THEORETICAL STUDY

1.   Introduction

1.1   The aim of the paper

This paper is going to deal with the parents' beliefs about English learning, a subject matter which has so far been neglected. Particularly, the study is going to investigate to what extent the parents' beliefs correspond with modern trends in English language teaching/learning (ELT). At first, the concept of parents' beliefs and the parents' role in pupils' learning processes will be analyzed. Then the areas of shift in perception of ELT will be defined. The practical study will be based on the research into the parents' beliefs concerning these particular areas. The results of the research will be used to formulate a set of implications for cooperation between school and family.

1.2   Modern views of education

Modern society has to face new realities and be able to cope with them. These changes concern various aspects of life. Firstly, the considerable development of science and modern technologies has lead to faster pace practically in all areas. For instance, almost everyone has an opportunity to travel; the transmission of information is enormously quick. In addition, people change their jobs more often and they have to face new ways of organization of work. They are also expected to be flexible, capable of working in a team and dealing with new pieces of information. Secondly, an individual in a democratic society is expected to make many more decisions which, besides a lot of information, demand a large amount of individual responsibility and a consistent system of values. He/she has to form an attitude toward realities of 21st century, such as drugs, chicanery, violence, racism, extremism in many forms, war and many others.

Modern education aims to reflect the changes in the society and bring up students who can meet the expectations mentioned above:

> "Crucial qualifications include the ability to think in complex contexts, management skills, communicative and cooperative skills, ability to solve problems; the importance of independence and responsibility rises."
>
> (Skalková. 1999: p. 49)*

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* all quotations from Czech sources were translated by the author

Although the Czech educational system "did not go through the changes as the rest of Western Europe did after 1968" (Zlatuška. 2001: p. B/3), its reform has started after the fall of communism in 1989. The direction of the reform and its goals are illustrated in the key document *Bílá kniha*, published in 2001.

1.3   Communicative Language Teaching

Modern views of language learning are represented by an approach which is generally referred to as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This attitude has its origin in the changes in British educational system in 1960s. These changes were initiated by Noah Chomsky's contribution to the views of the nature of languages. In his concept he distinguished two terms: "competence (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of the language), and performance (i.e. the actual use of the language in concrete situations)". (Chomsky in Hedge. 2000: p. 45) He raised the debate among linguists and philosophers (e.g. John Austin, John Searle) upon another method of language learning. As a result of these debates, a group of sociolinguists from the Council of Europe developed Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), a concept that incorporated the aspect of communication and culture into Chomsky's idea.

Richards and Rodgers claim that the aims of CLT are:

a)   make communicative competence the goal of language teaching
b)   develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication
(Richards and Rodgers. 1992: p. 66)

Apparently, the language is no longer viewed as a system of structures, as in traditional approach to ELT. CLT has put the emphasis on the meaning of language. Communicative competence is viewed as "the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately" (Richards and Rodgers. 1992: p. 67) and that is also the meaning used in this paper. Traditional language teaching on the other hand is here used in the sense of teacher-centered, grammar-based approach to ELT.

1.4   Particular areas in which the shift is apparent

As a result of the shift of the perception of language learning, implementing CLT has had an influence on all aspects of English language teaching (ELT). In this chapter, the particular areas will be defined. Their further analysis will follow in the chapters 2.1 to 2.7.

Discussing the particular changes, we should be aware that CLT shows the direction of modern ELT but this approach can still have stronger and weaker versions according to the importance of communication in the classroom. Also, some of the issues discussed exceed the concept of CLT and illustrate other views connected with modern education.

The first issue discussed is the goal of ELT. Comparing traditional language teaching with CLT, it becomes apparent that CLT and modern education in general introduce some new goals. The chapter is going to analyze the particular goals and the student's relationship towards the goals.

Secondly, all the teaching/learning processes as well as the means and forms used to enhance them, i.e. organizational forms, activities and teaching aids, have been adjusted in order to promote communication. We are going to consider the variety CLT offers, analyze the reasons of the change, advantages it brings as well as certain drawbacks.

Thirdly, the modern views of ELT have had an influence upon the teacher's and student's role. Their new roles will be analyzed, using the opinions of various authors. In order to achieve better comprehensibility, when using a pronoun, all of the participants, teacher, student, and parent, are going to be referred to as "he".

1.5   The basis of parents' belief system and its importance

This chapter is going to deal with the elements that have had an impact on the parent's belief system regarding ELT. Then it is going to focus on the reasons which lead to the analysis of their role and the research into their beliefs.

Parents' beliefs are influenced by a number of aspects. First of all, parents' expectations are formed by their own school attendance and experience from this period of life. The experience and expectations derived from it concern practically all the areas discussed in the chapter 1.4. The particular parent's personality is another factor determining his beliefs. It covers the internal influences, such as his mentality, values, intelligence, relationship to English as a language, etc., as well as the external influences, such as his education or occupation. Also social factors have an impact upon the parents' beliefs, such as relationship with the child, the expectations from him, the relationship with the English teacher, etc. At last, his beliefs are also formed by the experience with the school the child currently attends, its policy, the mutual relationship between the school

and the family, etc. The result of these influences is a system of parent's beliefs. Why are their beliefs to be understood?

Ideally, parent should be regarded as one of the participants of the learning process, along with the teacher and the student. He has a relationship to the other participants and has a personal interest in the results of ELT. Towards the student, i.e. his child, he is one of the objective determinants, which means he represents an external influence upon his child's attitudes and results of learning. He influences the child intentionally as well as unintentionally. For example, it has been proved that the level of parents' education has an impact on the child's school results. (Árochová, Bakičová, Ševčíková in Průcha. 1997: p. 119) Other interesting correlations have been found between the time when the parents come home and the child's school results. (Jerhotová in Průcha. 1997: p. 130) Also, the parent has an opportunity to consult the teacher in order to achieve better understanding of the process, share the experience about the child, etc.

Considering the relationships vice versa, child reports the results, success and difficulties to the parent. Also the teacher establishes a relationship with the parent, discusses the child's progress, weaknesses, etc. Obviously, the parent plays an active role in the student's education.

The only way of achieving effective participation is involving the parents in the process in an active way. The pre-condition of such involvement is the awareness what their expectations and beliefs about ELT are. Awareness of the parents' beliefs can facilitate further cooperation and help to avoid misunderstandings.

2.   Recent trends in various aspects of ELT

2.1   Goals and objectives in language teaching/learning

Goals and objectives form an area which is crucial for the process of language teaching/learning because they show the direction of the process. Since the views of education have changed a lot and a new, learner-centered attitude has had an influence upon all aspects of teaching/learning, as it was discussed in the introduction, also new relationship toward the goal is being discussed and put to practice. The following parts will be devoted to description of the most apparent changes concerning the perception of the goal.

2.1.1   Definition of the terms, the problem of formulation of the goal

A number of authors define the term goal. Skalková states that "educational goal is the intended and expected result to which the teacher along with the students proceeds". (Skalková. 1999: p. 106) She uses a chart illustrating the hierarchy of goals starting from the general ones to the more specific ones:

General goals (higher)

Specific objectives, lower

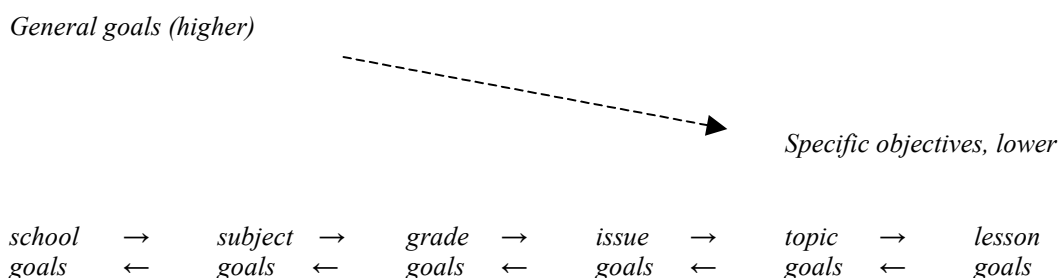| *school* | → | *subject* | → | *grade* | → | *issue* | → | *topic* | → | *lesson* |
| *goals* | ← | *goals* | ← | *goals* | ← | *goals* | ← | *goals* | ← | *goals* |

Chart no. 1: The Hierarchy of Goals. V. Švec, H. Filová, O. Šimoník in Skalková. 1999: p. 107

Nunan and Lamb also make the distinction in terms of generalization. More general goal is defined as "broad statement that provides general support for course development". (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: p.30) Specific goal is called an objective, "specification what a learner should be able to do". (ibid.)

Scrivener refers to the objective as to the main aim of the lesson, he defines it as "intended student achievements". (Scrivener. 1994: p. 50)

So far, we have seen very similar definitions of what a goal/objective is. Nevertheless, authors differ in their opinion on ideal formulation of the goal. Scrivener suggests using a traditional phrase "By the end of the lesson the learners will be able to ...". (Scrivener. 1994: p. 51) Skalková (1999: pp. 109, 110) and Nunan with Lamb (1996: p. 27) suggest that objectives should contain specification of the performance, i.e. what student will be able to do, conditions, i.e. on what conditions and circumstances will he be able to do it, and standards, i.e. how well should he perform.

On the contrary, Hedge considers similar definitions too narrow in comparison with recent views of language learning and gives an example of a goal and consequently derived objectives:

GOAL:		to develop the student's reading ability more comprehensively and effectively;
OBJECTIVES:	a)	to develop effective strategies for dealing with unknown words
	(b)	to be able to distinguish fact from opinion
	(c)	to build confidence in dealing with a wide range of texts (e.g. news reports, charts, magazine articles, short stories)

(Hedge. 2000: p. 344)

From the author's formulations it is apparent that the goal and the objectives are parts of continual process. Traditionally, this process was built upon goals leading to mastering the sound, form, order, symbols and other formal aspects of the language. On the other hand, communicative language teaching focuses on learners' needs, on their ability to participate in communication. (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: p. 11) That is why the objectives ought to involve linguistic as well as functional point of view. Practically, formulations of the type 'student should be able to ..' become impossible because they cannot truly cover the communicative aspect of the language.

2.1.2   Student's active relationship towards the goal, self-initiated learning

All English teachers as well as all parents probably hope to have students/children who are interested in the subject and motivated to make a progress. Particularly, such students should be keen on achieving the goal and should remain consistent throughout the process which is likely to continue all their life. The question is how a teacher can help to form this kind of active relationship towards the goal and independence in the learning process.

The matter is closely connected with the perception of the student's role in the classroom. Traditionally, student was considered a "passive recipient of knowledge" (Hedge. 2000: p. 82) and as such he was expected to learn in a covert way, i.e. without understanding the learning process or knowing the teacher's/institution's intentions. Nevertheless, as Hedge states, besides the acquisition of knowledge and skills, the goal in democratic society is to bring up independent and responsible people. This can be achieved only by means of letting students face situations and tasks in which they can behave independently and responsibly.

According to Nunan and Lamb (1996: p.10), student should participate actively at all stages of the language process, planning, implementation and assessment/evaluation. At the first stage, planning, learner should be consulted what and how to learn: "Learners are involved in setting, monitoring, and modifying the goals and objectives of the programme being designed for them." (ibid.) Skalková (1999: p. 114) also agrees that older students should be encouraged to form their own goal. She stresses that this level of independence is the result of a process, in which the students are at first guided by the teacher and continually, the amount of his assistance decreases.

Apparently, teachers and parents can help the students to take the responsibility for their own learning by letting them participate actively in the whole process: "Meaningful learning has to be self-initiated". (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: p. 10) This involves participation in creating the goal of the learning process as well. The result then will be personal interest in the goal and intrinsic motivation to achieve it.

2.1.3   Long-term goals in language teaching/learning

So far we have discussed the recent trends concerning forming the goal in ELT. In this chapter we are going to have a look at particular goals of education of the 21st century, mainly those which are relevant in ELT.

<u>Multicultural aspects</u>

Education focuses not only on cognitive goals, it aims at affective goals as well, i.e. goals concerning students' attitudes and values. These values should enable students to face the demands of the particular period. One of the demands that seem crucial in this era is the life in the multicultural society.

Modern society brings together variety of people of different nationalities, cultures, religions, and opinions. This is a result of the possibility of travelling, the role of media, good connection via telephone, internet, etc. However**,** different social and physical conditions cause difficult life situations. Such aspects of human relationships as racism, fanaticism or preconceptions, ignorance towards people's needs are present in the today's world too.

The role of the school is to represent the world of democratic values, where everyone is welcome to participate in constructive work, express his opinion but he has to obey the laws and rules as well. The role of the language education then is to encourage students' interest in other countries, cultures, and languages in order to help to develop respect and tolerance towards them.

> "We should aim at life without conflicts and negative relationships not only in the society of other people but also other nations, languages, minorities and cultures, and be able to accept and respect even vast differences among people and cultures of today's connected world."
> (*Bílá kniha*. 2001: p.15)

In ELT we a great opportunity to build intercultural relationships by means of contacting students from other countries, cooperating with foreign schools on international projects, etc.

Metacognitive strategies

Another long-term goal in education is the development of metacognitive strategies. Metacognitive strategies are "learning techniques by means of which the subject reflects (monitors, evaluates) his learning and organizes the process". (Švec. 1998: p. 47) The first step is to realize one's own learning style, the ways which help the individual in the learning process. This self-reflection then leads to learning to control these processes.

According to Nunan and Lamb (1996: p. 10), the content and the goals of the language programme should involve development of metacognitive strategies as well. They maintain that each language programme should have two goals, language content goal containing cognitive goal and learning process goal containing a learning strategy students are going to learn. ELT classroom is a good environment where various strategies and techniques can be shared. For example the class could discuss the ways of storing and learning the vocabulary, reading techniques, ways of practising certain items, etc. At first, students might need teacher's recommendations and advice, he "can suggest a range of strategies and help students identify those which will work well for them". (Hedge. 2000: p. 94)

This aim is again built upon the assumption that student should participate at all stages of the learning process (Nunan and Lamb, 1996: p. 10), which will firstly make the process more effective and secondly, it will enable him to continue with the process on his own.

Self-evaluation

So far we have seen that active participation enables the students to take the responsibility for their own learning process. This fact concerns assessment and evaluation as well. The last stage of the process is no longer based only on teacher's evaluation or on peer evaluation: "Learners monitor and assess their own progress. They are also actively involved in the evaluation of teaching and learning." (ibid.)

As well as with teacher correction, there should be some criteria used for self-evaluation. Usually we compare the performance with the goal. Bimmel offers a possible self-evaluative tool:

> What did I have to (want) to learn?
> What did I do in order to learn it?
> To what extent have I achieved what I had to learn?
> Next time, would I solve a similar task in the same way?

(Bimmel in Švec. 1998: p.51)

Self-evaluation is not an easy task to perform and therefore students need some practice. It demands the ability to analyze one's own performance, find the strengths and weaknesses, compare it with the criteria and sometimes, present the outcome. Acquisition of this skill is going to help students in setting new goals and primarily, it is going to improve their learning skills.

Critical attitude towards information

Another crucial goal defining education of 21st century is the ability to think critically, evaluate and select information. Modern society, which is sometimes referred to as informational society, has had an access to enormous amount of information. This is the result of extensive development of modern technologies and science, possibilities to travel, access to worldwide mass media, etc. These changes have had an impact on expectations from employees. People are expected to be able to know where to find the information and work with it. Moreover, another reason for learning to select the information is the fact that not all of it is correct, some of it intends to manipulate people in a way.

Obviously, students need to be able to approach each piece of information critically and selectively. This goal is going to influence the choice of activities in a number of subjects and can be implemented in ELT, too. Students can work with a number of texts, articles, watch various programmes on the video and speak about their feelings, about the author's intentions, etc.

Lifelong learning

Perhaps the most important goal of ELT as well as of the whole school education general is the idea of lifelong learning.

Lifelong learning – term recently used to suggest that education is not limited to certain, initial period of life but it continues throughout the whole life, and it is not acquired only formally, by means of educational system, it is based on all the obtained experience.

(*Bílá kniha*. 2001: p. 16)

This document also stresses out the role of this goal in language education:

"Lifelong learning also means a new view of traditional language education, which should mainly create necessary skills and motivation for the student to want to achieve as high level of knowledge as possible and thus take the responsibility of his own learning."

(*Bílá kniha*. 2001: p. 17)

According to this document, the role of the elementary school in preparing the conditions for lifelong learning is crucial:

> "Elementary education is at present the only stage of education that is compulsory for each child in the Czech republic and forms the basis for lifelong learning of the entire population."
>
> (*Bílá kniha*. 2001: p. 47)

We have discussed the main goals of modern education. Lifelong learning is the umbrella term which covers the active process of learning throughout the life and thus forms the goal of developing students' and metacognitive strategies. The work in a learner-centered classroom involves improving these strategies. At the same time, the role of education is to reflect on needs of modern society. These include the ability to work with information and approach it critically. Another need concerns positive relationship towards variety of people, cultures, minorities, religions, etc. These goals show the direction of modern ELT and the education in general.

2.2 Organizational forms

2.2.1 Language teaching/learning based on communication

The emphasis on student's active learning has lead to an obvious shift from front teaching to other forms of organization. These forms reflect the need of bringing up independent, flexible people who are good team members as well. This trend is also apparent in ELT, where front teaching served the purpose to teach/learn using grammar-translation method. Moving on to communicative language teaching caused the fact that more cooperative forms of work had to be put to practice:

> "To be able to operate effectively in the real world, students need plenty of opportunity to practice language in situations which encourage them to communicate their needs, ideas and opinions."
>
> (Abbs and Greebairn in Skalková. 1999: pp. 45, 46)

2.2.2 Various types of organizational forms, their advantages and disadvantages

Communicative language teaching involves using variety of organizational forms, which will be discussed in this chapter. It is going to focus on the classroom environment, other forms such as homework or excursion will not be dealt with.

Front teaching

Front teaching is an organizational form the conditions of which are described by Scrivener as: "the teacher standing at the front of the class 'teaching' and the students sitting in rows listening". (Scrivener. 1994: p. 1) According to him, a typical lesson will contain explanation of a subject matter, the understanding of which will be tested afterwards. The teacher does most of the activity and talking. Although this is a way of "informing a large number of people about a topic" (Scrivener. 1994: p. 2), "it is unclear how much 'learning' is taking place". (ibid.)

On the other hand, Skalková (1999: p. 205) stresses the interaction between the teacher and the whole class leading to a particular goal. She emphasizes that teacher's role is also to approach the students individually. Unlike Scrivener, Skalková (1999: p. 207) thinks that when using a variety of methods and teaching aids, and respecting certain hygienic rules, front teaching can be an effective organizational form used along with other forms in modern education.

Both authors (Scrivener. 1994: p. 2; Skalková. 1999: p. 207) have agreed that front teaching can serve neither as the only nor as the main organizational form. Its disadvantages are numerous. Front teaching does not take advantage of the students' potential because it does not reflect their individual needs. It often leads to the situation when the teacher takes the average students into consideration and the students above or below the average then do not have an opportunity to develop according to their abilities. Also, the amount of time that a teacher can spend with one student is rather small. (ibid.) Finally, students learn what teacher has designed and organized for them and therefore they are not improving the organization and cooperation skills which enable their lifelong learning.

The solution is in implementing front teaching as one of organization forms used in lessons. Most of the work should be based on cooperative forms, such as groupwork, pairwork, cooperative teaching or project work, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

Groupwork

Skalková defines groupwork as "an organizational form when we form small groups of pupils (3 – 5 members) that cooperate on a certain task". (Skalková. 1999: p. 208) If two students work on a task, i.e. each group has two members, we speak about

11

pairwork. Authors mostly agree that groupwork has a number of positive effects. First group of the advantages concerns social relationships. Unlike in front teaching, students have a good opportunity for active work based on cooperation, participation in discussions and learning to come to conclusions and formulate them along with the group. (ibid.; http://www.clt.uts.edu.au/student.Groupwork.html; http://www.psu.edu/celt/newsletter/ID_ March95.html) Also, the ability to present their work improves. They learn to listen actively, react and influence the other members. Ideally, all students are actively involved at the same time. (ibid.)

Secondly, groupwork has a positive impact on the individuality of the students. When working in group, student's ability to express and support his opinion improves which has a positive effect on the self-confidence. (http://www.clt.uts.edu.au/student. Groupwork.html) Groupwork helps to overcome student's anxiety and resistance to class participation because often group of peers forms a safe environment where students can test new ideas. Moreover, everyone can work at his own pace and thus he can develop according to his abilities. (ibid.)

Third area of positive effects concerns language improvement. The amount of communication for each student increases. Hedge states that "interaction pushes learners to produce more accurate and appropriate language, which itself provides input for other students". (Hedge. 2000: p. 13) The communication forces the student to negotiate the meaning, i.e. to use a variety of techniques to understand and make himself understood, such as slowing down the speech, rephrasing or repeating the idea. That means that not only the student's fluency will improve simply because he has many more communication opportunities but also his/her accuracy. (ibid.)

On the contrary, groupwork involves some disadvantages, too. Its negative side effects are for example "free riding" (Shepperd in Pýchová. 19996/97: p. 75), i.e. letting the other group members do my part of work, "sucking" (Morgan in Pýchová, 1996/97: p. 75), i.e. unwillingness of capable students to work for others and "social loafing" (Morgan in Pýchová. 1996/97: p. 75), i.e. unwillingness to work for others instead for myself. Nunan and Lamb (1996: p. 142) remind that tasks organized as groupwork tend to be rather time-consuming. Another disadvantage is that it is impossible for the teacher to monitor student talk. Also, groupwork can sometimes lead to discipline problems.

In order to decrease the negative effects, we have to take some issues into consideration. Nunan and Lamb (1996: p. 146) advise careful planning of groupwork.

Teacher ought to consider the purpose of the task, criteria for grouping students, size of the groups and the way of providing feedback. Nunan and Lamb (ibid.) along with Skalková (1999: p. 210) agree that teacher's monitoring of groupwork plays an important role, too. Skalková (1999: p. 209) suggests that only more complicated tasks which demand consideration should be set as groupwork because then an individual's contribution is meaningful. Also the classroom environment should be adapted for the purpose of groupwork in order to enable easy cooperation among the group members. (Skalková. 1999: p. 208)

To sum up, involvement of groupwork in ELT will bring numerous positive effects:

"For the teacher who believes that the most effective way to develop interactional skills in the target language is through guided opportunities to interact, pair and group work are indispensable."

(Nunan and Lamb, 1996: p. 142)

We certainly cannot agree with Pýchová who states that groupwork is a "waste of learning time" (Morgan in Pýchová. 1996/97: p. 75) for gifted pupils whose abilities cannot develop accordingly. If group work is planned carefully, students of all abilities will benefit from it in terms of their fluency and accuracy but also in terms of acquiring communication and cooperation skills.
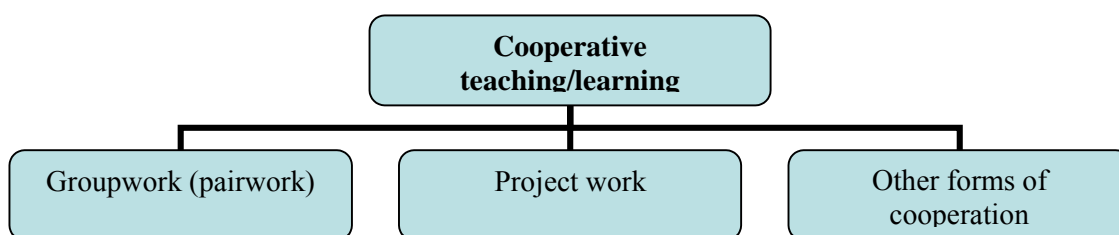

Cooperative teaching/learning

Kasíková defines cooperative teaching as a teaching/learning process

"based on collaboration on achieving the goals. The results of an individual are supported by the activity of the whole group and the whole group benefits form the individual's activity. The basic terms of cooperative teaching/learning are sharing, collaboration, support."

(Kasíková in Skalková. 1999: p. 211)

Cooperative teaching is opposite term to competitive teaching. While competitive teaching/learning leads students to attempting to be better than others, cooperative teaching aims at taking advantage of collaboration in the process of working on a task. As the following graph suggests, cooperative teaching is a wider term than groupwork or project work.

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │      Cooperative        │
                    │    teaching/learning    │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
          ┌──────────────────┼──────────────────┐
┌─────────────────────┐ ┌─────────────────┐ ┌─────────────────┐
│ Groupwork (pairwork)│ │  Project work   │ │ Other forms of  │
│                     │ │                 │ │   cooperation   │
└─────────────────────┘ └─────────────────┘ └─────────────────┘
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(see an example: Appendix 3)

Chart no. 2: Types of cooperative tasks

Project work

Hedge describes project work as "extended tasks which usually integrate language skills work by means of a number of activities". (Hedge. 2000: p. 362) The initial phase usually involves planning and gathering information. There should be a number of resources available for this part. Then the work on the project can include not only a variety of activities but also variety of organizational forms. In general we can say that project work is a way of cooperative teaching/learning, a lot of the work is likely to be done as groupwork. Some of the work can be set as a students' activity in their own free time. (Hedge. 2000: p. 363) At the end of each project there should be presentation of its results, the outcome. This outcome can be written, such as a poster, newspaper page, report, plan, invitation, comment or oral, such as a description, comments on music, classroom display, performance. (Hedge. 2000: p. 362) The presentation will be followed by the evaluation of the whole project. (Skalková. 1999: p. 218)

The description of the process suggests what the goals of project work will be. It aims to develop the ability to find creative problem solutions. In comparison with the usual teaching/learning unit, a lesson devoted to a subject, it helps to realize relationships among pieces of information. (Skalková. 1999: p. 219) Also, students have an opportunity to practice their language in practical situations, either written or oral ones. According to Skalková (1999: p. 220), project work is considered a complementary part of usual education. It can take part during one morning, there can be a project week devoted to a certain topic, or the whole school can participate in some larger-scale project, such as Socrates, which is a project organized by EU.

E.g. Project "The place where I live", see Appendix 4

2.2.3   Focus on differentiation and individualization

The idea of individualization suggests that work is adapted to each student's abilities. (Skalková. 1999: p. 212) Its purpose is to form such situations, which will enable each student to find ideal conditions for learning. The expectations that are put on students differ according to their personality.

Differentiation is a term closely connected with individualization. It refers to giving students an opportunity to develop according to their individual characteristics, e.g. abilities, learning styles, interests, etc. There are two types of differentiation, external and internal. The recent trend shows disapproval of external differentiation, i.e. differentiation based on selecting groups of students, e.g. in order to form classes with the extended teaching of languages, classes of students with dyslexia, etc: "One of the essential problems is early selection and specialization..." (Zlatuška. 2001: p. B3) Also forming groups within classes based on language performance is a way of external differentiation. Bílá kniha maintains that it is important to

> "limit, even avoid selections: instead of simply choosing the most capable students and excluding those who cannot meet the standards, give an opportunity for maximum development to everybody without difference."
>
> (*Bílá kniha*. 2001: p. 17)

On the other hand, internal differentiation refers to the situation, when students of various abilities are in the same classroom and all of them have an opportunity to develop. (Skalková. 1999: p. 214) This can be achieved by means of using a variety of tasks, methods and organizational forms. Moreover, the teacher has a supply of extra tasks to do, voluntary homework, etc. According to the particular needs, students in the classroom can divide into groups and work on different tasks. Groupwork and project work also provide an opportunity for individualization because everyone has a different role in the team, he can work at his own pace, etc.

In summary, ELT is recently built upon a variety of organizational forms. They are mostly built upon cooperation because such organization seems to form the most convenient conditions for CLT and it reflects the demand of the ability to work in a team. Unlike front teaching or teaching based on competition, groupwork, project work and other cooperative techniques form a large scope for internal differentiation and individualization of the work.

2.3   The teacher's and student's role

Along with the change of the perception of organization forms also the views of the teacher's and student's role have changed, as we will see in the following chapters. The word role denotes "the functions that teacher and learners perform during the course of a lesson". (Hedge. 2000: p. 26)

2.3.1   Demands of the shift from high-structure to low-structure teaching/learning

The shift regarding the roles of the participants of the process is based on devolving the power and control to students (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: p. 17) High-structure teaching/learning refers to traditional perception of education where teacher organizes the process, he has got the central, active role, provides direction and pace. Low-structure learning lies on the other pole of the continuum where students have the active role, they learn instead of being taught. (ibid.) Low-structure teaching/learning is a typical sign of learner-centered classroom. Nevertheless, even learner-centered classroom might involve some activities the organization of which lies closer to the high-structure:

> "successful management of the learning process depends on the teacher's knowing where to locate himself on the high- to low- structure continuum in relation to a given task."

> (ibid.)

2.3.2   Teacher's roles in CLT

The expectations put on a teacher in a learner-centered classroom are much higher than in a traditional classroom. Also the process of internal differentiation is quite demanding and challenging for the teacher:

> "Because of the lengthened school attendance of students of all levels and types of intelligence, teachers are expected, besides the specialization in their field, to be able to motivate, diagnose, and regulate the learning process of their students to a much greater extent than ever before."

> (*Bílá kniha*, 2001: p. 18)

Apparently, the teacher is expected to carry out a number of new roles. Various authors approach them differently.

Some authors describe teacher's responsibilities rather than roles and thus the shift from high- to low- structure is not that obvious. Hedge (2000: p. 33) discusses teacher's responsibilities and labels them in a following way: planning, managing interactions, monitoring learning, giving instructions and providing feedback. Also Kyriacou (1996: pp. 25, 26) is concerned about the teacher's pedagogical skills. According to him, these concern planning, ability to involve students in the process, management of the lesson, creating positive learning atmosphere, discipline of the students, evaluation and teacher's

self-reflection. We would need deeper analysis of the views of these authors of the particular responsibilities in order to be able to see the shift.

Other authors define and label particular teacher's roles. Nunan and Lamb (1996: p. 137) mention following teacher's roles: controller, assessor, organizer, prompter, participant, resource, tutor, investigator, and facilitator. Some of these roles seem to refer to high-structure organization, such as controller, assessor, organizer, prompter, tutor, resource of information or investigator. The teacher's roles of the process participant and facilitator of learning lie suggest low-structure attitude to the process.

On the contrary, Pýchová (1996/97: pp. 44, 41) seems to take more traditional approach when she argues that if teachers give up the traditional role of resource of information and they will lead students to independent learning and work on facilitating their learning process, it is going to have negative effects on the discipline of the classroom and, mainly, on their language performance. According to her, the result of lessons built mostly on students' interaction is good level of language fluency but very poor accuracy of the language performance.

Richards and Rodger's perception (1992: pp. 77 – 79) of the teacher's role appears to support low-structure CLT organization most of all. It assumes that the two main teacher's roles are to facilitate the communication process and to act as an independent participant. The role of the facilitator involves creating such conditions which will enable the students to interact: "Teachers help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language." (Richards and Rodgers. 1992: p. 68) The other main goal, acting as an independent participant represents the idea of partnership between teacher and students. All the participants work together in a "business-like atmosphere" (Cangelosi. 1994: p.67), they have the right to contribute to the process and influence it. The other roles suggested are researcher and learner, needs analyst, counselor, and group process manager. As a researcher and learner, the teacher is improving his language competence and pedagogical skills in his free time as well as in the classroom, during the process. The role of the needs analyst illustrates the teacher's responsibility to specify the learner's particular needs and approach them accordingly. As a counselor, the teacher will participate in negotiating the meaning during interactional activities. And finally, the role of a group process manager refers to effective organization of cooperative techniques. These often require discrete monitoring of the process instead of teacher's interference.

2.3.3 Number of student's roles in CLT

CLT also puts new expectations on the learner, he has to fulfil a number of new roles. The nature of these roles is built upon the belief that students learn things the most effectively by doing them:

> "There is convincing evidence that people who take the initiative in learning (pro-active learners) learn more things and learn better, than do people who sit at the feet of teachers passively waiting to be taught (reactive learners).

(Knowles in Hedge. 2000: p. 83)

Various authors discuss the subject of students' roles.

Nunan and Lamb (1996: pp. 140, 141) compare CLT and learner's role in it with other teaching methods and they stress that student in CLT has an active, negotiative role. According to them, student should contribute to the process as well as benefit from it.

Richards and Rodgers (1992: p. 77) focus on two students' roles in CLT. The role of a negotiator covers negotiation among the student, the learning process and the object of learning. The second role is a role of a joint negotiator, which represents the interaction among the group members. This means that each student is responsible for his own learning, he approaches the language using the strategies that are the most effective for him, nevertheless he acts as member of the team at the same time, negotiates the meaning during interactions with the other learners.

Also Hedge (2000: pp. 34 – 36) puts emphasis on self-initiated learning and student's contribution to the learning process but her analysis of the learner's roles is much deeper. She mentions four perspectives on learner-centeredness. Firstly, asking learners to contribute to the overall design of course content and the selection of learning procedures is a good way of involving the students and avoiding possible misunderstandings at the same time. Secondly, contributing to the design of language learning activities, according to Hedge, helps the concurrence of opinions on the purpose of activities. Thirdly, it is important to let students take responsibility for their own successful learning, e.g. by means of encouraging work outside the class or in self-access centres. Finally, Hedge stresses the necessity to use "methodology which allows learners greater control over the learning process". (Hedge. 2000: p. 35)

Considering the four perspectives, Hedge (2000: p. 36) labels the student's roles they involve. Students will analyze their needs, negotiate the content and monitor the progress. Also, they will explore and experiment. Furthermore, they will have an opportunity to plan, initiate and organize their work. And finally, students will question, clarify, suggest and comment.

2.3.4   Learner Autonomy

One of the biggest concepts of modern methodology is so called learner autonomy. It refers to the concept of self-directed learning, i.e. student's ability to plan, organize and evaluate his own learning effectively. According to Hedge (2000: pp. 77 – 79), there are four types of strategies which enable learner autonomy. They are cognitive strategies, which are based on student's ability to deal with new information, metacognitive strategies, which concern particular ways of learning of individuals, communicative strategies, helping the student to understand and make himself understood and socio-affective strategies, which allow the individual to face opportunities for practice.

Development of these strategies takes a lot of practice and self-reflection. Teacher's role is to enable and to facilitate the learner training. Hedge defines learner training as "teacher's encouragement of their efforts toward the goal". (Hedge, 2000: p.77) The goal of learner training is achieving more effective classroom learning as well as learning outside the classroom. This can include working at home or at school in a self-access centre: .

learner training

m o r e   e f f e c t i v e

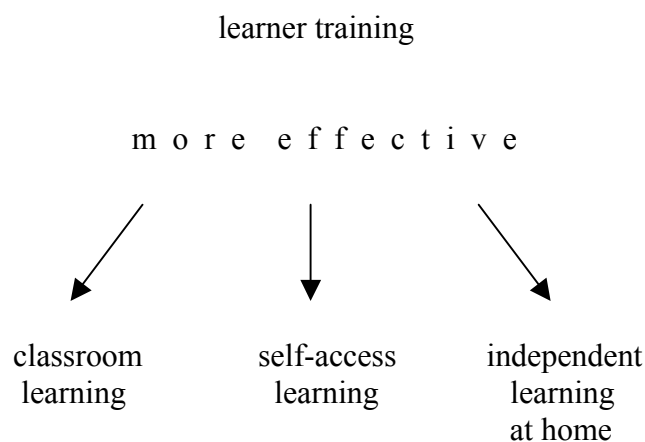| classroom | self-access | independent |
| learning | learning | learning |
| | | at home |

Chart no.3: The aims of learner training. Hedge. 2000: p. 85

Learner training can involve various procedures. Here are some examples of activities to develop each of them:

Cognitive strategies: guessing the meaning of new words from the context, drawing mind maps

Metacognitive strategies: keeping a journal about my own learning, classroom discussion about learning styles

Communicative strategies: rephrasing certain ideas, information gap speaking activities

Socio-affective strategies: keeping a reading journal, finding a penfriend

To sum up, CLT takes place in a learner-centered environment, which has had an influence upon the traditional perception of the teacher's and student's role in the process. The main teacher's role in CLT is that of facilitator, i.e. someone who will enable the student's learning, suggest possible learning strategies. The main student's roles are to take the responsibility for his learning and contribute to the process as a group member. The result of effective CLT is an autonomous learner, who is able to continue with the process outside the classroom.

2.4   The nature of activities in CLT

Any activity that promotes communication is suitable for CLT. Communication is viewed as a type of interaction which involves information gap between the participants, feedback, and a choice of devices to use in the interaction. While traditional language teaching was based on activities as dialogues and drills, repetition and memorization or pattern practice, CLT introduces communication, information sharing, negotiation of meaning and interaction. (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: p. 11) Traditional approach often allowed teachers to teach the language for its own sake, whereas CLT stresses the communicative competence as the result of language acquisition.

This does not imply that the activities are focused only on speaking. They cover all language skills, the productive ones, i.e. speaking and writing as well as the receptive ones, i.e. listening and reading. Also all the subskills are developed, i.e. pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and spelling. What has changed is the attitude toward the development of the language.

The traditional 'Presentation, Practice, and Production' (PPP) attitude was used as an outline for learning of new items. (Hedge. 2000: p. 61; Scrivener. 1994: p. 117) At first,

a new item was introduced to the student. Then, he practiced it in restricted use activities, i.e. tasks designed for practicing the particular item. Finally, during production the student was supposed to use the item in a situation where it would naturally occur. As Hedge maintains (2000: pp. 61, 62), the practice usually did not form sufficient knowledge and then, during production, students had the trend to avoid using the particular item and used other forms or strategies.

On the other hand, Scrivener extends the range of activities, he offers tasks suitable for CLT, which can cover all language skills and subskills and lead to communicative competence. He divided them to:

1)   Restricted use activities - these are activities where the language available to the learners is in some way restricted
2)   Authentic use activities - there is no restriction on the language
3)   Clarification and focus - learners become clearer about a language item and come to understand its meaning, form and use better for example through teacher explanation or guided discovery

(Scrivener. 1994: p. 23. modified)

Obviously, communicative practice is not viewed as a stage that follows after controlled practice but it can be used at any time during the process. The next chapter is going to deals with the development of individual language skills.

2.4.1   Developing the language skills

In CLT classroom all language skills, speaking, writing, reading and listening are used in meaningful ways. Their development aims to resemble or correspond to situations in real life. The content and the topics should be relevant to the particular age group of students and their needs.

<u>Speaking</u>

Speaking is mainly developed by communicative activities, "classroom activities designed to get learners speak and listen to each other". (Scrivener. 1994: p. 62) Some of these tasks are fluency-based, the emphasis is on the ability to express the ideas and understand, other tasks are accuracy-based and the focus is then on the form. Although Pýchová argues that CLT stresses fluency too much, "those who were not able to manage this system (i.e. the grammar of language) are partly excluded from the community". (Pýchová. 1996/97: p. 39), Scrivener (1994: p. 67) maintains that the distribution of both types of activities should be balanced. The focus of the activities is going to influence the error correction, which will be discussed in chapter 2.5.2.

<u>Writing</u>

In CLT, a lot of the writing takes place in the classroom, e.g. it can take form of a writing workshop (Hedge. 2000: pp. 299 – 330). The reason for not setting every writing task as homework is, according to Hedge (2000: p. 301), the danger of discouragement of the student who would have to struggle through the process on his own. The emphasis is put on the process of writing as well as the final product, the aim is to enable students to develop effective writing strategies, such as ability to generate ideas, plan the writing, revise it, and keep the sense of the audience throughout the writing. Apparently, the main focus of the writing development is the organization and meaning rather than grammar or spelling. Sometimes students work on tasks cooperatively, which gives them an opportunity to discuss the ideas they expressed in a written form. Teacher's role is to bring ideas about how the piece of writing could be improved, instead of correcting it.

<u>Reading</u>

CLT views reading as an interactive process. Hedge (2000: pp. 188, 189) interprets the interaction in two ways. Firstly, it refers to the dialogue between the reader and the text, which means that each text makes an impression on the reader and vice versa, he adds his previous knowledge and experience in order to understand the text and form certain attitude towards it. Secondly, it denotes the dynamic relationship with a text as the reader 'struggles' to make sense of it. In this active process the context is often engaged as a device. As Pýchová observes (1996/97: pp. 39, 40), some techniques of reading that are common in CLT, such as skimming or scanning, are based on using the context. Skimming is defined as "reading for a global impression of the text" (Hedge. 2000: p. 195), scanning is viewed as "searching rapidly through a text to find a specific point of information". (ibid.)

Reading activities may be built on intensive or extensive reading. While intensive reading is "intended to train students in the strategies needed for successful reading" (Hedge. 2000: p. 202), extensive reading is "reading for general meaning, primarily for pleasure, curiosity, or professional interest." (ibid.) CLT stressed the importance of extensive reading as it raises student's interest in the subject and his intrinsic motivation. It also has a positive influence on the student's communicative competence. In order to encourage students' extensive reading, it is a good idea to open a self-access centre at school, which can provide various sources for extensive reading.

Listening

Listening is a language skill which should not be neglected because it enables successful participation in communication:

> "Current interest in oracy, the ability to understand and participate in spoken communication, is one of several more recent concerns in education which have generated a stronger focus on listening in the classroom. "
>
> (Hedge. 2000: p. 229)

In ELT lessons, students should experience a wide range of listening tasks. They can include participatory listening, i.e. for example face-to-face conversations, as well as non-participatory listening, such as listening to radio programmes. (Hedge. 2000: pp. 229, 243) Non-participatory listening can contain a monologue or a dialogue. (Hedge. 2000: p. 244) Similarly as with reading, the distinction between extensive and intensive can be made. (Hedge. 2000: p. 252) The aim of extensive listening is general impression, intensive listening aims at particular pieces of information. The variety of tasks also concerns linguistic variations, which means that students encounter various accents, variants, etc.

2.4.2   Dealing with errors

An attitude towards mistakes depends on the perception of language learning. Traditional language teaching regarded the nature of language learning from the behaviorist point of view, i.e. as a "habit formation" (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: p. 9) and therefore error correction was perceived as a negative reinforcement preventing internalization of the error: "error must be prevented at all costs". (Richards and Rodgers. 1992: p.68) On the other hand, CLT approaches language learning as learning to communicate and considers error a part of the process:

> "More recently, the view has emerged that making mistakes is a healthy part of the learning process, and that mistakes and subsequent correction can provide the learner with valuable information on the target language."
>
> (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: p.68)

A difficult decision a teacher has to make is which errors to correct. His decision is likely to be influenced by a set of factors. (Scrivener. 1994: pp. 109 – 113) Firstly, it is necessary to distinguish between systematic errors, which "are to do with incomplete or faulty knowledge of English" (Hedge. 2000: p. 289) and mistakes, which "are caused through inability to perform that knowledge in production because of factors to do with carelessness, tiredness, distractions, or difficult circumstances". (ibid.) Another distinction,

made by Richard and Lockhart (1994: pp. 189 – 191), is between feedback on content and on form, i.e. the factual correctness and the formal correctness. The teacher has to consider whether the correction is going to provide useful feedback on the type of error the student has made. The second criterion is the type of task, i.e. its objective, its focus on fluency/accuracy. The third criterion concerns the lesson, i.e. its goal and the particular stage. The fourth criterion is the personality of the student, his proficiency, attitude to error correction, sensitiveness, etc.

Once the teacher has decided to correct an error, he has to choose a good timing. The error can be corrected immediately or later, depending on the situation. Another decision concerns the form of the correction. There are three basic forms the error correction can take. The student himself can correct the error, his peers, or the teacher. All of these forms are valuable tools if used sensitively: "Hypercorrection can also create a negative classroom atmosphere, discouraging learners from risk taking and experimentation." (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: p. 80) The teacher's responsibility is to decrease the student's anxiety about making a mistake, "to create a reassuring environment in which students are prepared to take risks and experiment with the language" (Hedge. 2000: p. 293)

2.4.3 The role of grammar in CLT

In the past there were two extremes apparent in the approach to grammar. (Hedge. 2000: pp. 143, 145; Scrivener. 1994: p. 114) Traditionally, the role of grammar was exaggerated and its practice took form of "rigid drills and exercises". (Richards and Rodgers. 1992: p. 67) On the other hand, in the 1980's Krashen brought the idea of natural acquisition of grammar by means of communication, i.e. learning grammar subconsciously, in the same way a small child learns his mother tongue. A disadvantage of both of these attitudes was that they focused mainly on one aspect, the former one on accuracy and the latter one on fluency. In CLT grammar is treated as one of language subskills, it is incorporated in the language development intentionally in order to facilitate communication.

Scrivener (1994: p. 128) notes that each of these attitudes is based on one way of dealing with grammar. Traditional approach is built on "presentation: I present them with the rules and information" (ibid.), the idea of natural acquisition applies "self-directed discovery: I let them work it out by themselves" /ibid./, and CLT uses "guided discovery:

I help you to find out for yourself". /ibid./ Similarly, Nunan and Lamb (1996: p.191) refer to this concept using the terms "deductive approach", i.e. students are introduced the rule and then they practice applying it, and "inductive approach", i.e. students generate the rule after being exposed to a number of examples. In fact, deductive approach is based on presentation whereas inductive approach is built on guided discovery.

Hedge (2000: p. 150) distinguishes between implicit and explicit knowledge. The result of traditional approach is an explicit grammatical knowledge and the result of natural acquisition is an implicit grammatical knowledge, i.e. "the intuitive knowledge of grammar which develops in the same way as it does in young children acquiring their first language". (ibid.) This division corresponds with the concept of covert and overt grammar teaching. Covert teaching aims to form the intuitive knowledge whereas overt teaching focuses on forming the explicit knowledge of grammar.

The purpose of CLT is to enhance both types of grammatical knowledge: "knowing a pedagogical rule can help learners with the structuring process when they are ready to internalize a grammatical rule". (Seliger in Hedge. 2000: p. 151) Also Pýchová agrees with this point of view:

> "Using both ways, i.e. conscious learning as well as subconscious practical usage of the foreign language, could have a positive effect on the pace of the process of mastering the foreign language and also, on its accuracy and fluency."
>
> (Pýchová. 1996/97: p. 40)

Apparently in CLT classroom students learn grammar through guided discovery, in other words, they approach grammar inductively. The aim of this process, which can be described as overt teaching, is to form explicit knowledge of grammar which will enable students to participate in communication with reasonable accuracy. The participation will then have a positive effect on students' fluency.

2.4.4 The use of the mother tongue/target language

Traditional language teaching was mostly based on grammar-translation approach, characterized by "the explicit teaching of grammatical rules and extensive practice in translating written passages from one language to another". (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: p. 98) The other extreme is represented for instance by natural method, an approach which forbade using the mother tongue. In CLT, the first language may be used when it is purposeful: " ... judicious use of the first language can greatly facilitate the management of the learning process..." (ibid.) Nevertheless, it is crucial that students are exposed to

a large amount of the target language so that input is provided and thus learning can take place.

2.5   Teaching aids

2.5.1 Current trends in creating and using teaching aids

The role of teaching aids in CLT is to promote the use of language. CLT emphasizes the use of authentic materials, i.e. "materials which have not been designed especially for language learners and which therefore do not have contrived or simplified language." (Hedge. 2000: p. 67) This demand is built upon the assumption that the best way of preparing students for using the language in meaningful situations is exposing them to the real-life language. Hedge (2000: p.68) distinguishes between authentic and simulated authentic materials. Simulated authentic materials "emulate original materials, but are contrived in some way to assist the learner". (ibid.) Simulated authentic materials still contain meaningful context but the language is simplified to an extent. Pýchová (1996/97: p. 39) refers to these when she mentions the claim for "language genuineness" (ibid.). The advantage of this type of materials is that they are less discouraging for students, who can approach them with confidence.

2.5.2 Kinds of materials

Richards and Rodgers (1992: pp. 79, 80) divide CLT teaching materials into three groups. The first group are text-based materials, the content of which can be quite different from that of traditional textbooks. Further discussion of textbooks follows in the chapter 2.4.3. The second group are task-based materials, designed to be used in ELT activities in order to enhance the use of language. These are e.g. pair-communication practice materials, aids stimulating role-plays, activity cards, etc.. Finally, the third group of materials are realia, which involve authentic materials of all kinds, such as newspapers, magazines, leaflets, advertisements, TV programmes, etc.

2.5.3 Textbooks in the English classroom

One of the steps that have to be taken before starting a course is making the decision about a kind of textbook. There is a variety of commercial textbooks available and therefore it is useful to have a set of criteria for selection. Nunan and Lamb (1996: p.183) claim that a suitable textbook should be consistent with school philosophy, the goal of the

course and students' needs. Apparently, the philosophy of the textbook should correspond with the nature of the course.

CLT has had an impact on the content and mainly the nature of textbooks, which are viewed as "learning guides for students". (Hedge. 2000: p.36) The textbook used in CLT classroom has to offer a variety of tasks aimed at communicative goals. The nature of these tasks was discussed in the previous chapter. The textbook should include practice of all skills and subskills and balanced approach in terms of fluency/accuracy-based activities. (Nunan and Lamb. 1996: pp. 36, 183) In ELT, many textbooks are part of 'textbook sets', which might also include e.g. workbook, dictionary, grammar book, teacher's book, audiotapes, videotapes, etc.

At Czech elementary schools, a particular interest is often devoted to the discussion about what role, if any, should the mother tongue play in the textbook. The following two paragraphs contain some arguments in favour and against the use of mother tongue.

The textbook is meant to guide the students not only in the classroom but in their independent learning at home as well and therefore some amount of mother tongue might be useful. Also, one of the conclusions of the previous chapter was that mother tongue may be used if it facilitates the learning process. Why should not this concern the textbook as well?

There are two problems with this assumption. Firstly, Hedge (2000: p. 38) warns against tendency of some textbooks to stereotype the culture they represent. This is more likely to happen with textbooks published in another environment than that of the culture. Secondly, the textbook author is going to make the decision when to use the mother tongue regardless a particular group of students, he/she cannot consider in which particular situations the use of the mother tongue will facilitate the learning.

Using the criteria for choosing a suitable textbook and the characteristic features of CLT, we can draw certain conclusions about this issue. The goal of the process is communicative competence in the target language and therefore as much input as possible should be in the target language. Choosing a textbook published in an English speaking country accompanied for example by a Czech-English dictionary seems to be a good compromise because it represents the culture and facilitates student's independent learning at the same time.

3.   Conclusion

In conclusion, the theoretical study analyzed recent trends in ELT in order to be able to investigate to what extent the parents' beliefs correspond with modern trends in ELT. Modern views of ELT are represented here by communicative language teaching. This attitude has some characteristic features, which cover all aspects of ELT. Only the most typical ones, those which exceed the traditional approach, were discussed in the theoretical study.

New goals of education and ELT have arisen in the 21st century. Life-long learning appears to be the most important one of them because it reflects the increasing demands of the period. That is why CLT stresses the importance of self-initiated learning, which encompasses active student's participation at all stages of the learning process.

Cooperative teaching forms promote communication, which is seen as both, the goal and content of CLT. Individualization and internal differentiation are the key concepts of respecting each student's individuality.

In communicative activities based on cooperative organizational forms the teacher and the student are expected to fulfill a number of new roles. The focus is on creating a learner-centered environment, which involves a variety of low-structure tasks, which encourage the students to contribute and take responsibility for their own learning. The main teacher's role in these activities is to participate and facilitate students' learning.

The activities in CLT develop all language skills and subskills in a meaningful way, i.e. in real-life context, using negotiation of meaning in order to facilitate communication. Speaking activities involve information gap, choice of devices and feedback. There is a balance between fluency-based and accuracy-based activities. Error is perceived as a proof that learning is taking place. Grammar is approached in an overt way but using inductive attitude.

Authentic teaching aids provide students with comprehensible input and thus have a positive effect on the students' communicative competence. The textbook used in ELT should reflect the communicative aims and the individual needs of the students.

All the aspects mentioned above form the nature of communicative language classroom. Viewing the parent as a participant of the process, we should know what his beliefs about these trends are. The practical study of the paper follows and it is going to investigate parents' beliefs about the student's relationship towards the goal, differentiation

and individualization, teacher's and student's role, teaching aids, organizational forms, errors, the role of grammar, the nature of activities and ways of cooperating with school.

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E.g. <u>Merry-go-round</u> - activity for a class of beginners or lower intermediate students

        objective: elicit the animals students already know

        materials: papers, pencils

        organization: groups of three

1) each group writes down all animals they know living in a certain environment (one group is writing forest animals, another group is doing farm animal, etc)

2) after two minutes a person from each group takes the list and moves on to another group, which will try to add some items to the list

3) the activity continues until each group has had an opportunity to contribute to each list and each group has gotten its original list back

4) presentation, evaluation – groups read the list and inform the class about its development

/author's sources/

Appendix 3

PRACTICAL STUDY

1. Introduction

1.1 Aim of the study

The main aim of the study is to find out to what extent parents believe in modern tendencies in English language teaching/learning, especially those approaches mentioned in the theoretical study of the paper. The reasons for this study were mentioned in the theoretical part. The secondary aim is to compare the opinions of the parents of children who attend the classes with the extended language teaching with those of parents who attend classes following a different curriculum. The curricula at the research school are analyzed in the next chapter.

1.2 Conditions of the research

The parents' beliefs were collected by means of the questionnaire, enclosed in appendix 1. The research was carried at the Elementary school with the extended language teaching, Angelovova 3183, Prague 4. The school is an elementary school at a housing estate. It has approximately a thousand of students and about sixty teachers and therefore we can expect to find a wide range of teachers' and students' beliefs, expectations and approaches here. What unites the entire school is the fact that it attempts to create an open, democratic and friendly environment and as such it strongly supports modern attitudes to teaching and learning in general. The research will show if this direction is apparent to the parents, if they are informed about it and if they also support it.

As it was mentioned above, the Angelovova school is an elementary school with the extended language teaching, but only 35% classes follow the curriculum "Základní škola s rozšířeným vyučováním jazyků". 47% classes follow the curriculum "Národní škola", 12% follow the curriculum "Základní škola" and 6% classes follow the curriculum "Základní škola s rozšířeným vyučováním matematiky", i.e. class with the extended teaching of Maths. All classes of all curricula have three English lessons per week throughout the elementary school attendance. The curriculum with the extended language teaching differs from the other curricula in several aspects. The classes with the extended

language teaching start taking English in the third grade whereas the other students do not begin taking compulsory English lessons until the fourth grade. Also, classes with the extended language teaching take another language from the sixth grade, the other classes do not have another compulsory language at the primary school. At last but not least, the content of education differs according to the curricula but the description of the differences would demand deeper analysis, which is not necessary for the purpose of the paper.

I decided to carry the research based on thirty questionnaires distributed among the parents of the students of Angelovova school, fifteen in the classes with the extended language teaching (GROUP A) and fifteen in other classes following another curriculum, which does not focus on language education (GROUP B).

First of all, I asked a friend of mine to fill in the questionnaire and inform me afterwards about any difficulties he had encountered. This respondent is not a specialist in language teaching/learning, therefore his approach to the questions was similar to that of parents – nonspecialists. Thanks to this pilot version I was able to make minor changes in the questionnaire in order to avoid or at least decrease the chance of misunderstandings.

Another issue I had to consider was whether to include parents - teachers in the research. As teachers they are likely to be more informed about the current tendencies in pedagogy. They have had an opportunity to develop their teachers' beliefs during their pedagogical education and mainly, throughout their teaching practice. After all I chose not to exclude any parents in order to have a wide range of respondents and thus gain more objective results.

My next decision concerned the distribution of the questionnaires among the parents. It was important to ensure that they have a chance to discuss their problems, uncertainties and doubts regarding filling in the questionnaire with me and still have the time to think about the questions. I intended to invite the parents of classes in grades six to nine to participate in the research and then let them decide if they wanted to fill in the questionnaire. I visited the regular meetings of the parents with the class teachers and there I distributed the questionnaires among the parents who were willing to participate in the research. I explained that I was interested in their beliefs about English language teaching/learning. I also stressed that the questionnaire is anonymous. I encouraged the parents to contact me in case of any problems.

Before the actual contact with parents, I had to consider how many questionnaires should be distributed in order to achieve the desired number of completed questionnaires.

Originally I distributed one hundred questionnaires, fifty in each group. I visited one class of each grade from each group, i.e. one sixth grade with the extended language teaching, one sixth grade following another curriculum, etc. Within two weeks I received twenty questionnaires from GROUP A, which was a sufficient number, but only eleven questionnaires from GROUP B. For that reason I distributed twenty more questionnaires in GROUP B, this time via students from classes I had not contacted before, and this time I got five questionnaires back. Therefore I was able to start with the research.

1.3   Limits of the research

This research is part of the study into parents' beliefs about language teaching/learning carried at one school. The conditions of the research, described in the previous chapter, limit the validity of the results of the study only to this particular environment or to similar environments. In different areas, e.g. at smaller schools, village schools or schools in the centre of large cities, and schools which take another direction, either more traditional or more alternative, the research would probably show different parents' beliefs. To cover the beliefs in all these environments is beyond the possibilities of this paper.

Also, the chosen research method, the questionnaire, brings about some limitations. I tried to avoid the possibility of misunderstandings or ambiguous questions by careful designing of the questionnaire and by distributing the pilot version. Of course, it is still possible that some respondents did not understand some questions well and did not contact me. Moreover, we have to count on parents' partial self-stylization, i.e. intention to appear more informed.

A certain degree of simplification is also caused by the fact that the options in the questionnaire cannot cover all the possibilities. Therefore, in most questions I used two marginal options and one or two alternatives between them on the range. Finally, some simplification was necessary in order to make the scientific language comprehensible to the parents.

1.4   Expectations about the results of the research

Our expectations should be built upon the recent situation at the school the children go to as well as upon the other elements that influence parents' beliefs. These were analyzed in the chapter 1.5 of the theoretical study. Generally, we can assume that the

parents' previous experience with language teaching/learning was rather different from the recent tendency at school. Therefore both of the influences are likely to have an impact on the parents' beliefs.

On one hand, the beliefs might show traces of the traditional approach used at most of the schools before 1990's, on the other hand, the advantages of the communicative language teaching might have convinced the parents to change some of their opinions. As a result, we can expect certain combination of these attitudes. The question is in favor of which direction the result will be, and to what extent the school policy has had an influence upon the parents' beliefs.

In general, we can say that the classes with the extended language teaching are more focused on language learning. Therefore we can assume that the parents of the students as well as the students themselves are interested in language learning and it is one of their priorities. This was the reason which lead to the idea to carry a separate research with the parents of the students of classes with the extended language teaching in order to see if their beliefs are more informed.

1.5   Questionnaire analysis

The whole questionnaire, enclosed in Appendix 1, contains eighteen questions. These concern English language teaching/learning in grades six to nine. The instructions for filling in the questionnaire, which precede the questions, inform parents that they are supposed to tick one answer unless they are given other instructions. Analysis of the individual questions follows.

The first question is composed of two parts. Firstly, it asks about the grade the student attends. In case of a bigger number of completed questionnaires I meant to be able to select a wide range of student ages in order to achieve as objective results as possible. Secondly, parents are asked to state whether the class their child attends is a class with the extended language teaching. The aim here is to divide the questionnaires into two groups, GROUP A containing classes with the extended language teaching, and GROUP B containing classes following another curriculum.

Question number two concerns the respondent's level of education. The parent is requested to tick one of the possibilities, primary, secondary or university education. The intention was to gain at least some information about the respondents and perhaps be able to find some link between their beliefs and the level of achieved education. I am aware of

certain simplification when distinguishing the education simply in terms of its level, nevertheless, I found it sufficient for the purpose. Moreover, I expected the parents to find this question to be very personal even as it is.

Question number three inquires about the ideal student's relationship towards the aim of English teaching/learning. There are three options available, from the most passive to the most active. The purpose is to find out to what extent the parents think that students themselves can choose what they are going learn. The answer will partly indicate where parents' beliefs lie on the high/low structure continuum.

In question number four parents are asked to tick if the tasks leading to the aim should be the same for all of the students or if the may differ. The parents will demonstrate if they believe that each students has an individual learning style, strategies, pace, ability and these ought to be respected by means of using different tasks. The negative answer indicates that according to the parents, students can achieve the goal and learn the most when doing the same activities. More than one assumption can lead to this opinion, e.g. teacher knows the best activity for achieving the goal, there is one "correct way" of learning the language, or when everyone is doing something different, it becomes impossible to check the outcome, etc. The objective of this question is to observe the parents' approach towards differentiation within one class.

On the other hand, question number five focuses on attitude to external differentiation, parents are asked to express their opinion on forming special classes with the extended language teaching. Is forming classes of children who have proved some talent for language learning really the most effective way of developing the children's language competence? Do the parents support the view that students can learn the most in groups of students of similar motivation and ability or do they suggest gaining the most from the advantages of heterogeneous classes, like learning from one another, motivation of weaker students by the more successful ones, learning to cooperate in a natural environment of people with variety of dispositions, etc.?

The purpose of the next question is similar; it aims to recognize the parents' attitude towards the external differentiation but this time in a narrower sense. According to what criteria should the classes be divided into groups for English? Classes of more than twenty-four students are divided for foreign language lesson according to the law. The current practice at Angelovova school is dividing the groups according to the language performance assessed by means of a placement test distributed at the beginning of the sixth

grade. The students then stay in the group until the ninth grade unless they show an improvement or worsening at some point. In such case the student is placed into another group using the teacher's judgment. This practice is an apparent way of external differentiation and the research should show if the parents support it or if they would prefer some less selective method. Other possibilities provided are forming the groups at random, in relation to the learning styles of the students, or the parents can suggest another technique.

Questions number seven and eight focus on the expectations regarding teacher's and student's activities in the lesson. The purpose here is to see if the view of the roles of these two members of educational process has changed from the high structure towards the low structure. It order to achieve better comprehensibility, the term activities was used instead of the roles and thus the range of possible options was narrowed down to only some of the roles analyzed in the theoretical study.

Some of the options of the activities suggest a high structure approach to the perception of these roles. Among the teacher's activities there are: teacher provides the students with knowledge; corrects mistakes; serves as an example in terms of ideal language performance. Among the student's activities there are: student listens to teacher's explanations; gains knowledge from the teacher and various materials.

 Following answers imply low structure attitude in the perception of the roles. Among the teacher's activities: helps to define student's specific needs; creates learning environment; encourages students. Among the student's activities: discovers, looks for answers; offers his ideas, suggestions; organizes his learning; evaluates his learning.

There are three more options available among the teacher's activities: gives instructions for tasks; evaluates student's performance, the progress he has made; directs activities in the classroom the aim. These lie somewhere in the middle on the high to low structure continuum, teacher can carry them in both ways. These variants were listed in order to make the list of activities as complete as possible.

Parents were asked to tick three options in the list of student's activities as well as in the list of teacher's activities as I wanted to gain an objective picture of parents' expectations about this subject matter. Having one answer would not be sufficient, firstly because there are many more options available in the list, secondly neither teacher nor student can carry only one activity, both roles are much more complex.

Question number nine concerns the teaching aids. Its main purpose is to find out to

what extent the parents support authentic materials. The idea of exposing students to a large amount of authentic language is connected with communicative language teaching and it was discussed in the theoretical study in chapter 2.5. The array of options ranges from teacher-oriented materials suggesting more traditional attitude, such as textbook, workbook, grammar book, audiotape/videotape to go with the textbook, visual aids - e.g. flashcards, posters focused on grammar, vocabulary, etc., to task based, authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, leaflets, brochures; pieces of literature; recordings of radio programmes, station or airport announcements; videotapes containing films, pieces of news, weather forecasts, etc. Somewhere in the middle of the continuum lie sources such as maps, dictionaries or multimedia, the use of which can be more or less authentic according to the context into which they are put. In this question parents may tick as many answers as they want, they can even add their own suggestions, the result of which should be the entire scope of materials expected to be used in English language teaching.

Question number ten focuses on parents' preferences regarding the type of textbook used in English lessons. Since textbook is the teaching aid upon which most of the courses are built, its choice suggests the direction the course is going to take: "Any textbook is based on assumptions about learning". /Hedge, p. 36/ The options available in the question concerned the approach to language learning by means of considering the language of the textbook as criteria. The monolingual approach, i.e. textbook using only English, suggests choice of more or less natural approach based on learning via using the language. Choosing a textbook written entirely in English but containing an English - Czech dictionary shows the preference of approach in which one of the means of learning the meaning of vocabulary will be translation. And finally, a textbook using the combined attitude, where Czech is used for explanation and/or practice of new items, suggests the inclination to grammar-translation approach, i.e. learning based on assumption that the most effective way of learning English is through comparing it with the mother tongue. With the first two options I stressed the trustfulness of the publishing houses in order to avoid the misunderstanding based on changing the theme of the question to the credulity of textbooks.

In question number eleven the focus is to explore the expectations regarding the social role of an individual in language learning. Should most of the work in the lesson be based on cooperation, competition on individual work? The result should illustrate parent´s view of suitable social patterns in the language classroom.

The aim of question number twelve is considering the organizational forms in classroom. Parents are asked to choose the most effective way of dealing with a creative task and provide an explanation for their response. They can decide among individual work, pairwork, or groupwork. As a result, we will be able to see the range of parents' opinions on the effectiveness of individual organizational forms and, thanks to the parents´ explanation, the reason for their choice.

In question number thirteen parents are asked to express their attitude towards mistakes. Is it necessary to correct all the mistakes, which a student makes in his language, either written or oral, performance? While the positive answer means a clear focus on accuracy, the negative answer could imply various reasons for not correcting mistakes. Therefore the parent is provided with two different options, one suggesting that the teacher should make the decision which mistakes to correct, and the second one claiming that it is better not to correct mistakes. Parents are asked to give the reason for their reply in order to support it.

Question number fourteen deals with ways of presenting and acquiring the grammar structure of English. Parents are supposed to decide if it is necessary to learn grammar rules and what language ought to be used when presenting grammar. The first possibility is the idea that it is not necessary to learn grammar rules explicitly and the pupil should acquire the language in the same way as a baby learning his mother tongue. This assumption is built upon the natural approach, where the grammar is acquired in a covert way, i.e. it is considered a part of the whole language system and its mastery comes along with listening to the language and using it. The second possibility suggests that it is necessary to learn the grammar rules explicitly and English should be the only language used in the lesson, which also includes presenting grammar items. Unlike in the first possibility, here the attitude is based on overt teaching, i.e. awareness of grammar rules and their use. The last possibility states that it in necessary to learn the grammar rules and Czech should be used for achieving understanding. Again this view suggests overt teaching of grammar but, unlike the previous option, it supports the use of the mother tongue.

Question number fifteen focuses on reading, one of the language skills whose ways of development have been a matter of discussion. What means of comprehension check is the most effective and beneficial for future reading? The parents were asked to think about what should follow after reading a text. Options were: figuring out the meaning of new vocabulary, translation of the whole text into Czech or checking the comprehension, e.g.

by means of answering the questions to the text. The first option means that knowing the meaning of individual lexical items ensures the understanding of the text as a whole. The second one is based on grammar-translation approach the result of which will be comparative approach to the language. The third option considers the whole text, unlike the first option; moreover, it enables the students to work in the target language, which is beneficial for improving their reading skills.

The next question, number sixteen, deals with a productive language skill, speaking, upon which we tend to evaluate one's language performance the most often. I offer four answers to the question about activities that are most likely to lead to development of communicative competence in English. It is suggested that pairs of students learn a dialog from the textbook or they make a dialogue on a given topic, they make a dialogue using a certain grammar structure having a topic given or they are asked to find out particular pieces of information about each other. These responses range from the one with the highest structure, learning the dialogue from the textbook, to two with reasonably low structure, forming a dialog on a given topic and finding out some information about the mate. The latter differs from the former one though, as it is based on a real life situation. Finding out some information involves meaningful conversation. As a school task it fulfills all the criteria for communication, it involves information gap, feedback and each participant has a choice of strategies he is going to use to deliver the message and understand the other participant.

Question number seventeen concerns parents themselves, particularly the areas in language education in which they would like to cooperate with the school. The options suggest meeting and consulting the English teacher, helping to form the yearly curriculum, helping the child with his homework according to one's ability, helping to organize special events like excursions or trips, participating in projects. Space is provided for parents who can think of another area in language education in which they would like to cooperate with the school. This question should show what role do the parents give themselves in the triangle STUDENT - TEACHER - PARENT.

At last, in question number eighteen parents are to define successful teaching/learning. The options cover effective factors such as good mark in the subject, acquiring the items prescribed for certain grade in particular curriculum, ability to use the knowledge for communication, ability to "think in the language" and solve situations or acquiring the language at the level of native speaker. There are some affective factors

available as well, such as interest in the subject or activity of students in the group. The options also contain a metacognitive aim, ability to learn and ethical aim, interest in other cultures and respect towards them. As parents could tick as many answers as they wanted, it will be interesting to see the range of results.

2.   Research

2.1   Research in the entire group

In this part the results of the research in the whole group of thirty parents will be presented. The next chapter, 2.2, will be devoted to the particular areas in which the comparison of the results of the two groups, classes with the extended language teaching and other classes, have shown an obvious difference and/or some interesting data.

The result of the first question is apparent from the conditions of the research. Thirty parents participated in it, fifteen of which were parents of children with the extended teaching classes and fifteen parents' children followed another curriculum.

No.2
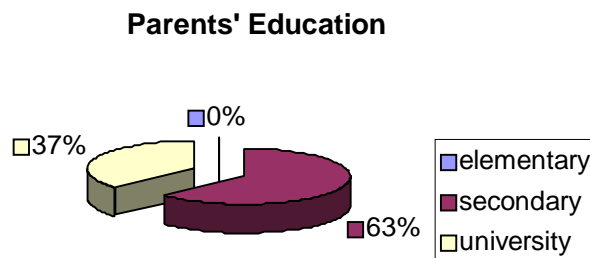
Parents' Education

Looking at the graph, we can see that no parents have achieved only primary education, 63% have achieved secondary education and 37% have achieved university education. Although this distinction is rather simplified, we can generally say that the parents are well educated. This fact implies that their children's education would be one of their priorities, which might be one of the reasons why they chose to participate in the study.

No.3

Student's Relationship to the Aim

3%

10%

23%

64%

- □ student knows the aim
- ■ student cooperates on forming the aim
- □ student can modify the aim
- □ student forms the aim
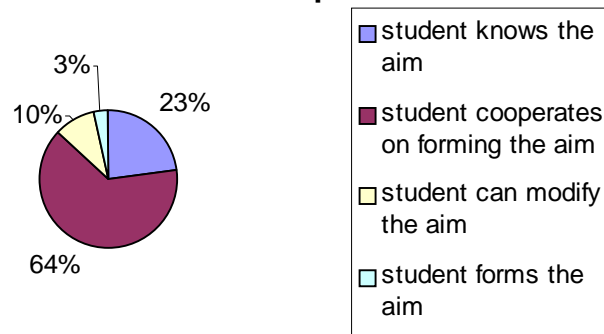
Apparently, parents want their child to have an active relationship towards the aim of English teaching/learning. 63% of parents claim that a student should participate in forming the aim, 23% think that student should know the aim of the process, 10% suggest that student should be able to modify the aim and 4% state that student should form the aim of the process. This means majority of parents considers the students partly responsible for the content of their language education, and the fact they agreed on participation of the students implies that there will be some other elements influencing the process of forming the aim, such as the teacher, curriculum, textbook, etc. It is only a minority that is willing to give all the responsibility to the students. The parents supporting the idea that student should know the aim of the process seem to embody traditional approach to teaching where teacher informs the students at the beginning of the lesson what he is going to teach them and then leads the lesson towards the aim.

Process Leading to the Aim

23%

77%

- □ all students do the same tasks
- ■ the tasks and activities may differ
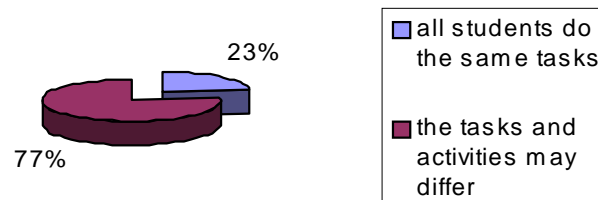
No. 4

We can see that the idea of internal differentiation has influenced the parents'

beliefs. 77% agree that tasks may differ whereas 23% think that all pupils should work on the same tasks. This result suggests that most parents are aware of individual differences among students, e.g. in terms of learning styles, working pace, interests, language competence, etc.

No. 5

Relationship Towards Forming the Classes with the Extended Teaching of Languages

27%

73%

- agree with forming "language" classes
- do not agree with forming "language" classes
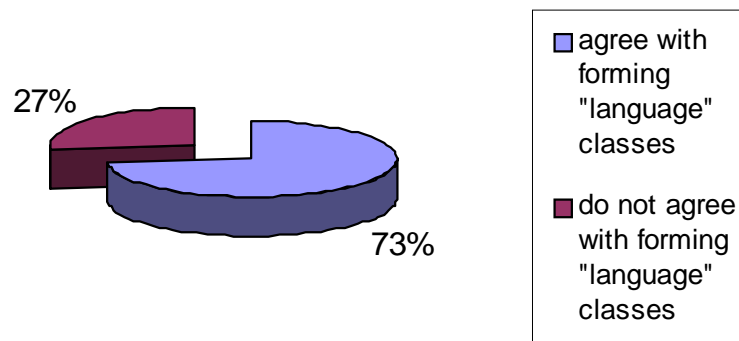
The result concerning the external differentiation is surprising to a certain extent. 73% agree with forming "special language classes", i.e. classes with the extended language teaching, 27% disagree with it. This fact shows that not only do most parents support internal differentiation, as presented in the previous question, but they also believe in benefits of external differentiation. The percentage of parents who think that it is best for students to be educated in a natural environment of children of various abilities, experience, talents, etc. is rather low.

No. 6

Criteria for Dividing into Groups
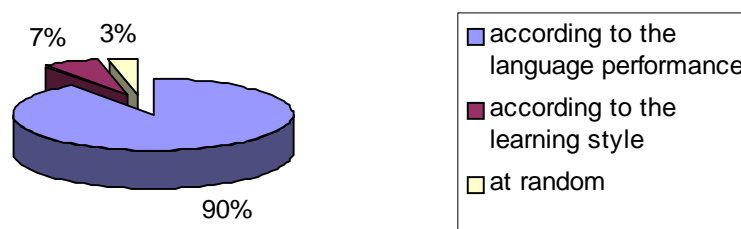
Looking at the graph and comparing it with the answers to the previous question, we get to a similar outcome. 90% think that student in the same grade should be divided into groups according to the level of their language performance assessed by means of a placement text distributed at the beginning of the school year. 7% would divide the students according to their learning style and only 3% would divide them at random claiming that curriculum is the same for all students in the grade. Parents did not suggest any other ways. We can observe a strong tendency to external differentiation here based on the assumption that learners can learn the most if their language competence is approximately at the same level.

No.7

Teacher's Activities	No. of answers
Evaluates student's performance	20
Provides the information	16
Encourages students	11
Directs the activities to the aim	11
Helps to define the student's specific needs	10
Creates learning environment	9
Gives the instructions	7
Corrects mistakes	3
Example of ideal language performance	3

In the chart you can see number of parents supporting the importance of each teacher's classroom activity. 20 parents believe that evaluating student's performance and the progress they have made is important, 16 parents suggest providing students with knowledge. 11 parents support encouraging students and directing activities in the classroom towards the aim. 10 parents consider helping to define student's specific needs

important, 9 emphasize creating learning environment. 7 parents stress giving instructions for tasks and 3 parents accent correcting mistakes and the role of teacher as an example in terms of ideal language performance. Obviously, the number of answers in favour of high structure teaching, where teacher takes most of the initiative, is slightly bigger than the number of parents in favour of low structure attitude, based mainly on student's activity.

No. 8

Student's Activities	No. of answers
Receives the knowledge from the teacher and materials	24
Explores, searches for the answers	17
Offers his ideas, suggestions	15
Listens to teacher's explanation	13
Organizes his learning	13
Evaluates his performance, progress	8

The parents' perception of the student's role in the classroom shows a certain tendency to the low structure attitude. 24 parents think that it is important for a student to gain knowledge from the teacher and various materials, 17 parents consider discovering and looking for answers important. 15 parents put the emphasis on students offering their ideas and suggestions. 13 parents stress that students should organize their learning process and listen to teacher's explanations and 8 emphasize the student's evaluation of his performance and progress. Although the biggest group of parents emphasizes that student should gain knowledge from various sources, and thus suggest his passive role of a recipient, the result still suggests a low structure tendency in parents' beliefs.
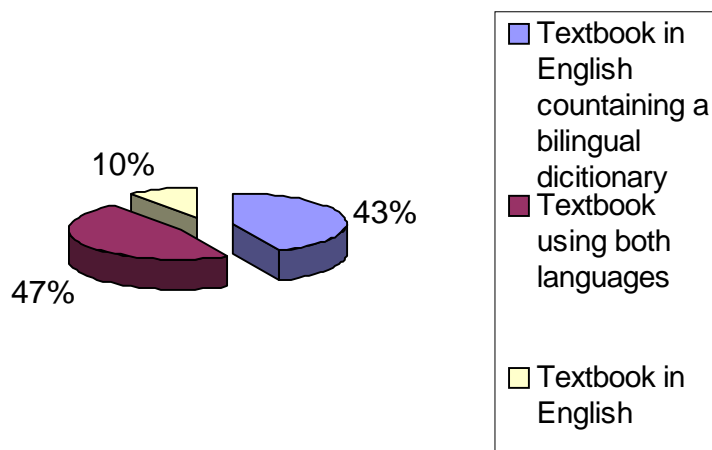
No. 9

Suitable Teaching Aids	No. of answers
Workbook	27
Textbook	23

Audio recordings designed for the textbook	22
Materials created for language teaching/learning	19
Video recordings designed for the textbook	19
Multimedia	18
Dictionary	16
Simplified literature	11
Encyclopaedia	10
Authentic audio recordings	8
Maps	7
Grammar book	6
Authentic materials	5
Authentic literature	5
Authentic video recordings	5

The chart above displays the parent's beliefs concerning the appropriateness of various teaching aids in English lesson. 27 parents support the use of workbook, 23 chose textbook, 22 picked audio tape which goes along with the textbook, 19 parents ticked video tape which goes along with the textbook and also materials especially designed for language teaching such as flashcards, posters with vocabulary/grammar, etc. 18 parents mentioned multimedia and 17 suggested dictionaries. 11 parents think it is good to use simplified literature and 10 parents support encyclopedias. 8 parents mentioned authentic audio materials, 7 suggested the use of maps and 6 the grammar book. 5 parents emphasized pieces of literature in original, authentic video materials and authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, leaflets, brochures, etc. No parents suggested other teaching aids to be used in the English lesson. The results show that although some parents agree with the use of authentic materials, they are especially the teacher-oriented materials that the parents support. This is probably partly due to the perception of authentic materials as too difficult and discouraging for the age group of primary school students. As you can see in the chart, this does not mean that the parents want their children to be dependent only on textbook. They are obviously aware of existence of so-called textbook sets, which can include workbook, grammar book, audiotape, videotape, etc. What is surprising is the fact that not all the parents support the use of textbook, 7 parents do not consider textbook a suitable material to be used in the process in English teaching/learning. One of possible reasons is that they are not content with the textbook their child uses. We will gain more evidence in the results of the next question.

No. 10

Type of Textbook

▣	Textbook in English countaining a bilingual dicitionary
■	Textbook using both languages
▢	Textbook in English

10%

47%

43%

In the graph we can see that most parents, 47%, support the use of English textbook published in the Czech republic based on comparative approach, i.e. textbook containing also Czech language for grammar explanation, vocabulary translation, translation exercises. A little bit less respondents, 43%, suggest using a textbook originally published by a recognized publishing house in an English speaking country accompanied by an English–Czech dictionary. Only 10 % agree with using a textbook published by a recognized publishing house in an English speaking country, which is the recent practice at school. It appears that most of the parents insist on Czech element in the English textbook and what differs is the expected amount of it. From discussions with parents I know that one of the reasons is the fact that parents want their children to be able to do some work at home, without the assistance of the teacher. For this reason they consider Czech language in the textbook a clue for student's independent work and/or work assisted by parents.

No. 11

Most Tasks Should Be Based on:
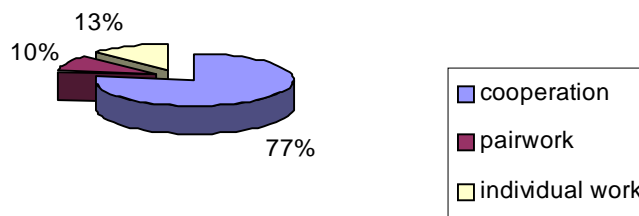
The answers to this question showed parents' expectations towards the nature of English lessons in terms of about the social role of an individual. 77% parents claim that most tasks should be based on cooperation, 13 % believe in tasks based on individual work and 10% prefer cooperative tasks. This research has clearly shown that majority of parents prefer cooperative teaching, activities founded on teamwork to individual work of students or competition. The result corresponds with the general tendency of improving people's ability to work in team, contribute to the common work process.

No. 12

The Most Effective Way of Dealing with a Creative Task
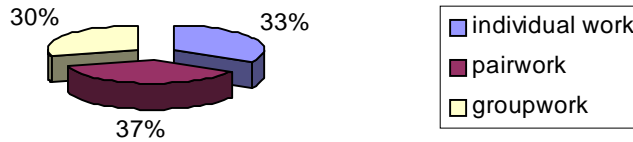
The answers to question number twelve are quite balanced, unlike in the previous question. 37% think that the most effective organizational form of working on a creative task is pairwork, 33% support individual work and 30% suggest groupwork. When giving the reasons for their answer, the parents supporting pairwork mention the factor of cooperation and sharing ideas along with certain necessity to participate in the work. Those supporting individual work focus on accuracy of language performance and therefore they wish to decrease the chance of making a mistake.

This disagreement apparent in opinions of some of the parents is practically a conflict on the continuum between high- and low-structure attitude to teaching/learning.

No. 13

Attitude Towards Mistakes
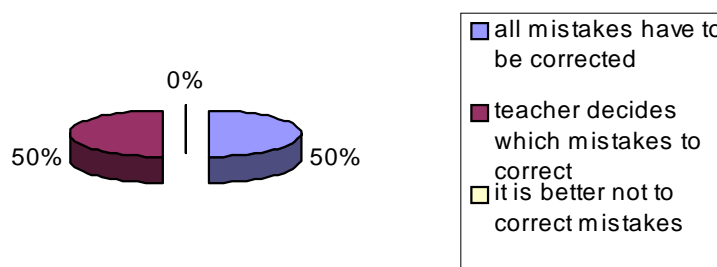
In this question, all respondents stuck to one of two answers. 50% think that all mistakes, which a student makes in his language performance, either written or oral, should be corrected, 50% leave it upon the teacher's decision what mistakes he will/will not correct. No parents think that it is better not to correct mistakes at all. Parents who think

that all mistakes ought to be corrected state that such practice is going to lead to avoidance of further mistakes and thus to improvement of language performance. Those who do not insist on correcting all mistakes stress the necessity to consider the individuality of pupil, the focus of the lesson and the level of English performance. Obviously, half of parents focus on accuracy of language performance and hold the traditional behaviorist view that making a mistake will lead to its memorization and therefore mistakes are to be deterred. The other group considers various criteria for dealing with a mistake and apparently counts on mistakes as part of natural process of language learning.

No. 14

Approach to Grammar Teaching and its Language
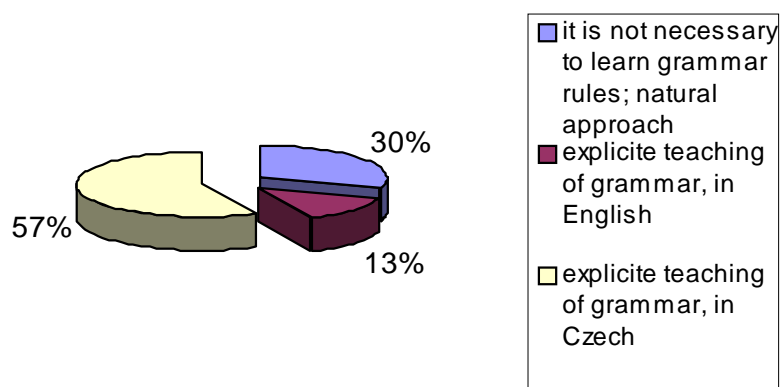
Parents' relationship to grammar teaching/ learning is demonstrated in the graph above. 57 % claim that it is necessary to learn grammar rules explicitly and Czech should be used for better understanding. 30% think that it is not necessary to learn grammar rules in an explicit way because students should acquire the language in the same way as a small

child his mother tongue. 13% say that it is necessary to learn grammar rules explicitly and that grammar, as well as the whole lesson, should be presented in English. As we can see, more than half parents support overt attitude to grammar teaching/learning and agree with using Czech. A surprisingly large number of respondents chose the overt attitude based on natural approach to language teaching/learning and only a few parents suggest overt dealing with grammar and using only the target language in the lesson. These results have shown that many parents see using the target language as crucial and very often as a means of acquiring the language. Looking back at the research results of former questions, this contradicts the parents' opinions regarding the choice of textbook to an extent. Although 90% of parents insist on textbook containing Czech, this question shows that 43% refuse the comparative attitude. What remains, is the fact that most parents have agreed on explicit, i.e. overt teaching of grammar.

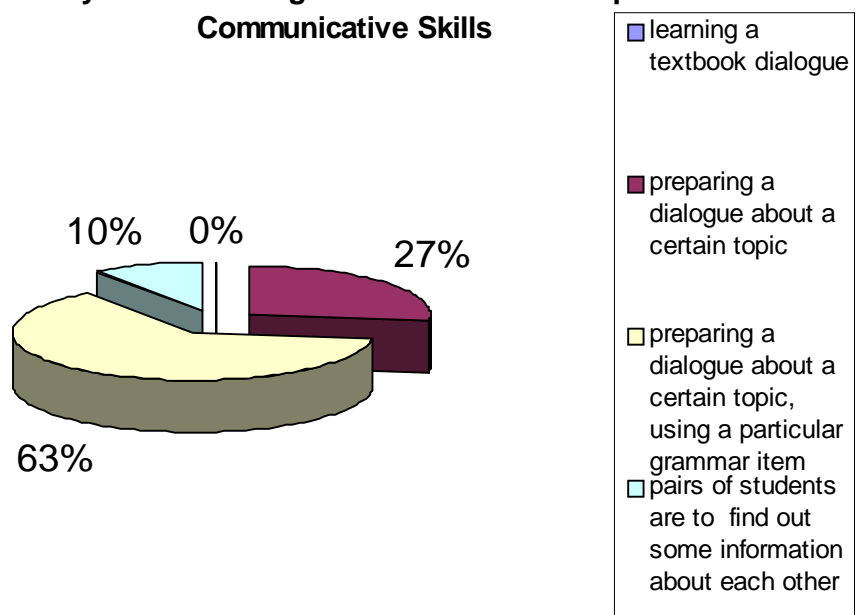**After Reading a New Text Should Follow:**
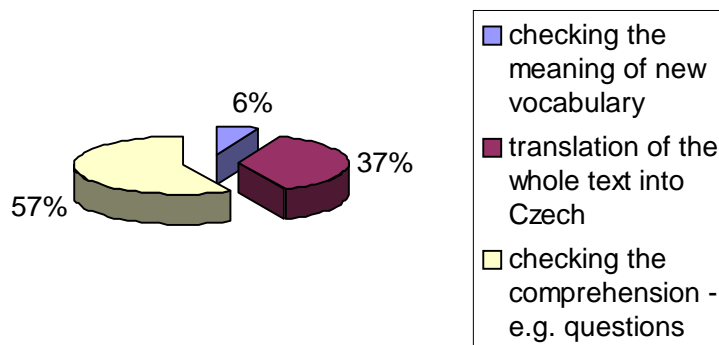
No. 15

In the graph we can see parents' expectations about the form of comprehension check following after reading a new text. 57% suggest checking the comprehension for example by means of answering questions about the text, 37% think that the whole text ought to be translated into Czech and 6% support checking the meaning of new

vocabulary. The data show that more than half respondents put the focus on meaning of the text whereas more than one third of respondents insist on form by translating the text, word by word. Only very few parents consider finding the meaning of unknown vocabulary sufficient.

No. 16

An Activity which is Going to Lead to the Development of Communicative Skills

10%   0%   27%

63%

- learning a textbook dialogue
- preparing a dialogue about a certain topic
- preparing a dialogue about a certain topic, using a particular grammar item
- pairs of students are to find out some information about each other

This graph shows parents' beliefs about development of speaking. 63% claim that preparing a dialogue about a certain topic, using a particular grammar item, is the most effective way of developing communicative skills. 27% state that preparing a dialogue about a certain topic is the most effective. 10% support pairwork in which students are supposed to find out particular pieces of information about each other. No parents consider memorizing a dialogue from the textbook the most effective. Obviously, most parents prefer high structure organization of speaking activities, in 90 % their choice was a type of activity that is easy to control but has nothing in common with real life communication.

No. 17

Areas of Cooperation in Language Education	No. of answers
Meet and consult the English teacher	18
Help the child with homework	16
Help to organize special events, e.g. trips, excursions	7
Help to prepare the yearly plans	1
Help with projects	0

Chart of the results of question number seventeen shows the areas in which the parents would like to cooperate with the school. 18 parents would like to meet and consult the English teacher, 16 want to help their child with homework and 7 are willing to help to organize special events such as excursions or trips. 1 parent would like to help to prepare the yearly plan. Looking at the results from the positive point of views, there are some parents who are interested in helping the school and their children's language education, they are willing to do extra things. From the negative point of view, not all the parents want to be meeting the English teacher, which means that unless the teacher takes the initiative, he/she is not going to see the parent and get to talk to him. This situation could be the result of preconception that it is necessary and useful to talk to teachers only in case there is a particular problem.

No. 18

Features of Successful Language Education	No. of answers
Ability to use the knowledge for communication	27
Ability to "think in the language" and solve situations	21

Ability to learn independently	11
Students in group are active	11
Student has learned the items prescribed in the curriculum	9
Student's language performance is at the level of a native speaker	7
Student has a good grade	6
Students are interested in other cultures and respect them	1

This chart illustrates what is the result of successful language education, according to the parents. 27 parents maintain that student should be able to use his knowledge for communication, 21 think students ought to think in the language and be able to solve situations, 12 believe that students should be interested in the subject. 11 parents claim that students in the group should be active and the same number says a student should be able to learn independently. 9 parents consider learning all the items given by curriculum of the particular grade important, 7 think students should master the language at the level of a native speaker. 6 parents focus on a good grade and 1 parent considers interest in other cultures and respect to them important. Apparently, parents focus most of all on effective goals; they care about their child's communicative competence. In some cases, their expectations are unrealistic, children growing up in a Czech environment who learn English only at a primary school cannot achieve language competence of a native speaker. Parents are also aware of affective factors in language education such as motivation. Not very many parents see the importance of metacognitive goals and only one parent has included the ethical aspect of language education, i.e. respect toward other cultures. Generally, parents tend to see the short time goals rather than the long time ones, they do not reflect on the recent tendency to concentrate on enabling students' life long learning and leading students to democratic, tolerant attitude towards people of different cultures, nations and religions.

2.2   Comparison of results in two groups of respondents

The aim of this part is to compare the beliefs of parents whose children follow the curriculum with the extended language teaching (GROUP A) with those of parents whose children follow another curriculum (GROUP B). As a result we should see if the opinions of GROUP A are more informed in terms of current trends in language education or, on the other hand, if the fact that they chose to participate in a selective class shows certain tendency to traditional attitude to education. Only the results in which there is an obvious difference between the two groups will be presented.

The two groups definitely differ in their view of student's relationship toward the aim of English teaching/learning. While in GROUP B 73% claim student should cooperate on forming the aim, in GROUP A it is only 53%. All the remaining respondents from GROUP A, that is 27%, suggest that students should know the aim of the process. In GROUP B 20% agree with this opinion. The main difference is that only respondents from GROUP A support the options suggesting more active role of students. 20% parents from GROUP A think that students should have an opportunity to modify the aim and 7% think that student should form the aim. From this point of view the opinions of GROUP A are more consistent with low structure attitude to language teaching, they count on student's active participation and responsibility for forming the aim. Most of the parents from GROUP B still want the students to be active in this matter but they seem to be more careful about giving the control of the aim to the students.

It is also the matter of the tasks that should lead to the aim in which the two groups of parents have shown different attitude. 87% parents from GROUP A and 67% from GROUP B think that tasks and activities may differ, 13% from GROUP A and 33% from GROUP B maintain that all students should work on the same tasks. Apparently, more parents from GROUP A believe in internal differentiation, the idea based on respect towards the abilities, learning styles, learning strategies, working pace, etc. of individual students.

The results concerning forming classes with the extended language teaching are also surprising. The results show that 67% respondents from GROUP B agree with forming these classes and 33% disagree. In GROUP A 80% agree with forming classes with the extended language teaching and 20% disagree. It is the last number which seems the most surprising. Why do parents of children attending a class with the extended language teaching disagree with forming such classes? One of these respondents provides an explanation. He has a feeling that the expectations put on a student in language lessons are the same in both types of classes and they differ only in other subjects. The parent shows certain disapproval with the realization of the curriculum but he does not disagree with the selective nature of it. The other parents have not offered an explanation of their opinions but it is likely they have changed their mind about this subject matter during their child's school attendance, as the parent mentioned above did. On the other hand, the fact that 67% respondents from GROUP B agree with forming classes with the extended

language teaching suggests that although the children of these parents do not attend such a class, they approve of external differentiation of this type.

Opinions on criteria for dividing students into groups show certain differences between GROUP A and GROUP B. All respondents from GROUP B support dividing students according to their language competence assessed by means of a placements test distributed at the beginning of the school year whereas in GROUP A it is 80%, the remaining 20% suggest choosing different criteria. 7% would divide the students at random, claiming that the curriculum is the same for all students in the class. 13% think students ought to be put into groups according to their learning style. Obviously, some parents from GROUP A can imagine other ways of grouping students than the one that is currently taking place at Angelovova primary school. Although the parents had originally chosen to place their children into class based on selection, now they seem to focus on more natural environment in the classroom by keeping students of different abilities together and respecting their individual learning styles.

The results concerning the choice of teaching aids are approximately the same in both groups except for two interesting points. When comparing the numbers of parents supporting using particular teaching aids, we can see that 18 parents from GROUP A have chosen some of the authentic materials but in GROUP B it was only 5 parents. The recent tendency supporting the use of authentic materials seemed to have a bigger influence on parents from GROUP A.

Other differences between the two groups concern the opinions on the kind of textbook students should use. 67% respondents from GROUP B would choose a traditional textbook based on teaching English by means of comparing it with Czech, in GROUP A it is only 27%. Majority of parents from GROUP A, 67%, suggest using a textbook written in English accompanied by an English/Czech dictionary, the variant which was chosen by 20% parents from GROUP B. Only 7% respondents from GROUP A and 13% from GROUP B support using textbooks published in an English speaking country, the current practice at Angelovova primary school.

Also the parents' opinions on suitable organizational forms differ, particularly in terms of the most effective way of working on a creative task. The numbers of parents who believe in individual work are the same in both groups, 33%. The rest of the parents in both groups chose a cooperative organizational form, each group leaning slightly towards one of them. While 40% respondents from GROUP A support groupwork and only 27%

pairwork, in GROUP B 47% prefer pairwork and 20% consider groupwork the most effective way of dealing with a creative task. Obviously, the same number of parents from both groups believes in the advantages of cooperation but parents from GROUP A suggest giving students more freedom and responsibility which groupwork demands.

The attitude towards mistake correction is surprising mainly in GROUP A, where majority of respondents, 63%, thinks that all mistakes ought to be corrected and only 37% maintain that it depends on the teacher's decision which mistakes are to be corrected. The results in GROUP B are vice versa, 37% agree that all mistakes should be corrected and 67% want the teacher to decide. We can see that they are mainly parents from GROUP A who focus on accuracy.

Parents hold different opinions regarding tasks leading to development of communicative skills. In GROUP A 73% respondents consider preparing a dialogue on a given topic using a particular grammar item purposeful, in GROUP B it is 53%. The same number of respondents from both groups, 27%, support preparation of dialogues about a given topic. Only respondents from GROUP B, particularly 20% of them, chose the activity in which pairs of students work together and they are to find out certain information about each other. They gave the students the most freedom in terms of devices and strategies they are going to use and made the communication purposeful at the same time.

The expectations about successful teaching differ only in some areas. No parents from GROUP A put emphasis on the grade the student achieves whereas in GROUP B 6 parents consider the grade important. In other words, these parents suggest that language education is effective if my child is successful. On one hand, each participant in the process should have the feeling of achievement and this can influence his/her attitude to language learning. On the other hand, baring my child's success as the main criteria for evaluating the education process is very narrow minded because success is a broad term based on subjective perception. Another interesting point is that 7 parents from GROUP A claim that student should have learned the items prescribed in the curriculum, and only 2 parents from GROUP B agree with this. The attitude of the rest of the parents shows certain hesitance towards the credibility of the curriculum, apparently the parents do not think mastering the items presented in the curriculum ensures mastering the language. It is difficult to say if the disbelief is based on knowledge of the content of the curriculum or if it is built partly on preconceptions. The data show that they are mainly parents from

GROUP B who have doubts about curriculum. The numbers of respondents supporting the other options are very similar, therefore there is no reason to compare them.

3.   Conclusion

To sum up, parents partly believe in recent trends in English teaching/learning. Parents' beliefs were collected by means of questionnaire distributed among a group of 30 parents at Angelovova elementary school. The secondary research was based on comparison of beliefs of two groups of parents, GROUP A being parents of children who attend classes with the extended language teaching, GROUP B were parents of children who attend a class following another curriculum. All respondents are well educated, approximately two thirds of the parents have achieved secondary education, one third is university educated.

The research has fulfilled the original expectation that both influences, parents' former experience with mainly traditional language education and recent tendencies in English teaching/learning have had an impact on their beliefs. First we will have a look at the areas where parents' views are based mainly on traditional grounds.

The results show traces of traditional approach in parents' opinions regarding external differentiation. Majority of respondents agrees with grouping students according to the level of their language competence. Respondents generally approve of selecting children who are going to attend a class with the extended language teaching and they would divide classes according to the level of individual students as well. Such selection is a way of secluding talented children, a practice which is in contrary with principals of democratic educational policy: "... instead of selecting the most capable students and excluding those who cannot fulfill the set expectations, an opportunity for maximum development of abilities should be given to all people without difference." (*Bílá kniha.* 2001: p. 17) Only minority of parents considers natural environment of children with different abilities more beneficial.

Parents are in favour of all sorts of teaching aids but mostly they agree on the use of materials they are familiar with themselves. Respondents mostly suggest using teacher oriented aids and other materials designed for language teaching rather than authentic materials. As for the textbook, parents rely mostly on comparison with the mother tongue, only the desired amount of it differs. The mother tongue should also, according to more

than half of the parents, serve for grammar presentation.

The focus on accuracy and controlled practice is obvious. Half of parents claim that all mistakes have to be corrected and suggest that devices used in communication in classroom should be prescribed. This expectation is in contrary with the outcome of some of the other questions. In the last question most parents state that they consider students' ability to use the communicative competence the most important. In the question focused on parent's point of view of grammar teaching, 30% parents support the idea of natural acquisition. Speaking activities focused only on accuracy and on the use of particular items are hardly going to lead to development of communicative skills.

In questions number eleven and twelve parents agree that most of the tasks in the classroom should be based on cooperation. Nevertheless, it is obvious that their attitude towards cooperation illustrates a dilemma on the high to low structure continuum. Some of the parents suggest narrowing down the cooperation to groups of only two people and some even choose to carry the task as individual work. On one hand parents are theoretically aware of usefulness of cooperation in classroom, on the other hand some of them would like to decrease or avoid the opportunities for genuine cooperation because of some of its characteristic signs.

Surprisingly, parents are not really keen on participating in their child's language education process: most of them are willing to meet and consult the English teacher, some parents would like to help their child with homework and only a few are interested in helping in other ways.

On the other hand, in some areas parents are aware of current tendencies in language education and they believe in them.

Parents maintain that students' attitude toward the aim of the teaching/learning process should be active. Student should have an opportunity to influence the aim, majority of parents agree on that. The opinions then differ in terms of degree of influence student should have upon the aim. Moreover, tasks and activities leading to the aim may differ, which shows parents' respect towards the individual characteristics of students and thus support of internal differentiation.

Parents' expectations regarding the student's and teacher's role illustrate tendency to low-structure classroom organization. The focus is put on the teacher's role of facilitator, needs analyst and process manager. Student is no longer the object of teaching, parents stress his role of participant of the process who gains as well as contributes,

evaluates the progress, who takes the responsibility of his own learning. The number of parents who emphasize student's power and control is comparably large.

More than half of parents prefer other ways of comprehension check following reading a new piece of text than translation. On the other hand, the number of parents supporting translation as the most effective method of comprehension check is still rather high. This result illustrates the process of shifting from the emphasis on the form to the focus on the meaning of the language, the refusal of grammar–translation approach to language learning is becoming apparent.

Comparing the results in the two groups of respondents, we can see there are some areas in which they differ.

Respondents from GROUP A put greater emphasis on students' active relationship to the aim of the language learning process, some of them think students should have an opportunity to modify or even form the aim. More respondents from GROUP A also stress the role of internal differentiation by stating that tasks leading to the aim may differ within the class.

Both groups of respondents are generally in favour of forming the classes with the extended language teaching. Nevertheless, in both groups there are some respondents who disagree with them, which is especially surprising in GROUP A. One of the possible reasons is that the parents have changed their mind about the purposefulness of forming these classes.

Some parents from GROUP A have shown that they do not insist on dividing classes for language education according to the language competence and that they can imagine other ways, such as using learning styles of students as criteria or dividing the students at random. This result illustrates that not all the parents approve of external differentiation.

Group A prove to be more informed about modern teaching aids used in language education. A larger number of respondents from this group express the approval with using multimedia and authentic materials of various kinds. Also the desired degree of Czech element in the textbook is smaller in GROUP A, most parents would like the textbook to contain an English - Czech dictionary unlike in GROUP B where most parents suggest using a textbook based on comparative approach.

Both groups differ in the degree of freedom and responsibility each student gets when working on a creative cooperative task. While GROUP A supports groupwork and

thus more responsibility of each student, GROUP B prefers pairwork where there is more control of each student's contribution. In spite of this result, majority of parents from GROUP A claims that all mistakes ought to be corrected and thus shows a strong focus on accuracy. This emphasis is supported when discussing the most effective way of developing student's communicative competence. GROUP A maintains that students should be informed which devices to use in a piece of communication, whereas some respondents from GROUP B give the freedom to the students. The required degree of control is much bigger in GROUP A and in consequence the speaking activities loose the characteristics of communication.

At last, the results of the two groups show minor differences when discussing the signs of successful language teaching/learning process. More respondents from GROUP B than in GROUP A rely on the grade the student achieves, regardless its subjective nature. On the other hand, a bigger number of respondents from GROUP A considers mastering the items prescribed in the curriculum important. Nevertheless, the student's ability to use communicative competence is crucial according to both groups.

In conclusion, parent's beliefs about English language teaching/learning are composed of traditional views as well as views built upon modern tendencies. Parents are aware of the changes in the Czech educational system and in some areas their beliefs correspond with them. These concern for example student's active relationship towards the aim of the process, the teacher's and the student's role in it, the importance of internal differentiation in the schools, the benefits of cooperative methods in language education or the approach to the process of checking the comprehension. In other areas parent's beliefs are based on traditional attitude to language education. These are mainly the positive approach to external differentiation, teacher oriented teaching aids, textbooks based on teaching English by means of comparison with Czech, correcting all mistakes, grammar-translation method.

The secondary research shows that parents of children who follow classes with the extended language teaching are more informed about the recent tendencies in English language teaching/learning. This becomes apparent when discussing the student's attitude towards the aim, internal differentiation in classroom, criteria for dividing students into groups, authentic and modern teaching aids, suitable textbooks, cooperative organizational forms. On the contrary, in some areas parents from this group show a strong emphasis on

accuracy and on the form of language performance, the result of which would be lack of opportunities and perhaps motivation for real-life-like communication. These areas concern the approach to hypercorrection of mistakes and speaking activities based on given devices.

What does the research suggest for the cooperation between school and family? The first conclusion is that it should improve in terms of continuity, i.e. the contact ought to become part of the everyday process. As a result, parent and teacher would meet regularly, consult various aspects of ELT and the child's individuality, discuss his/her progress and difficulties, and offer help to each other in particular matters.

The second conclusion concerns the forms of cooperation. In fact, many of the changes of the teaching/learning process can take place in cooperation with parents as well. The forms and methods of cooperation should enable the parent participate actively instead of simply listening to teacher's comments. Also, the relationship between parent and teacher should be built on mutual respect and partnership: "the partnership between parents and teacher can have a positive effect on efficiency of individual children". (Campbell in Beránek. 2001: p. 4) Instead of trying to convince parents about an innovative approach to ELT we can encourage them to participate in the process.

What forms can cooperation between school and family take? The most common opportunity when teacher and parents meet are the class meetings. Their mass nature can change to more individualized forms according to the purpose of the meeting. Sometimes the meetings can take form of consultation either between teacher and parent, or ideally, among the teacher, student and parent. Another idea is to organize the class meeting as a workshop where the participants have an opportunity to discuss various issues. Cooperative forms can be involved, such as groupwork or pairwork. Moreover, teacher along with families can organize informal events too, e.g. trips, excursions, etc. The concept of open classroom is a crucial idea underlying all these forms of cooperation. Parents should be encouraged to come to lessons, help and contribute if they wish.

What advantages does such cooperation bring? Firstly, the student's command of English is likely to improve because he can see the interest from the teacher as well as the parent. ELT becomes more effective as all participants are well informed about the goal, the stage of the process, etc. In consequence, the student's intrinsic motivation and interest in the subject increase. Secondly, many misunderstandings can be avoided because the

participants meet often and their beliefs are understood and respected. Close cooperation among the participants of the process, student – teacher – parent, will lead to general understanding of the innovative process.

DOTAZNÍK – Názory rodičů na výuku anglického jazyka na 2. stupni ZŠ

Vážení rodiče,

obracím se na Vás s prosbou o vyplnění tohoto dotazníku. Vaše odpovědi budou vyhodnoceny a získaná data budou využita v praktické části mé diplomové práce. Dotazník je anonymní.

Přečtěte si prosím každou otázku, a pokud není uvedeno jinak, zaškrtněte jednu odpověď, která nejlépe odpovídá vašemu názoru. Otázky se týkají výuky anglického jazyka na 2. stupni základních škol.

V případě jakýchkoliv dotazů nebo nejasností mě prosím neváhejte kontaktovat, ráda Vám s vyplněním dotazníku pomůžu.

Mnohokrát děkuji,

Marie Hrubá.

1. Můj syn/moje dcera navštěvuje .... ročník. (doplňte)
   Navštěvuje Váš syn/Vaše dcera třídu s rozšířeným vyučováním jazyků?
   - ❏ ano
   - ❏ ne

2. Jaké je Vaše nejvyšší dosažené vzdělání?
   - ❏ základní
   - ❏ středoškolské
   - ❏ vysokoškolské

3. Výuka by zcela jistě měla směřovat k určitému cíli. Do jaké míry by měl být žákův přístup k cíli výuky aktivní?
   - ❏ žák zná cíl výuky
   - ❏ žák se podílí na vytváření cíle
   - ❏ žák má možnost upravovat cíl výuky
   - ❏ žák formuluje cíl výuky

4. Jakým způsobem by mělo být cíle výuky dosaženo?
   - ❏ všichni žáci ve třídě plní stejné úkoly
   - ❏ úkoly a aktivity se mohou lišit

5. Souhlasíte s dělením tříd na jazykové a nejazykové (vzdělávací program Základní škola s rozšířeným vyučováním jazyků a ostatní vzdělávací programy)? Svou odpověď zdůvodněte.
   - ❏ ano
   - ❏ ne

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Podle jakého kritéria by měly být děti ve stejných ročnících rozřazovány do skupin na jazykovou výuku?

        ❑ nahodile, osnovy jsou pro všechny děti ve třídě stejné
        ❑ podle dosažené úrovně (na základě rozřazovacího testu zadaného na začátku školního roku)
        ❑ podle stylu učení (např. zrakový, sluchový, pohybový typ)
        ❑ jinak – uveďte způsob:_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Kterou z níže uvedených činností učitele ve třídě považujete za nejdůležitější? Zaškrtněte 3 odpovědi.

❑ zadává instrukce k aktivitám

❑ pomáhá definovat specifické potřeby žáka

❑ předává vědomosti

❑ opravuje chyby

❑ hodnotí žákův projev, pokrok který udělal

❑ povzbuzuje žáky

❑ vytváří výukové prostředí

❑ usměrňuje dění ve třídě k vytyčenému cíli

❑ vzor z hlediska ideálního jazykového projevu

8. Kterou z níže uvedených činností žáka považujete za nejdůležitější? Zaškrtněte 3 odpovědi:

❑ poslouchá učitelův výklad

❑ čerpá vědomosti od učitele a z různých materiálů

❑ objevuje, hledá odpovědi

❑ nabízí své nápady, návrhy

❑ hodnotí svůj vlastní projev, pokrok

❑ organizuje si vlastní učení

9. Které z níže uvedených didaktických prostředků (pomůcek) jsou vhodné pro použití ve vyučovací hodině? Můžete zaškrtnout více odpovědí.

❑ učebnice

❑ pracovní sešit

❑ učebnice gramatiky

❑ encyklopedie

❑ slovníky

❑ zjednodušená beletrie pro výukové účely

❑ mapy

❑ materiály speciálně vytvořené pro výuku (různé kartičky, plakáty se slovní zásobou / gramatikou, atd.)

❑ autentické materiály – noviny, časopisy, letáky, brožury, apod.

❑ beletrie (próza, poezie, drama, literatura pro děti) v originále

❑ audio nahrávka k učebnici obsahující poslechová cvičení

❑ autentické audio materiály - např. nahrávky z rádia, krátká hlášení z nádraží/letiště, apod.

- ❑ video k učebnici obsahující různé scénky, reálie, gramatiku použitou v kontextu, apod.
- ❑ autentické video materiály – např. pořady, filmy, nahrávky zpráv, předpovědí počasí, apod.
- ❑ multimediální systémy – např. internet, výukové počítačové programy

❑ další – navrhněte:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Důležitým didaktickým prostředkem bývá v hodině AJ učebnice. Jaký typ učebnice upřednostňujete a proč?
- ❑ učebnici vydanou v anglicky mluvící zemi renomovaným nakladatelstvím (např. Oxford University Press, Cambridge, atd.)
- ❑ učebnici převzatou od renomovaného nakladatelství z anglicky mluvící země a doplněnou o anglicko – český překladový slovník
- ❑ učebnici vydanou v České republice, využívající kromě angličtiny také český jazyk (např. vysvětlení gramatiky, překlad nové slovní zásoby, zadání překladových cvičení)

11. Většina úkolů v hodině by měla být založena na:
- ❑ spolupráci
- ❑ soutěži
- ❑ samostatné práci

12. Žáci dostanou v hodině tvůrčí úkol. Chce-li učitel, aby přínos z této aktivity pro každého žáka byl co největší, měl by ji zadat jako:
- ❑ samostatnou práci
- ❑ práci ve dvojicích
- ❑ skupinovou práci

Zdůvodněte svoji odpověď: _____

_____

_____

13. Je nutné opravovat veškeré chyby, které žák v jazykovém projevu (písemném nebo ústním) udělá?
- ❑ ano
- ❑ ne; záleží na pedagogickém rozhodnutí učitele, které chyby opraví a které nikoliv
- ❑ chyby je lepší neopravovat

Svou odpověď zdůvodněte:

_____

_____

_____

14. Myslíte si, že je potřeba se učit gramatickým pravidlům? Jaký jazyk by měl být použit k prezentaci gramatiky?

- ❑ není potřeba se explicitně učit gramatickým pravidlům; žák by se měl jazyk učit stejným způsobem jako malé dítě svoji mateřštinu – tedy poslechem a mluvením
- ❑ je potřeba se explicitně učit gramatickým pravidlům; celá vyučovací hodina (tedy i prezentace gramatiky) by měla být vedena v angličtině
- ❑ je potřeba se explicitně učit gramatickým pravidlům; pro lepší porozumění je třeba použít češtinu

15. Co by mělo následovat po přečtení nového textu?
- ❑ ujasnění si významu nových slov
- ❑ překlad celého textu do ČJ
- ❑ ověření si porozumění textu – např. odpovídáním na otázky

16. Která z následujících aktivit nejspíše povede k rozvoji komunikačních schopností v angličtině?
- ❑ dvojice žáků se naučí rozhovor z učebnice
- ❑ dvojice žáků vytvoří rozhovor na dané téma
- ❑ dvojice žáků vytvoří rozhovor na dané téma, použije v něm právě probíraný gramatický jev
- ❑ žáci pracují ve dvojici, každý má za úkol zjistit určité údaje o svém spolužákovi

17. V jakých oblastech byste rád/a spolupracovala v jazykové výuce se školou? Můžete zaškrtnout více odpovědí.
- ❑ setkávat se a konzultovat s vyučujícím AJ (v rámci třídních schůzek, konzultačních hodin, v případě potřeby)
- ❑ podílet se na přípravě celoročních tématických plánů
- ❑ pomáhat svému dítěti v rámci možností s domácí přípravou
- ❑ pomáhat organizovat nadstavbovou činnost (exkurze, zájezdy, apod.)
- ❑ pomáhat zpracovávat projekty
- ❑ jiné – uveďte:

  _____

  _____

18. Kdy je výuka úspěšná? Můžete zaškrtnou více odpovědí.
- ❑ žák má dobrou známku
- ❑ žák si osvojil látku určenou osnovami příslušného ročníku a vzdělávacího programu
- ❑ dokáže své znalosti využít ke komunikaci
- ❑ žák má o předmět zájem
- ❑ žáci ve skupině jsou aktivní
- ❑ žáci mají zájem o jiné kultury a respektují je
- ❑ žák se dokáže samostatně učit
- ❑ žák zvládnul jazyk na úrovni rodilého mluvčího
- ❑ žák v jazyce přemýšlí a dokáže řešit situace

QUESTIONNAIRE – Parents' Beliefs About Language Learning

Dear parents,

I would like to ask you to fill in this questionnaire. Your answers will be analyzed and the data will be used in the practical study in my thesis. The questionnaire is anonymous.

Read each question, please, and unless you are given different instructions, tick one answer that corresponds with your opinion the most. The questions concern English language teaching at the elementary school in grades six to nine.

In case you have any questions or problems, do not hesitate to contact me. I will be glad to help you to fill in the questionnaire.

Thank you very much,

Marie Hrubá.

1. My son/daughter attends .... grade. (complete)
   Does your son/daughter attend the class with the extended language teaching?
   - ❑ yes
   - ❑ no

2. What level of education have you achieved?
   - ❑ primary
   - ❑ secondary
   - ❑ university

3. The teaching/learning process should certainly lead to an aim. To what extent should be the student's relationship towards the aim active?
   - ❑ student knows the aim of the process
   - ❑ student participates in forming the aim
   - ❑ student can modify the aim
   - ❑ student forms the aim of the process

4. What process should lead towards the aim?
   - ❑ all students work on the same tasks
   - ❑ the tasks and activities may differ

5. Do you agree with the division to classes with the extended teaching of languages and "ordinary" classes (curriculum Základní škola and other curricula)? Give your reasons.
   - ❑ yes
   - ❑ no

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. According to what criteria should children in the same grades be divided into groups for language classes?

- ❑ at random, curriculum is the same for all the children in class
- ❑ according to the level of their language performance (based on placement test distributed at the beginning of the school year)
- ❑ according to the learning style (e.g. visual, auditory, tactile style)
- ❑ in another way – suggest: _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

7. Which of the teacher's activities below do you consider the most important? Tick 3 answers.

- ❑ gives instructions for tasks
- ❑ helps to define student's specific needs
- ❑ provides the information
- ❑ corrects mistakes
- ❑ evaluates student's performance, the progress he has made
- ❑ encourages students
- ❑ creates learning environment
- ❑ directs activities in the classroom towards the aim
- ❑ serves as an example in terms of ideal language performance

8. Which of the student's activities below do you consider the most important? Tick 3 answers.

- ❑ listens to teacher's explanation
- ❑ receives knowledge from the teacher and various materials
- ❑ explores, searches for answers
- ❑ offers his ideas, suggestions
- ❑ evaluates his performance, progress
- ❑ organizes his learning

9. Which of the following teaching aids are suitable for using in lesson? You can tick more than one answer.

- ❑ textbook
- ❑ workbook
- ❑ grammar book
- ❑ encyclopedia
- ❑ dictionaries
- ❑ simplified literature designed for instruction
- ❑ maps
- ❑ materials designed for instruction (flashcards, vocabulary posters, grammar charts, etc.)
- ❑ authentic materials – newspapers, magazines, leaflets, brochures, etc.
- ❑ literature (prose, poetry, drama, children's literature) in original
- ❑ textbook audiotape containing listening tasks

- ❑ authentic audio materials – e.g. radio recordings, short announcements from stations, airports, etc
- ❑ textbook video tape containing various films, items of news, debates, etc

- ❑ multimedia systems, e.g. internet, computer learning programmes
- ❑ others – suggest:

   _____
   _____
   _____

10. A textbook is an important teaching aid. What type of textbook do you prefer and why?
- ❑ textbook published in an English speaking country by a recognized publishing house (e. g. Oxford University Press, Cambridge, etc.)
- ❑ textbook published in an English speaking country supplemented with an English – Czech dictionary
- ❑ textbook published in the Czech Republic using also Czech, apart from English (e. g. explanations of grammar, translation of new vocabulary, translation exercises)

11. Most tasks in lesson should be based on:
- ❑ cooperation
- ❑ competition
- ❑ individual work

12. Students are supposed to work on a creative task. In order to make it as effective as possible, teacher should set it as:
- ❑ individual work
- ❑ pairwork
- ❑ groupwork

Give your reasons: _____
_____
_____

13. Is it necessary to correct all mistakes that students make in their language performance (written or oral)?
- ❑ yes
- ❑ no, it depends on the teacher's decision which mistakes to correct
- ❑ it is better not to correct mistakes

Give your reasons: _____
_____
_____

14. Do you think students should learn grammar rules? What language should be used for presenting grammar?
    - ❑ it is not necessary to learn grammar rules explicitly; student should acquire language in the same way as a small child his mother tongue, i.e. through listening and speaking
    - ❑ it is necessary to learn grammar rules explicitly; grammar well as the whole lesson should be conducted in English
    - ❑ it is necessary to learn grammar rules explicitly; for better comprehensibility Czech should be used

15. What should follow after reading a new text?
    - ❑ checking the meaning of new words
    - ❑ translation of the whole text into Czech
    - ❑ comprehension check – e.g. by answering questions

16. Which of the following activities is most likely going to lead to development of communicative competence?
    - ❑ learning a textbook dialogue
    - ❑ preparing a dialogue about certain topic
    - ❑ preparing a dialogue about certain topic, using a particular grammar item
    - ❑ pairs of students find out a particular piece of information about each other

17. In what areas would you like to cooperate with the school in the language education?
    - ❑ meet and consult the English teacher (during the regular meetings, in case it is necessary
    - ❑ help to prepare the yearly plans
    - ❑ help the child with homework
    - ❑ help to organize special events, e.g. trips, excursions
    - ❑ help with projects
    - ❑ other – suggest _____
      _____

18. What are the features of successful language education, according to you? You can tick more answers.
    - ❑ student has a good grade
    - ❑ student has learned the items prescribed in the curriculum
    - ❑ student is able to use his competence for communication
    - ❑ students in group are active
    - ❑ students are interested in other cultures and respect them
    - ❑ student's language performance is at the level of a native speaker
    - ❑ student can 'think' in the language and solve situations