bibliography.

⁸ In order to anticipate terminological confusion, attention must be paid to another possible view of encoding as "the mental process by which we

learning to learning of verbal series. Motor skill is acquired by practice. The reason is, according to Montpellier, that the sensory control of such reactions has a kinaesthetic origin, and is therefore dependent on the actual performance with an exclusively motor structure. In other words, by pronouncing a series of words, movements accompanied by proprioceptive excitation constitute certain structures of motor nature. It is important for the effectiveness of learning that each element of these structures (chains) plays the roles both of response and of stimulus (Montpellier et al. 1970, p.71).

2.2 Storage

We will now concentrate on the process of holding information in one's memory. Most sources distinguish three stages of memory storage: sensory store, short-term store and long-term store.

Evidently, all of them are fully applicable on the vocabulary learning process, neither of them being facultative. Intelegen states that "**sensory store** retains the sensory image for only a small part of a second, just long enough to develop a perception" (Intelegen II: Human Memory Encoding, Storage, Retention and Retrieval / Human Memory: the Science / Storage). No matter how short this stage is, teachers should be particularly attentive towards the means of students' very first perception of vocabulary items.

Each word should, above all, be registered by several senses. Naturally, sight and hearing are most at hand here, but especially with younger students storage can be supported by touching some realia. Unfortunately, modern computer technology has considerably limited the use of handwriting

express meaning in language, so the general term for what we do when we speak or write (cf. de-code)" (Lewis 1997, p. 216).

both in class work and in homework (see Research Results in Chapter 5). This is a regrettable tendency, since writing by hand links eyesight, movement and possibly also hearing and thus stimulates students' perception to a considerable degree (see verbal vs. motor learning in 2.1). One of the often omitted techniques is dictation.

As for **short term memory** (STM), it lasts for about twenty to thirty seconds without information rehearsal, whereas with it, STM will last as long as rehearsal continues (Intelegen II: Human Memory Encoding, Storage, Retention and Retrieval / Human Memory: the Science / Storage). This fact again supports the need for different kinds of initial experience with every single word. As commonly asserted, the STM capacity is restricted to about seven items. It can, however, be increased by chunking (combining similar material into units analogically to clustering in LTM). Let us now ponder upon the topic of possible ways (viewpoints) of chunking for a moment:

Chunking is most frequently derived from thematic connections among the groups of realia referred to by vocabulary. Therefore, most textbooks dedicate each unit to one specific topic. The best is if these topics are linked together as the level of issues presented by the textbook develops. Our research has proved thematic vocabulary grouping to be favoured by students; some of them even called for additional theme-centred vocabulary lists provided by their teachers. However, subject matter or theme is by no means the only possible way of chunking. If we need to sort out information for the sake of its firmer storage, why not base chunking on a different aspect than the semantic one? Phonetics, morphology and syntax are similarly appropriate. In addition, storage follows up with encoding which is three-levelled (see types of encoding in 2.1). We can also chunk regarding one morpheme shared by different words and thus

familiarise students with the process of derivation and with word families. On the syntactic level chunking can result in patterns easy to remember. The following example helps students realise the difference between transitive and intransitive verbs followed by gerund and/or by infinitive, possibly by bare infinitive. A question comes up, how to achieve the list of verbs. Simply given ready-made to the learners, it may not fulfil much of its function. The stimulus given by such a list must be strong enough to initiate long term storage. Students themselves (monitored by their teacher) should therefore list the verbs independently on the basis of equivalents from their mother tongue. Alternatively, the verbs can be looked up in a text or set up out of smaller pieces (preferably corresponding to morphemes) etc. By any means the class with their teacher's support can achieve for example such a list:

	seems			
	needs			
Sue	tries	to do		it too.
	wants			
	aims at			
	avoids			
King	can't stand		saying	the thing.
	longs for			
	looks forward to			
	can			
	lets me			
	makes me			
Bill	may	steal		the seal.
	must			
	will			

We have already mentioned the benefits of connecting the items to be remembered to other related information. Rhyming used in the scheme above is one possible means. Other instances of this process are mnemonics. For further comments on this issue see 2.4.

Discussing the **long term memory (LTM)** issue, Intelegen challenges the question of its permanence. The source explains that LTM has been suggested to be permanent, since information stored in it is never forgotten; only the means of its retrieval is lost. Intelegen doubts the accuracy of thus achieved memories, gives, however, no further explanation (Intelegen II: Human Memory Encoding, Storage, Retention and Retrieval / Human Memory: the Science / Storage).

What is more inspiring for our topic, are the rules related to the transfer of information from STM to LTM. This physiological process is, in fact, what we call the learning process. Intelegen mentions the **serial position effect** based on primacy and/or recency. The former affects LTM considerably by more intensive rehearsal of first words that are therefore more easily remembered. Words with the advantage of recency have not been rehearsed as often, but they are still available in STM (Intelegen II: Human Memory Encoding, Storage, Retention and Retrieval / Human Memory: the Science / Storage).

What has been said above draws our attention to the importance of **rehearsal** that helps to get information to LTM. Intelegen gives two rehearsal types: maintenance rehearsal is simple recitation, whereas elaborative rehearsal demands meaning of the information to be involved. Therefore, this type of rehearsal is much more effective in information storage. (Intelegen II: Human Memory Encoding, Storage, Retention and Retrieval / Human Memory: the Science / Storage). At this point, clear claim arises for teaching

words in contexts, so that their meanings are clear to learners including at least some of their semantic shades.

The necessity of practice in any effective learning process is generally known. It was a research by Ebbinghaus that showed that neural pathways in the hippocampus (known to be involved in learning) become increasingly sensitive when stimulated. Ebbinghaus proved that whereas activation changes quickly over time, the effect of practice decays much more slowly.

Teachers more or less intuitively work with as much variation as possible to make the learning process more effective. This also has an experimental support. Craik and Lockhart proposed in 1972 and Glenberg proved in 1977 that strength of memory depends on how deeply information is processed, not on how long it is processed. In other words, memory of words cannot be improved by merely repeating them for a longer period of time. The same result (extremely limited effect of frequency of repetition) was demonstrated by Thorndike's experiments already in 1932 (reference to all above mentioned experiments: *Intelligence II: Human Memory Encoding, Storage, Retention and Retrieval / Elaborative Processing and Text*). How come then that any process of verbal learning is significantly supported by a well distributed repetition? One possible response can be found in the interpretation of Montpeller's findings in 2.1. In that section the qualities of verbal learning and motor learning were stated to be (at least partly) shared. Consequently, practice (i.e. repetition of the reaction), which is regarded a true factor in motor learning, plays a key role not only in pure motor learning, but also in learning of words.

For successful storage, the right choice of syllabus is important. Cunningsworth explains that a structural syllabus with linear progression is suitable for students who are to pursue a prolonged period of study leading to a high level of

performance and accuracy (Cunningsworth 1987, p. 29). Secondary school and university students are typical members of this group. On the other hand, adults learning English for particular purposes will achieve more success following a functional syllabus with cyclical progression.

Besides choosing the right syllabus, experienced teachers are able to estimate learnability of words. They are aware of all possible kinds of difficulties such as spelling and phonological ones, problems with syntactic properties of words and with their meanings, especially if words are perceived as very close in meaning by the learner, who is therefore not able to separate one from another like in case of "make" and "do". A similar problem is "false friends". Other problems can be culture-based - learners may be unable to relate the meaning of a word to their world experience or to their culture.

For a summary, let us use one more quotation of Montpellier:

Spacing out the trials seems to provide the most favourable conditions for the exercise, from the point of view both of the number of repetitions required to reach the learning criterion and of the quantity of work accomplished in a given period. This is the substance of a law known as *Jost's law* (1897) which states that, with two associations of equal strength, but unequal age, repetition increases the strength of the older more than that of the younger. (Montpellier et al. 1970, pp. 77-78)

2.3 Retrieval

The mechanisms of encoding form a basis for retrieval - the process of remembering something on purpose. Retrieval

and encoding are interdependent - the more ways information has been encoded, the more ways there are for retrieving it. This should significantly influence the choice of teaching techniques. Except for encoding, retrieval is related to storage. When attempting to retrieve information, it is helpful to think about related ideas and it is also useful to know how the information was stored. This generates important tasks for teachers, above all in early stages of students' learning.

There are numerous strategies of achieving more effective retrieval; all of them, of course, connected with storage. One of them uses composition of words. Those with familiar morphemes are easier to decipher than other words. This, however, does not mean that our memory is structured in the same way as dictionary entries. Mc Carthy explains that derived words are stored separately as wholes:

"Produce" for example will have its own entry, so will "reproduce", and so, indeed, will the prefix "re-", for use in creative formations and interpreting new formations not yet part of the individual store. Thus, the retrieval process goes straight to the stored derived, compounded, or phrasal form without prior analysis. (Mc Carthy 1990, p. 44)

More help is achieved by presenting together words that are alike in structure, though not necessarily in meaning, e.g. words with *-al* morpheme such as *arrival*, *retrieval* etc. Mc Carthy mentions storing words according to spelling patterns that is typical for English native speakers (Mc Carthy 1990, p. 38). They are able to quickly call up sets of words with similar spellings and intuitively use them when solving spelling problems. Mc Carthy gives the example of question "How do you spell honey?" followed by "Like money."

as opposed to "Like funny." etc. He believes that L2 learner will develop similar cross-references for spelling (Mc Carthy 1990, p. 46).

Good results can also be achieved by putting emphasis on both conscious and informal input (see 2.1) and preferring grading input such as reading tests of increasing difficulty (see the analysis of the material by Hamajda in Chapter 5).

We all know situations when retrieval is not as prompt as one would need. Within this delay, however, a lot of rehearsal can take place when synonyms and co-hyponyms in our mind compete as candidates for the right word. Thus, these unwanted pauses can play a positive role in our learning process.

On the contrary, certain negative influences may appear like that of psychologically central meaning of a word that keeps a learner from retrieving the other ones.

2.4 Forgetting

On the basis of Nelson's experiment (1971) Intelegen states that "we retain more than we can retrieve". One of its results is that relearning some information (associations in Nelson's case) is always faster than learning any new items of the same kind (Intelegen II: Human Memory Encoding, Storage, Retention and Retrieval / Forgetting: Gone, or Inaccessible). Also Montpellier confirms the same:

Learning phenomena imply the existence of processes of connection or organisation of traces of earlier experience, i.e. a certain kind of associative memory. (Montpellier et al. 1970, p.79)

The existence of such traces suggests that at least some associative information is retained. This is possible thanks

to the fact that the strength of memories decays gradually. If it falls under certain threshold, we cannot recall the information, but the remaining memory trace is still there to facilitate relearning. Each piece of information (even a word unit) should bear links to any previous inputs.

Another rule for teachers to bear in mind is the so-called "power law" which means that most of the learned information is forgotten shortly after the learning activity, later the rate of forgetting diminishes. Ebbinghaus proved that within one or two days we forget about 80% of the learned material (Intelegan II: Human Memory Encoding, Storage, Retention and Retrieval / Forgetting: Gone, or Inaccessible). The best interval of relearning any information in the same lesson is ten minutes. This approach guarantees that the ability to recall it does not fall dramatically. The best for preserving the ability to recall the same relearned information is to review it within one day. This is of course rather a task for students than for their teachers. Learners' activity can be enlivened by recitation or writing out the learned facts or items. Both techniques are multisensory and therefore help to move the information into the secondary memory (LTM).

Last but not least, teachers should supervise the organisation of material, since information retrieval is better if the information is organised in some manner supporting systematic search, such as in hierarchies. Rhymes used in previous chapter are just one of many possible examples of organisation (besides antonymy, homonymy, meronymy, associations, word maps, word grids etc.).

Before finishing this chapter we would like to touch upon learning vocabulary through mnemonic techniques. They work on a simple principle: a retrieval plan is developed during encoding with the use of imagery, both visual and verbal. According to Thompson mnemonics help individuals

learn faster and recall better because they aid the integration of new material into existing cognitive units and because they provide retrieval cues.

The best known linguistic mnemonics are The Peg Method and The Keyword Method. Both are based on establishment of an acoustic and/or imaginal link between a word of L2 that is to be learnt and any item chosen by the learner. In The Peg Method these items are most frequently rhyming words, in The Keyword Method students use words from their L1 that sound similar to the new vocabulary.

Apart from linguistic mnemonics learners can use spatial mnemonics such as Spatial Grouping (rearranging words on a page to form patterns) or The Finger Method (the items to be learned are associated with fingers).⁹ A big advantage of all mnemonics is that the objects for association are chosen or generated by students themselves (Thompson in Wenden - Rubin 1987, p. 43-49).

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⁹Just for the sake of interest, let us mention the Method of Loci used by ancient Greeks: the ancients remembered things by imagining taking a familiar walk and placing the things to be remembered at locations along the way. This method works because it organizes the material to be remembered and it encourages elaborative processing and memorable imagery.

3. Learner Strategies in Language Learning with respect to Secondary School Students

3.1 Basic terms

Since in the second part of our research we occupy ourselves with complementary materials for vocabulary learning, this preparatory chapter gives a brief introduction into the domain of learner strategies, especially those related to reading comprehension. At the beginning, let us explain a few key terms of this domain:

First of all, we can compare two definitions of **cognitive style**. R. Ellis states:

Cognitive style is a term used to refer to the manner in which people perceive, conceptualise, organise, and recall information. Each person is considered to have a more or less consistent mode of cognitive functioning.

(Ellis 1985, p. 114)

Whereas the definition by L. Dickinson is more concise: "Cognitive style describes an individual's overall approach to learning, irrespective of the task" (Dickinson 1987, p. 20).

She further distinguishes cognitive style from cognitive strategy and learning strategy:

Cognitive strategy describes the approach to specific types of task.

Learning strategy is concerned with actual activities and techniques which lead to learning" (Dickinson 1987, p. 20).

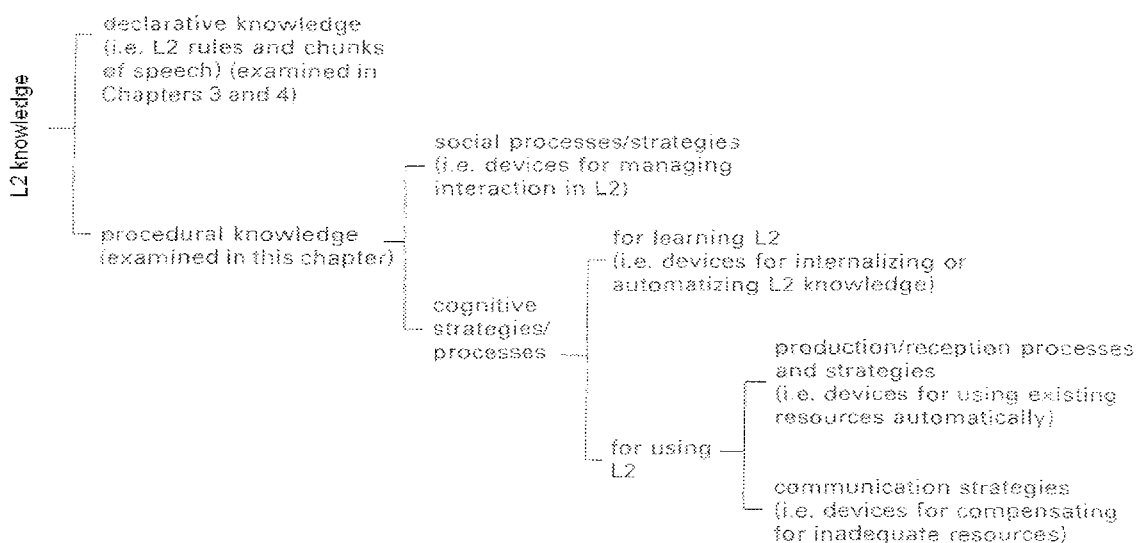
As we can see, there is a strong tendency to distinguishing between theory and general demands on one hand and praxis and concrete tasks on the other, although both

must form a unity. A similar dichotomy is present in Krashen's definitions of acquisition and learning:

Acquisition is the subconscious internalisation of L2 knowledge that occurs through using the L2 naturally and spontaneously. **Learning** is the conscious study of a L2 that results in knowledge about the rules of the language.

Krashen (1981) according to Ellis (1985, p. 113)

Further, according to Ellis it is possible to distinguish two types of knowledge in L2. He speaks about **declarative knowledge** which is "knowing that"; it consists of internalised L2 rules and memorised chunks of language. **Procedural knowledge**, on the other hand, is "knowing how" and consists of the strategies and procedures employed by the learner to process L2 data for acquisition and for use. Obviously, declarative knowledge can refer to acquisition in Krashen's view, whereas procedural knowledge is rather a result of learning. Further branching (that proves the responsibility of procedural knowledge both for production and communication strategies) is shown by following scheme (Ellis 1985, p. 165):



Types of L2 knowledge

One of the leading educational goals of the research on learner strategies is an autonomous language learner. On that account, studies in learner strategies are usually carried out among adult learners who are usually able of considerable autonomy. As far as we know from literature, not much has been said about learning strategies of secondary school students in opposition to those of adults. Similarly, no big distinction between the two categories is made in this thesis except for occasional remarks. The reasons are as follows:

First of all, one of our basic assumptions is the idea of older secondary school student as a near mature learner whose responsibility for his own learning process should be encouraged. Secondly, the need to change the focus of classrooms from a teacher-centred one to a learner-centred one is obvious in our country. Nevertheless, this is by no means easy for teachers. In Rubin's words: "teachers may then find it difficult to determine how each student learns best, students must therefore be taught to help themselves" (Rubin 1987, p. 17). Last but not least, supporting students' autonomy is in accord with the general assumption that learning is best achieved when the students play an active role in the process.

What are then the typical qualities of an autonomous (adult) learner?¹⁰ Allen Tough began systematic investigation of self-directed adult learners in 1971. In his study *Adult Learning Projects* he demonstrated that efforts of self-directed learners are organised around a "learning project". Also one of the basic assumptions about the psychological characteristics of adult learners made by Knowles (1976) presumes that the self-concept of the adult is that of a

self-directing personality: "The point at which a person becomes an adult psychologically is that point at which he perceives himself to be wholly self-directing. He is able to make his own decisions and face their consequences, to manage his own life" (Wenden 1987, p. 10).

Wenden further states (in accord with Holec - 1981) that with total self-direction, action by the learner is concerned with:

- Fixing objectives
- Defining the contents and progression
- Selecting the methods and techniques to be used
- Monitoring the acquisition procedure
- Evaluating what has been acquired

(Wenden 1987, p. 11)

In other words by the same author:

Together with the training in the use of strategies, the fostering of learner autonomy will require that learners become critically reflective of the conceptual context of their learning. They must be led to clarify, refine and expand their views of what language means and of what language learning entails. They should also understand the purpose for which they need to learn a second language. ... However, even this will be insufficient, if critical reflection does not take into account the fact that learners will also need to learn to believe in their potential to learn and to manage their learning and to be willing to assume a more responsible role in the process (Wenden 1987, p. 12).

¹⁰ The authors do not always properly distinguish between the two close terms of "self-direction" and "autonomy". For their definitions see Chapter 7.

To what extent are then secondary school students able of critical reflection and all the tasks described above by Wenden? Definitely, it is a matter of opinion. The author of this thesis believes that with certain amount of support (it will be shown in Chapter 7 that neither learner's autonomy nor his or her self-instruction are usually "full", i.e. completely without teacher's help) these aims are achievable already in the category of 15-20-year-old students. Teachers should always bear in mind that with students of this age it is already necessary to strengthen individual cognitive style, learning and procedural knowledge of each student.

3.2. Reading comprehension and text work

The range of this thesis does not allow any minute analysis of the complex topic of learning strategies. Therefore, with regards to our further research, after a short terminological introduction we put emphasis on reading comprehension and work with text.

As we can see in Chapter 6, numerous complementary materials for English learning are text-based. Also the first research (Chapter 5) has shown that original or adapted English texts are favoured among different means of vocabulary acquisition. Students are attracted by their independence in choosing particular texts and using them in their self-study. Moreover, major principles of reading comprehension are present in other favourite techniques of learning, above all while using the Internet and listening to songs in English. For these reasons this chapter includes rough information on the background of reading skills and reading strategies as an example of learning strategies used by our category of students.

Thompson states that "to a large extent, reading comprehension is a process whereby a message intended by the

writer is recognised by the reader against the background of information already stored in the reader's memory" (Thompson in Wenden-Rubin 1987, p. 50). Thus there are in fact two different sets of information issues involved in the process of reading that are to be combined. The reader brings to the reading task his or her background knowledge and a certain set of (more or less conscious) reading strategies, while the text, on the other hand, provides the reader with a certain kind of rhetorical organisation transmitting the meanings.

Stylistics uses the terms "structure" or "text grammar" to describe specific differences between particular texts. In a more general view, textual organisation varies also from language to language. Consequently, knowledge of how certain types of texts are organised helps readers to comprehend and recall the text. At higher stage an experienced L2 learner is aware of the differences between texts in his L1 and L2 that follow from a number of linguistic issues and different positions of the languages in language typology.

The distinct varieties of textual organisation in English prose have been described several times. Meyer and Freedle (1984) work with five categories: collection (list), description (attribution), causation (cause and effect), response (problem and solution) and comprehension (contrast). After further investigation they conclude that the more tightly organised the passage, the better reading comprehension tends to be. For instance, the recall of texts that had an overall organisation based on causation, response and comparison was better than for collections and descriptions. In other words, the more highly organised texts are easier to recall than the more loosely organised ones. Further research made by Carrell (1984) resulted in the conclusion that this rule is true both for L1 and L2 readers, although with certain variation because readers of different

language backgrounds react to the textual structure in a culturally specific way.

What is then common for L1 and L2 learners and what are the differences in their reading? The effects of rhetorical structure are hold for both categories. Let us have a few examples:

- the main ideas are recalled better than supporting details (effects of hierarchical structure)
- recall is facilitated if statements in the text appear in the same order as the events they describe (effects of chronological sequencing of events in the text)
- the same content is recalled better if presented as a drama than as a narrative (effects of genre)¹¹

On the other hand, there are differences between L1 and L2 readers, well summarised in Carrell's conclusion (1983). Carrell states that native readers read, understand and recall passages using context and familiarity with the topic to make predictions of what will follow. Further, they use lexical cues to confirm or disconfirm their predictions. L2 learners, on the other hand, do not read like native readers. Being unable to make use of these cues they tend to be bound to the text, processing it linearly - one word at a time (Carrell according to Thompson 1987, p. 51) .

Also numerous studies on so called "good readers" have brought interesting results. Although these works are specific for different languages, they almost universally stay in the domain of L1. Our literature speaks about the existence of "some evidence" that L2 learners fail to transfer their good L1 reading strategies when it comes to reading in L2 and therefore doubts any correspondence between good readers in L1 and L2 (Thompson in Wenden-Rubin 1987, p. 52). Nevertheless, we do not find these doubts the right

¹¹ For notes on underlying studies see Thompson in Wenden-Rubin 1987, p. 52-54

starting point. On the contrary, our aim is to find as many similarities as possible between L1 and L2 reading and take advantage of them while presenting texts to learners. As a result, we are offering the following list of hints for effective reading comprehension:

- *Importance of pre-reading questions*

Questions asked before reading are teachers' excellent tool to "prepare the ground" exactly in the way he or she prefers. Teachers themselves can choose the extent of help and explanation given to their students in this phase of work. They can also drive students' attention to particular details or, to the contrary, formulate searching for interesting details as one of the reading tasks.

- *Explaining vocabulary before reading*

Conditions and possibilities of this activity are similar to those of pre-reading questions. Vocabulary explanation is even most effective if students are encouraged to cooperate with their teacher in making definitions of words in L2. For this purpose the form of questions can be used.

- *Post-reading vocabulary exercises*

Reading followed by comprehension exercises makes a difference compared to reading that only involves understanding the general meaning of a text, as is often the case in the "real word" reading situations where we tend to stay at the recognition level. Learners often ignore the meanings of unknown words, unless they are essential for achieving the desired level of text comprehension. Here we find it useful to draw readers' attention to an experiment made by T. S. Paribakht and M. Wesche. These linguists aimed at exploring the role of various vocabulary instruction techniques based on reading texts for vocabulary learning by university ESL students

(In Coady, J.; Huckin, T. 1997, pp. 174-202). Since the domain of their research does not precisely correspond with ours, we are quoting just one of their results directly in this thesis:

The reason for the better success of reading followed by vocabulary exercises may be that these exercises ensured learner attention to specific vocabulary items and required learners to analyse and understand the meanings and functions of target words through different tasks. Both the amount and variety of mental processing required may have influenced the likelihood of learners acquiring more knowledge of particular words. ... This suggests that although instruction makes a difference, more focused instruction is desirable when the learning period is limited and specific vocabulary outcomes are sought (Coady, J.; Huckin, T. 1997, pp. 196-197).

- *Titles*

For some strange reasons, students often forget about reading them. Thus they do damage to themselves. When the topic is provided beforehand, the reader (or listener) has available a schema that can serve as a source for generating appropriate predictions of meaning, that can assist in clarifying ambiguous points in the text. A framework is made for storing textual information in retrievable form.

- *Imagery*

High imagery ability helps to store and recall more information from texts. Therefore, teachers should support students in their imagination both before and during the reading. Some texts are already supplied with pictures or photographs. For this purpose, simple drawings are often more useful, since they let more space for personal

imagination than detailed coloured pictures. An excellent (though a little time-consuming) technique is to let students themselves draw pictures connected with the text. The same exercise can be done after reading nothing more than the title. Later, when reading is finished, the information and impression gained from the text can be compared to pre-reading ideas. Another possibility is to let only one student (skilful in drawing) read the whole of a simple text and "narrate" its content (story) to his classmates only with the aid of pictures. This technique is an excellent means of integrating learners with less developed learning skills in languages. While drawing the pictures they get aural input and can, moreover, show their skills in a different domain which increases their motivation.

- *Making links*

Within the process of reading teachers should make hints to as many contextual and cotextual links as possible. This is true on the level of topic that can be related to some previous ones as well as on all levels of grammar. On this field teachers can work with word relations such as synonymy, antonymy, derivation, comparison, phrasal and prepositional verbs etc. On the level of stylistics such means as periphrases or explaining idioms can be used. To sum up, no text should be regarded as a separate unit without any connections to other texts of different origin.

Students should also be aware of the wide meaning of "textuality" referring also to aural texts, dialogues etc. All the above mentioned activities may stay on the practical level. Although we do not load our students with too much theory, their reading strategies, though more or less intuitive, will develop through such exercises.

What has been said here about text work and reading comprehension is mostly true also in case of aural texts. In case of text-based complementary materials much of the tasks ascribed here to teachers can be assumed by their editors.

4. Background of the Pedagogical Research

4.1 Sample schools

The reason for choosing the two particular sample schools was the author's personal experience with both of them; as a student of eight-year study program in Klatovy and as a teacher of English in Prague. Thanks to this experience certain rate of quality can be guaranteed. Moreover, we know the social climate of the schools, their regional status and the opportunities offered by both places.

Both schools provide general secondary education in four-year and eight-year study programs; grammar school in Klatovy for about 600 students, the Prague school¹² for about 350 students. The town of Klatovy with its 23 000 inhabitants is situated 170 km far from Prague. There are five secondary schools at this place, only one of them providing general education structured as preparatory for all sorts of university studies. The nearest institution of the same kind is in the distance of more than 30 km from Klatovy. Therefore, the regional status of the school is very high. The number of its graduates immediately proceeding to university studies is approximately 10% higher than that of KG in Prague.

Among Prague grammar schools KG is a minor one. Among other qualities it has a very pleasant social climate. Students know each other well across class and grade boundaries and have friendly relationships with most of their teachers. The atmosphere is very creative; one of the goals of the staff is to support self-activity of their students.

¹² This school is also going to be referred to as "KG", i.e. Křesťanské gymnázium (Christian Grammar School). Although it is a Christian school, one's attitude towards Christianity is by no means a criterion for accepting students. More than 50% of its students are non-believers.

4.2 Course of Research

We asked for help the heads of English departments at both schools; each of them was given 40 copies of the questionnaire. These teachers appeared to be very supportive; they made some extra copies and shared them with their fellow-teachers. Finally, the questionnaires were handed out to three groups of students in Klatovy (23, 17 and 9 students) and four in Prague (17, 17, 16 and 14 students) each group being taught by a different teacher. Thus two sample groups were achieved; both differentiated enough to provide reliable material for comparison.

The author then used the method of grounded analysis, i.e. during her qualitative study she was encoding answers that tended to be most frequent. Thus the number of viewpoints was expanding during the study. However, since her aim at the same time was to compare the two sample schools, the result was following: per cents in case of finite number of answers but numbers of students in case of individually distinct answers.

5. Research Results

5.1 Result categories

The results of our research are of three types:

- 1) *Percentage* (rounded to one decimal place) is provided where it is important to give the exact ratio of different or opposite responses (e.g. how many students doubt / do not doubt about the necessity of secondary school English lessons). Further, per cent are used to compare the situation in Prague and in Klatovy, since the number of respondents differs (with 64 Prague students and 49 students in Klatovy). The percentage is always counted out of all students of the given sample (one of the two secondary schools or overall view). Although we always give the information about students who did not understand the question or who were not able to decide about their response, they are still included in the 100% amount of respondents for all other questions. No questionnaire had to be left out because of too many missing answers.
- 2) *Number of students*. This type of information is employed in overall view if the situation of the two schools does not differ dramatically. Since these numbers are usually quite small (1 to 10), we find them more useful and transparent than per cent. Also with students' commentaries figures are more exact than percentage, since these commentaries are only additional and cannot be found in all questionnaires.
- 3) The third category of results is *the author's reflections* on possible impact of the situation and on links between different areas of vocabulary teaching mentioned in the questionnaire.

5.2 Research results

Question 1: Do you sometimes doubt about the usefulness of English lessons at secondary schools? Why yes / no?

Comparison:

	Klatovy	Prague
Yes, I do	0.02%	12.50%
No, I don't	0.98%	85.90%

General overview:

Number of responses	112
Missing responses	1 (P)
No doubts	99.10%
Doubts	0.08%

There was just one student with doubts in Klatovy. He or she was not content with formal aspects of English lessons resulting in their insufficient effectiveness. Three students in Prague admitted doubts caused by the same factors (too many students in class with the result of too much revision and slow progress). Moreover, two students found English teaching not effective enough in comparison with staying in foreign countries for some time. Doubts of one student were based on the fact that young people are too violently forced into English studies.

Students without any doubts about the topic usually supported their response by the fact that English as "lingua franca of today" is becoming part of their everyday lives. Six students (three at each school) put great emphasis on the importance of English with respect to their future education and job career.

Interesting commentaries:

▶ English is the most important (one of the most important) of all secondary school subjects - 5 students.

▶ English should be compulsory subject at all secondary schools - 1 student.

▶ I do not doubt about its usefulness but the system is sometimes regardless towards people who prefer any other foreign language - 1 student.

▶ English education at secondary school has the big advantage of being fee-free - 1 student.

Summary:

The responses in Prague and in Klatovy did not differ remarkably. There is one essential result that can be read out of them: Wrong or unfitting form of English lessons can have a very negative impact on students' opinion on their teacher and his or her lessons. What is more sincere, such a view can influence their attitude to English as means of communication, since students are not much willing and able to distinguish between form (presented by their teachers) and content (the language itself and its importance in everyday life).

Question 2: Comment on the importance of vocabulary within English study. Can you see any difference as for the importance of vocabulary vs. grammar and culture of English speaking countries?

Comparison:

	Klatovy	Prague
Yes, there is a difference	69.4%	79.7%
Vocabulary is the most important part	40.8%	43.8%
Vocabulary and grammar are more important than culture	18.4%	17.2%
I cannot see any difference	22.4%	15.7%
I do not know	4.1%	1.6%
Misunderstood question	4.1%	---

General overview:

Number of responses:	113
Missing responses:	0
Misunderstood questions:	2 (K)

There is a difference	75.2%
Vocabulary is the most important part	42.5%
Vocabulary and grammar are more important than culture	17.7%
There is no difference	18.6%
I do not know	2.7%

Similarly to question No. 1 the results in Klatovy and Prague resemble each other. It is interesting that just one student out of all 113 finds grammar the most important part of English learning. Just two students put culture on the same position.

Interesting commentaries:

- ▶ Grammar should step back; vocabulary and lively communication are much more important - 1 student.
- ▶ If my vocabulary is good enough, I can learn grammar and the system of language more easily - 1 student.
- ▶ Culture does not have to be extensively taught at schools, we get it daily from media. - 1 student.

► Grammar and culture are to be taught at schools, vocabulary is ideal for individual learning - 1 student.

Summary:

The responses again (see Summary of Question 1) refer to the fact that there is still a gap in people's minds between use of English in everyday life and its presentation during lessons. Even young students take this fact for granted, grammar being, as it were, a negative "token" of this situation. Therefore, grammar is extremely unpopular at schools.

This is also obvious from Question 6 responses (see p. 45). Only 3 students included grammar into their remarks on the English teaching process, two of them requiring Grammar-Translation Method explicitly. As a result, we can say that the preference of communicative method in Czech schools becomes evident. What is the outcome? First of all, every teacher of English should make his or her own opinion on this state as a basis of his or her preferences. Further, no matter what this opinion, he or she should be able to perform to students about the two approaches and their main underlying techniques. Later, the teacher should get a feedback from students to find out what their preferences are. Above all, the approaches must always be regarded as complementary, not competitive; only this view can guarantee their optimal usefulness.

Question 3: Do you have your own technique of vocabulary learning (reading, watching English TV programs, listening to English songs etc.)? Do you use any manuals except for your school textbook? Which ones?

Comparison:

	Klatovy	Prague
Reading ¹³	44.9%	43.8%
Songs in English ¹⁴	53.0%	34.4%
Films in English	28.6%	34.4%
Other TV and radio programs (broadcast etc.)	20.4%	25.0%
Internet ¹⁵	8.2%	14.1%
English conversation with native speakers	2.0%	6.3%
non-native speakers (family members)	4.0%	---
PC games	8.2%	3.1%
Pen-friends	2.0%	1.6%

General overview:

Activities:	
Reading	44.2%
Songs in English	42.5%
Films in English	26.5%
Other TV and radio programs	23.0%
Internet	11.5%
PC games	5.3%
English conversation with native speakers	4.4%
non-native speakers	1.8%
Pen-friend	1.8%

(In the following results we count students instead of giving percentage. Per cent would not be precise enough in this case, since many students did not list any technique and material. In this and following questions we are leaving out the section Interesting Commentaries, since these appear as items in the tables.)

¹³ This item includes reading prose and newspaper articles. Abridged versions of novels were mentioned explicitly by eight students, four students read regularly the English supplement of *Lidové noviny* (*Anglický list*).

¹⁴ Two of Klatovy students use music for learning also actively (they themselves sing the songs with a musical instrument), the other respondents try to uncover the text while listening, some of them look for texts on the Internet, print them out and then use them for further reading.

¹⁵ This item includes reading articles, chatting and contributing to Internet discussions.

Individual techniques:	
Revision by writing words down	5 students
Vocabulary written on cards	2 students
Vocabulary written on paper stripes (2 pages - English word / Czech translation)	1 student
Listening to English stories on CD	1 student
Pexeso (Czech-English word game)	1 student

Complementary materials:	
Older textbooks of Czech origin(non-specified)	3 students
<i>Angličtina pro samouky</i>	2 students
<i>Angličtina pro jazykové školy</i>	1 student
<i>Odmaturuj z anglického jazyka</i>	1 student
Monolingual dictionary	6 students
Preparatory manuals for FCE	1 student
<i>Grammar in Use</i> (by Murphy)	2 students
Other grammars	3 students

Summary:

As for the outcomes of question 3, they differ in the two sample schools more than in previous questions, above all due to unequal accessibility of some means of vocabulary learning. This is true mainly in case of using the Internet which is more current among Prague students. The cause is probably to be found in the life-style of their families which is partly distinct from that in Klatovy. Different job opportunities call for using the Internet also at home. This fact together with higher life standard and more public places with Internet permit more use of this technology in Prague. The same causes are projected in the percentage of students preferring conversation with native speakers. In this aspect, the situation in small towns differs remarkably from Prague conditions. Unfortunately, Klatovy students seem to compensate for the lack of possibilities by frequently playing computer games (8.2% in comparison to 3.1% in Prague). There is, however, also an example of positive compensation - two students in Klatovy mentioned English conversation with family members, for example during shopping or housework.

Students in Klatovy seem to prefer English songs as a means of learning more than their Prague "colleagues". We assume that teachers themselves are its main reason; all the three teachers in Klatovy who assisted by the research are active musicians. One of them presents music regularly to his students by his own performance (playing the guitar and singing with the class); the other two do that occasionally (in Christmas time or in lessons of music). As for Prague teachers, we have no such information about them.

Compared with the increasing use of Internet technology, the popularity of pen-friends seems to be on the decline. In our sample it was preferred only by two students, one in each town.

We are glad to confirm the stable preference of reading within vocabulary learning techniques. In both groups the percentage was over 40%. It is the more praiseworthy the less strictly lecture is required by the assisting teachers. 12

Quite a big number of students mentioned English-Czech PC or Internet dictionary as complementary material. However, these were not included into the results. Although these materials are highly favoured by students for being handy, quick and user-friendly, teachers often come across their negative impact above all on students' writing. In PC bilingual dictionaries synonyms are often improperly distinguished from each other. This fact can be dangerous for learners, who are not patient enough to read the whole entry. As a result, they mix up different meanings of synonymous or polysemous words with the effects of fun or misunderstanding. Students, unfortunately, consider PC bilingual dictionaries normal part of everyday study in comparison to still rarely used monolingual dictionaries.

These, however, are often of much higher quality. Moreover, English definitions are much more stimulating for the learning process than translations. Using of these

dictionaries calls for much patience, motivation and language experience. Therefore, their value in the research is much higher than that of bilingual dictionaries.

Question 4: If you use your own vocabulary notebook, what is the structure of its entries? Do they include information about pronunciation? What are the sources of the vocabulary in your notebook (lecture, textbook et al.)?

Comparison:

USE OF VOCABULARY NOTEBOOK:	Klatovy	Prague
Yes, I use one	20.4%	40.6%
No, I don't use any	67.3%	53.1%
No, I don't use it any more	12.2%	4.7%
I don't use it; the course book dictionary is sufficient	28.6%	1.6%

STRUCTURE OF VOCABULARY NOTEBOOK:	Klatovy	Prague
3 columns ¹⁶	14.3%	21.9%
2 columns ¹⁷	6.1%	12.5%
Monolingual entry ¹⁸	2.0%	3.1%
Including idiomatic expressions	---	1.6%

OTHER MATERIALS FOR LOGGING VOCABULARY INFORMATION:	Klatovy	Prague
Grammar notebook	6.1%	9.4%
Course book	4.0%	6.3%
Separate papers	2.0%	1.6%
Small cards	---	1.6%

VOCABULARY SOURCES:	Klatovy	Prague
Course book	55.1%	31.3%
Classwork during school lessons	10.2%	7.8%
Lecture	6.1%	10.9%
Films	4.0%	1.6%
English songs	---	3.1%
I just hear it somewhere	---	3.1%
Internet	---	1.6%

¹⁶ English word - pronunciation - Czech translation

¹⁷ English word - Czech translation

¹⁸ English word + its explanation in English

General overview¹⁹:

Number of responses:	112
Missing responses:	1 (P)

USE OF VOCABULARY NOTEBOOK:	
No, I don't use any	59.3%
Yes, I use one	31.9%
I don't use it; the course book dictionary is sufficient	13.3%
No, I don't use it any more	8.0%

STRUCTURE OF VOCABULARY NOTEBOOK:	
3 columns	18.6%
2 columns	9.7%
Monolingual entry	2.7%
Including idiomatic expressions	0.9%

OTHER MATERIALS FOR LOGGING VOCABULARY INFORMATION:	
Grammar notebook	8.0%
Course book	5.3%
Separate papers	1.8%
Small cards	0.9%

VOCABULARY SOURCES:	
Course book	41.0%
Classwork during school lessons	8.8%
Lecture	8.8%
Films	2.7%
English songs	1.8%
I just hear it somewhere	1.8%
Internet	0.9%

¹⁹ (P) – Prague; (K) - Klatovy

Summary:

With the increasing range of available materials the role of vocabulary notebooks in foreign language teaching in our country is changing. We dare say that fifteen years ago they were still considered one of the cornerstones of language study together with course books and grammar notebooks handwritten by students. At present a student who uses no more of "paper" materials for his study than his course book which contains his own grammar and vocabulary notes is no exception. Almost sixty per cent of students in our research have never had their own vocabulary notebook; eight per cent have given up writing it. There are great differences between the two sample schools in this aspect. Whereas in Klatovy only about twenty per cent of students keep their vocabulary records continually, in Prague it is almost twice as much.

What further arises from the results is the fact that Klatovy students rely noticeably on their course books. Half of the vocabulary learned by these students is taken from their course books (55.1%) which are at the same time used for inscribing information about unknown expressions (4%). The last datum can seem surprisingly low (in Prague where students have much more vocabulary notebooks it was 6.3%), but it can be explained by using the printed dictionary available as a supplementary material to their textbooks. This dictionary is highly favored among students (almost thirty per cent of them mentioned it in their responses although it was not a compulsory piece of information) and it can be read out from numerous answers that this course book supplement was the reason for giving up keeping their own vocabulary notebooks.

As for other means of vocabulary recording, only one student in Klatovy and two in Prague mentioned their using of separate papers or small paper cards. All of them explained

that they used them solely while learning vocabulary before a test.

It is not only the role of vocabulary notebooks that is changing, but also the form of their entries. The form of three columns including pronunciation which was for long traditionally required by Czech teachers is still the leading one but an increasing number of students is using the form strictly forbidden to their parents - two columns without pronunciation. Of all respondents two use monolingual entries and only one incorporates also idiomatic expressions into his or her vocabulary notes. Here we must again comment on a change; common dictionary notebooks fifteen years ago were two-sided, their back part containing idiomatic expressions only.

As we can see from the research results, the learning system in Klatovy is extremely materials-directed, depending almost uniquely on the course book.²⁰ Prague learners, on the other hand, seem to use more of self-instruction. This is obvious not only from their more frequent use of vocabulary notebooks, but also from using many different vocabulary sources.

In our last remark of this section we get back to the Summary of Question 3. It has been stated there that quite a big number of students tend to use the Internet as a means of learning English (8% in Klatovy, 14% in Prague). Surprisingly enough, it emerges from the results of Question 4 that only 0.9% of all students use the Internet as a source of new vocabulary. It is very probable that although young learners are aware of the usefulness of secondary learning materials and means, they lack some more training in self-instruction to achieve meaningful usage of these opportunities. We dare

²⁰ Although students were not asked about the titles of their course books, they often gave us this type of information. Therefore, we know that all the respondents in Klatovy use any level of Headway as their course book.

say that keeping traditional handwritten vocabulary notebook is one of the most effective ways of reaching effectiveness in self-instruction. Modern students sometimes seem to presume that their memory is developing as fast as the range of new technical and other learning opportunities. Therefore, they forget about the immense importance of handwriting as a sensomotoric activity significantly supporting memorizing. Moreover, language learning together with lifestyle in general is aiming at being as quick as possible. Consequently, numerous techniques including handwriting are being abandoned as too time-consuming. Recording vocabulary by handwriting, unfortunately, is one of them. (For examples of vocabulary notebook entries see Appendix A.)

Question 5: Does your teacher evaluate your knowledge of vocabulary (also through written tests)? Does he or she divide grammar examination from vocabulary examination? Does he or she insist on your reading certain books in English or in Czech translation? Do you want to comment on his or her system?

Comparison:

	Klatovy	Prague
Vocabulary testing	79.6%	92.2%
No vocabulary testing	4.0%	---
There is testing, but insufficient	16.3%	---
Vocabulary divided from grammar	26.5%	9.4%
Vocabulary not divided from grammar	26.5%	68.8%
Sometimes divided (oral exams)	30.6%	10.9%
Teacher insists on lecture	2.0%	1.6%
Teacher does not insist on lecture, nevertheless provides strong motivation for learners' reading	4.0%	3.1%

General overview:

Number of responses:	111
Missing responses:	2 (P)

Vocabulary testing	86.7%
There is testing, but insufficient	7.0%
No vocabulary testing	1.8%

Vocabulary not divided from grammar	50.4%
Sometimes divided (oral exams)	19.5%
Vocabulary divided from grammar	16.8%

Teacher does not insist on lecture, nevertheless provides strong motivation for learners' reading	3.5%
Teacher insists on lecture	1.8%

Summary:

The results of Question 5 do not demonstrate much difference between the two schools except for the aspect of distinction between grammar and vocabulary within the process of examination. The rate of testing is similarly high which is to be assigned to assessment-oriented Czech educational system. The approach of Prague teachers, however, is more holistic. With current information we can only assume greater tendency towards communicative method at this institution. The almost opposite result in Klatovy is in accord with the assumption of materials-directed approach derived from Question 4 results, since universal vocabulary lists derived from the textbook facilitate vocabulary testing.

There is not much pressure from any of the teachers in the aspect of students' lecture in foreign language. Although we know from the author's personal experience that students at both schools get some information about literature of English speaking countries within culture-oriented lessons, the lack of practical experience of this kind is obvious. This fact

may also be a part of explanation for the discrepancy between use of the Internet and ability of profiting from it in the domain of vocabulary learning (see Summary of Question 4).

Question 6: Please write down whatever remarks and ideas concerning the topic of vocabulary teaching.

Techniques and means required:	No. of students (K/P)
Watching films	11 (K4+P7)
More conversation ²¹	5 (K3+P2)
Controlled lecture	3 (K2+P1)
More essays	1 (K)
Reading short catching texts	1 (P)
Learning short texts by heart	1 (P)
Learning words within sentences	1 (P)
More use of monolingual dictionary	1 (K)

Testing and evaluation:	No. of students (K/P)
Written vocabulary test after each unit	2 (K)
Testing vocabulary separately	1 (P)
Evaluate what is right not what is wrong (to avoid loss of motivation)	1 (K)
Revision at the beginning of each lesson	1 (P)
Examination is more effective than time-consuming games	1 (K)

Background of vocabulary teaching process:	No. of students (K/P)
More inventive, less mechanical teaching	6 (K3+P3)
Self-study = basis of voc. learning	2 (P)
More time for in-class voc. learning	1 (K)
Get voc. for learning in small amounts	1 (K)
Get voc. lists for each topic	2 (P)
Voc. should not be specialized (technical etc.), rather cover many different topics	4 (K3+P1)
More use of Grammar-Translation Method	2 (K1+P1)
More links between grammar and vocabulary	1 (K)

Summary:

Following up with the results of Question 5 we can now state quite a big demand for testing and assessment with

²¹ One of the Prague students remarked that "Czechs in general are afraid of speaking; therefore we need effective conversation to avoid this fear."

emphasis on positive evaluation. There is, however, no big preference of separated vocabulary-testing (only one Prague student). Out of some responses certain lack of system can be read out (students call for more links between grammar and vocabulary, regular continuous revision and structured vocabulary lists). Nevertheless, they are well able to distinguish system from mechanical learning which is in direct contrast to their requirements.

5.3 Conclusions

Many conclusions have been stated in partial Summaries. Therefore, we are now listing them only in a short revision:

- Teachers still have key role in secondary school language education (a good example is teacher's influence in case of using songs). This effect is also due to the fact that at the age of fifteen to twenty, young people typically search their models.
- The relatively small number of students using the Internet is surprising; it speaks clearly for the importance of classic paper textbook. That, however, does not justify any lack of development in this area. To the contrary, both basic and complementary textbooks must be given maximum of attention to stay current and innovative (cf. the results of our second research - Chapter 6).
- In the learning behaviour of students there is a clear tendency towards autonomous learning. In addition, they often put great emphasis on lexis. These inclinations correspond to the methodology of Self-instruction and the Lexical Approach (for more information about these approaches see Chapter 7).

6. Research in Complementary Materials for Vocabulary Acquisition

6.1 Research background and aims

In this chapter we will comment on the situation of Czech book market in the domain of complementary materials for vocabulary learning. A few concrete titles will be chosen and analysed as for their structure, form and content and their potential contribution to vocabulary learning process.

The situation in Prague bookstores is satisfying. We concentrated either on bookstores with large general offer (Luxor, Kanzelsberger) or on small bookshops specialised in textbooks and teaching materials. In all of them we were offered materials of both Czech and foreign production, although due to limited capacity some of these materials have to be ordered from a catalogue and delivered in a few days. The offer is so rich that it calls for precisely defined criteria if a choice shall be done. We dare say from our own experience that many teachers are not aware of the richness of their opportunities in this field because the situation has improved quickly during last years and is changing permanently.

One new phenomenon has appeared during the last two years; a big number of available materials focuses on secondary school leaving exams (A level) a part of which is going to be state-directed since the next academic year (2006/2007). In preceding years the whole exam had been just a matter of concrete school. The following analysis involves two materials of this kind.

6.2 Materials of British and American origin

The offer of these materials was slightly bigger than that of Czech ones. Nevertheless, shop assistants claim that people more often hesitate whether to buy them. It is partly due to the lack of Czech commentary explaining its opportunities and difficulty level, partly due to higher price.

In the analysis we never omit subtitles and information on covers of the books, since they are often leading for potential customers and therefore should be as precise as possible.

6.2.1 **English Vocabulary in Use (Upper-intermediate);**

100 units of vocabulary reference and practice; Self-study and classroom use

By M. Mc Carthy and F. O' Dell

Cambridge University Press, 2001 (Second edition)

We start with this material, since its first edition has been successfully used for years at Czech secondary schools, including our sample school in Klatovy. Students know it mainly from their lessons of English conversation, often guided by a native speaker.

Information on cover:

- primarily designed as a self-study reference and practice vocabulary book but can also be used for classroom work
- easy to use
- provides vocabulary in context
- based on a corpus of real spoken and written language
- with key and index

- beautifully illustrated in full colour

Structure:

- Introduction (Comments on the changes the book has gone through on its way to the second edition.)
- Using the book
- Phonemic symbols
- Units
- Index
- Abbreviations

The content of the book is in conformity with its being primarily designed for self-study on upper-intermediate level. First of all, the section *Using the book* supports students' self-reliance by giving examples of exercises and hints for optimal way of progressing through the book. Moreover, within the 100 units only one section is dedicated to traditional *Topics* (with subsections like *Health and Illness, City and Countryside* etc.). The other sections are metalingual and can be extremely inspiring for self-instruction. Therefore, their complete list follows with some of their subsections in brackets:

- *Effective vocabulary learning (Organising a vocabulary notebook, Revising vocabulary, ...)*
- *Word formation*
- *Words and pronunciation (Onomatopoeic words, ...)*
- *Connecting and linking words*
- *Countables and uncountables*
- *Feelings and actions*
- *Basic concepts (Time, Distance, ...)*
- *Idiomatic expressions*
- *Phrasal verbs and verb-based expressions*
- *Varieties of English*

We find this schedule highly contributive, particularly in the era of communicative teaching when metalingual aspects of learning are often omitted. Consequently, students who are not aware of specific properties of idioms or phrasal verbs are not able to treat them properly. **English Vocabulary in Use**, to the contrary, provides them with this type of information clearly enough to be remembered easily.

Each unit has two pages. Whereas the left-hand page explains the meaning and use of the words, the right-hand page checks that students have understood everything properly. Each unit contains numerous examples supplemented with nice coloured illustrations. Exercises are of various types, pictures are used here as ground for descriptions etc. Index contains pronunciation of each word plus reference to its use in the book by unit number or numbers. Pages are graphically well arranged, the structure is intentionally strictly regular. A minor disadvantage of the material - its heaviness - is not extremely annoying if it is used primarily for self-study.

To sum up, for students of appropriate level this material is fully satisfactory. Its structure, form and content are integral, well chosen for upper-intermediate students. Numerous metalingual explanations are well incorporated into the task of vocabulary teaching. Despite its volume, which is the biggest one of all analysed books, the material can hardly be found boring.

6.2.2 **English Vocabulary Organizer;**

100 topics for self-study

By C. Gough

Thomson, Boston 2002

This material is in many ways similar to the previous one. It is definitely sufficient, although there are some details to be added or improved for the sake of greater effectiveness.

Information on cover:

- Hundreds of new words
- Collocations
- Vocabulary notes
- Fully illustrated
- With key
- Space to add your own notes

Structure:

- Introduction ("Vocabulary is important")
- "Before you start" (Comments on typical exercises and main lexical domains of the book aimed mainly at different kinds of collocations and fixed expressions.)
- 17 sections (with subsections)
- Answer key

Similarly to **English Vocabulary in Use** this material also works with two-page units gathered in 17 sections. The topics are clearly defined and well organised, very traditional. Therefore, we are listing just three examples:

- *Education and work (Jobs, Business, Learning a language, ...)*
- *Our world (The environment, Materials, History, ...)*
- *Abstract concepts (Time, Numbers, Thoughts and ideas, ...)*

It can be seen even from this short abstract that the topics, although traditional, are up-to-date, chosen with

emphasis on variability. Pages are well organised, like in previous material exercises are preceded by explanation and examples. Despite smaller format of the book, the exercises are transparent with enough space for filling in. Right pages often include an authentic text (part of a letter etc.). At the bottom of each right page there is a space for student's own notes on words and expressions.

As we have already stated, **English Vocabulary Organizer** is definitely a sufficient material for vocabulary learning. However, in opposition to **English Vocabulary in Use** we cannot be sure about its attractiveness for students. This is due to less imaginative exercises that, after some time, can be found boring. Moreover, the information on cover about vocabulary notes is misleading. The words are, of course, commented upon in the units. The material, however, contains no Word List. Its consequence is the lack of interactivity of its parts. In addition, any English language manual without pronunciation notes loses a lot of its value for the sake of smaller usefulness for foreign students. Thanks to this negative aspect even the "hundreds of new words" advertised on the cover become only relatively positive.

6.2.3 Vocabulary in Practice 1-6;

30 units of self-study vocabulary exercises with tests

By G. Pye

Cambridge University Press 2003

This material is of a different kind than the previous two. It is designed as a handbook of exercises with strong emphasis on practising as opposed to theoretical explanations. Thanks to its smaller format and six separate volumes in accordance with student's level, it can be simply used for utilising short periods of free time during the day.

Resulting in high frequency of short learning units, this approach is highly effective.

Information on cover:

- Enjoyable
- Easy to carry
- Quick to do
- Tests
- Answer key
- Vocabulary list with notes and pronunciation
- Words taken from computer data of real English

Structure:

- Introduction "To the Student" (Comments on how to use the book)
- Units 1-10
- Test 1
- Units 11-20
- Test 2
- Units 21-30
- Test 3
- Answer key
- Word List

Among the one-page units, students can find topics such as: *Your head, Your body, Fruit and vegetables, Telling the time, Computers, In the office* et al.

Within the manual there is a tendency to progress from easier topics to more difficult or less frequent ones. Metalingual level is present in final topics: *Everyday adjectives, Everyday verbs, More everyday verbs, Phrasal verbs*.

As for types of exercises, the author is very inventive. Among traditional techniques like matching or filling-in

words, writing down opposites or putting items in the correct order students can amuse themselves with crosswords, looking for words in letter-circles etc. In Word List which is divided into sections corresponding to the units they can find pronunciation notes.

Vocabulary in Practice is a very useful material provided that it is treated differently from the previous two. It is a manual oriented at practical vocabulary use, handy and enjoyable. If more theory is needed to understand certain issues, it must be looked up in other manuals. However, the material does not omit any details necessary for a language manual of its kind.

6.3 Materials of Czech origin

All Czech complementary materials for English vocabulary learning that we have come across are based on written or spoken texts. One of its reasons is definitely the need to make students ready for their A levels. Another cause can be seen in current general preference of communicative method under Czech conditions. The effort to provide words in authentic context is obvious.

6.3.1 Čtení a poslech s porozuměním - příprava k maturitě

(Reading and Listening Comprehension; Preparatory Course for A Levels)

By J. Pernicová

Praha, Fortuna 2004

Information on cover: none

Structure:

- Introduction (Comments on the aims of the book and on the types of tasks involved; explains the difference between open and closed tasks.)
- Listening - Level 1; Level 2
- Reading - Level 1; Level 2
- Transcripts of Recordings - Level 1; Level 2
- Key answers
- Resources

In the Introduction the author defines sets of skills trained at each level:

At basic level:

- finding concrete pieces of information
- finding basic points of texts
- finding key ideas of texts

At higher level:

- finding concrete pieces of information
- comparing different pieces of information
- finding basic points of texts
- understanding logic of text structure
- detailed comprehension of parts of texts
- catching the aims and opinions of the authors

Both the written texts and the recordings are of high quality; the former being taken from authentic sources, usually newspapers, the latter being read by native speakers. Pages with tasks are well structured so that students are not disturbed by extremely thick text, the space for filling-in is sufficient, pictures are rather rare, black and white, and some texts preserve their original layouts (e.g. newspaper articles or letters). Thanks to the authenticity of texts the material provides students with facts about life in English

speaking countries. This is a useful role not only with regards to other parts of A Level except for text comprehension.

As for exercises, they are effective but lack more variability. They are usually fill-in or multiple-choice exercises, above all on level one which gives smaller amount of opportunities for other tasks such as paraphrasing etc. On the other hand, such homogeneity can become advantage if the texts are used in class work.

Although we understand that making an Index for this kind of manual is a difficult task, we still believe one should be added. It is no big problem for an experienced teacher to judge which vocabulary units are prone to cause comprehension troubles. Although such a list could never be universal, it is always better to use it than to create a word-oriented manual without any lexical background.

The lack of Word List is another good reason for using this material primarily in class work where students can easily compare their responses with each other, discuss them and get immediate feedback from their teacher.

6.3.2 Focus on Text;

Soubor čtecích a poslechových textů s klíčem pro státní část maturitní zkoušky z angličtiny.

(Set of texts for reading and for listening comprehension with answer key for state-guided part of English language A Levels.)

By L. Betáková

Plzeň, Fraus 2003

Information on cover:

- Well structured
- For all types of secondary schools

- Also for self-study
- Information on culture of English speaking countries
- Both CD and MC available

Structure:

- Introduction (Comments on the method used in the book.)
- Part I: Reading (20 texts A + 20 texts B)
- Part II: Listening (20 texts A + 20 texts B)
- Answer key
- Transcripts

This manual is in many aspects similar to the prior one. Its aim and structure are in fact identical, texts being divided into two sets (reading and listening) and four subsets (basic and advanced level). The repertoire of exercises is richer than in previous book; except for multiple-choice and true-false exercises students are also asked to take particular notes or match words and expressions with their definitions. The two last techniques especially are very effective. Unfortunately, they are not accompanied by adequate graphic aspects; the type size is insufficient (the font being not very attractive) and there is rarely enough space for responses.

In accord with information by the editor the texts are culture-based. The effort to create a "catching" and modern material is obvious. In this respect, the author was successful. Let us have just three examples of the topics:

- *Health - Anorexia and Bulimia*
- *Environment - Animal Rights*
- *Battle of the Sexes - Men, Women and Toilets*

Similarly to the manual by Pernicová, **Focus on Text** can be used with good results if its aims (restricted in comparison

to the foreign materials) are kept in mind by its users. Again, because of the lack of Index, we suggest using this manual primarily in guided class education.

6.3.3 Anglické texty / English Texts;

Soubor textů orientovaných na gramatiku a reálie pro všechny studijní úrovně.

(Set of grammar- and culture-oriented texts for all study levels.)

By P. Hamajda

Blug (incomplete information!)

This material contains solely texts with word-lists, the techniques of using them are to be chosen by teachers; the author provides help by giving suggestions in Foreword and by dividing texts into groups according to their orientation. The book is primarily class-directed, although, thanks to the attractiveness of its texts we do not doubt that students will also read them individually.

Information on cover: none

Structure:

- Foreword (References to text sources, usually Anglo-American magazines.)
- How to work with texts (Explains reasons for dividing texts into 4 categories: Texts "of the first reading", Grammar-based texts, Culture-based texts, Texts for narration.)
- Easy Reading (12 texts)
- Grammar Texts (112 texts)
- Culture (30 texts)
- Stories (7 texts)

This book has been used at Czech secondary schools for about five years. (Unfortunately, we cannot be more precise; it does not contain complete information on its edition!) It is not primarily oriented at success in A Level, but works with graded texts of all levels.

The classification of texts is useful, despite the overwhelming majority of Grammar Texts. In this large section the author puts emphasis on different grammar points, graded according to their difficulty (beginning with present simple and present continuous tense and finishing with reported speech, conditionals and articles). There are from one to eleven texts dedicated to each grammar issue. This we find in many cases superfluous. Since the difficulty level of vocabulary in the book is generally higher than that of grammar, we suggest adding other uneasy grammar issues such as phrasal verbs and verbal expressions with prepositions and putting greater emphasis on sequence of tenses.

The section of culture-based texts also has its subsections: Great Britain, London, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Topics of Easy Reading texts are for example: *The River Volga*, *Sandwiches*, *The Charles Bridge* etc. Within Stories we can find *Hire car steers into trouble*, *Rachel*, *Dear Oliver*, *The Picassos of Prague* and other topics.

Most texts of all categories are supplemented with attractive black and white photographs or simple drawings. The layout is fully functional, on each page there are one or two texts of a type size pleasant to read.

All texts are followed by their own word-lists. The author explains in his Foreword that the items were chosen rather intuitively according to his own teaching experience. The choice was, in our opinion, successful. However, we suggest word lists more resembling traditional dictionaries as for the structure of entries. Hamajda's lists follow the order in which vocabulary appears in the texts. This spares too much

of students' effort. What is worse, also the form of entries is precisely copied from the texts. Consequently, verbs are presented in all possible tense forms without any other grammatical information, nouns usually lack notes on irregular plural forms etc. Pronunciation notes are absent.

To sum up, the material by Hamajda could be suggested as a supplementary manual for secondary schools only after some necessary modifications. First of all, word lists should be modified. Further, changes should be done in the proportion of different kinds of texts. Finally, no material can make any good impression on its users unless it puts emphasis on necessary details such as editing information or precisely corrected spelling in Czech Foreword.

6.4 Conclusions

Let us start this subchapter with a quote from Cunningsworth:

The real aim of language teaching is to bring the learner to a point where he can use the language for his own purposes, and this goes far beyond manipulating structure drills. (Cunningsworth 1987, p. 6)

This aim was fully achieved in all analysed materials. To some extent, the statement delimits complementary materials for vocabulary learning as opposed to general course books. Although the latter ones may be based on the same prerequisites, they must be well content-balanced. Complementary materials, on the other hand, are allowed certain profitable one-sidedness. More specifically, complementary materials for English vocabulary learning aim at:

- satisfying specific learning needs of self-directed students or students aiming at passing their A levels
- introducing new words (either by developing the meaning and then supplying the word, or alternatively, by presenting the word and then developing its meaning)
- giving instruction and training opportunities as for word use
- (in case of text-based units): building an awareness of register together with appropriateness of language to its social context and function
- simulating use of integrated skills (in real language use we rarely use one skill in isolation)
- equipping the learner to use English in whole range of everyday life situations from shopping to writing academic essays
- In order to achieve what precedes, the following means are used:
 - the learning objectives are expressed primarily in terms of communicative functions within the range of a number of main themes and sub themes
 - text abstracts are chosen with great emphasis on authenticity with frequent visual support (original layouts, pictures)
 - reading strategies are taught indirectly within different types of exercises

Important principles concerning complementary materials and text work:

- Since complementary materials are often chosen by students themselves, they should be precisely labelled as for proficiency level, structure, content and aims of the book.

- For the same reason users should be properly guided in using the book (in Foreword), well-structured Index is a must.
- Such manuals are often used as practice books; therefore, editors must be attentive towards their weight, paper quality (appropriate for pencil writing), type and size of fount and free space for notes.

And a final remark by Mc Carthy:

There is an important balance to be struck between new-word density and length of text. New-word density will also be important when we consider the learner's ability to make intelligent guesses as to the meaning of new words. (Mc Carthy 1990, p. 117)

Evidently, complementary materials for vocabulary learning encourage the development of learning strategies and self-instruction. Therefore, more theory dealing with this domain of learning will be given in the following chapter. We will also explain the main principles of the Lexical Approach. It has already been mentioned in Summary of Chapter 5 that numerous tendencies in students' learning behaviour are in accord with this method. Since in the Lexical Approach teachers often work with students of different levels at the same time, they put great emphasis on their individual learning. Therefore, we are going to present this approach as one possible opening of the difficult situation of secondary school English teaching. Teachers and learners will thus be provided with some hints for vocabulary instruction with regards to all our research results and previously defined theoretical base.

7. Self-directed Learning and the Lexical Approach

7.1 The role of self-directed learning and the Lexical Approach in secondary school language education

The category of older secondary school students is a specific one, since these learners stand (as for their learning experience and self-directing skills) between the categories of children and adults. On one hand, they show considerable tendency towards self-instruction. On the other hand, their dependence on their teachers is still higher than with adults, they may even pattern themselves on their teachers (cf. Conclusions of Chapter 5). Moreover, young students love innovative practices and are much more apt to deny any positive qualities of English lessons if they find them boring. Further, there is some evidence stated by Singleton (Singleton 1989) that older learners may draw more than younger learners on general intelligence in acquiring a second language. In other words, the contribution of IQ to second language learning is very probably lower in respect of secondary school students than of adults.

At the same time however it is obvious that even among students of precisely the same age there are numerous individual differences that influence their capacity for L2 acquisition. Singleton reminds his readers of the role of primary school language education:

Given that second-level schooling is a vital part of the child's basic formation, and that within the secondary school curriculum second language learning increasingly constitutes an essential element, it would seem particularly important that pupils should not arrive at the start of their secondary studies with negative attitudes towards a particular language or to language

learning in general. We are obliged to ask, therefore, how probable it is that the experience of learning a second language at primary school will in fact be positive. (Singleton 1989, p. 244)

Taking into account specific features of the secondary school student category and concrete results of the first part of our research, we have come to the conclusion that a proper combination of particular principles declared by Self-Instruction and the Lexical Approach may variegate English lessons at secondary schools and help teachers make the education attractive for most students.

7.2 Self-instruction in secondary school language learning

7.2.1. Key facts about the method

Unfortunately, under Czech conditions self-instruction is taken into account almost uniquely in the domain of teaching adults. The category of older secondary school students is usually left aside. It is frequently forgotten that only a few people are spontaneously self-directed and that self-directing skills are a matter of personal development. Students who are encouraged in self-direction from their early -teens can grow up as experienced and conscious adult learners capable of effective self-study. One of the causes of underestimating and oversimplifying of self-instruction may be the naive view of self-directed learning as a process where teacher is completely redundant. Yet this is very rarely true. Even on the field of self-instruction we can find a scale of autonomy from high degree of external direction to full autonomy.

The biggest change in comparison to teacher-directed lessons is in the ratio of personal responsibilities that increase on student's part. In other words, the learner undertakes some additional responsibility, which in different circumstances would be held on their behalf by a teacher. In the context of Czech language education we consider this potential shift highly rewarding together with a similar shift from materials-centred to learner-centred attitude. Both changes are still at their beginnings.

We are following by a summary of short definitions according to Dickinson:

First of all, Dickinson distinguishes self-instruction from self-direction.

- *Self-instruction* - a neutral term referring generally to situations in which learners are working without the direct control of the teacher.
- *Self-direction* - describes a particular attitude to the learning task, where the learner accepts responsibility for all the decisions concerned with his learning but does not necessarily undertake the implementation of those decisions.

Further, she puts emphasis on the fact that learners' autonomy is a scale where at least autonomy as such should be distinguished from semi-autonomy:

- *Autonomy* - the situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all of the decisions concerned with his learning and the implementation of those decisions. In *full autonomy* there is no involvement of a teacher or an institution.
- *Semi-autonomy* - the stage at which learners are preparing for autonomy.

There are three more key terms in this domain according to Dickinson:

- *Self-access materials* - materials appropriate to and available for self-instruction.
- *Self-access learning* - self-instruction using these materials.
- *Individualised instruction* - a neutral term as to who takes the responsibility for the learning. It is a learning process that is adapted to a particular individual, taking this individual's characteristics into consideration. (Dickinson 1987, p. 11)

7.2.2. Reasons for self-instruction

Although much has already been said to support self-instruction, let us now summarise the main reasons for its use:

- *Self-instruction as a way of coping with various sorts of differences among learners.*

According to Dickinson (Dickinson 1987) at the very beginning of using this approach there was a wish to release learners from the need for all to work at the same rate or in her own words "to break the lockstep". Naturally, learners differ in their preferences in language learning. The difference in their needs is also proved by our research (see 4.2). By the way, the annoyance caused by the lack of individual work with students was present as one of the remarks.

- *The gradualist approach.*

As for the methodological preparation of learners for self-instruction, in most cases teachers use the gradualist approach. Consequently, students are introduced to self-instruction bit by bit, and they always have the opportunity of reverting to a conventional mode, if their circumstances so allow.

- *General requirement for continuing education.*

For the sake of this demand of our society, there is a need for most its members to be capable of continual learning long after achieving their maturity. The role of self-instruction in this process is evident.

- *Reducing inhibition.*

Dickinson explains one more advantage of the approach. Under Czech conditions we consider what follows an extremely powerful argument for the method:

I believe that self-assessment, individualisation and self-access will help to reduce inhibition and build confidence, and will help to increase empathy in the class. All three devices work to reduce competition, and at least one - self-access - may lead to an increase in co-operative learning. (Dickinson 1987, p. 26)

7.2.3. Preparation for self-direction

There are two basic conditions to fulfil if we want to make learners capable of a self-instructional mode of learning: firstly they must be self-directed, and secondly the learning environment must be organised in such a way as to facilitate self-instruction. In following subchapters we will comment on the two conditions separately.

7.2.3.1. Preparation of the learner

At the preparatory stage teachers will probably appreciate the near-maturity of their students who are able to understand and accept certain necessary amount of theory in advance. This ability is important, since students must require both psychological and methodological preparation. Dickinson (Dickinson 1987) explains that the first one serves

to changing attitudes and the second one shall provide learners with the necessary practical expertise in handling contracts, using materials, and undertaking self-assessment.

Psychological preparation consists of three main tasks. First of all learners are persuaded to try self-instruction. Consequently, their attitudes about language learning often need a change away from false assumptions and prejudices. Thirdly, students should be helped to build their self-confidence in their ability to work independently of the teacher. During the whole process of preparation the gradualist approach must be kept in mind. Despite all possible doubts, learners should by no means feel any insecurity during their learning process. Therefore, the opportunity of getting back to the conventional ways of teaching should always be at hand.

Methodological preparation for the learner is the process of acquiring the abilities and techniques he needs to undertake self-instruction. For P. Riley²² this stage involves "first becoming aware of learning processes and techniques which learners operate implicitly, and then combining this knowledge with certain skills more usually expected in teachers than in learners" (Dickinson 1987, p. 122).

More practically, it is useful to start with adopting such techniques into the classroom that encourage learners' autonomy but still do not cause much disruption. These are for example group and pair work, project work or encouraging learners to bring to the classroom original texts according to their own choice as an offer for class work.

Later students can be encouraged to monitor their own learning. Self-instruction offers numerous means for that

²² P. Riley is one of the major figures of CRAPEL (Centre de Recherches d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues). This centre provides self-directed learning of English for learners within the university, learners who are extramural, and "on-site" groups, i.e. groups of employees in local factories and commercial organisations.

activity. Some examples are keeping a checklist or even a learning diary including a self-rating on how well the items were learned. Students can also monitor the areas of difficulty and what was done about them. Every opportunity to correct their own work should be taken by learners.

The next stage is to support learners in drawing up their own objectives. Dickinson suggests following preparatory phase: The teacher indicates minimum objectives to be achieved in the ordinary classroom lessons (such things as "Score at least seven out of ten") so that even weak learners have a sense of achievement. The next stage is to encourage learners to draw up their own objectives. For this purpose, different types of learner contracts are used. Their common purpose is to contract with the teacher an amount of work to be done by a particular time. All the activities involved in the phase of learners' preparation have a common purpose: learners shall become aware of their learning problems by getting the possibility to communicate about them with their teacher. The self-instruction method works with one more tool - trouble-shooting sessions where the teacher supports this type of awareness.

7.2.3.2. Environment preparation

The most evident part of teaching environments is probably the domain of teaching materials. Those used for self-instruction are of three major types: authentic texts used directly by the learner, commercially available materials (used as they are or after adaptation) and materials which are specially written by the staff of the institution providing self-instruction based courses.

Dickinson states that "there is a growing movement among language teaching practitioners towards authenticity in textual materials" (Dickinson 1987, p. 68). The same tendency

is evident among learners themselves and is also noticeable among our research results. We dare say that specifically in our country students have adapted themselves to the new conditions (availability of original materials, TV programs and music, using the Internet etc.) in much shorter time than some of their teachers. In spite of that secondary school students need a feedback from their teachers in this matter, especially in case of materials for class work.

The authenticity of materials is even more important in case of adult learners with very specific requirements in language learning, especially due to their jobs. Although this problem does not primarily concern secondary school students, it can occur marginally rather in the domain of their personal interests and future professional orientation. For this reason we are adding one more quotation from Dickinson:

The tutor's role in using authentic documents is not to attempt to acquire the learner's specialised knowledge (which is difficult where there is one learner and virtually impossible where there are several with different specialities), but to aim to help the learners to develop study techniques which can be applied to any document. This is an elegant solution to a problem, which has troubled teachers of language for specific purposes for a long time - the fact that they often do not understand the content of the texts.

(Dickinson 1987, p. 69)

What we find utile is Dickinson's requirement of universality, especially in contrast to the negative "universality" resulting in artificial accommodation of all students to the same rate. Another positive feature of such an approach is teacher-student collaboration.

The commercial materials are usually used selectively and in adapted versions, since they are rarely designed for self-instruction. The adaptation consists of various procedures, usually additions. These changes are aimed for example at pre-reading reflection upon the text, contextualising vocabulary items, idioms and phrases or practising techniques for discovering word meaning (guessing from context, spotting synonyms etc.).

As for materials designed by teachers themselves, their creating is actually only a developed process of adaptation. Therefore, similar demands have to be taken into consideration. These are above all explicitness and the right choice of vocabulary because a self-directed learner more than any other needs materials in comprehensible language. For the same reason of weaker feedback from the teacher, the organisation of learner's work must be clear from the exercises or explanations supplied in the materials. There are many formal aspects the author must bear in mind, for example the pacing, timing and intensity of the work or combination of various materials.

There is one more item that comes under the section on environment: students' self-assessment. It has already been mentioned in connection with inhibition and psychological preparation. Our final remark concerns the fact that right self-assessment (as a parallel to the whole process of self-instruction) is based on two qualities: first of all it is a range applied with different intensity in case of different tasks. Secondly, all self-monitoring and progress testing should be continuous. In opposite case its results would not correspond to the real progress rate and their effect on the learners would therefore be demotivating.

7.2.4. Main principles of self-instruction

The following list summarises key rules for self-instruction, most of them known to the reader from remarks in previous paragraphs:

- Self-instruction does not mean redundancy of the teacher.
- The term refers to various learning situations with different range of student autonomy.
- The method encourages students' awareness of personal responsibility for the learning process. Students take over a part of teacher's activity. Teachers compensate for that by more effort during adaptation of materials and other forms of guidance (analysing the needs of each learner, preparing forms for learner contracts etc.).²³
- Both psychological and methodological preparation is necessary.
- The application of the approach should be gradual, respecting individual differences among learners and reinforcing their motivation.
- A necessary part of self-instruction is continual self-assessment.

7.3 The Lexical Approach

7.3.1 Basic facts about the method

Michael Lewis introduced his methodology first in 1993. In his own words, his book *The Lexical Approach* was intended to be a practically applicable methodology book (Lewis 1997, p. 7). At the very beginning there was a turn in the traditional view of lexis in relation to grammar. Lewis

²³ For a contract form see Appendix A.

rejected the traditional distinction of generative grammar system as opposed to nongenerative "words". In his view language consists of four different types of lexical items: words and polywords, collocations, institutionalised utterances and sentence frames or heads. Evidently, most of these items are "chunks" that, according to Lewis, are of much higher importance in any language than isolated words. In contrast to the traditional grammar-lexis distinction, chunks occupy all points on the spectrum between these two extremes. Chunks have some important qualities, the most important being likeliness. The Lexical Approach emphasises combinations that are not only possible but highly likely. As a natural result of the idea of frequently occurring fixed groups of words, learners get input in prefabricated chunks already. Some of the chunks (mainly idioms and fixed expressions) are recommended to be taught completely without internal analysis (Lewis 1997, p. 11-38 and Lewis in Coady-Huckin 1997, p. 255).

In order to prevent possible misinterpretation of what has been written here, let us consult some potential objections. First of all, Lewis does not deny the value of grammar; he just approaches it differently as one of possible generative elements instead of a unique one. The importance of generative elements is repeatedly noted in his works, since they permit creative re-combinations of lexis. Another misinterpretation could arise from the lack of internal analysis mentioned above. Thanks to this element, the Lexical Approach is close to the Communicative Approach. What these two methods have in common is the general view of "communication of meaning placed at the heart of language and language learning" (Lewis 1997, p. 15). Nevertheless, their ways of approaching lexis are distinct. The biggest change can be seen in the input-output concept. Lewis remarks a link between this shift and learner participation:

The Lexical Approach values both the quantity and quality of input. A corollary of it is that it is less concerned than some communicative methods with output. This is an important methodological shift, with which teachers need to feel comfortable. ... Increase student talking time is dismissed as a principle; learners are encouraged to participate fully in lessons, but we recognise that although they may participate through speaking, they can also do so, perhaps sometimes more effectively, by listening, noticing, and reflecting.
(Lewis 1997, p. 49)

With the help of the preceding quotation, we are able to comment on three essential issues. The first of them, as it has already been said above, is the distinction Lexical Approach vs. Communicative Approach. In spite of the fact that both methods put emphasis on communication, the importance of vocabulary input and output is perceived differently in each of them. Secondly, the quotation draws our attention to some connections between the Lexical Approach and the method of Self-instruction. The common principles are full participation of learners in lessons and effective input followed by reflecting. Are these demands of the Lexical Approach not great conditions for using Self-instruction? Thirdly, the quotation may correct potential doubts about active reception at students' part that could have been caused by our previous mention of the lack of internal analysis. Although in the Lexical Approach input is considered more important than output, students are not inspired to stay passive. On the contrary, their activity (although of different kind than in traditional communication method) is encouraged by so-called "awareness-raising" or "consciousness raising" activities. Their character is often receptive as opposed to (in Lewis' words) "the largely

productive practice used in formal vocabulary teaching" (Lewis in Coady-Huckin 1997, p. 260). There are many concrete examples in both Lewis's works (for some of them see Appendix A), let us now describe one for all:

A prototypical awareness-raising receptive activity is *Collocation dictation*. Each student is handed a copy of a sheet with between twelve and twenty verbs generously spaced in two columns. The teacher then reads a sequence of nouns, one by one with pauses long enough for learners to write down the noun beside a verb with which they think it forms a "strong partnership".²⁴ Answers are then compared in the whole class and learners record useful "partnerships" to their notebooks (Lewis 1997, p. 116).

Lewis's inventory of awareness-raising exercises is immense. Except for *Collocation dictation* there are for example *Spaghetti matching*, *Story boxes*, *Cascades*, *Thought-Speech bubbles* etc. (For more of them see Appendix A of this thesis or Lewis 1997, pp. 86-142.) Thanks to this type of exercises the Lexical Approach approximates the method of Self-instruction by the emphasis on reflection and autonomous work.

7.3.2. The role of L1 and translation in the Lexical Approach

Another marked difference between the Lexical Approach and the Communicative Approach is the supporting view of translation. Lewis considers translation inevitable but does not "want to see a return to a methodology which takes long passages of supposedly "good" but often turgid text into the classroom, to be laboriously translated" (Lewis 1997, p. 60). Consequently, he always approaches translation with regards to the role of L1. He explains:

²⁴Lewis's term for highly probable combinations.

The learners' questions reveal two important points: firstly, rather than "thinking in English", when you cannot express yourself in the L2, you naturally fall back into L1, and search for a translation from a starting point in L1. Translation is thus an instinctive part of the way the mind approaches learning a second language. ... Acquiring an L2 mirrors acquiring L1 in that you relate L2 words to L2 words, or L2 words to the external world, but you also and inevitably relate L2 words and expressions to L1 language items; in short, you translate. (Lewis 1997, p. 60-61)

In his further considerations Lewis suggests supporting students' natural tendency to translate. While projecting the way of doing that he gets back to the topic of chunks:

We often complain that learners translate word-for-word but rarely suggest a better way. The secret, of course, is to translate chunk-for-chunk. Such a translation will have some rough grammatical edges, but almost certainly successfully conveys the content. But learners cannot translate chunk-for-chunk until they can successfully identify the chunks. The ability to chunk correctly is a necessary, though not sufficient condition for successful translation. (Lewis 1997, p. 62)

Similarly to the aim of profiting from students' "translating tendency" Lewis has also searched how to use best the tendency towards L1 interference (more explanation of this term can be found in Chapter 1.3). He resulted in the proposition of raising learners' awareness of the positive effects of interference by putting emphasis on the facts that although many L1-L2 parallels are untrue, there are numerous

well working L1-L2 analogies (particularly structural ones) that can be helpful (Lewis 1997, p. 65).

Another interesting feature of the Lexical Approach is its positive view of negative evidence. Again, this issue is closely connected with awareness raising. The key point of the idea is the fact of the teacher being an important source of feedback. This feedback, however, should be sensitive enough not to change into mere correction. For that reason, Lewis proposes that the teacher's advice should include not only positive formulations of the type *You can say ... and you can also say...* but also those based on *Instead of ... I advise you to say ...* (Lewis 1997, p. 54). At this point the similarity between Lewis's approach and Self-instruction is again at hand.

7.3.3 Vocabulary notebooks

Logically, since Lewis's method is based on lexis, vocabulary notebooks have a key position within it. The entries are precisely organised and one of the teacher's roles is to take control over the way students record them. Vocabulary notebook also is one of the tools of developing students' awareness of the lexical nature of language. Lewis suggests making clear difference between receptive (from L2 to L1) and productive (from L1 to L2) vocabulary recording and explaining this rule to learners (Lewis 1997, p. 76).

In Appendix A we give examples of possible notebook entries. Despite their efficiency we doubt about their usefulness, above all in classes with big numbers of students. Nevertheless, they are excellent for teacher's inspiration.

There is one more aspect we cannot fully agree with in the domain of vocabulary notebooks. As we can read in one of the Classroom Reports written by one of Lewis's colleagues,

the Lexical Approach tends to regard these notebooks as temporary. It seems to the author of this thesis that this idea is derived from a more or less ideal view that lexical items, through constant use, become fully integrated into active vocabulary. As a consequence, approximately six-month-old vocabulary notebooks are useless (Heinz Ribisch in Lewis 1997, p. 172). In our opinion, this view is incompatible with any method based on lexis. The importance of vocabulary notebooks has already been noted in Chapter 5. Such tools, especially those of high quality (see the entries made by a secondary school student in Appendix A) can serve a learner all life long.

7.3.4. The main tenets of the Lexical Approach

A brief summary of some essential rules can be as follows:

- Lexis is organised in (four) different kinds of chunks.
- Activities are based on raising of receptive awareness, input is more important than output.
- What is taught is probable rather than possible English.
- Numerous activities work with L1-L2 comparisons and translation.
- The role of notebooks is essential, though rather in the current process of vocabulary learning than for future purposes of revision. Indiscriminate recording of "new words" is considered useless.

7.4. Links between the method of Self-instruction and the Lexical Approach

Although we could continue summarising for quite a long time, we are rather staying at the stage of inspirational hints. The materials by Lewis are in any case worth reading over. Finally, let us project a similar summary, this time concerned with liaisons of the Lexical Approach and Self-instruction:

- Both methods encourage learners' autonomy and active role in the learning process.
- Methodological preparation is a must both in the Lexical Approach and in Self-instruction.
- Both approaches are graded with emphasis on communication in real-life situations.
- In both cases the teacher is rather a supportive element than a leading one, his or her role is nevertheless irreplaceable.

Although we are aware of the fact that our presentation of the two methods was only roughly informative, we hope (in the manner of the Lexical Approach) to have stirred up the readers' awareness. Our aim was to draw their attention to the existence of new opportunities that are worth searching in order to improve the EFL teaching-learning process and to make it attractive both for teachers and their students.

8. Conclusions

In the Introduction it was stated that this thesis would comment upon "a few selected problems connected with English vocabulary teaching at Czech secondary schools". After consulting the research results we have revealed two groups of such problematic issues according to their causes. Whereas the first group of issues is connected with recent changes in Czech society including new opportunities of access towards educational materials, the Internet and other means of instruction, the second set of problems is caused by obstacles in teacher-learner communication. More precisely, the most frequent and therefore the most serious questions to be solved are as follows:

- 1) Not all teachers are well prepared for all the new opportunities and are often unwilling to or unable of as quick adaptation as their students. Students, on the other hand, have shown considerable flexibility. In spite of accepting modern ways of learning in short time, they quite naturally use classic tools such as classic paper textbooks (even quite old ones) and reading fiction.
- 2) Due to insufficient communication with their learners some teachers are not fully aware of students' learning needs. What is more, they are often unwilling to admit the rate of learning autonomy which in case of older secondary school students is usually quite high. As a result, students may be underestimated by their teachers. Another negative consequence of these attitudes is the tendency to install the same rate of demands and assessments for all students of the same class, without any regards to individual differences among learners.

As a response to thus acquired knowledge, the second half of our practical research puts emphasis on teachers' familiarity with the offer of complementary teaching

materials. Despite big contrasts in quality, all the six analysed samples have been found in some way useful, yet considerable differences have been revealed between the Czech and British / American ones. Most of the analysed materials are very well apt to self-instruction, usually more than to class work.

Since (as it has already been mentioned) self-instruction is a very convenient means of learning for the surveyed category of learners and since its material basis is of high range and quality, we have pointed out some of its methodological rules and compared them with the theoretical basis of the Lexical Approach. The expectations about numerous common features of the two methods have proved true. Therefore, the combination of these two approaches appeared easily achievable and inspiring both for learners and their teachers.

Resumé

The starting point of this thesis is the author's personal experience with English education at Czech secondary schools. Its task is to point out several concrete problems of this area, especially in the domain of vocabulary teaching. The paper does not aim at providing its readers with universal solutions of the problematic issues. Our purpose is rather to put emphasis on the wide range of possibilities of approaching the situation. Since one of our tenets was to cover the real current conditions, we decided not to formulate many initial assumptions. Instead of doing that we relied fully on the results of our research as a basis for further considerations.

The problems of English (vocabulary) teaching have been observed at two distinct Czech grammar schools resulting in two main types of their possible causes. First of them is undoubtedly recent rush social development. Numerous changes in Czech society have been connected first with the Velvet Revolution in 1989, later with the growing influence of the European Union. Out of these shifts, the opportunity of personal contact with English speaking countries is the most significant. Further, Czech learners can profit from easier access to current foreign educational materials, TV and radio programs in English and original English literary and music production. Last but not least there is the opportunity of using the Internet.

Although teachers of English can profit a lot from these opportunities, their flexibility is not always adequate. Consequently, Czech teachers often get used to them in much longer time than their students who use them for their home self-direction and consider these sources a normal part of their everyday lives. In the light of this knowledge we came to the following conclusion: the best reaction to this

situation is supporting students' self-direction. Therefore, much of this thesis deals with the method of Self-instruction. Another improvement can be achieved by informing Czech teachers about the up-to-date offer of teaching materials. For that reason, the practical part of this paper is concerned also with complementary materials for English vocabulary teaching. After giving some general information about Czech textbook market, six most frequently offered complementary materials have been analysed in detail. Half of them is of Czech origin (designed above all as preparatory materials for state-directed A levels), whereas the other three were written either in Great Britain or in the USA.

The second set of problem causes (in accord with research results and the author's experience) is due to inadequate teacher-learner communication. At the teacher's part it is often an insufficient analysis of students' needs that is to be blamed. It can be difficult for teachers to recognise and accept a high degree of students' independence in the educational process. As a result, learners express their discontent about too general demands designed for a class as a whole. Some of them suffer from the lack of individual approach.

As one possible opening of this uneasy situation this thesis offers combining selected ideas of Self-instruction method and the Lexical Approach by Michael Lewis. Both these methods work with quite a high level of learners' autonomy, which fully corresponds, to the examined category of students. Another common tendency of the two approaches is awareness towards personal learning needs of individuals and big emphasis on their self-assessment.

As it has been already said above, the thesis should not result in any universal instruction in case of current Czech secondary school language education. The author rather hopes that the projected results and reflections can help Czech

teachers in directing their attention to concrete parts of the process of education. For their following work several concrete hints are offered based on the two above mentioned methods. However, an equally important aim of this thesis is encouraging teachers to search for similar hints in their surroundings and accessible sources.

Resumé

Východiskem pro předkládanou práci je autorčina osobní zkušenost s výukou angličtiny v českém středním školství. Jejím úkolem je upozornit na několik konkrétních problémů této oblasti, přičemž se zaměřuje na oblast slovní zásoby. Práce si neklade za cíl poskytnout jednoznačná řešení otázek, jde spíše o to, upozornit na různé možnosti, jak k nedostatkům přistupovat. Ve snaze o aktuálnost práce vzhledem k současnému stavu jsme se rozhodli nepředkládat v úvodu práce osobní teze, nýbrž pracovat výhradně s výsledky výzkumů a ty teprve využít k dalším úvahám.

Po problémech ve výuce angličtiny a její slovní zásoby jsme pátrali prostřednictvím kvalitativního dotazníkového průzkumu přímo na dvou dosti odlišných českých gymnáziích. Kromě autorčiny osobní zkušenosti s oběma institucemi nás k jejich výběru vedly právě značné rozdíly mezi školami. Naprosto odlišné lokality a nestejný regionální význam umožnily průběžné porovnávání situace v hlavním městě a v malém městě příhraničním, ovšem s důležitou rolí v západočeském regionu. Studenti byli požádáni o zodpovězení šesti otevřených otázek. Zajímaly nás jednak konkrétní formy výuky, jednak subjektivní pohled studentů na její kvalitu, jejich připomínky a návrhy. V neposlední řadě byl výzkum zaměřen na osobní domácí práci s angličtinou, ať už jako přípravu na školní vyučování, nebo jako vědomé doplňkové sebevzdělávání.

Výsledky odhalily především dvě oblasti možných příčin problémů ve výuce. První z nich je bezesporu překotný společenský vývoj a s ním spojené změny probíhající v naší zemi nejprve v souvislosti se sametovou revolucí a později se sílícím vlivem Evropské unie. Jde především o možnost osobního kontaktu s anglicky mluvícím prostředím, dále o přístup k aktuálním zahraničním materiálům, rozhlasovému a

televiznímu vysílání v angličtině, původní literární a hudební produkci a v neposlední řadě o možnost využívání internetu.

Ačkoli tyto možnosti mohou být pro učitele angličtiny velkou výhodou, vinou nedostatečné flexibility se často stává, že si na ně pedagogové zvykají mnohem pomaleji než samotní studenti, kteří je využívají k domácímu sebevzdělávání a některé z nich považují za běžnou součást každodenního života. Porovnání situace v Praze a v Klatovech ukázalo častější využívání zmíněných prostředků v hlavním městě, pravděpodobně díky širším možnostem v této oblasti. (Zde máme na mysli především častější kontakt s anglicky mluvícími rodilými mluvčími či snazší přístup k originálním materiálům v angličtině prostřednictvím lépe zásobených knihoven.)

Na základě výše zmíněných poznatků o nesouladu mezi učitelem a žákem v oblasti užívání vyučovacích technik jsme došli k závěru, že nejlepší reakcí na tuto situaci je samostatnost sebevzdělávání studentů podporovat, proto je značná část práce věnována metodě *Self-instruction* (viz dále). Ke zlepšení situace může vést také větší informovanost pedagogů o nabídce výukových materiálů. V praktické části práce jsme se proto na tyto materiály zaměřili, v rámci velmi široké nabídky jsme se specializovali na doplňkové materiály pro výuku anglické slovní zásoby. Po obecné informaci o stavu českého knižního trhu v této specializaci jsme přikročili k podrobnému rozboru šesti materiálů, které se na pultech knihkupectví objevovaly nejčastěji. Polovina z nich vznikla v ČR, především pro potřeby přípravy na zavedení státní maturitní zkoušky od školního roku 2006-2007, další tři materiály jsou britské nebo americké provenience. Právě úzké zaměření na přesně definované úkoly maturitní zkoušky a důraz na text zřetelně odlišovaly české učebnice od britských a amerických.

Všechny analyzované materiály se sice ukázaly být použitelné při doplňkové výuce slovní zásoby, nicméně rozdíly v kvalitě byly obrovské. Častým nedostatkem byla nedostatečná pozornost autorů a vydavatelů vůči slovníčkům a rejstříkům s funkčními odkazy k textu učebnice, u některých materiálů se objevoval nesoulad mezi informací na přebalu knihy a realitou. Velmi znepokojivý je v tomto směru stav knihy *Anglické texty* od P. Hamajdy, která postrádá některé základní ediční údaje. Mnohé z výše zmíněného je pravděpodobně editory považováno za nedůležitý detail, pro studenta pátrajícího po vhodné učebnici jde však o důležité informace pro rozhodování o koupi materiálu. Jednotlivé knihy se také lišily důrazem na využitelnost ve skupinové resp. individuální výuce.

Druhou skupinu příčin problémů vyplývajících z výsledků výukumu a potvrzenou autorčinou zkušeností tvoří nedostatky v komunikaci mezi studenty a jejich pedagogy. Ze strany učitele bývá často na vině nedostatečná analýza potřeb studentů. Někdy je pro pedagogy obtížné rozpoznat a uznat vysoký stupeň samostatnosti adolescentů ve vyučovacím procesu. Studenti si následně stěžují na příliš obecné požadavky vytvářené pro třídu jako celek a na nedostatek osobního přístupu.

Jako možné východisko z této situace jsme navrhli zkombinovat vybrané podněty z přístupu *Self-instruction* a poměrně nové metody Michaela Lewise nazvané *the Lexical Approach*. (Svou koncepci založenou na recepci slovní zásoby v jasně oddělitelných celcích zvaných „chunks“ představil Lewis v roce 1993.) Oba tyto přístupy totiž počítají s poměrně značnou mírou samostatnosti studenta v procesu vzdělávání. Posílení důrazu na tuto samostatnost je v podmínkách českého školství více než žádoucí, neboť schopnost zapojit se do plánování, vedení i hodnocení vlastní

výuky je naprosto v souladu s námi sledovanou kategorií patnácti až dvacetiletých studentů.

Společným znakem obou metod je dále zohlednění osobních studijních potřeb jednotlivce. To je v našem středním školství také nasnadě - náš výzkum ostatně potvrdil, že škála individuálních přístupů k osobnímu vzdělávání je u současných českých středoškoláků velmi bohatá. Jak už bylo řečeno, studenti jsou (i když v různé míře) schopni velmi rychle přijímat nové učební techniky a prostředky, zároveň se však nebrání těm klasickým a osvědčeným. Oproti učitelům jsou velmi často mistry v propojení studia angličtiny s každodenním životem (viz internet, poslech anglických písní aj.) Možným úskalím jejich výběru přitom může být nedostatečná zkušenost, a tedy i schopnost analýzy prostředku, techniky či materiálu. I v tomto ohledu lze hledat pomoc u dvou výše zmíněných přístupů, neboť v obou je kladen důraz na vědomé zapojení studenta do vyučovacího procesu a jeho informovanost v oblasti metodologie. Oba přístupy dále zdůrazňují schopnost sebehodnocení, již považujeme za velmi potřebnou, zvláště s ohledem na současný trend průběžného celoživotního vzdělávání.

Jak už bylo řečeno, výsledkem práce nemají být obecně platné návody, jak k současné situaci ve středním školství přistupovat. Doufáme spíše, že naše výsledky a úvahy napomůžou českým učitelům uvědomit si, na které části vyučovacího procesu je třeba upřít pozornost. K další práci nabízíme několik konkrétních podnětů na základě výše zmíněných metod, naším záměrem je však také podpořit snahu učitelů hledat a nacházet podobné podněty ve vlastním okolí a v dostupných zdrojích.

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²⁵ This source contains only incomplete information about its edition.

Appendix A

I. Students' questionnaire - introductory information.

Vážení kolegové, milí studenti,

děkuji vám všem předem za spolupráci. Tento anonymní dotazník je součástí práce, která pomůže zmapovat současný stav doplňkových učebních materiálů pro výuku angličtiny na českém knižním trhu. Je totiž důležité, aby nabídka odpovídala konkrétním potřebám jednotlivých studentů a pedagogů, kteří dokážou být nesmírně kreativní při výběru, obměňování a vymýšlení technik učení. S díky a přáním mnoha hezkých chvil strávených s angličtinou,

Kateřina Nohlová

II. Students' questionnaire - blank form.

Ročník: _____ Angličtinu se učím _____ rok(y)/ let.
Považuji se za *začátečníka* / *mírně pokročilého* / *středně pokročilého* / *pokročilého*
(podtrhněte)

- 1) Pochybujete někdy o významu studia angličtiny na střední škole? Proč ano / ne?

- 2) Jak důležitá je podle vás při studiu cizího jazyka slovní zásoba? Vidíte v tomto směru nějaký rozdíl oproti znalosti gramatiky a reálií anglicky mluvících zemí?

- 3) Máte nějakou vlastní techniku pro studium slovní zásoby? (Četbu, sledování anglických TV programů, poslouchání hudby aj.) Používáte nějaké jiné příručky než základní školní učebnici? Jaké?

- 4) Vedete-li si slovníček, naznačte, prosím, jakou strukturu mají jednotlivá hesla. Obsahují údaje o výslovnosti? Z jakých zdrojů berete slovíčka? (Z učebnice, beletrie, časopisů, ...)

- 5) Zkouší váš učitel slovní zásobu (i písemně) „na známky“? Odděluje ji při zkoušení od gramatiky? Vyžaduje povinnou četbu v angličtině nebo v překladu? Co si o jeho systému myslíte?

- 6) Toto je prostor pro jakékoli vaše připomínky a nápady k tématu výuky slovní zásoby. Můžete využít i druhou stranu dotazníku.

IV. Language Skills Contract form used in the method of Self-instruction (Dickinson 1987, p. 100).

NAME: Dithril		GROUP: Advanced		DATE: 1 October		
Skill area for improvement - learning objectives	Proposed activities - what you are going to do	Proposed resources - what you are going to use	Target date for completion	Ways of demonstrating achievement - how you are going to test yourself	Tutor's initials	Date completed
<p>1. Reading speed</p> <p>Improve speed from 100 w.p.m. to 120 w.p.m. without reducing comprehension</p>	<p>Timed reading of prepared passages</p>	<p>Reading speed builders Box IV; Level blue</p>	1 Nov	<p>Use test items in the card for comprehension and get >80% Reach >120 w.p.m. on five consecutive cards</p>		
<p>2. Seminar discussion skills</p> <p>Break into a discussion</p> <p>Disagree politely with another speaker</p> <p>State an alternative viewpoint</p>	<p>Take part in oral skills option</p> <p>Try to arrange additional discussions with friends</p> <p>Practise during tutorials and seminars in other subjects</p>	<p>Supplied by tutor</p> <p>Try to get a native speaker to take part; watch TV news and discuss current issues; use newspapers</p> <p>Supplied by tutor</p>	1 Nov	<p>Judge reactions of other participants - do they look startled/irritated when I join in? Do I convey my viewpoint? Do I manage to persuade people? Try to get native speaker to monitor my performance</p>		
<p>3. Essay writing</p> <p>Improve my planning of essays</p> <p>Writing essays</p>	<p>Plan essays on many topics</p> <p>Write one essay per week on one of the topics above</p>	<p>Wallace Study Skills in English</p> <p>Form self-help group from friends (tutor will help with this)</p>	1 Nov	<p>Use guide in book</p> <p>Self-assessment schedule</p> <p>Ask tutor</p> <p>Ask tutor</p> <p>Self-assessment</p> <p>Assessment by self-help group</p> <p>Tutor to check some essays</p>	<p>Using criteria supplied by tutor</p>	

V. Example of organising vocabulary in the Lexical Approach
(Lewis 1997, p. 69).

Administration

A. Which of these things do you have in your office?

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. printed envelopes | 4. plain paper |
| 2. letterhead | 5. compliment slips |
| 3. address labels | 6. sellotape |

B. Make five word partnerships. Match each verb to a partner.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. book | a. the Annual Conference |
| 2. reserve | b. extra supplies |
| 3. make arrangements for | c. an early flight to Athens |
| 4. order | d. the AV equipment |
| 5. hire | e. a table for six at 8 o'clock |

How many different kinds of AV equipment can you name?

C. Which of these words is not usually used with *form*:

application order supply registration duplicate

Which of these words is not usually used with *memo*:

send circulate internal external write

Which of these words is not usually used with *file(s)*:

open save copy delete
create make merge

Write the initials of someone at your work who deals with these things:

telephone enquiries complaints
correspondence day-to-day problems

D. Write the equivalent in your own language for each of these expressions:

- I think we'd better send them a reminder.
Can you send them a reminder, please?
Did you get my memo?
Don't worry, it's already been dealt with.
Could you sign this form, please?
Could you fill in this form, please?

In American English you *fill out* a form; in British English you *fill in* a form.

VI. Possible way of making highly organised vocabulary notebook entries suggested by Lewis (Lewis 1997, p. 79).

Five adjectives	+ noun
bleak	prospect
daunting	
dismal	
exciting	
vague	

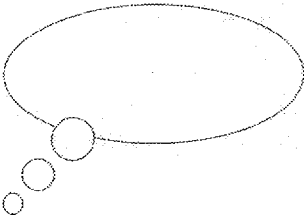
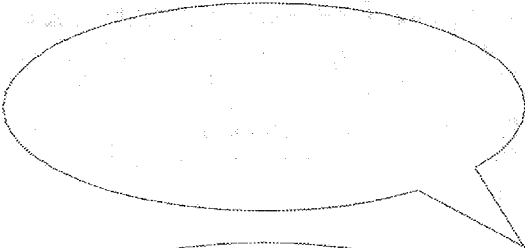
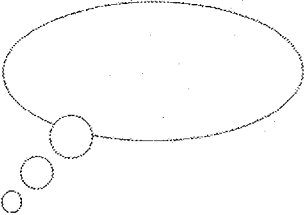
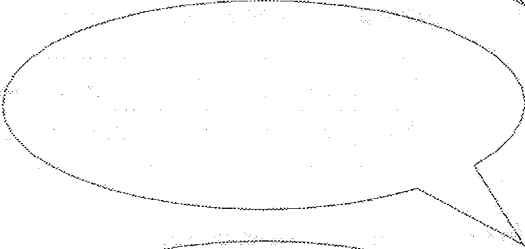
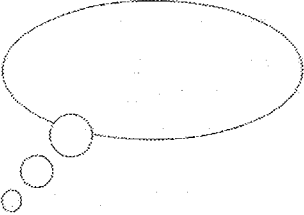
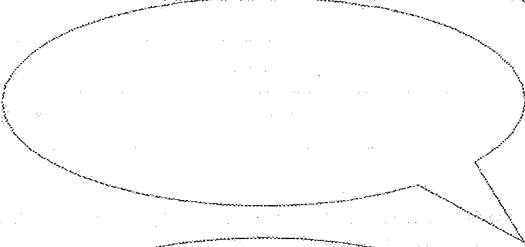
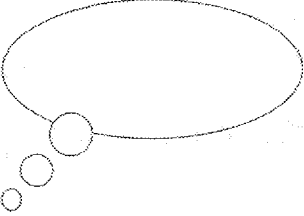
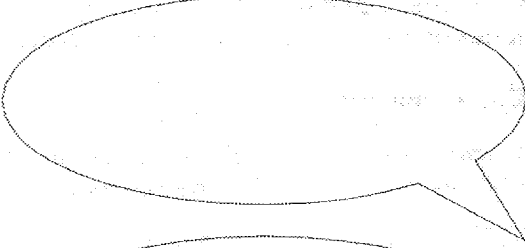
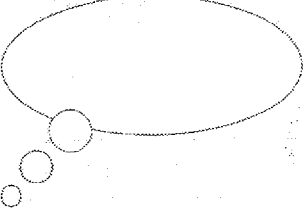
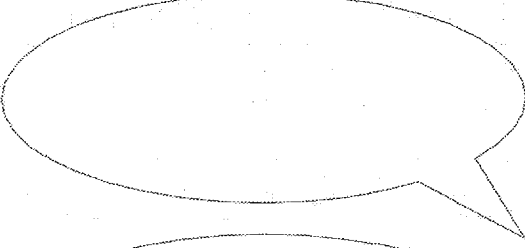
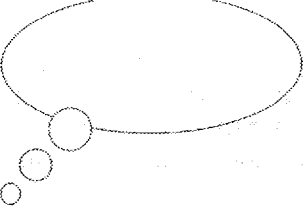
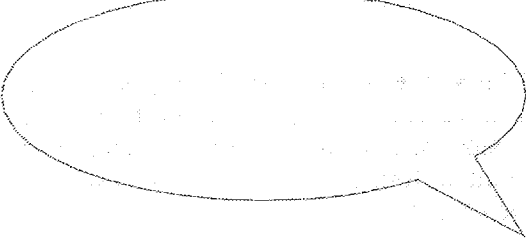
These may be combined into the 5 - 5 - 1 box:

Five verbs	Five adjectives	+ noun
attract	adverse	criticism
be subject to	blunt	
deserve	constant	
react to	helpful	
provoke	severe	

Sometimes other 5 - 1 or occasionally 1 - 5 formats are useful:

Five nouns	+ noun
export	costs
management	
labour	
transport	
overhead	

VII. Speech-thought Bubbles; one of the awareness-raising exercise types according to Lewis (Lewis 1997, p. 83).

What you think	What you say
	
	
	
	
	
	

VIII. Happy Have; an exercise by Lewis focusing on distinguishing of chunks (Lewis 1997, p. 150).

Happy Have The verb (have) occurs in lots of expressions. Quite a lot of them about good news or good luck. Arrange these in any order you like, then use the expressions to tell a story with a happy ending.	
had a holiday in ...	had a good time
had nothing/a lot to do	had a good job
had a bit of good/bad luck	had no alternative but to ...
had no difficulty ... <i>ing</i>	had a meal/a few drinks
had a friend who ...	had a chance to ...
had a nasty shock when ...	had no way of avoiding ...
had an accident	had no doubt that
had a talk to ...	had a think and decided to ...
had no hesitation in ... <i>ing</i>	had a feeling that
(S)he had an idea!	It had no effect.