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Faculty of Arts and Philosophy**

**Teaching English Vocabulary to Learners
with Specific Learning Difficulties**

Pavla Jahodová

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Vedoucí bakalářské práce:

PaedDr. Monika Černá, Ph.D.
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

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prof. PhDr. Petr Vorel, CSc.
děkan

L.S.



Mgr. Šárka Bubíková, Ph.D.
vedoucí katedry

V Pardubicích dne 30. listopadu 2010

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Abstract:

This bachelor paper deals with teaching English vocabulary to learners with specific learning difficulties. Primarily it focuses on defining ways how to adjust the teaching-learning process to these learners. The paper emphasizes the role of individual learner differences which is crucial when dealing with learners with specific learning difficulties because on the basis of these characteristics the teacher is able to create such conditions that would suit the needs of the learners with specific learning difficulties and that would enable these learners to succeed in learning.

Key words:

specific learning difficulties, dyslexia, vocabulary, individual learner differences

Souhrn:

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá učením anglické slovní zásoby u žáků se specifickými poruchami učení. Primárně se zaměřuje na definování způsobů, jak přizpůsobit proces učení a učení se těmto žákům. Práce zdůrazňuje roli individuálních charakteristik žáka, která je rozhodující při jednání s žáky se specifickými poruchami učení, protože na základě těchto charakteristik je učitel schopen vytvořit právě takové podmínky, které by vyhovovaly potřebám žáků se specifickými poruchami učení a které by jim umožnily uspět v učení se.

Klíčová slova:

specifické poruchy učení, dyslexie, slovní zásoba, individuální charakteristiky žáka

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1. INTRODUCTION

The term ‘specific learning difficulties’ (SLD) is a crucial term that occurs in the field of pedagogy. Its impact on the process of teaching and learning any subject at any school is evident and enormous. For many decades learners with SLD were considered to be bad learners who are lazy, not studious or not so intelligent. These baseless hypotheses were replaced by up-to-date views of SLD which has radically changed public opinion regarding SLD. On the contrary, in spite of the fact that today’s society is familiar with the concept of SLD, its characteristics and background, there are still many prejudices regarding learners with SLD which should be broken down. Generalizing all learners with SLD based on definitions of particular difficulties and research outcomes leads to making unsuccessful attempts at understanding these learners and at helping them to deal with these difficulties. This bachelor paper emphasizes the importance of respecting individual learner differences when teaching English vocabulary to learners with SLD.

In the theoretical part of the paper the concept of SLD is introduced as well as definitions of particular difficulties, its origin and prevalence and the role of SLD in the teaching-learning process, especially its impact on the process of acquiring English vocabulary. With respect to this relationship, characteristics of English vocabulary and ways of presenting and practising it are described in order to demonstrate what teachers who deal with the learners with SLD must take into their account when teaching English vocabulary to these learners. To teach learners means to be aware of their individual learner differences. Some of them (learning styles and strategies, Multiple Intelligences or kinds of motivation) are mentioned in the paper as well as techniques which are based on respecting these individual learner differences.

The practical part of this paper reports on the procedure of making a research on ways of teaching (and learning/acquiring) English vocabulary. The aim of the research is to find out if teaching (and learning) which is based on the Multi-sensory Approach, Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence theory and on teaching and learning English vocabulary through Total Physical Response enables the learners with SLD to succeed in learning while their individual learner differences are respected. The research is also intended to

find out if these learners are aware of their learning preference and to find out which kind of activities suits the learners with SLD best.

Chomsky claims that “education must provide the opportunities for self-fulfillment; it can at best provide a rich and challenging environment for the individual to explore, in his own way.” (www.icelebz.com) With respect to this hypothesis the teacher should adjust the teaching-learning process to his or her students and thus enable each individual learner to enjoy learning and succeed in it. This is the way to enable learners with SLD to work in favourable conditions.

2. INTRODUCING SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Specific learning difficulties influence the lives of many people all around the world. It does not affect only those who are diagnosed as people with SLD but also their surroundings and relationships within it. There are also many of those who have never been diagnosed as people with SLD but who are people with SLD. Although it could seem that today’s society is familiar with this topic, the reverse is true. There are still many questions regarding SLD that have to be clarified.

2.1. Definitions

When defining SLD, Zelinková refers to an article published in *Perspectives on Dyslexia* according to which:

Learning difficulties is a term labelling a heterogeneous group of difficulties which manifest themselves when acquiring and using language, in the process of reading, writing, listening and doing mathematical calculations. (Zelinková, 2009, p. 10)

Therefore, it is possible to define SLD as a general term that covers dyslexia (which causes problems associated with acquiring reading skills), dysgraphia (which causes problems associated with acquiring writing skills), dysorthographia (which causes problems associated with acquiring orthography), dyscalculia (which causes problems associated with acquiring mathematical skills), dyspraxia (which causes problems associated with acquiring, planning and doing conative movements) and dysmusia

(which causes problems associated with acquiring a musical skills). (Zelinková, 2009, p. 9-10)

The definition of dyslexia used in the Czech Republic differs from the one used in English speaking countries. In Anglophone countries the term 'dyslexia' is used not only as a synonym of SLD but also as a term labelling all similar difficulties. Terms like 'dysgraphia' or 'dysortographia' have started to be distinguished in English speaking countries recently. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 125) There are also other terms used to label the whole group of learning difficulties. American authors incline to call the whole group 'learning disabilities' whereas the British ones use the abovementioned 'SLD'. (Zelinková, 2009, p. 11)

The prefix 'dys' conveys the meaning of difficulty or malfunction. (Ott, 1997, p. 1) According to Zelinková (2009, p. 9) it means, in terms of SLD, insufficiency or wrong development of a skill. The root-word of a particular SLD refers to the skill that is affected. That means that the literal translation of the word 'dyslexia' is then "difficulty with words". (Ott, 1997, p. 1) "It implies that the problem is not simply with reading, but includes spelling, writing and other aspects of language." (Tomson in Ott, 1997, p. 1) Opinions like this imply that dyslexia is more than just 'reading failure', which used to be a frequent perception of it. (Ott, 1997, p. 1) Even one of the first really working definitions of dyslexia stated by World Federation of Neurology in 1968 claims that dyslexia is

a disorder in children who, despite conventional classroom experience, fail to attain the language skills of reading, writing and spelling commensurate with their intellectual abilities. (Waites in Ott, 1997, p. 2)

Nowadays, there is no doubt that all the abovementioned SLD do not manifest themselves only in the domain where the defect is the most significant. Zelinková (2009, p. 10) claims that they have, on the contrary, a lot of common expressions like language disorders, concentration difficulties, disorders associated with right-left and spatial orientation or e.g. an insufficient level of visual and auditory perception. She refers to an article published in *Perspectives on Dyslexia* which notes:

Although learning difficulties may appear simultaneously with other handicapped conditions (such as sensory disabilities, mental retardation or

behavioural disorders) or with external influences (like cultural differences or insufficient or disproportional leading), they are not the direct consequence of these conditions or influences. (Zelinková, 2009, p. 10)

2.2. Causes, the origin and prevalence of SLD

Ott characterizes dyslexia as:

- congenital – people are born with it
- genetic – inherited and runs in families, more males than females
- constitutional – there is a neurological basis
- problems with phonological awareness – difficulties with letter sounds when reading, spelling and writing
- problems with language – such as verbal naming or word retrieval or pronunciation
- problems with short term memory – which particularly affect auditory sequential memory (such as for the repetition of digits) or visual sequential memory (such as used in coding skills). (Ott, 1997, p. 5)

Although Ott inclines to the conclusion that there are more males than females with SLD, the men/women ratio has not been stated yet because a wide range of researches that has been made on the topic of gender features related with SLD has proved diversity of conclusions. Pierangelo and Giuliani summarize what has been found by other specialists – some of them state that the ratio of males to females with SLD is 3:1, others claim that the ratio is 4:1, while some are of the opinion that it is even higher. (Pierangelo and Giuliani, 2008, p. 8) Nevertheless, to conclude the question of the men/women ratio, Matějček notes that almost every researcher dealing with SLD mentions the unequal distribution of dyslexia within the population. (Matějček, 1972, p. 82) On the other hand there are also those who claim that “the prevalence of learning disabilities is equally distributed between males and females” (Alexander, Gray and Lyon in Pierangelo and Giuliani, 2008, p. 8) However, because of lack of agreement on definitions of dyslexia, it is impossible to identify the extent and prevalence of dyslexia in the population. (Ott, 1997, p. 16)

On the other hand, despite this controversy, the reality is that “dyslexia occurs throughout the world, in all environments, and does not respect class boundaries” (Ott, 1997, p. 2), which is also confirmed by the researches made by BDA¹. These researches

¹ The British Dyslexia Association

conclude the question of the men/women ratio in the way that men as well as women with dyslexia are encompassed within the population. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 126)

Zelinková (2009, p. 21) points out that today's scientists have found out that learners with dyslexia in addition to difficulties with reading and writing manifest problems also in the area of motor coordination, visual and auditive processing, input processing, memory and the structure and function of the nervous system. These abnormalities are caused by the phonological deficit, problems with time sequencing of processes and by pace in which the processes take place. They can be combined or be of different importance.

Ott characterizes dyslexia as “a syndrome with a wide range of symptoms” while the cluster of symptoms differs from one person to another. (Ott, 1997, p. 4) Naidoo contributes that “we did not find a single, common pattern which typifies all these children.” (Naidoo in Ott, 1997, p. 4) Zelinková (2009, p. 10) refers to an article published in *Perspectives on Dyslexia* which claims that learning difficulties have an individual character and are caused by a dysfunction of the nervous system.

The abovementioned role of the nervous system (Ott as well as Zelinková point it out) has become fundamental for defining the origin of SLD. Also Lerner emphasizes the role of the neurological processes. He contributes that “in general, learning disabilities refers to a neurobiological disorder related to differences in how one's brain works and is structured.” (Lerner in Pierangelo and Guiliani, 2008, p. 2) BDA's definition of dyslexia from 1996 claims that:

Dyslexia is a complex neurological condition which is constitutional in origin. The symptoms may affect many areas of learning and function, and may be described as a specific difficulty in reading, spelling and written language. One or more of these areas may be affected. Numeracy, notational skills (music), motor function and organizational skills may also be involved. However, it is particularly related to mastering written language, although oral language may be affected to some degree. (Crisfield in Ott, 1997, p. 4)

Nowadays, the prior theory according to which learning disabilities are caused by a single neurological problem (Hallahan and Kuffman in Pierangelo and Guiliani, 2008, p. 4) has been replaced by another one:

New evidence seems to show that most learning disabilities do not stem from a single, specific area of the brain but from difficulties in bringing together information from various brain regions. (Lerner; University of Maryland Medical Center in Pierangelo and Guiliani, 2008, p. 4)

Learners with learning disabilities are not less intelligent than the general population, although results of their work differ from the standard outcomes of learners of the same age and level. Gargiulo claims that:

Children with learning disabilities are not “dumb” or “lazy”. In fact, they have average or above-average intelligence. Their brains just process information differently. (Gargiulo in Pierangelo and Giuliani, 2008, p. 2)

2.3. Diagnosing SLD

Because of the fact that dyslexia cannot be prevented or cured it is necessary to identify it as soon as possible to prevent or avoid emotional and behavioural problems. (Ott, 1997, p. 25) Miles and Miles point out that children with dyslexia who are “caught” on time need less time for catching up, while their frustration caused by dyslexia can be prevented. (Miles and Miles in Ott, 1997, p. 24) Realizing the fact that it is dyslexia that makes one’s attempts to succeed in learning difficult is a key moment that ensures learners with SLD that they are not thick or stupid if “other children can easily cope with tasks which they themselves find difficult.” (Miles in Ott, 1997, p. 25) Ott contributes:

Early identification can lessen the long term effect of the symptoms when it is accompanied by appropriate remediation, sympathetic understanding and an awareness that there may be weaknesses and lateness in acquiring fundamental life skills. (Ott, 1997, p. 25)

The aim of diagnosing is to identify the level of learner’s knowledge, skills, cognitive processes, social interaction abilities, his or her personal characteristics and many other factors influencing one’s success in a particular situation. Outcomes of the diagnosis should be thus used in favour of the particular student with SLD. (Zelinková, 2009, p. 50) Hrabal elaborates that the outcomes of the diagnosis may be used as a source piece of information when deciding about a particular learner (or a group) or his or her (or its) surroundings or when optimising his or her life or surroundings. Information based on the outcomes can be received by a diagnostician, by those who are authorized to decide

about the person who is diagnosed with SLD or by the person who is diagnosed. (Hrabal in Smutná and Novák, 1996, p. 4)

3. INDIVIDUAL LEARNER DIFFERENCES

Every child is unique. Bennett-Golenam describes this presumption with the example of an apple. The teacher asks his or her students what colour apples are. Most of the children claim that they are red, a few of them say that they are green and one child claims that they are white. The teacher explains that apples are usually red, green or yellow but never white. Then the child suggests cutting it in two and looking inside. (Bennett-Goleman in Day 2004, p. 90) This example shows that the teacher must contemplate individual characteristics of learners when dealing with them.

As for the objective determinants influencing the learner, it is rather difficult to define a(n) (un)favourable background (Pokorná, 2001, p. 88) although there is no doubt that the emotional climate of a learner's family affects his or her learning outcomes. (Pokorná, 2001, p. 90) Researchers dealing with the relationship between the learner and his or her family background report on variety of external conditions that may negatively influence learner's development. These possible conditions cannot be generalized or used as a criterion for judging a particular learner. (Pokorná, 2001, p. 91) Therefore it is important to realize the individual learner differences and focus primarily on subjective determinants influencing one's learning. Hanušová introduces a learner-centred approach which emphasizes the role of learner autonomy and learning styles and strategies. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 128) Similarly Richards and Rodgers claim that "learners are viewed as possessing individual learning styles, preferences, or intelligences." (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 115)

3.1. Learning styles

Hanušová defines learning styles as "general approaches to learning that could be defined as a more or less consistent way through which a person perceives, processes, organizes and reuses information." (Hanušová, 2005, p. 129) If the learner is exposed to the input of new information, his or her organism perceives only those pieces of

information which correspond to his or her modality (Zelinková, 2009, p. 185) because “there are differences in the ways individual brains work.” (Harmer, 2007, p. 89) Thus some people remember best what they have seen while others remember what they have heard, touched or done themselves. (Zelinková, 2009, p. 185)

With respect to this, learning styles can be classified on the basis of sensory preference or, as Hanušová mentions, it is also possible to distinguish them on the basis of personality aspects (introverts versus extraverts), while another classification of learning styles can be based on the level of generalization which means that learners prefer either global or analytical learning styles. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 129) Coffield and his colleagues are of the opinion that “there are so many different models available that it is almost impossible to choose between them.” (Coffield et al in Harmer, 2007, p. 89)

They state that the classification of learning styles thus looks like this:

- convergers versus divergers
- verbalisers versus imagers
- holists versus serialists
- deep versus surface learning
- activists versus reflectors
- pragmatists versus theorists [...] (Coffield et al in Harmer, 2007, p. 89)

The individual approach is again demanded when dealing with each learner.

Learning styles are inherent and it is difficult to modify them. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 130) Thus, according to Entwistle and Ramsden’s opinion, it is more effective to modify the environment of teaching and learning which causes problems, than to find ways how to overcome learners’ difficulties. (Entwistle and Ramsden in Mareš, 1998, p. 132) Jenkins points out that energy that learners devote to dealing with the environment that is not favourable to their learning preference may be missing when they need it for learning. (Jenkins in Mareš, 1998, p. 132) Thus there is a need for adjusting the teaching-learning process to learners’ learning styles. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 130)

3.2. Learning strategies

O’Malley and Chamot define learning strategies as “special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning, or retention of the information.” (O’Malley and Chamot, 1999, p. 1) In other words learning strategies are “specific

activities, behaviour or procedures which a person uses to make his or her learning better.” (Oxford in Hanušová, 2005, p. 130) Oxford distinguishes six categories of learning strategies:

- cognitive – enable learners to work with language via thinking, analysing, synthesizing, summarizing or working with information
- metacognitive – enable learners to identify their own learning style, needs, ways how to plan learning, organize learning materials, monitor their own imperfections and evaluate themselves
- memory – using strategies facilitating remembering information – e.g. mnemonics aids, acronyms, rhymes, visual imaginations, movement, semantic maps
- compensatory – enable learners to guess from the context, use synonyms, periphrases, gestures and pauses in the process of communication
- affective – enable learners to realize their mood, feelings and anxiety and work with them
- social – the ability to ask for explanation when communicating or to ask for help, searching for an opportunity to communicate with native speakers, examining cultural and social norms (Oxford in Hanušová, 2005, p.130)

Learning strategies can be modified in some measure, (Hanusová, 2005, p. 130) that is why Hanušová suggests that “the teacher should help his or her students to identify preferred strategies and to realize which strategies they could develop better” (Hanusová, 2005, p. 130) to improve their learning.

3.3. Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner introduced his Multiple Intelligence (MI) theory as a reaction on the expanding use of traditional IQ tests. These tests according to his opinion “measure only logic and language, yet the brain has other equally important types of intelligence.” (Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 115) Gardner claims that, on the contrary, his view of intelligence(s) is culture-free and avoids the conceptual narrowness that is usually associated with traditional views of intelligence. (Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 115)

Gardner suggests that people “do not possess a single intelligence, but a range of intelligences.” (Gardner in Harmer, 2007, p. 90) His MI model contains eight intelligences²:

- Linguistic: the ability to use language in special and creative ways, which is something lawyers, writers, editors, and interpreters are strong in
- Logical/mathematical: the ability to think rationally, often found with doctors, engineers, programmers, and scientists
- Spatial: the ability to form mental models of the world, something architects, decorators, sculptors, and painters are good at
- Musical: a good ear for music, as is strong in singers and composers
- Bodily/kinaesthetic: having a well-coordinated body, something found in athletes and craftspersons
- Interpersonal: the ability to be able to work well with people, which is strong in salespeople, politicians, and teachers
- Intrapersonal: the ability to understand oneself and apply one’s talent successfully, which leads to happy and well-adjusted people in all areas of life
- Naturalist: the ability to understand and organize the patterns of nature (Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 116)

Gardner predicts that all people possess these eight intelligences but in each person one (or more) of them is more pronounced (Harmer, 2007, p. 90), while no two people have exactly the same profile of intelligence (www.youtube.com) because people differ in the strengths and combinations of their intelligences. (Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 115) Mareš gives an example that e.g. “the memory for spatial information may be better or worse than the memory for musical information.” (Mareš, 1998, p. 73) This example shows that intelligences are relatively independent. Gardner explains this by defining a human mind as a set of computers where one computer is not dependent on another one. (www.youtube.com)

One kind of intelligence is not dependent on just one particular sense organ. Intelligences are determined to manifest themselves in more than one sense system (at least partly). (Gardner, 1999, p. 97) Thus, although spatial intelligence could be logically considered to be dependent only on the visual sense, there are other aspects encompassed. Gardner claims that spatial intelligence is based not only on visual but

² Naturalistic intelligence was added into the MI concept later (Harmer, 2007, p. 90)

also on auditory perception. (www.youtube.com) That is why even the blind can be and are spatially intelligent³. (Gardner, 1999, p. 197)

Examples like these show the main ideas of Gardner's MI theory, especially they emphasize the importance to focus on differences between learners and the need to recognize their individual differences in the teaching-learning process. (Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 115) Despite the fact that intelligences "are not equally developed in any one individual" (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 170), Gardner believes that they all can be enhanced via training and practising. (Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 115) Nowadays, as Průcha (2002, p. 110) points out, many schools try to integrate Gardner's MI theory into the alternative educational programs in order to enable learners to develop all their intelligences.

3.4. Motivation

Motivation is an essential feature that influences one's desire to participate and succeed. Harmer defines motivation as "some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something." (Harmer, 2007, p. 98) This is very similar to Williams and Burden's definition according to which motivation is "a state of cognitive arousal which provokes a decision to act [...]" (Williams and Burden in Harmer, 2007, p. 98)

From the learners' point of view motivation reflects how much value they place on the outcome that they wish to achieve. It depends on particular students whether they are motivated by outside factors (extrinsic motivation) or whether intrinsic motivation is sufficient to them. Intrinsic motivation might be understood as the enjoyment of learning or a learner's desire to make him or her feel better. Extrinsic motivation, by contrast, is based on external support of learning – it is e.g. the need to pass an exam, the hope of financial reward or the possibility of future travel. (Harmer, 2007, p. 98)

Lokšová and Lokša are of the opinion that the aim of education is to develop mainly intrinsic motivation. It is supposed to balance tension between teacher's requirements

³ Marmor contributes that the blind are able to imagine things because they perceive shapes via the sense of touch (Marmon in Gardner, 1999, p. 207)

and the learner's personality. (Lokšová and Lokša, 1999, p. 9) Similarly Obst claims that "motivation is a result of the interaction between the learner's personality, the teacher, schoolmates, a content, etc." (Kalhous, Obst et al, 2002, p. 367) To conclude, Slavin claims that in fact the teacher cannot motivate the learner. The only thing that he or she can do is to create a classroom climate that would support learners' motivation. (Slavin in Kalhous, Obst et al, 2002, p. 367) Thus the teacher should create such conditions that would motivate most of the learners and that would be based on their actual needs. The teacher should also respect dominant needs of an individual learner and therefore individualize some parts of a teaching-learning process. (Hrabal, Man and Pavelková in Lokšová and Lokša, 1999, p. 14-15) Teacher's knowledge of learners is thus an advantage. It allows the teacher to adjust each task to needs and interests of his or her students and thus the teacher is allowed to enable the learners to stay enthusiastic about learning.

4. LEARNERS WITH SLD AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

It was said in the previous chapter that every teacher should respect individual learner differences when dealing with his or her students. On the other hand this is not a descriptive process thus, as Williams and Burden suggest, teachers instead of asking how learners differ from each other and measuring these differences should ask questions like "How do learners perceive themselves as language learners?", "What effect do these personal constructs have upon the process of learning a new language?" or "How do individuals go about making sense of their learning?". (Williams and Burden in Tudor, 2001, p. 13) In view of answers to these questions the teacher is supposed to ask himself or herself how he or she assists the learners in making sense of their learning in ways that are personal to them. (Tudor, 2001, p. 13-14) Answers to all these questions enable the teacher to adjust the way of teaching a foreign language to particular learners and their needs, in this case to very specific needs of learners with SLD.

As Hanušová (2005, p. 126) notes, for learners with dyslexia learning a foreign language is probably the most difficult part of their studies. Wondering if learners with

SLD should in spite of this fact try to learn a foreign language is obvious and according to Hanušová's opinion 'No' is not considered to be an answer to this question anymore. Not only because of the fact that it is not true that learners with dyslexia are not able to master a foreign language. (Zelinková, 2005, p. 29)

CEFR⁴ calls on supporting and developing educational programs which would enable various groups and types of learners to use foreign languages communicatively with respect to their needs. The teaching-learning process should be based not only on these requirements but also on providing motivation and respecting learners' characteristics and abilities. Stating specific, meaningful and realistic aims should be supported by using appropriate methods and materials. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 126)

Hanušová claims that diagnosing SLD and identifying the current situation of a particular learner are key moments for stating appropriate aims of the foreign language teaching-learning process. The teacher must also identify the way of teaching that would enable his or her students to learn the foreign language in the way that would optimally suit them. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 127) Then the predetermined aims are supposed to be achieved.

4.1. Impact of SLD on the learners' ability to acquire English (vocabulary)

Dyslexia as well as other deficits associated with it⁵ causes problems when learning foreign languages. They are considered to be barriers that strongly influence the teaching-learning process. The more difficulties are manifested, the more difficult learning a foreign language is for the learners with SLD. Again and again repeating learning failures are caused not only by learner's inability to read and write but also by insufficiently developed cognitive functions which cause emotional problems of the learner. (Zelinková, 2005, p. 26) Hanušová (2005, p. 125) claims that dyslexia does not affect only reading but secondarily it negatively affects one's vocabulary. Nevertheless, Zelinková (2005, p. 29) points out that the learners with dyslexia are able to acquire foreign language vocabulary although dyslexia negatively affects their ability to read.

⁴ Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

⁵ e.g. the phonological deficit, the visual perception deficit, etc. (Zelinková, 2005, p. 21)

Dyslexia affects the learner's mother tongue in terms of phonetics and phonology, morphology, grammar, syntax and semantics. The more areas are affected in the learner's mother tongue, the more probable the chance that particular difficulties will manifest themselves in the process of acquiring and using the second language is. All the above-mentioned difficulties influence the whole foreign language teaching-learning process (including acquiring vocabulary). Thus the learners with dyslexia need more time to accomplish learning tasks⁶ and most importantly they need extra information regarding the tasks and extra instructions how to accomplish them. (Zelinková, 2005, p. 26-27) In this respect the teacher plays an important part in the teaching-learning process because it is he or she that provides these extra pieces of information.

4.2. Teaching English vocabulary

From the didactic point of view vocabulary is the part of a language that is primarily acquired via memorization, then it is a matter of analogy. When working with vocabulary, linguistic and psychological viewpoints are applied. Linguistics reports the results of researches on frequency and distribution of vocabulary. These pieces of information help the teacher to choose vocabulary that should be taught and practised, whereas psychology helps to choose effective ways of memorizing vocabulary and ways how to use it in the process of communication. Psychology also emphasizes the role of motivation in the teaching-learning process and suggests ways how to overcome learning difficulties in the process of acquiring a foreign language. (Hendrich et al, 1988, p. 130)

To define what teaching English vocabulary means, Thornbury cites an article published in *Communicating Naturally in a Second Language*:

Vocabulary cannot be taught. It can be presented, explained, included in all kinds of activities, and experienced in all manner of associations ... but ultimately it is learned by the individual. As language teachers, we must arouse interest in words and a certain excitement in personal development in this area ... We can help our students by giving them ideas on how to learn, but each will finally learn a very personal selection of items, organized into relationships in an individual way. (Thornbury, 2002 , p.144)

⁶ Learners with SLD are not able to promptly recall Czech equivalents of acquired foreign language vocabulary when they participate in conversations (Zelinková, 2009, p. 163-164)

Similarly Zelinková (2005, p. 78) claims that terms like ‘the teaching-learning process’ emphasize not only the role of a teacher in this process but also the role of learners who are encouraged to learn independently. Thornbury comments on these conclusions by stating that it does not mean that the teacher is redundant in the teaching-learning process. On the contrary, he or she plays a major part in motivating learners to sustain learning vocabulary and in giving them ideas on how to learn it. (Thornbury, 2002, p. 144)

4.2.1. Presenting vocabulary

When dealing with vocabulary that is going to be taught and learnt/acquired, the teacher must contemplate among others the learnability of selected vocabulary and adjust the way of teaching to its level of difficulty and primarily to individual needs of his or her students because vocabulary which is somehow difficult to master (or/and to teach) may cause serious problems to learners with SLD in the process of acquiring it.

When the English tongue we speak
Why is ‘break’ not rhymed with ‘freak’
Will you tell me why it’s true
We say ‘sew’ but likewise ‘few’?
And the maker of a verse
Cannot cap his ‘horse’ with ‘worse’
‘Beard’ sounds not the same as ‘heard’,
‘Cord’ is different from ‘world’.
‘Cow’ is ‘cow’, but ‘low’ is ‘low’,
‘Shoe’ is never rhymed with ‘roe’.
Think of ‘hose’ and ‘dose’ and ‘lose’
And think of ‘goose’ and yet of ‘choose’.
Think of ‘comb’ and ‘tomb’ and ‘bomb’,
‘Doll’ and ‘roll’, and ‘home and ‘come’.
And since ‘pay’ is rhymed with ‘say’,
Why not ‘paid’ with ‘said’, pray?
We have ‘blood’ and ‘food’ and ‘good’,
‘Mould’ is not pronounced like ‘could’.
Wherefore ‘done’, but ‘gone’ and ‘lone’
Is there any reason known?
And, in short, it seems to me,
Sounds and letters disagree! (Selikowitz, 1998, p. 53)

This poem written by an anonymous author shows why learning/acquiring English vocabulary is difficult for learners with SLD. Some English words are less catchy than

others, especially in terms of their sound and spelling. Despite the fact that most of English words are law-abiding (in terms of spelling) (Thornbury, 2002, p. 27), in the case of English it is almost impossible to state one always-applicable rule which could be used when transforming the written form into the spoken one and vice versa.

Thornbury (2002, p. 27-28) mentions pronunciation and spelling within his list of features of English that make words difficult. This list contains:

- pronunciation – words which are difficult to pronounce are less learnable (e.g. words containing unfamiliar sounds or clusters of consonants such as ‘strength’)
- spelling – potential spelling mismatches (may caused errors of pronunciation or of spelling); words containing silent letters such as ‘foreign’ or ‘listen’
- length and complexity – longer words seem to be less learnable than short ones (however in English high frequency words tend to be short); polysyllabic words with variable stress that belongs to one word family – e.g. ‘necessary’, ‘necessity’ and ‘necessarily’
- grammar – verbs which are followed by an infinitive or by an –ing form must be memorized as well as phrasal verbs which are separable (some of them are – such as ‘look up’, others cannot be separated – e.g. ‘look after’)
- meaning – words overlapping in meaning such as ‘do’ and ‘make’; words with multiple meaning like e.g. ‘since’ and culture-specific items
- range, connotation and idiomaticity – words that can be used in a wide range of contexts such as ‘put’ are more learnable than their synonyms with narrower range such as ‘impose’; idioms are difficult to acquire because of their idiomaticity and also because of their syntactic complexity; special attention should be paid to connotations of some words such as ‘propaganda’ – it has negative connotations in English but its equivalents in other languages may mean ‘publicity’

The vocabulary meaning should not be presented by translating words into one’s mother tongue. As it was mentioned in chapter 4.1. dyslexia affects one’s ability to acquire and use any language including the mother tongue. That is why there is no point in demanding to recall a word in English and its equivalent too. Moreover, the role of

language interference⁷ is often crucial and it is not possible to associate just one expression in a mother tongue with one particular word in a foreign language. Hendrich speaks about divergences and convergences. A divergence means that what is in a learner's mother tongue expressed by one lexical item is in other languages expressed by several lexical items. A convergence describes the situation in which a foreign language lexical item has more equivalents and meanings in a learner's mother tongue. He also points out that there are many false-friends⁸. (Hendrich et al, 1988, p. 139-140) To avoid problems caused by language interference, Zelinková (2005, p. 86-87) promotes that new vocabulary should not be introduced by translating particular words but presented in model situations while using illustrative aids.

4.2.2. Practising vocabulary

Hendrich emphasizes the principle of complexity which should be respected when practising vocabulary – i.e. practising a word in close proximity of its pronunciation, spelling, grammatical functions and connections of the vocabulary meaning with its surroundings. (Hendrich et al, 1988, p. 136) Acquired vocabulary should be practised (as well as presented) without translating it into the learner's mother tongue. This way of practising is recommended e.g. by Vernacová who suggests games and activities developing the ability to use acquired vocabulary:

- matching names of body parts with particular parts of body
- miming activities
- matching expressions with their definitions
- guessing word meaning from the context
- work with a picture – What is under the table, next to it...?
- practising prepositions in complete sentences, using pictures in which actions and time determination are described (to practise tenses)
- drawing pictures according to given instructions
- using dices to practise numbers – naming sums, differences...
- deciding which word falls into a different class

⁷ “the effect of language learners' first language on their production of the language they are learning” (<http://www.shvoong.com>)

⁸ words which are represented by the same etymology or the similar form that occur in various languages but do not carry the same meaning (Hendrich et al, 1988, p. 140)

- assembling letters to create a word. (Vernacová in Zelinková, 2009, p. 170)

Scrivener promotes visualization of the vocabulary meaning through diagrams such as scales and trees. He is of the opinion that these diagrams “provide useful visual hook for memory.” (Scrivener, 1994, p. 79) McCarthy suggests using these semantic maps as gap-filling activities for instance. (McCarthy, 1990, p. 97) Exercises on vocabulary suggested by Scrivener thus contain:

- matching pictures to words;
- matching parts of words to other parts, eg beginnings and endings;
- matching words to other words, eg collocations, synonyms, opposites, sets of related words, etc;
- using prefixes and suffixes to build new words from given words;
- classifying items into lists
- using given words to complete a specific task;
- filling in crosswords, grids or diagrams;
- filling in gaps in sentences;
- memory games. (Scrivener, 1994, p. 83)

Activities like these reflect a number of principles and approaches (some of them will be described in more details in chapter 5.) that should be followed when teaching vocabulary to learners with SLD.

5. TECHNIQUES HOW TO TEACH ENGLISH VOCABULARY

Experts have come to the conclusion that it is not possible to define one specific way how to teach learners with SLD. That is why an eclectic approach is implemented. This approach combines positive features of other methods and approaches such as a communicative approach or a learner-centred approach⁹. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 127-128)

5.1. Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching method that attempts to teach languages through physical (motor) activity (Richard and Rogers, 2001, p. 73) while the meaning of words is conveyed via actions. (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 111) This

⁹ a learner-centred approach is characterized in chapter 3.

alternative method is a way of teaching that suits the learners with SLD. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 128)

TPR was developed by James Asher in order to reduce stress and create a positive mood in the learner which would facilitate his or her learning. His view of affective factors in language learning corresponds to ideas represented by the school of humanistic psychology. Humanistic psychologists and Asher share the opinion that methods like TPR which are undemanding in terms of linguistic production and which involve gamelike movements reduce learner stress. (Richard and Rogers, 2001, p. 73)

Asher sees second language learning as a parallel process to child mother tongue acquisition. He claims that:

A reasonable hypothesis is that the brain and nervous system are biologically programmed to acquire language ... in a particular sequence and in a particular mode. The sequence is listening before speaking and the mode is to synchronize language with the individual's body. (Asher in Richard and Rogers, 2001, p. 74)

TPR is directed to right-brain learning. That is the reason why this method differs from most second language teaching methods¹⁰. Asher believes that the learners should proceed to language acquisition via right-hemisphere motor activities while the left hemisphere learns and waits until a sufficient amount of right-hemisphere learning takes place. Then left-hemisphere activities trigger producing language. (Richard and Rogers, 2001, p. 75) Thus according to Asher's opinion the process of acquiring any language starts at the stage when speech directed to a person consists primarily of commands which the person responds to physically. Verbal responses come later. (Richard and Rogers, 2001, p. 73) At the beginning of the process of language acquiring the children only listen to spoken language for a number of months and it may seem that they do not develop their ability to use language at all. In fact they process all incoming information which will help them to produce language when they are ready to do it. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 128)

Teachers using TPR are supposed to enable the learners to stay in this 'silent period' as long as needed in order to enable each learner to internalise as much information as he

¹⁰ producing language is not a right-hemisphere activity (Richard and Rogers, 2001, p. 75)

or she needs to get ready to use language productively. During this period learners are not forced to produce language, on the contrary they listen to speakers, respond to commands by movement, gestures or by a demanded activity. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 128) They are listeners and performers who are allowed to develop their speaking skills in their own natural pace (Richard and Rogers, 2001, p. 76) which makes learning individualized.

5.2. Multi-sensory Approach

Some people are stimulated by music, others respond most powerfully to images. Practitioners of Neuro-Linguistic Programming claim that people use different representational systems to experience the world. Thus if the preferred primary system of experiencing the world is auditory, learners will respond well to musical stimuli, whereas their ability to extract particular information from a picture will be poorer. (Harmer, 2007, p. 89-90)

The process of input processing is described in the acronym 'VAKOG' which stands for visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory and gustatory. (Harmer, 2007, p. 89-90) Two latter senses are used in the foreign language teaching-learning process rather occasionally, that is why reduced conceptions of VAKOG were introduced. They are called 'VAK' or 'VAKT' where the letter T stands for tactile. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 129) These frameworks enable "to analyse different student responses to stimuli and environments." (Harmer, 2007, p. 90) Zelinková claims that the more senses are involved in perceiving new information, the more ways are used to lead these pieces of information into the brain. Then more than one part of the brain is activated and all engaged brain parts cooperate with each other. The chance to remember new information is thus greater. (Zelinková, 2009, p. 167)

Neuro-Linguistic Programming enables the teacher to offer learners those activities that suit their primary preferred system. (Harmer, 2007, p. 90) Thus when teaching vocabulary, every new lexical item should be presented via the VAKOG system. Allen, who deals with vocabulary teaching, says that "success in learning often depends on the

number of senses which are used in the learning process.” (Allen, 1983, p. 7) She emphasizes the role of real objects in the process of teaching and learning vocabulary.

When students can touch something, in addition to hearing and seeing the word that names it, there is a stronger chance that the word will be learned. Even if there are practical reasons why each learner cannot touch the object, just seeing it while hearing its name is helpful. At least those two senses (sight and hearing) are working together to focus the learner’s attention. (Allen, 1983, p. 7-8.)

Similarly Zelinková, who deals with teaching learners with SLD, is of the opinion that new vocabulary should be taught with support of VAKOG. According to her viewpoint acquiring new lexical items should be associated with pictures of given objects or with particular situations. Furthermore learners can hear the word, repeat it, write it, highlight consonant clusters, mime the meaning, etc in order become familiar with new vocabulary in many various ways. (Zelinková, 2009, p. 74) Hanušová claims that the Multi-sensory Approach is another way of teaching that suits learners with dyslexia (Hanušová, 2005, p. 128) which is evident for example from the fact that Orton-Gilligham method, which is based on the Multi-sensory Approach, is considered to be one of the most effective methods of dyslexia re-educating. (Zelinková, 2009, p. 74)

5.3. Multiple Intelligences

Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences theory is not a foreign language teaching method but, as Hanušová points out, it may inspire foreign language teachers in terms of how to teach. (Hanušová, 2005, p. 129) Multiple Intelligences (MI) belongs to “a group of instructional perspectives that focus on differences between learners and the need to recognize learner differences in teaching.” (Richard and Rogers, 2001, p. 115) Teachers who recognize learners’ talents are able to provide learning activities that build on these gifts. (Richard and Rogers, 2001, p. 116)

With respect to individual learner differences teachers are supposed to improve the second language abilities of their students as well as to become major “contributors to the overall development of students’ intelligences.” (Christison in Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 120) Learners need to be engaged in the process of personality development above and beyond being successful language learners.

The MI classroom is one designed to support development of the ‘whole person’, and the environment and its activities are intended to enable students to

become more well-rounded individuals and more successful learners in general. (Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 120)

Richards and Rodgers's list of views how to use the MI model in the classroom shows how the MI concept serves the needs of language learners. These views are rather suggestions and advices that may help the teacher to deal with his or her students.

- *Play to strength.* If you want an athlete or a musician (or a student having some of the these talents) to be an involved and successful language learner, structure the learning material for each individual (or similar group of individuals) around these strengths.
- *Variety is the spice.* Providing a teacher-directed rich mix of learning activities variously calling upon the eight different intelligences makes for an interesting, lively, and effective classroom for all students.
- *Pick a tool to suit the job.* Language has a variety of dimensions, levels, and functions. These different facets of language are best served instructionally by linking their learning to the most appropriate kind of MI activity.
- *All sizes fit one.* Every individual exercises all intelligences even though some of these may be out of awareness or undervalued. Pedagogy that appeals to all the intelligences speaks to the 'whole person' in ways that more unifacted approaches do not. An MI approach helps to develop the whole Person within each learner, which best serves the person's language learning requirements as well.
- *Me and my people.* IQ testing is held to be badly biased in favor of Western views of intelligence. Other cultures may value other intelligences more than the one measured in IQ setting. Since language learning involves culture learning as well, it is useful for the language learner to study language in a context
- that recognizes and honors a range of diversely valued intelligences. (Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 119-120)

To conclude the idea of Gardner's MI theory within the teaching-learning process, Campbell notes that this theory "is not prescriptive. Rather, it gives teachers a complex mental model from which to construct curriculum and improve themselves as educators." (Campbell in Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 120) These teachers, who know how to adjust the teaching-learning process to the learners while encouraging the process of developing particular intelligences, enable the learners to learn more effectively in ways that suit their individual learning needs and preference.

6. RESEARCH

The idea of the practical part of this paper is based on the theoretical background of teaching English vocabulary to learners with SLD which is introduced in the theoretical part of the paper. Thus all the activities, as well as the way of presenting vocabulary, that are examined in chapters 6.3.1. and 6.3.2. and discussed in chapter 6.4. are designed with respect to what is mentioned in the theoretical part of the paper. The aims of the research are described in more details in chapter 6.1.

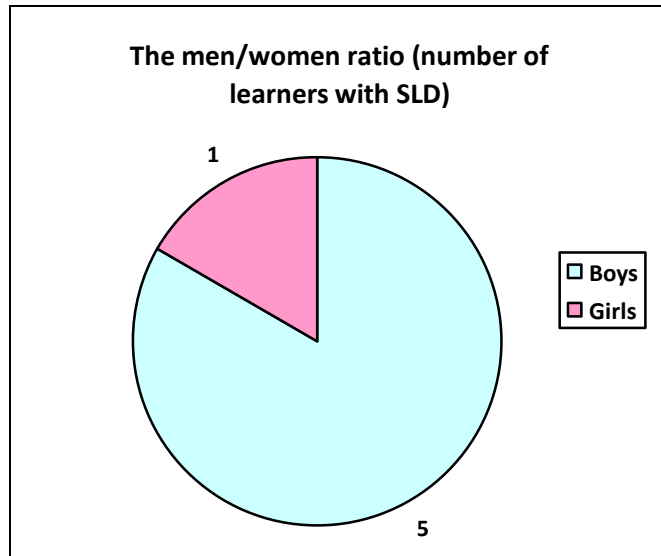
6.1. Introducing the aim of the research

This research on teaching vocabulary to learners with SLD is supposed to find out whether teaching English vocabulary to learners with SLD that is based on main ideas of TPR, the Multi-sensory Approach and Gardner's MI theory helps the learners with SLD to succeed in learning and to find out which kind of activities suits the learners with SLD best – which learning activities the learners with SLD prefer. That is why most of the learners' opinions and comments are summarized. Secondary aim of the research is to find out if the learners with SLD are aware of their learning preference and needs.

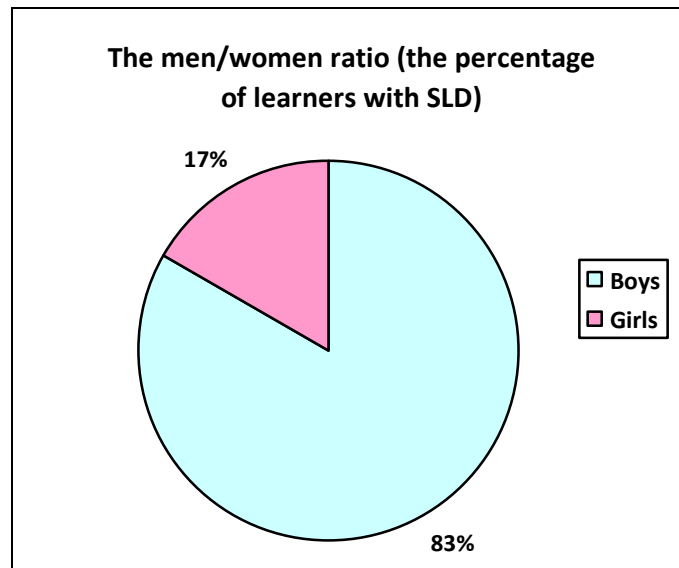
6.2. Background of the research

The research was made at ZŠ Jihlava, Seifertova 5 in February 2011. It was supposed to deal with six learners of the fifth year who had been diagnosed as learners with SLD while characteristics of each individual learner profile were different. There was only one girl out of these six learners. The rest of them (five) were boys. Expressed as a percentage, there were 17% of girls and 83% of boys out of 6 learners with SLD (100%). Graphs 1 and 2 demonstrate the proportion of the male learners with SLD to the female learners with SLD.

Graph 1:



Graph 2:



The proportion demonstrated in graphs 1 and 2 proves that there are more male learners with SLD than the female ones. In this case the men/women ratio is 1:5.

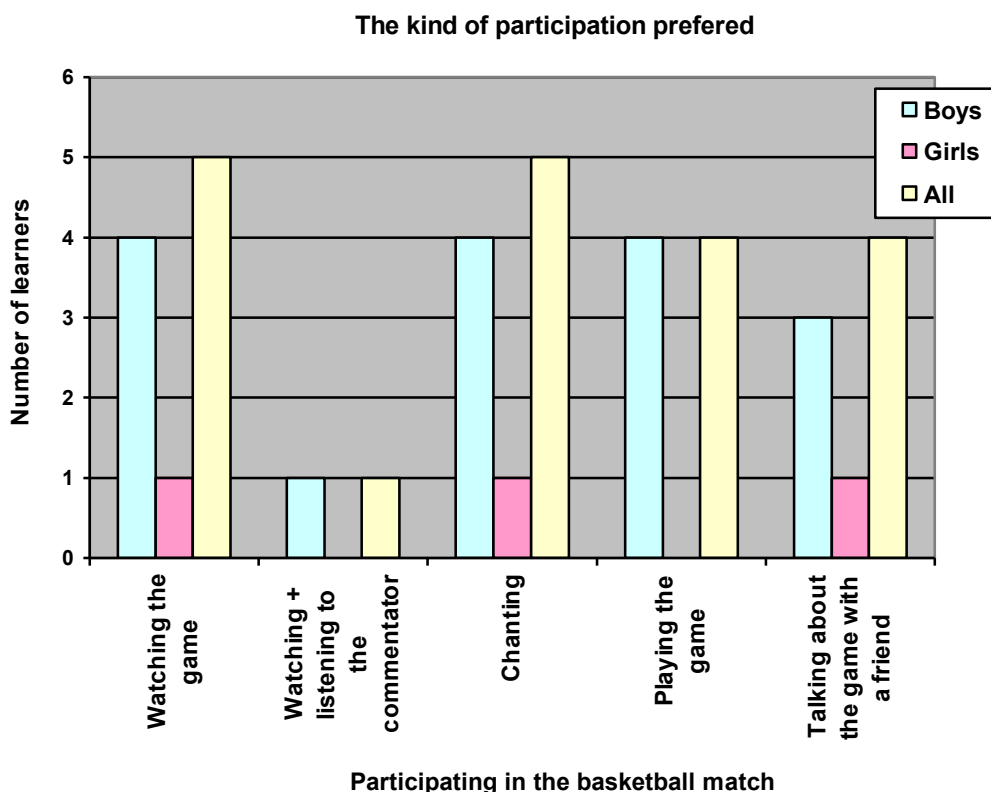
The research procedure was divided into two parts. During the first phase the learners were supposed to acquire new English vocabulary on one pre-selected topic which was chosen by their teacher of English in order to cover the topics that the learners of the fifth year are supposed to cover and manage. Lexical items chosen for this research (to be taught and learnt) were those regarding sport. The second part of the research was focused on practising this vocabulary. At that phase of the research the learners were supposed to be interviewed. They decided that the interviews would be in Czech.

Before pre-selected vocabulary was taught, the research procedure and its background had been introduced to the participating learners. Each learner was individually interviewed in order to become familiar with his or her attitudes to learning English, his or her personal characteristics and individual differences. The interviews were done orally because it might be difficult and stressful for the learners with SLD to deal with a written text because of the impact of SLD on their ability to read, write etc. The learners were asked to imagine that they were going to go to a basketball match. Then the learners were asked if they would like to:

- just watch the game,
- watch the game while the sport commentator commentates the game,
- support the team by chanting,
- play the game,
- or to talk about the game with a friend later on.

The aim of this interview was to find out which kind of the environment the learners prefer to be involved in. Five learners answered that they would like to just watch the game, only one learner wanted to watch it and listen to the commentator at the same time. Five of the learners would support the team by chanting, four of them would like to play the game and four of them would also talk about the match with a friend. Outcomes of the interview are demonstrated in Graph 3.

Graph 3:



On the basis of information described in Graph 3, there were six activities chosen to be used in the part of the research that was focused on practising vocabulary. These activities were designed in the way that would enable the learners to actively participate in the process of practising vocabulary, cooperate with each other and use various aids to associate vocabulary with its visual forms and sounds. With respect to information visualized in Graph 3 also the way of presenting vocabulary was designed.

6.3. Process of making the research

During the process of making the research the learners worked within one group thus they could cooperate with each other or also work individually if they wanted to. Mostly they wanted to work together. They were observed during both the research phases. At the beginning and at the end of the second (practising) phase they were individually interviewed in Czech (the Czech language enabled them to express all what they wanted to say).

6.3.1. Phase of teaching and learning/acquiring vocabulary

During the first phase of the research vocabulary regarding sport was introduced via TPR. The meaning of new lexical items was visualized and associated with real objects and particular situations. At first the learners were commanded to point to particular objects or visualization, then they were asked to go to them, touch them and replace them. Later on they commanded each other and worked in pairs and in a group.

As soon as they internalised the correct pronunciation of new lexical items, a written form of each lexical item was introduced while each word was written down in capitals. Clusters of consonants as well as two vowels standing one next to another were highlighted by the learners. Pronunciation of each lexical item was associated with its spelling. Then the written form of a word was associated with its visualized meaning.

6.3.2. Phase of practising vocabulary

At the beginning of this phase activities that had been designed on the basis of information visualized in Graph 3 were explained to the learners in English and clarified in Czech and the learners were told what they were supposed to do. Consequently they were individually interviewed (in Czech) in order to find out which activities they supposed to be interesting and enabling them to do their best when accomplishing given tasks and thus enabling them to succeed when doing so.

The learners were asked to comment on six following activities:

- rhyming – spelling a lexical item and rhyming the last letter with another complete word in English that the learner finds out (recall)
- completing semantic maps (a gap-filling activity) – some parts of a picture are labelled by particular words, others are supposed to be label by the learners (matching particular lexical items with the picture)
- miming actions, objects and situations – learners who did not mime, guess what is mimed
- ghost writing – writing words (in capitals) in the air, one learner reads the word while another one writes it

- creating words of given letters – this activity consists of two procedures – assembling letters to create a word and completing de-vowelled words
- defining the meaning – one learner defines the meaning of a lexical item while another one guesses what was defined

Then the learners did all six activities and again they were asked to comment on them. They were asked if they had changed their mind – which activity they considered to be the most interesting one, which task attracted their attention and which task gave them an opportunity to show what they had learnt/acquired and thus to succeed in learning.

6.4. Interviewing learners

It was already mentioned that the learners who were involved in the research were interviewed twice during the research procedure – before they did all the activities and after they did them. Both interviews were done individually in Czech to enable the learners to express all that they wanted to say. The learners were supposed to answer two questions in the first interview:

- Which activities do you suppose that could be interesting and enabling you to show what you have already learnt/acquired?
- Why do you like or do not like particular activities?

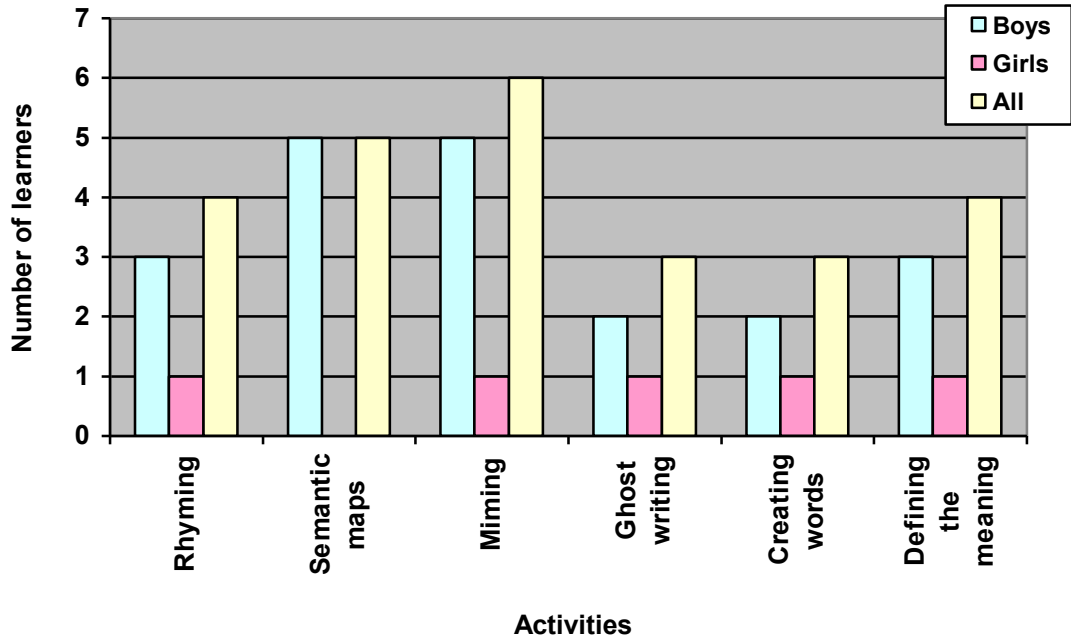
... and three questions in the second interview:

- Which activities do you consider to be really interesting and enabling you to show what you have learnt/acquired?
- Why did you like or did not like particular activities?
- If you compare your opinion before doing the activities with your opinion which is based on experience, have you changed your mind? Why?

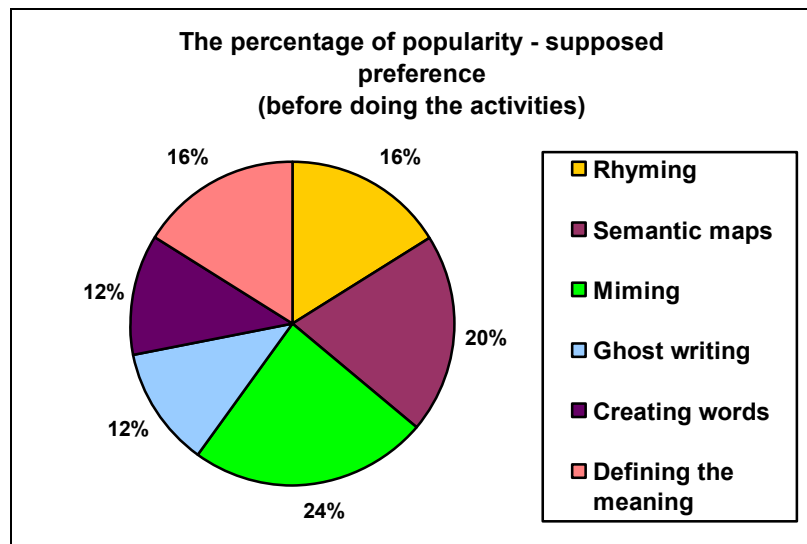
Graph 4 describes which activities were supposed that would be the most interesting ones and enabling a person to complete a given task successfully. Interests of male and female learners with SLD are demonstrated in this graph.

Graph 4:

Popularity of activities - supposed preference (before doing the activities)



Graph 5:



Popularity of particular activities expressed as a percentage is described in Graph 5 while males and females with SLD are not distinguished there as well as in the following paragraph that reports learners' opinions regarding the activities.

All the learners (i.e. six) supposed that miming would be the most interesting activity out of all. They were of the opinion that it would be fun because miming is rather a game. Completing semantic maps was chosen by five learners (i.e. all boys) while they all pointed out that it would be as same (as easy and as interesting) as describing pictures. Four out of six learners voted for rhyming and for defining the vocabulary meaning. In the case of rhyming the learners supposed that this activity might be funny because rhyming reminds of singing. Defining the meaning was supposed to be easy but also a bit boring. Three learners wanted to try ghost writing because they were curious about it – they were not able to imagine that they would be able to read a word written in the air. Creating words was chosen also by three learners and considered to be the most difficult activity out of all because the letters might be confusing.

Finally, table 1 summarizes information covered in graphs 4 and 5 (again without reference to girls’/boys’ opinions).

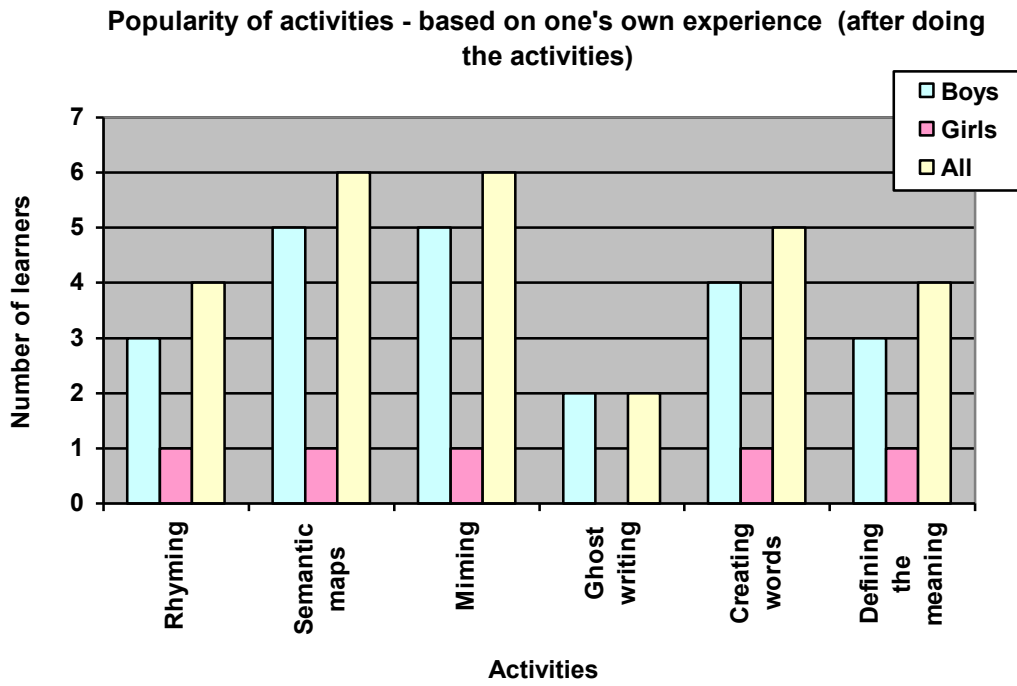
Table 1:

Popularity of activities - supposed preference (before doing the activities)

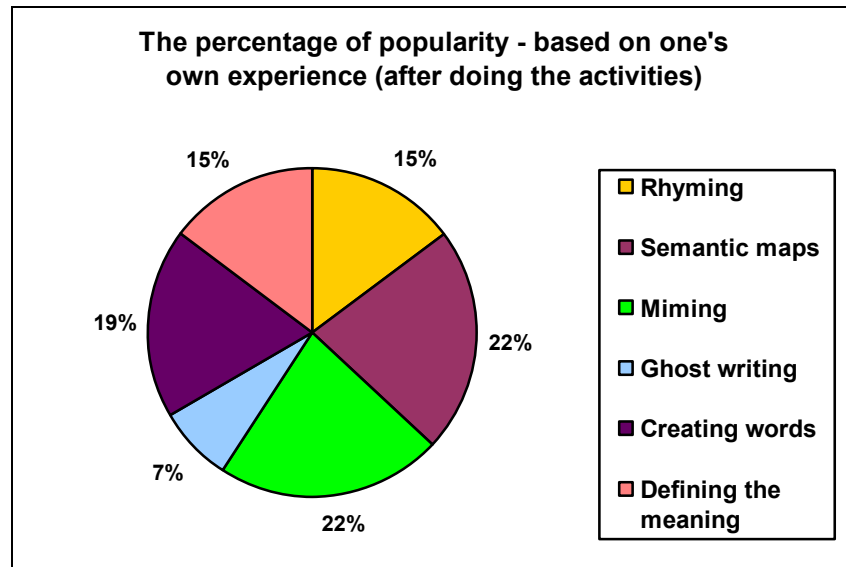
Popularity	Activity	Number of learners who liked the activity	% of popularity
1 st	Miming	6	24
2 nd	Semantic maps	5	20
3 rd	Rhyming	4	16
3 rd	Defining the meaning	4	16
4 th	Ghost writing	3	12
4 th	Creating words	3	12

Graph 6 demonstrates which activities the learners considered to be really interesting and which, according to learner’s opinions, enable them to show what they have learnt/acquired. In this case learners’ opinions are based on their own experience. Interests of male and female learners with SLD are demonstrated in this graph.

Graph 6:



Graph 7:



The percentage of popularity of particular activities based on learners' own experience is described in Graph 7. Males and females with SLD are not distinguished in the graph

as well as in the following paragraph that summarizes learners' opinions regarding the activities.

On the basis of their own experience the learners (all of them – i.e. six) confirmed that miming was the most interesting activity for them because it was funny to mime and to watch the learner who was miming. Completing semantics maps became more popular on the basis of own experience and all the learners (i.e. six) considered it to be the most interesting activity (as well as miming). They found recalling vocabulary with visual support quite easy and they said that they had liked the pictures. Also creating words became more interesting for the learners when they accomplished the task. All five learners who voted for this activity appreciated completing de-vowelled words because it was new for them and more interesting than assembling words. Four learners again appreciated rhyming words thus their expectations corresponded with the feeling after completing the task. These four learners claimed that it was fine to realize what words they are able to recall. They all also pointed out that spelling words was funny because it was fast. Defining the vocabulary meaning was considered to be either too easy or too difficult. Ghost writing was considered to be difficult and therefore boring. Only two boys found this activity interesting. For the rest of the learners it was difficult to recognise particular words written in the air.

Table 2 summarizes information covered in graphs 6 and 7 without reference to girls' and boys' opinions.

Table 2:

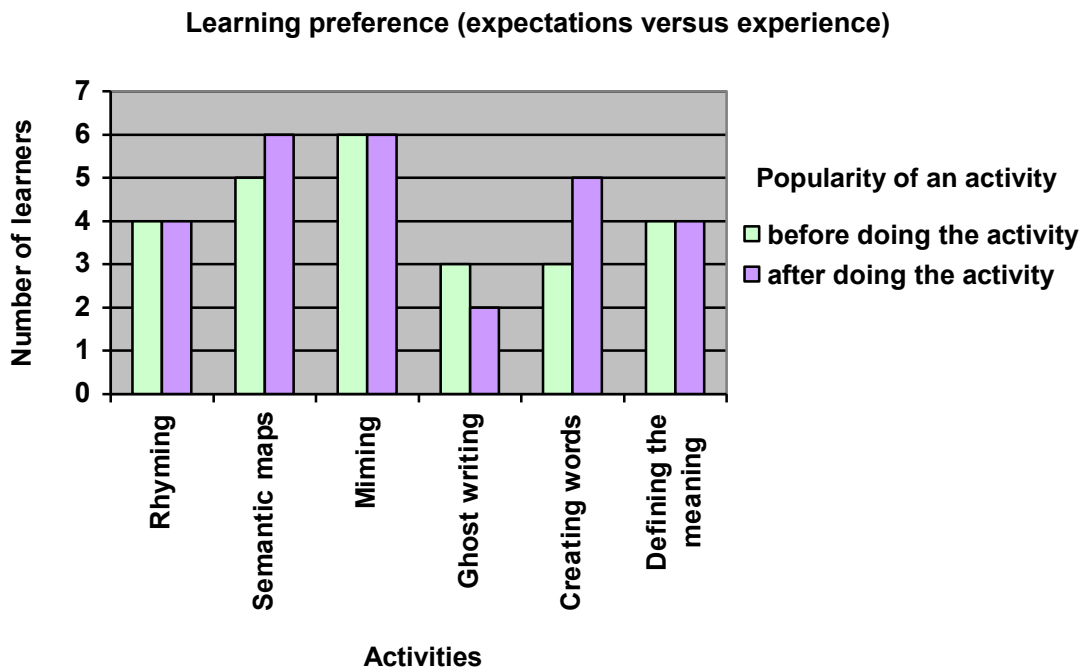
Popularity of activities - based on one's own experience (after doing the activities)

Popularity	Activity	Number of learners who liked the activities	% of popularity
1 st	Miming	6	22
1 st	Semantic maps	6	22
2 nd	Creating words	5	19
3 rd	Defining the meaning	4	15
3 rd	Rhyming	4	15
4 th	Ghost writing	2	7

6.5. Interpreting the outcomes

Outcomes of both interviews that were done with the learners in order to find out their learning preference (before and after doing the activities) prove that the learners involved in the research are aware of their learning preference which is probably based on their previous experience with learning (based on their responses in both interviews). The situation demonstrating the comparison between learners' expectations regarding the activities and their opinions based on dealing with these tasks is demonstrated in Graph 8.

Graph 8:



The learners with SLD, who were involved in this research, prefer mainly the activities in which they can be actively involved and move things or one's own body and the activities that enable them to rely on visual support or to use this support. On the other hand, Graph 8 and learners' individual comments and opinions demonstrate that it is difficult for them to imagine letter shapes if they are not written down so it is not possible to focus on them for longer time. They prefer dealing with words which are pre-selected by somebody else so they do not have to recall and produce them

themselves. If producing vocabulary is demanded, they prefer oral producing of lexical items to writing it. If they are not sure what they are supposed to do, they discuss the problem with each other.

The outcomes of this research thus prove that teaching learners with SLD through TPR while applying the ideas of the Multi-sensory Approach and Gardner's MI theory enables these learners to be actively involved in the teaching-learning process which is adjusted to their individual needs. Therefore learning is not stressful and enables the learners to succeed in learning. It was also proved that there are more men with SLD than women as it was mentioned in chapter 6.2.

7. CONCLUSION

This paper focuses on describing and examining ways how to adjust teaching English vocabulary to learners with SLD and their individual needs and characteristics. The theoretical part introduces the concept of SLD and its impact on the learner's ability to acquire English vocabulary. With respect to this the process of teaching English vocabulary is introduced. The main idea of the theoretical part of this paper is to introduce learners with SLD as individual independent entities with specific characteristics. Individual learning differences and ways how to deal with them are described in order to provide ideas how to adjust teaching English vocabulary to learners with SLD. With respect to this, techniques such as TPR, the Multi-sensory Approach and Gardner's MI theory are described to be a basis of the practical part of this paper.

The practical part of the paper is based on the theoretical background of teaching English vocabulary that is described in the theoretical part. In the practical part of the paper six activities, which are based on principles of the Multi-sensory Approach and Gardner's MI theory and on the idea to teach English through TPR while individual learner differences are respected, are suggested and examined in order to enable the learners with SLD to succeed in learning. The aim of the research is to find out whether teaching English vocabulary to learners with SLD that is based on respecting the above-

mentioned principles and on applying previously mentioned methods and approaches enables learners with SLD to succeed in learning, especially which activities the learners with SLD prefer when learning/acquiring English vocabulary. Apart from this the research also examines if the learners with SLD are aware of their own learning profiles.

The outcomes of the research prove that learners with SLD consider learning activities, which are based on integrating the Multi-sensory Approach, Gardner's MI theory and TPR teaching into the teaching-learning process, to be a way that enables a person to succeed in learning. It was also proved that the learners with SLD who were involved in the research were aware of their learning profile and needs and that they preferred those activities which enabled them to be active participants and to cooperate with different forms of visualisation. Thus the idea of teaching and learning (acquiring) English vocabulary through TPR while applying principles of the Multi-sensory Approach and Gardner's MI theory may be considered to be a way that enables learners with SLD to become more successful learners while their individual learner differences are respected.

RESUMÉ

Tato práce se zabývá problematikou výuky anglické slovní zásoby u žáků se specifickými poruchami učení (SPU), přičemž se snaží především překonat ještě donedávna všeobecně akceptovaný názor, že žáci s SPU nemohou zlepšit své studijní výsledky, protože jsou zkrátka pomalí nebo hloupí. Tato práce se snaží osvětlit celou problematiku otázky SPU ve světle současných poznatků, které neustále potvrzují to, že zde existuje řada možností, jak pomoci žákům s SPU překonat obtíže, s nimiž se musejí potýkat nejen v průběhu svých studií, ale i po celý svůj život. Tato práce mapuje a rozebírá vztah žáka s SPU k osvojování anglického jazyka, konkrétně pak slovní zásoby. Celá práce je rozdělena do dvou základních celků – části teoretické a praktické.

Teoretická část práce se zaměřuje zejména na charakterizování role SPU v procesu učení a učení se (osvojování si) anglické slovní zásoby. Jejím hlavním cílem je představit koncept SPU ve vztahu k žákovi i učiteli anglického jazyka, definovat základní pojmy, jako je dyslexie či specifické poruchy učení, a nastínit, jaký dopad mají dané poruchy na proces učení a učení se (osvojování si) anglické slovní zásoby a jakým způsobem SPU ovlivňuje tyto procesy. Teoretická část se dále věnuje několika přístupům a metodám, které mohou, jsou-li integrovány do vyučovacích hodin, umožnit žákům s SPU uspět v procesu osvojování si nové anglické slovní zásoby.

První kapitola práce uvádí SPU do kontextu současného veřejného mínění. Mapuje tedy všeobecné povědomí běžné populace týkající se problematiky SPU, přičemž se snaží odpoutat od dříve uznávaných vědecky nepodložených hypotéz. Dále nastiňuje schéma celkové struktury práce.

V druhé kapitole jsou představeny základní pojmy pojící se s konceptem SPU, jakož i jejich charakteristické znaky, které se promítají v závěrech odborné diagnostiky provedené u jednotlivých žáků s SPU. Pozornost je mimo jiné věnována příčinám vzniku SPU, jejich původu a současnému stavu rozšíření ve společnosti. Na základě odborné literatury jsou smazány mylné domněnky týkající se problematiky SPU a v neposlední řadě je zde také vylíčena situace odborného názvosloví, jelikož terminologie SPU se v českém a anglickém jazyce nepatrně liší.

Třetí kapitola vychází z požadavku jednat se žáky s SPU s ohledem na jejich individualitu. Jelikož nelze zobecnit závěry sumarizující SPU na všechny jedince s SPU, volají odborníci po nutnosti respektovat individuální rozdíly každého takového jedince a přistupovat k němu s přihlédnutím k jeho osobnostním charakteristikám, potřebám, preferencím a způsobům, jimiž žák přistupuje k poznávání světa i sebe samého. Kapitola stručně zmiňuje, jakou úlohu v životě každého jednotlivého dítěte s SPU zaujímá jeho rodina a její zázemí, které tvoří spolu s dalšími prvky v žákově okolí skupinu objektivních determinant ovlivňujících jeho pozici v roli žáka. Další podkapitoly se blíže zabírají subjektivními determinanty, jimiž je žák charakterizován z pozice svého JÁ. Pozornost je věnována především stylům a strategiím učení, žákově motivaci a teorii mnohačetné inteligence. V případě stylů učení jsou představeny některé přístupy ke klasifikaci jednotlivých stylů. Styly učení jsou dále na základě odborných definic rozlišeny od učebních strategií. Představena je také koncepce Gardnerovy teorie mnohačetné inteligence, která se staví proti tradičnímu pojetí inteligence měřitelné IQ testy. Velký důraz je zde kladen také na individualizované motivování žáka. Pilířem podporujícím myšlenku individuálního přístupu k jednotlivým žákům, zejména pak žákům s SPU, je učitelova dobrá znalost žáků, která mu umožňuje přizpůsobit formu vyučování každému z jeho žáků.

Čtvrtá kapitola čerpá z poznatků uvedených v kapitole druhé a také z nich vychází. Rozebírá konkrétní dopady SPU na procesy učení a učení se (osvojování si) anglického jazyka, konkrétně pak slovní zásoby. S oporou odborné literatury konstatuje, že učení se cizím jazykům není pro žáky s SPU jednoduchou záležitostí a negativní či nesprávný přístup ze strany učitele může hned od samého začátku zhatit žákovy naděje na úspěšné osvojení si cizího jazyka i celkově vztahu k danému jazyku. V kapitole jsou nastíněna možná úskalí, která se skrývají v učení a učení se (osvojování si) anglické slovní zásoby, a jejich vztah k SPU. Taktéž jsou představeny základní ideje, jak prezentovat a procvičovat slovní zásobu, přičemž v tomto momentě vyvstává otázka, jakou úlohu ve vzdělávacím procesu představuje učitel.

Pátá kapitola se zabírá konkrétními technikami a přístupy k vyučování žáků s SPU v rámci respektování jejich individuálních charakteristik. Kapitola se věnuje právě těm

způsobům učení, které se dají využít při vyučování anglické zásoby u žáků s SPU. Z pohledu žáka pak tyto způsoby učení umožňují jedincům s SPU přistupovat ke vzdělávání se právě takovým způsobem, jenž bude co nejvíce přizpůsoben jejich konkrétním potřebám, požadavkům, preferencím a pracovnímu tempu. Podkapitola 5.1. se věnuje metodě zvané Total Physical Response (TPR), která je ideálním řešením, jak učít žáky slovní zásobu v přirozeném tempu, které se pochopitelně u každého žáka liší, a v kontextu, bez využití překladu významu jednotlivých slov do žákova mateřského jazyka. Využívá vizuální a zvukové opory, což koresponduje s principy multisensorického přístupu, jemuž se věnuje podkapitola 5.2. V ní jsou rozebrány různé kombinace podnětů, které stimulují žáka k přijmutí a zpracování nových informací. V poslední podkapitole této kapitoly, v podkapitole 5.3., je pozornost věnována opět konceptu Gardnerovy teorie mnohačetné inteligence. Tentokrát již není definována z pohledu odborníků, spíše se snaží představit způsoby, jak může být tato koncepce integrována do běžné hodiny a jakým způsobem z ní mohou těžit jak žáci, tak i učitelé.

Stěžejním bodem praktické části práce je navržení konkrétních aktivit, které budou svou povahou založené na teoretických podkladech rozebíraných v teoretické části práce. V rámci praktické části práce byl proveden výzkum mezi žáky pátého ročníku základní školy, kteří byli diagnostikováni jako žáci s SPU, přičemž každý z nich vykazoval jiný profil SPU, což potvrzuje to, po čem volá odborná veřejnost – musí-li učitelé spolupracovat s žáky s SPU, musí přistupovat ke každému jednomu jednotlivci zvlášť, s ohledem na jeho individuální charakteristiky. Ve výzkumu byly posuzovány subjektivní percepce šesti žáků s SPU v poměru jedna dívka ku pěti chlapcům. Před provedením průzkumu dostali všichni žáci příležitost, aby se vyjádřili k prostředí, ve kterém se cítí nejlépe, aby aktivity, které budou pro potřeby výzkumu navrženy, vycházeli z potřeb právě těchto konkrétních žáků, pokud to mají být oni, kdo bude ve výzkumu zaujímat roli zkoumaného.

Výzkum byl rozdělen do dvou částí, z nichž první byla věnována učení a učení se (osvojování si) slovní zásoby týkající se sportu prostřednictvím TPR. Žáci byly nejprve seznámeni s významem jednotlivých slovíček, které byly představeny prostřednictvím různých forem vizualizace. Žáci poté reagovali na kladené pokyny svou přímou

interakcí. Po dostatečném zvnitřněním zvukové formy jednotlivých slov ve spojení s jejich významem žáci instruovali sami sebe navzájem a byla jim představena psaná forma jednotlivých slov v těsném spojení s výslovností a významem jednotlivých slovíček.

V průběhu druhé části výzkumu byly s každým žákem zvlášť udělány dva rozhovory. První z nich zjišťoval, které z šesti aktivit určených k procvičení probrané slovní zásoby, které si žáci posléze vyzkoušeli, připadají žákům jako aktivity umožňující jim úspěšně prokázat, co se doposud naučili, případně, které aktivity jim připadají zajímavé a mohly by je bavit. Druhý rozhovor následoval ihned po procvičení slovní zásoby v šesti daných aktivitách. Tento rozhovor zjišťoval, které aktivity žáci opravdu, po vlastní zkušenosti s prací na daném cvičení, považují za umožňující aplikování dosavadně osvojených vědomostí, která aktivita je skutečně zaujala, bavila, připadala jim přínosná pro učení se, eventuálně jestli je nějaká aktivita svou povahou překvapila.

Cílem výzkumu bylo zjistit, zdali aktivity založené na učení a učení se prostřednictvím TPR a principů multisensorického přístupu a Gardnerovi teorie mnohačetné inteligence umožňují žákům s SPU stát se lepšími žáky, dále pak jaké učební aktivity žáci s SPU preferují. Účelem výzkumu bylo též zjistit, zda-li jsou žáci s SPU vyhranění co do jednotlivých podob učení se (a tedy i učení) a zda-li si jsou tohoto vyhranění vědomi. Z šesti aktivit, které si měli příležitost vyzkoušet je nejvíce zaujaly ty, které byly založeny na fyzickém pohybu, kdy se buďto pohybovali sami žáci či kdy žáci hýbali okolními předměty. Tyto aktivity jim také připadly nejvíce přínosné. Dále pak byli žáci nakloněni aktivitám, které umožňovali nejrůznější formy vizualizace, takže žáci mohli využít vizuální opory, kterou jim daná situace poskytovala.

Závěry plynoucí z výzkumu prokázaly, že žáci s SPU, jejichž subjektivní percepce byly v průběhu výzkumu centrem zájmu, si jsou vědomi, jaké podoby výuky jim nevíce vyhovují, což opět zdůrazňuje nutnost přizpůsobovat vzdělávací proces a učební úlohy jednotlivým žákům, jejich potřebám, možnostem a charakteristikám. Jen tak může učitel umožnit žákům s SPU, aby si našli svou vlastní cestu k učení a stali se tak lidmi, kteří se mohou označit za ty, přibližující se ke statutu školsky úspěšného žáka.

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