

University of Pardubice

Faculty of Arts and Philosophy

Homework in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language

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Bachelor paper

2014

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

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Osobní číslo: **H10394**
Studijní program: **B7507 Specializace v pedagogice**
Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk - specializace v pedagogice**
Název tématu: **Domácí úkoly ve výuce anglického jazyka**
Zadávající katedra: **Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Studentka se bude ve své práci zabývat problematikou domácích úkolů ve výuce anglického jazyka na základní škole. V teoretické části práce nejprve pojedná fenomén domácího úkolu z historické perspektivy. Dále se zaměří na jeho současné funkce, a to v kontextu rozvoje komunikační kompetence žáků a jejich autonomie. Studentka bude diskutovat různé typy domácích úkolů a jejich relevantnost pro rozvoj komunikační kompetence i autonomie a také očekávané role učitele, žáka a rodičů v jednotlivých fázích práce s domácím úkolem, tj. zadávání, vypracování a zpětná vazba. V praktické části práce studentka realizuje vlastní výzkumné šetření s cílem zjistit, jaké typy úkolů učitelé ve výuce angličtiny na vybrané základní škole zadávají, na jakou oblast komunikační kompetence jsou orientovány a zda tyto úkoly rozvíjejí autonomii žáků. Cílem zkoumání bude dále zjistit, co učitelé od žáků a jejich rodičů ve vztahu k domácím úkolům očekávají. Pro realizaci šetření využije studentka pozorování a rozhovoru.

Rozsah grafických prací:

Rozsah pracovní zprávy:

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**

Jazyk zpracování bakalářské práce: **Angličtina**

Seznam odborné literatury:

Buckland, D. *Night shift: ideas and strategies for homework*. London, 1993
Buell, J. *Closing the book on homework*. Philadelphia, 2004
Fryjaufová, E. *Naučte své dítě efektivnímu učení*. Brno, 2006
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Painter, L. *Homework*. Oxford, 2004
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Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **30. dubna 2012**


Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **31. března 2013**



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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně.

V Pardubicích dne 27. 11. 2014

Magdaléna Škodová

Acknowledgment:

I would like to thank my supervisor, PaedDr. Monika Černá, Ph.D., for her useful advice and encouragement. I also want to thank the teachers of the basic school who participated in the study for their time and definitely to my family for their enormous patience.

Annotation:

This bachelor thesis deals with homework aimed at developing communicative competence and learner autonomy in English language learning at primary and lower-secondary level. Firstly, the theoretical part focuses on homework throughout the history in comparison to its contemporary function. Then a definition of communicative competence and learner autonomy is presented. The purpose of homework and homework typology are the crucial issue of the theoretical part. Lastly, different attitudes towards homework preparation concerning teachers, pupils and parents are discussed. The practical part is concerned with research study conducted by means of observations and interviews in order to determine frequently assigned types of homework and their influence on developing learner autonomy and communicative competence.

Key words: homework, homework purposes, homework types, communicative competence, learner autonomy

Anotace:

Tato práce se zabývá domácími úkoly na základní škole ve vztahu k rozvoji komunikační kompetence a rozvoji autonomie žáka. Teoretická část se nejprve zaměřuje na historický kontext domácích úkolů ve srovnání s jejich současnou funkcí. Dále pak uvádí definice komunikační kompetence a autonomie žáka. Funkce a typy domácích úkolů jsou zásadním tématem teoretické části. Závěrem této části práce pojednává o vztahu mezi učiteli, žáky a rodiči v závislosti na domácí přípravě žáků. Praktická část se zabývá výzkumem, který je prováděn pomocí metody pozorování a interview, za účelem zjistit, jaké úkoly jsou zadávány nejčastěji a jejich vliv na rozvoj komunikační kompetence a autonomie žáka.

Klíčová slova: domácí úkoly, funkce domácích úkolů, typy domácích úkolů, komunikační kompetence, autonomie žáka

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Introduction

Homework issue has been discussed a lot in the past few years. Number of proposals for limitation of homework has appeared. Several schools have renounced homework at least at primary level. Nonetheless, no official regulation has been enforced yet. Attitudes toward homework are still multifarious. Opponents as well as advocates of homework have their adherents not only among parents and learners but also among teachers. However, homework as learning and teaching strategy can have both beneficial and undesirable effects. Properly utilised homework help learner to reach communicative competence as well as provide learner with an opportunity to develop self-reliance and responsibility. Such homework can be a crucial factor in development of self-directed learning¹. To achieve the goals, several rules must be considered. Therefore the theory of this paper deals with homework types and homework purposes.

The theoretical part is divided into four sections. The first chapter provides a brief homework history outline in comparison with its contemporary concept. Contemporary functions of homework are described in the second chapter. This chapter deals with various functions of homework. Learner autonomy, communicative competence and other homework objectives are defined in this part. The third chapter categorises homework into specific groups in accordance with different English language skills. This section gives ideas for useful tasks. The last chapter of the theoretical part is devoted to homework participants. Teachers', learners' and parental attitudes are covered. Their role in homework assignments is specified in this chapter.

The practical part of this thesis, which is based on the theory, investigates homework functions and types employed at primary and lower-secondary education. First of all an introduction to the research is presented. After that, the aims of the research are stated. The overall aim of this study is to discover what homework is frequently assigned at the basic school and what its function is. The secondary aim is to find what teachers expect from learners and parents involved in homework. The study was conducted by means of an observation to reach the overall aim and by interviews to provide teachers' expectations of learner' and parental role in homework. The final section presents research findings associated with frequently assigned homework by teachers at the primary and lower secondary level.

¹A concept of self-regulated learning concerning the aims, time, place, content, strategy, a partner and an ability to self-assess and reflect on one's own learning process (Neber 1978, In Janíková 2005, p.17). Own translation.

Theoretical Part

1 Historical Perspective of Homework

The phenomenon of homework was not always understood as it is today. In accordance with *Pedagogický slovník*, the contemporary conception of homework is defined as “an educational activity which is carried out after school hours ordinarily at home. Homework is closely connected with the teaching process and it is aimed at supporting the acquisition and extension of the curriculum” (Průcha, Walterová, Mareš. 2003, p. 43)². Skalková (2007, p. 240) and Maňák (1992, p. 10) agree on homework classification as an *organizational form of teaching*¹ which can show learners that the learning process can take place everywhere.

In antiquity and the Middle Ages it was rather vice versa. All required knowledge and skills were covered during the lesson. Not a large number of students were attending schools at that time due to social differences; therefore the teacher could lead pupils individually and the lesson had no time limit. Thus the lesson content and the pace could be adapted to the needs of the individuals. There were also other aspects of not letting students work on school materials outside the classroom. One of them was the problem of educational tools. Until typography was established a school book and similar required equipment was available only to teachers. Hence teachers were mostly lecturing and students were supposed to remember the subject matter of the lecture through repetition and drill (Maňák 1992, p. 7).

During the Renaissance period a lesson was limited to a half-day and simultaneously the number of pupils rose. This led to a stronger emphasis on learning also outside the classroom. However, as Maňák (1992, p. 8) describes, Jan Amos Komenský stressed that all the knowledge acquired that day should be revised immediately after the lesson with the teacher and pupils together.

In the 19th century, classrooms at primary schools were mostly multi-age. For this reason, it was really demanding to assign homework (Gill, Schlossman 2004, p.175). On the other hand, students in higher classes had many more duties. They were expected to learn verbatim³. It was the memorising that had a key function in learning outside the classroom. Nevertheless, there were not many complaints about doing homework up to the end of the 19th century when backlash began.

² All citations and paraphrases from Czech sources are own translations.

³ To memorise word-for-word

By the end of the century, the number of complaints about homework increased. The arrival of progressive education contributed to anti-homework movements and studies aimed at children's health. The frequent objections were made by doctors and psychologists. The reason for criticism stemmed from child's health and their overexertion. Maňák presents the oldest regulation of assigning homework for the Czech lands (1875) which stipulated that "pupils cannot be overburdened with homework (...) and that homework should be assigned with respect to the age and social condition of the child" (Maňák 1992, p. 8).

Trying to prove that homework should be excluded, the beginning of the 20th century brought a survey (1904) conducted by E. Meumann. His research disclosed that in-class study at primary school is superior to homework which is done outside the lesson. Furthermore, this supported the argument that assignments done at home were followed by a number of mistakes. However, he was not strictly against homework. Maňák (1992, p. 9) in his publication cites that Meumann had respect for homework that was able to develop learners' individuality (Meumann 1925, In Maňák).

As time passed, the opinion of homework started to shift toward a more positive outlook and homework supporters were convinced that it provides children with an opportunity to extend their knowledge and helps them to "develop good character traits" (Gill, Schlossman 2004, p. 176).

Nowadays, homework in general is still a perennial issue for many discussions. A number of both the opponents and advocates quarrelling about its influence can be found. Different views of homework are also published in educational magazines. Debates over this issue are mainly led between parents and teachers. Many parents are in favour of abolishing homework assignments these days, convinced that everything should be taught in a classroom. This opinion originates in parents' belief that contemporary homework consists of assignments not finished during the lesson and that the burden is placed on learners. Unfortunately, this fact cannot be easily refuted. Skalková (2007, p. 240) describes this way of assigning homework as absolutely ineffective and points out the incompetence of teachers who are not able to manage their lesson appropriately. Another undesirable example of homework which is still sometimes used is the 'busy work'. Hancock (2001) describes it as work assigned to pupils with the aim to monitor that they do at least something out of the school. This kind of homework meets with neither academic nor moral achievement. It only causes learners overload and presents homework as a futility. That is probably the reason why negative attitudes toward homework still remain.

Klíma, a psychologist and director of Prague PPP⁴ believes that homework is an old paradigm. He claims that homework causes stress and family disagreements (Švancar 2012, p.8). Klíma is one of the opponents who assert that everything has to be learned within a school lesson. Nevertheless, the next chapter is going to clarify that homework can be a “cost-effective instructional device” (Cooper 1989, p. 90) especially in learning a language, on condition that it meets its purposes and it is meticulously planned.

2 Purposes of Contemporary Homework in Accordance with Developing Communicative Competence and Learner Autonomy

This chapter deals with homework as a part of the learning process that can be beneficial for developing communicative competence and learner autonomy. It firstly defines the communicative competence and then the concept of learner autonomy. In this chapter we can also find different purposes of homework that may help teachers to assign better homework and to present it in a more positive light.

2.1 Communicative Competence

Communicative competence is defined as “the language user’s ability to communicate” (CEFR, p. 101) It is much easier to fulfil communicative competence in one’s mother tongue. To develop this competence in the target language, it is necessary to practise it. That is the reason why communicative competence is the main goal to reach in the language learning process.

Czech curriculum documents use the communicative competence⁵ based on *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). CEFR divides communicative language competence into three components: linguistic competences, sociolinguistic competences and pragmatic competences (MŠMT 2013, p. 17).

- Linguistic competences are defined here as “ability to use, the formal resources from which well-formed, meaningful messages may be assembled and formulated” (CEFR, p.

⁴ Pedagogicko-psychologická poradna/ Educational/Pedagogical and psychological counselling centre

⁵ This term is also defined by many other authors such as: Chomsky, Bachman, Canale and Swain, Littlewood, Hymes...This study works with CEFR which is often cited in curricular documents and it is known among teachers.

109). In other words, it is knowledge of the language system. This includes the lexical competence which distinguishes and extends vocabulary, lexical and grammatical aspects such as phrases, idioms, fixed expressions etc. The next is grammatical competence which includes *grammatical accuracy*⁶, and other competences such as: semantic (organises the meaning), phonological (ability to produce and distinguish English sounds in the right way), Orthographic (punctuation), and Orthoepic competence (a skill of reading aloud, to correctly pronounce written text) (CEFR 108-118).

- Sociolinguistic competences refer to the cultural aspect of the language. The rules differ from one culture to another. Linguistic markers of social relations (greetings, addressing people...), politeness (positive either negative), expressions of folk wisdom (idioms, proverbs etc.), register differences (stages of formality) and the last dialect and accent (divided into social groups, regions, nations...). Generally, this area is aimed at different culture behaviour and its habits (CEFR, p .118-121).
- Pragmatic competences concern the structure, organization and production of the text: discourse competence (to simplify, it refers to sentence arrangement with appropriate structure, word order and ability to use appropriate expressions with being flexible...), functional competence (fluent and accurate speaking in the way of interaction, communication). Pragmatic competence involves the ability to create a fluent speech, coherent and cohesive written text, use of practical knowledge and understanding to different connotations (CEFR, p. 110-130).

According to Common European Framework (p. 14), communicative competence is practised in language activities for which *reception* and *production* are the key elements. Receptive skills include reading and listening. Contrary to receptive, productive skills include speaking and writing. However, both receptive and productive skills are crucial for another language activity which is *interaction*. It is described as an ability to communicate in both oral and written form. The last involved is *mediation*. Mediation is an indirect communication presented in a form of “translation or interpretation, a paraphrase, summary or record, provided for a third party a (re)formulation of a source text to which this third party does not have direct access“ (CEFR, p. 14).

⁶ The ability to take control over grammar and use it correctly (CEFR, p. 114)

2.2 Learner Autonomy

Learner autonomy was first described by Holec “as the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (Holec in Benson 2007, p. 22). The learner is free from external control and is responsible for his/her own decisions in learning (Ibid.). This ability helps learner in his/her future education. To fulfil the aim of education Framework Education Programme for Basic Education describes key competences in which aspects of learner autonomy are reflected. For example, Learning Competency describes:

By the end of his or her basic education, the pupil:

- selects and uses suitable procedures, methods and strategies for efficient learning; plans, organizes and manages his or her own learning process; is willing to devote his or her time and efforts to additional study and life-long learning; (...)
- recognizes the meaning and goal of learning; has a positive attitude towards learning; assesses his or her own progress and identifies obstacles or problems hindering his or her learning progress; makes plans as to how to improve his or her learning; makes a critical assessment of his or her own learning results and discusses them. (MŠMT 2007, p. 12)

Such a learner is able to plan, to set the objectives and select materials, to monitor his/her learning process with following self-assessment⁷ (Holec in Benson 2007, p. 23). Janíková (2005, p. 18-19) writes about autonomy which is divided into more ‘dimensions’. In the concept of pedagogy learner becomes autonomous when she/he is able to assume role of her/his own learning without being influenced by a teacher.

Nunan (2000) provides a helpful table (Appendix 1) with five stages of learner autonomy development. Formulated levels of learning process with objectives show the process of building learner’s self-reliance in learning. First of all, as well as other authors⁸, he emphasises that learner has to be primarily aware of his/her preferred learning strategies. Without knowing one’s own learning preferences it is demanding to support autonomous learner. As a second stage, he regards this phase as a learner option to choose out of several tasks distinguished by different content, aim, needs. Third stage pays attention to learner individuality when the learners are allowed to create own assignments according to own needs. And the final is the stage of a transfer to the teacher’s role.

To summarize these two competencies in relation to purposes of English homework, communicative competence corresponds to the development of academic knowledge and skills, while learner autonomy is more linked with non-academic objectives. Thereinafter,

⁷ Self-assessment is closely related to developing learner autonomy. It enables learners to reflect on their own learning (Harmer 2007, p. 134)..

⁸ Harmer (2007, p. 394), Painter (2010, p.9)

Cooper, repeatedly cited in many publications concerning homework, divides homework purposes into instructional and non-instructional objectives of homework (2006, p.1). These purposes are going to be presented in the following part which deals with homework purpose and its effects.

2.3 Purposes of Homework

Cooper (2006, p.1) in his *Review* presents a classification of homework in accordance with its ‘amount (length and frequency), skill area⁹, purposes, degree of choice (compulsory or mandatory), deadline (long-term or short-term), degree of individualization (if the homework is differentiated or assigned to whole class or groups) and social context (independent, assisted)’. Since the length of this paper is limited and the research is aimed at homework types in accordance with communicative competence, the theory focuses directly on homework types in the context of skill areas, and on homework purposes. This chapter is related to homework purposes.

Homework is a part of learning process which can be an efficient tool in developing students’ learning abilities. Well-prepared homework can easily encourage students to learn more independently. To reach this aim, an assignment has to be thought out carefully. This chapter presents possible purposes of homework that should be considered by a teacher before assigning homework. As Skalková (2007, p. 241) points, common purposes of homework, which are assigned by a majority of teachers, are aimed at practising and extension of learners’ skill. Maňák (1992, p. 21-23) claims that we cannot take homework only as a way of practise and extension. The other purposes are described in the following part.

Cooper (2006, p.1) divides purposes into instructional and non-instructional objectives. He describes instructional purposes as factual knowledge retention, understanding and extension of the material where homework can help to develop students’ study skills, whereas non-instructional purposes are important for learners’ responsibility, independence and self-reliance in learning (Cooper 1989, p. 86). Even if he separates these into two main categories he highlights that purposes never state on their own. Some homework tasks can have more than one single purpose.

⁹ Described according to Painter in the following chapter

2.3.1 Instructional objectives

Three different authors agreed on four types of homework instructional purposes. Fundamental concept is based on Cooper's division. He designed four main purposes of homework tasks that can help to plan the assignment properly and fulfil its objectives.

- Practise – very commonly used method of homework is to practise material which learners have already learned. In this case, it is necessary for learners to understand a given skill or the concept of the material due to a potential risk of misunderstanding and incorrect acquisition. Provided the subject matter is not acquired, it is essential to explain given material again. Homework for practising is mostly based on the same examples as those practised during the lesson. These types of tasks that are all the same in arrangement easily discourage learners in completing it. To name few examples of homework that belong to this group are for example corsebook exercises in the form of 'gap-fill', 'matching' and 'multiple choice'.
- Preparation¹⁰ – its function is to introduce a new subject matter for the upcoming lesson; it can also provide an insight of what learners already know. Preparation can also be used to evoke pupils' interest for the given concept such as finding the details of the given topic. Generally, it can provide the benefits of having a view of what is going to be taught or discussed. Such homework can be reading the initial part of a new unit and preparation vocabulary translation/pronunciation. Also different materials for the next lesson fit in here.
- Extension¹¹ - a function of the tasks aimed at extension is to apply already acquired knowledge to more distinctive situation/activity than the one used for acquiring. Both Cooper and Helms describe the transfer of the knowledge to new form (Helms 1996, p. 46, Cooper 2006, p. 1). Although, Helms (1996, p. 9) adds an extra category of homework which is aimed at extension too, but in the way of enrichment of already learned skills.¹² As an example, he presents learning and memorising definitions, vocabulary, poems and other rules etc., everything that broadens learner's knowledge.

¹⁰ Vatterott categorises it as 'Prelearning' (2009, p.97)

¹¹ In Helms ,Transferové úkoly' (1996, p. 50)

¹² In Helms ,Učební úkoly'(1996, p. 49)

- Creative¹³ – this category is explained by Cooper (2006, p. 2) as a task which “can integrate separately learned skills and concept” (Lee & Pruitt In Cooper 2006, p. 2). Similar aspects of this purpose can be noticed in Vatterott *Rethinking Homework* (2009, p. 98). She calls it ‘Processing’. Processing is a summary of learned skills and knowledge produced as a reflection. Helms (1996, p. 50) confirms that tasks with creative purpose can be less organised by teacher, thus learners are more allowed in engagement in planning it. Several examples provided by authors are presented: creative writings, reports on a book or a film, presentations and other long-term projects etc.

(Vatterott 2009, p. 96-98, Cooper 2006, p. 1-2, Helms 1996, p. 46-47)

In general, each purpose of homework embodies at least one of the components of communicative competence. It depends on the specific assignment. Nonetheless, homework which helps learner to develop his/her autonomous learning is not always included. In foregoing objectives, a few levels of learner autonomy have been perceived. These levels are described in Nunans’ table or interpreted in Janíková (2005, p. 19) as learner ability to: recognise one’s own needs, state the aims, choose the content and material needed for, plan and self-assess (Janíková 2005, p. 19). To accentuate the levels in particular objectives, the samples are restated in here.

Vatterott (2009) and Cooper (2006) explain prelearning/preparation homework as introductory activities to the lesson. This can offer learners to prepare for the lesson by looking up new vocabulary in dictionaries or reading about specific topic which raises an interest in additional reading. Each task that encourages self-learning can be considered as autonomous (Harmer 2007, p. 394). However, the most influential homework is oriented to creative production. As it is clearly noticeable in the name of this category, creative homework may be adapted to learners’ needs. While creating it, learners need to search for extra information to complete it. Therefore, their self-regulated learning is being developed. The remainder purposes are chiefly influenced by teachers and the space for developing independent learning is more limited.

2.3.2 Non-instructional objectives

In Cooper’s article *Synthesis of Research on Homework* (1989) non-instructional objectives are described as non-academic effects of homework that are important for learners’ self-reliance. Homework can foster learners to be self-directed, self-disciplined and to have

¹³ Own translation of ‘Tvůrčí úkoly’ mentioned in Helms (1996, p. 50)

better time management and planning. Cooper (2006), Hancock (2001) and also Obst (1998) believe that non-instructional purpose of homework is to facilitate self-study and helps them to reveal problematic aspects in their learning. Cooper (2006, p.7) demonstrated that homework has positive effect on pupils' mental skills like concentration, solving problems and be independent. Moreover, homework can support self-confidence. Buckland (1993, p.1) insists on assigning homework to reduce the pressure that is put on a learner during the lesson. He indicates that if the learner does the task in non-school hours he/she can control own work without any interruption. Therefore, learner autonomy is encouraged here. It is only up to a learner when he/she starts or finishes the given assignment. The learner also has to organize the time and plan the steps. As Fisher (2004, p. 44) wrote in his publication, which deals with useful advice and tips on how to think and behave in the learning process, to learn how to plan is a crucial factor for future ability to learn independently.

Although Cooper (1989, p.88-90) claims that improvement of academic achievement is more efficient for older students rather than for younger, he emphasises that homework definitely helps young learners in non-academic achievement. His research on homework further established that with young learners, homework enhances the development of character traits, study habits and other non-instructional qualities such as an attitude toward school and a connection between school and home, while for their academic achievement in-class study is more beneficial (Ibid.).

To sum up, both instructional and non-instructional homework objectives can be valuable indeed. Thus, homework supposed to be a very useful device to reach the aim of the foreign language learning. Additionally, it can provide more time for in class practise when more time-consuming activities like extensive reading¹⁴ or writing, which are finally very effective, are assigned to be done at home (Buckland 1993, p.2).

¹⁴ Extensive reading – this term appears in *Learning Teaching* by Scrivener (2005, p. 186). It is defined as a reading that we choose to enjoy. It differs from intensive reading which is included in a course book. Source for extensive reading can be a magazine, literature, fiction and any other longer text which is read for entertainment purpose instead of reading for detail.

3 Homework Typology in English Learning and Teaching

According to Maňák's research from 1991, most assigned homework at basic schools was supposed to be submitted in written form. Both Maňák and Buckland (1993, p. 3) explain that the reason is obviously an easier collection and correction. However, if the homework is still the same satiation can occur. Cooper (2006, p.7) defines satiation as "losing the interest in academic material, physical and emotional fatigue". Cooper (1989, p.90) and Painter (2010) both strongly disagree with assigning homework as a punishment because it absolutely loses a sense of learning progress. Unfortunately, homework assigned with the aim to punish learners for uncooperative behaviour or for incomplete homework still exists. Buckland (1993, p. 3) proposes that these negative effects may be prevented by assigning attractive homework in different forms.

The range of homework is very broad. Homework assignments can be divided according to its forms including written or oral realisation, sources required for homework accomplishment, time spent on homework, correction and many other less intensive aspects as well. Cooper (1989, p.90) presents the rule of frequency how long homework should last appropriately to the age of learners: for the 1st year up to the 3rd year of study he suggests no more than fifteen minutes per day, the 4th, the 5th and the 6th year learners' time on homework should not transcend forty-five minutes per day, and the 7th year to the 9th year students should study on homework maximally up to seventy-five minutes per day.

Homework can differ in many aspects. While in the previous chapter purposes of homework were described this chapter leads us to its types. Therefore the aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of potential homework activities with a goal to develop learners' communication in English language and to facilitate their self-awareness. This chapter is mainly based on Painter's resource book for teachers, which presents different views of how to adapt homework appropriately to the needs of the learners and Buckland's *Night Shift* which offers creative ideas of improving target language outside the class in more enjoyable way. Painter (2010) divides homework types according to skills and language focus – writing, speaking, listening, reading, pronunciation, use of language and lexis.

3.1 Focus on Language

Since the most frequently used homework focuses on practising already learned subject matter, Painter (2010, p. 72-84) arranged homework to be more attractive and useful to learner's needs. Albeit coursebook exercises in a form of 'gap-fill' and sentence

construction are helpful for practising grammar and vocabulary, learner can easily become bored with all the identical exercises. An alternative approach, which is suggested in Painter's (Ibid.) book on homework, is a 'gap-fill' designed by learners themselves when a teacher only chooses a particular grammar structure to be practised. This allows students to be creative.

Nowadays, English is a part of our lives. Another task is created to find the language outside the classroom. Setting learner homework which is based on browsing through the Internet, magazine or walking into a city and library furnish learners with a natural acquisition of a language. This kind of assignment seems to be very useful and enjoyable. Afterwards, a following activity in a lesson can be a discussion in which learners refer to where and what they collected.

3.2 Focus on Lexis

Homework serves efficiently to reinforce lexical competence. Hancock (2001) presents her research in which the results prove that pupils who fulfil lexical assignments have better understanding of vocabulary¹⁵ than those who did not. Painter (2010, p. 36–56) agrees that revision of English words done out of a lesson is productive. The aim of homework focused on lexis is to encourage autonomous learning and to “gain varied exposure to language” (Painter, p. 37). There are several methods of practising lexis as homework.

Memorizing any English expression perfectly is dependent on its usage. Painter (Ibid.) suggests practising recently learned expressions in a conversation. Unfortunately, every learner has not got the opportunity to talk to a native speaker or at least somebody who speaks English well. Nevertheless, this task may be assigned as a pair or group work and learners can practise it together. Other methods are applied to lexical homework such as analysing words, experimenting with remembering techniques and recognising words in different contexts (Painter 2010, p. 36). Painter (2010, p. 37) gives advice on using methods which help learners to easily remember vocabulary. For example, she recommends using visual imagination of the given word and its spelling as well. The second method is an association which is divided into four subgroups. One of these subgroups helps students to connect the word with a picture, mind map or a diagram. The next one associates a word with specific story or context. Then an association referring to words' origin or other interesting characteristic that helps to maintain the word in learners mind is described. And finally, learner can create a nonsense

¹⁵ As Scrivener explains in his *Learning Teaching*, 'vocabulary' and 'lexis' should be distinguished. This paper is dealing with both and in accordance with Scrivener's advice the word 'word' is also used to summarize both 'lexis and vocabulary' (2005, p. 227-228).

word out of the first letters of the words to be acquired. All these techniques help to evoke already learned vocabulary/lexis and may be practised as a homework preparation.

It is not only memorization, which is essential for learning new words, but also an authentic material that can support an acquisition. When learners are told to find words they have learned during the lesson they need to browse through the Internet, magazines/newspapers, movies or dictionaries. To extend the area of lexis learners can listen to an English broadcast and choose one specific word they hear more than once. Following activity can be a class discussion on particular broadcasts learners heard.

With regard to lexical activities, Painter (2010, p. 36–56) puts forward number of assignments when most of them could be appropriately exploited in a lesson. Whereas a preparation for these activities may rely on an authentic material found for example on the Internet. In fact, homework focused on a lexical approach mainly consists of practising recently learned vocabulary, its extension and finding more examples. As Harmer (2007, p. 229) wrote, the ideal way “of introducing new words is for students to read and listen to audio tracks and see or hear those words in action”.

3.3 Focus on Receptive Skills

Both listening and reading are engaged in this chapter. Through receptive skills a language is perceived in context. That corresponds to reinforcement of pronunciation in listening, lexical items and grammar all together. Listening to English films, news and songs provides learner better comprehension of native English. Audio recording is helpful as well.

To date, the technology allows sharing the same audio for example on the internet or many textbooks are available with CDs. All are very inspirational and offers number of possibilities of homework assignments. Similarly, magazine or newspaper articles, books or even recipes can ensure better learners. Making true or false worksheet on movie with writing a review is one possible activity to encourage learners work on their listening/writing skills.

Discovering new words related to news for example forecast or song transcription are attractive tasks aimed at an enrichment of learners’ vocabulary and listening ability. Extensive reading, explained above, such as reading about famous people, finding details from their lives or other topics based on learners’ interests with creating a presentation based on this information and preparing other reading activities for classmates are beneficial for developing both communication and independent learner (Painter 2010, p. 121-141).

3.4 Focus on Writing

Writing activities should be set to motivate learners to write more off their classroom. Time for a lesson is not always long enough to comprise all skills, especially those which require more time. Encouraging learners in writing outside class Painter (2010, p. 57-71) suggests activities such as leading a diary, writing notes on reading, creating questions and statements or creative writings. While writing the diary, students refer to their daily activities, feelings and things they are interested in. To embolden them in writing regularly, explain them that it is not expected to be hand it in, only if it is their own volition. Taking notes, creating statements and questions also encourages learners to read or listen to English texts. Such activities are often based on specific texts found for instance in different magazines, news or in a coursebook. Learners' duty here is to take notes of it or prepare questions on that text/article and then present them in class. The last mentioned here but definitely not least is creative writing. This allows students to be imaginative in writing own rhymes, short stories and other artistic works (Harmer 2007, p. 328).

3.5 Focus on Communication

Speaking activities designed for homework offer students to develop their confidence without teacher's and class members' listening. A worry about making mistakes is reduced and a learner can feel more relaxed (Painter 2010, p. 87). Even if an oral homework is sometimes accompanied by written notes it is mostly a discussion which is led in a following lesson. Therefore their utility can be revealed. If learners are motivated by meaningful homework they tend to work on their own which develops autonomous learning (Ibid.).

Activities for practising language outside school are worthwhile when a real-life situation is included. Painter (2010, p. 90-110) proposes tasks with the aim to find out different information about learners' city such as traffic, museum etc. and then present them in a lesson. Similarly, students can visit local shops to name all the objects which they have already acquired during the lesson (food, furniture ...). Another interesting idea which Painter uses in her book on homework is assignment when teacher communicates with learners via phone call or learners' recording when talking about themselves and other aspects of their lives or describing picture. Different methods appear in Buckland's *Night Shift* (1993). Learning by teaching somebody else can be stimulating. Teacher or students themselves may prepare what ought to be learned. Finally, creating a dialogue for themselves or for other

learners in a class can be included into speaking activities developing communication. And as Buckland (1993, p. 11) claims, recording one's own speech not only improves pronunciation but it also serves as the evidence for future analysis. It can be assessed by either teacher or self-assessed by learner him/herself.

To summarise homework focused on communication, speaking assignments that are attractive and entertaining are ascertained as very motivating (Painter 2010, p. 94).

3.6 Focus on Pronunciation

Pronunciation is not an area of English which may be acquired only in a lesson with teacher's assistance. If the sounds are pre-learned properly, students can practice pronunciation at home with their own pace (Painter 2010, p. 111). Frequently used tools for practising pronunciation in non-school hours are a tongue twisters, rhymes, movies or songs. First of all, students may practice specific sounds and compare them with those in their mother tongue. Sources such as dictionaries, television or radio can be helpful when finding other English sounds (Painter 2010, p. 113). Problematic areas of pronunciation may be revised by creating own tongue twister or rhyme. Nonetheless, all assignments set as homework need to be revised or connected to a lesson. Already experienced assignments help learners to see its benefits.

To sum up the typology of homework mainly based on Painter's book on homework, it is obvious that all these skills mentioned above are always interconnected. Painter (2010) suggests great number of activities to be assigned as homework. Cooper (1989, p.90) recommends to use both mandatory and voluntary tasks. However, the most important fact about homework assignments is to motivate learners to work on their language progress. That means to explain learners its objectives and to choose homework appropriate to learners' needs and interest.

4 Attitudes toward Homework

This chapter is going to ascertain several attitudes toward homework. Teacher, learner and parent are considered below. The aim of this chapter is to clarify roles of previously mentioned participants in homework process and to stress their interaction.

4.1 Teachers

This chapter deals with teachers' obligation to homework. Firstly, an assignment is discussed and after that this chapter looks into motivation for homework and homework assessment.

Teachers should organize homework as well as other activities when planning the lesson instead of assigning immediate ideas that comes to their mind during the lesson. Homework as an educational tool can provide teachers with monitoring learners' progress, knowledge and skills or even problems with particular subject matter (Cooper 1994). Various factors have to be considered before particular homework is assigned. Painter (2010, p. 13) suggests to introduce homework policy immediately at the beginning of the school year. This helps learners to perceive homework as an important component of an educational process. In the first place, teachers should support learner autonomy. It is important to help learners identify their way of learning. Painter (Ibid.) advises to draw up a questionnaire (see Appendix 2) or open a discussion among learners to discover their learning style. After collecting information about learners, teacher or even learners themselves can arrange tasks according to their needs.

Painter (2010) in her publication *Homework* designed number of homework activities aimed at specific skills of English language learning (some examples are mentioned in a previous chapter 3). Also Cooper (2006) propounds several rules to aid teachers to take as many advantages of homework as it is possible. First of all, homework has to be considered and planned carefully with an accurate aim. It is also important to present the aim and the purpose of the given assignment to learners. Thereby homework assumes an importance. If the teacher explains the usefulness of homework the learners can see its benefits and it seems to be more worthwhile to do it. The aim of homework has to correspond with particular learner's knowledge. If it is not related to learner's knowledge desperation and boredom with homework sets in. The same situation comes if homework is assigned to teach complex skills or new material. These knowledge need to be acquired first. Inadequate assignment is easily

recognisable. If homework is not manageable without any help and a learner is not able to complete it on one's own the task is not designed appropriately. Vatterott (2009, p. 47) once wrote that "sometimes it is easier to judge children as unmotivated or lazy than to reflect on our own teaching methods or to admit we don't have the tools, experience or training to meet individual students' needs." It depends upon teachers who are obliged to think carefully and be creative concerning homework. Discussing or starting homework in a lesson with a teacher offers learners a chance to ask additional question in the case they are not sure what to do. This can be also a reason for not assigning homework immediately at the end of the lesson. Learners are mostly packing and their concentration is away (Painter 2010, p.5).

Another teacher's responsibility is homework checking. All assigned tasks have to be checked. Without checking the task, students' progress cannot be monitored. Owing to homework checking which can reveal areas of learner's weakness, the problematic issue can be rethought again. Two possible ways of assessment are mentioned in Obst (2000, p. 154), Cooper (1989, p. 90-91). One of them is an assessment followed by mark. If teachers classify homework by mark regularly, pupils can get used to it and expect it. Thus copying and cheating arise. Learners' motivation to do homework should not be rooted in expecting good mark (Ibid.). Evaluation without numbers in a way of a comment¹⁶ helps to strengthen a relationship between learners and their teacher. A teacher then seems to be more trustworthy for his/her pupils.

Providing¹⁷ is another method used for evaluating homework. Formative assessment¹⁸ is a crucial part of improving learning. If provided properly teacher response is "one of the main motivating forces that keep students doing their homework" (Painter 2010, p.15).

Finally, teachers may use homework as an outline for parents to inform them about their children's learning process. For this reason Painter (2010) recommends teachers to let their students design homework diaries. If we consider written assignments, diary can be controlled very easily. Meeting parents is another possibility that should not be underestimated. When acquainting pupils with homework parents can be invited and meet a teacher. Teacher's responsibility is to inform parents about possible ways to help their children with homework (Hong 2004, p. 202). Generally, homework is a very powerful tool which can be either helpful or devastating. It depends on teachers if they utilise it properly.

¹⁶ Harmer 2007, p. 139

¹⁷ Feedback is described in Harmer's *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (2007, p. 137) as a 'formative assessment' that has essential role in learning process.

¹⁸ Harmer's definition of *formative assessment* is: a feedback provided to find learners' weakness with the aim of helping them "to improve their performance" (Harmer 2007, p. 379).

4.2 Pupils

As we mentioned in previous part, teachers are the main characters in designing homework which should be always related to learners' needs. But not only teachers have their role in homework. It is also pupils' participates in homework. For this reason homework need to be attractive.

Homework gives students the opportunity to choose a way of completing homework and also how much time they want to spend doing it (Eunsook et al. 2004, p. 198). Eunsook comes up with a model of the *Homework Motivation and Preference* where he states that a learner should be motivated by its teacher, parents and him/herself as well. Homework is a practical tool to monitor one's own learning and learners' independency is supported which is very important for their future (Buckland 1993, p. 32). Through homework learners can develop the competence of self-assessment. Unfortunately, this can be fraught with difficulties because learners are used to be awarded by mark (Vatterott 2009, p.117).

Nevertheless, many authors mentioned in this paper, believe that homework is great for developing learner autonomy. Painter (2010) and Buckland (1993) emphasize that homework set up by learners themselves is very encouraging. As well as they can provide assessment to each other. Highly useful is to let them design their own task according to their needs and interest. Painter claims that "the learner is not only a receiver but also a giver" (2010, p.20). Being involved into homework assigning learners can be far more motivated to do their homework and their autonomous learning is being developed.

4.3 Parents

Parental involvement in homework is another important aspect of homework. Homework is a tool for monitoring children's study development. Unfortunately, stress and disagreement among parents and children can be the result when parents too much interfere into homework. As ordinarily, parents have both advocates and opponents. Few advocates even insist on regular homework assigning. They believe that homework is vitally important for their children's knowledge development. However, this notion can have a significant effect when their child is for example ill. Parents often ask the teacher for homework to practise already missed subject matter (Švancar 2012, p. 9). Regrettably, Cooper (2001a) identifies number of limitations associated with parental involvement in children's homework, including parental over-involvement when using different instructional techniques

to the teacher or impact negatively on a student's sense of homework organisation, planning and even its completion.

On the other hand, one of the reasons for assigning homework is to connect a school and home environment. This includes parents' cooperation and gives them the opportunity to take a look into the school process. Homework communicates what children are doing at school. There are few concerns to be organized by parents. For effective completeness of homework parents should provide the best study environment to support their children in doing their homework (Cooper 1989, p.90), to provide good conditions for learning and support learners' attitudes towards homework (Hong and Milgram, 1999). Nevertheless, teachers cannot rely on perfect learner's background (Vatterott 2009, p.40).

To summarize this chapter, without all three personalities involved the theory of homework would not work. All of them need to communicate and try to agree on specific rules with the aim to equip learners with encouragement of doing homework.

Practical part

5 Research

5.1 Introduction to the Research

The practical part of this paper deals with types of homework assigned at the one particular basic school¹⁹ in the context of communicative competence. The research tries to investigate homework impact on developing learner autonomy. All required data for this research were specified earlier in the theoretical part.

This chapter is divided into five subchapters. Firstly, it is this brief introductory part which is presented. Then the aims of the research are formulated. After that research methodology with research characteristics follows. Next, all the obtained data through the observations and interviews are analysed. And finally, the results and interpretation of collected data are concluded.

5.2 Aims of the research

Throughout history different views on homework policy have occurred. On the presumption that it is well organized homework can be a very useful tool to improve second language learning. The overall aim of the research is to investigate what homework is mostly assigned at one particular basic school with an emphasis communicative competence and whether these tasks develop learner autonomy.

Another goal of this research is to provide an insight into primary and lower secondary teachers' expectations of homework. Thus the second aim of this study is to find out what teachers expect from learners and their parents when doing homework.

The research is underlined by these questions:

- 1: What aspects of communicative competence are mostly achieved by homework assigned at the chosen basic school?
- 2: Does homework assigned at this particular school helps to develop learner autonomy?
- 3: What are teachers' expectations of learners and their parents in relation to homework?

¹⁹ Term used in accordance to ISCED and MŠMT document *The Education System in the Czech Republic*.

5.3 Research Characteristics and Methodology

The research is conducted in quantitative methodological approach. It is followed by an analysis of types of homework mainly assigned at one particular basic school and teacher's expectations of homework. To collect the quantitative data methods of systematic observation²⁰ and semi-structured interview²¹ were selected. The method of observation was decided on to provide detailed insight into homework assigning. This method of observation examines types and purposes of homework with their impact on developing communicative competence and learner autonomy.

Teachers' expectations were collected by means of a semi-structured interview with each respondent individually. The interviews were conducted with an intention of providing respondents' opinions (Descombe 2003, p. 189) and to find out their expectations of homework. The respondents were four English women teachers, all agreed with participating in this research. The interviews were led in teachers' mother tongue to make them feel more confident. Each teacher is labelled according to the class in which she was observed to remain the research anonymous.

The study was carried out at one particular basic school in the Pardubice region with the permission of its headmaster. Thus the results found in this study are only applicable to this particular school. All the data were collected within four weeks in February and March 2014. Twenty-two English lessons in four different years were observed with the aim of investigating types of homework mostly assigned at different levels of this basic school. Two of them were employed as pilot studies. At both levels two classes of different levels were observed. At the primary level the third and the fifth class were included. The lower-secondary level observations were conducted in the seventh and the ninth class.

As Gavora (2000, p. 78) recommends, the back corner of the classroom was chosen to observe each lesson and be disruptive as little as it is possible. Homework details, components of communicative competence and stages of learner autonomy were registered into a self-designed observation sheet (see Appendix 3) which is based on the theoretical part of this paper.

²⁰ Denscombe presents a systematic observation as a method with rooted in social psychology which lay emphasis upon researching social interaction. That means it is suitable for a classroom research (2003, p. 191).

²¹ A semi-structured interview has similar characteristics as structured interview. Questions are prepared by the interviewer. However, these are open-ended questions and the interviewee can freely answer the questions (Denscombe 2003, p. 167).

5.3.1 Observation

Structured observation is a method which was decided on to conduct this research. The purpose of the observation is to record specific behaviour in the course of an action, whereupon it is analysed and the obtained data are interpreted. Gavora (2000, p. 76), in his remarks, emphasizes that prior to observation²² itself the objectives need to be specified. In the case of this study an appropriate observation sheet aimed at three main aspects of the research was devised.

The observation sheet is based on the theoretical part which provides entire terms necessary for the research. The original observation sheet was firstly piloted. As it was recognized after the piloting the original observation sheet was weak in its design. Observation piloting has shown that the observation sheet was appropriate to distinguish homework types assigned by teachers. Nevertheless, a few problematic situations emerged. The pilot study revealed weakness in design of the columns, especially in its categories. Moreover, not all of them were valid for this kind of research. Therefore, the structure was reorganized into four main parts (all described below) and also renamed in order to be used in accordance with the theoretical part. The columns with emphasis on the *deadline* of homework and homework *forms* were omitted. The forms were transferred to the table distinguishing participation on homework. To avoid confusion, the observation sheet was reduced and sections for additional comments were added instead.

The modified version of the observation sheet is divided into four categories (tables). The first part specifies the details of given homework. It starts with the aim of homework. In reference to Cooper in 4.1, the aim must always be stated even for homework itself. If the task is not well-planned it loses its function to develop learners' skills. This note was also created to explore whether the teacher motivates learners by explaining them the usefulness of the given task.

The introductory part of the first table is arranged to monitor and note the details about given tasks. The column that records a stage of a lesson in which homework is assigned comes afterwards. The stage of the lesson in which the teacher assigns homework may be essential. If the task is assigned at the very end of the lesson, it is not easy for learners to consider homework as an important part of the learning process. Teachers should introduce homework in an earlier part of a lesson to provide time for possibility to start the assignment within the lesson to prevent misunderstanding or to provide young learners time to write the

²² It refers to an observation conducted in quantitative approach.

assignment down. Provided that enough time for assigning homework is left, learners have an opportunity to ask additional questions about it.

Several shortcuts are used for this column. The beginning of the lesson is noted down as B, middle part of the lesson as M and the end part as E. The stage of a lesson is not an object of this research. On the other hand, it can monitor teachers' and learners' attention paid to the process of assigning homework which is definitely reflected in homework completeness and understanding. Furthermore, it can reveal whether the given homework was planned as a part of the lesson or not.

The types of homework with its objectives are the next section of the observation sheet. Homework types and objectives are designed into the same table. The data focusing on different skills and homework purposes were collected here. The objectives are further subdivided into *Preparation, Practise, Extension, Creative* purpose of homework, in agreement with the theoretical part 2.3.1. 'Preparation' activities include pre-learning for the following lesson such as learning of vocabulary and their meaning or reading an introductory part to the topic. 'Practising' as a traditional way of assigning homework is targeted on revision of already learned subject matter, for example grammar exercises in a form of 'gap-fill' or 'multiple choice'. Next, activities expanding knowledge and recently learned skills refer to the group of 'extension'. Last but not least is homework which develops learners' creativity. This can help the teacher to monitor learners' knowledge whether they have acquired the material correctly.

The following column called 'Aids' is used to match the assignments and required sources. Different sources are expected to be used for homework. The observation sheet refers to course material such as textbook and workbook in which many exercises are equipped. Similar to coursebook can be worksheet formed by a teacher. Self-designed worksheets may be suitable for learners' needs. Unfortunately, difficult situation occurs when learners tend to lose their copies. Sources such as the Internet, magazines and other authentic materials which are not directly connected to school are considered.

Thereinafter, the second part deals with homework purposes in more detail. To what aspect of communicative competence the tasks are oriented is the main focus to be observed. The records dedicated to the communicative competence were kept in a table which is separated to the element parts. This chart helps to collect data on components of communicative competence referable to particular homework. During the observation assigned activities were being matched to its appropriate aim.

The third table of this observation sheet is devoted to learner autonomy. Details to be

included in are the participation of both the teacher and the learner in homework. This mainly includes homework assignment and its elaboration. This table is mainly based on Nunan's table of learner autonomy development²³ (see chapter 2.2) and it is adapted to the needs of this research. If the statements in the chart appeared in the lesson the tick was put into its box.

The last section of the observation sheet is homework assessment. This part was designed to gather data on particular homework assessment which was mostly provided in the following lesson. Varieties of homework checking are T→L an assessment made by the teacher such as commenting or marking. Also an option of not checking homework at all is considered as a variety in this observation sheet.

Learners' self-assessment is then perceived. "Although, as teachers, we are ideally placed to provide accurate assessments of student performance, students can also be extremely effective at monitoring and judging their own language production (Harmer 2007, p. 140)". Each learner can assess another learner, and vice versa (L1↔L2)²⁴. Finally, the class peers assessment (C→L)²⁵ is taken into consideration in this section. The other two columns are to note down whether the homework is assessed in a written or an oral form. The collected data are marked by ticks.

At last, the second pilot study was worthwhile and this observation sheet was finally applied. Out of this observation instrument, it was easy to analyse the data obtained from the lesson.

5.3.2 Interview

Teachers' expectations and attitudes toward homework are hardly observable, hence the interview is another method applied to this research. As Denscombe asserts, "an in-depth insight into the topic (...)" is provided during the interview (2003, p.164).

The researcher ought to be able to justify the decision to go for depth rather than breadth in the material as being best suited to the specific needs to the project. (Denscombe 2003, p. 165)

Denscombe determines three reasons to justify the choice of the interview. These are: *Dates based on sensitive issues, Data based on emotions, experiences and feelings, Data based on privileged.* The case for our research is an intention on respondents' feelings and experience

²³ Nunan, 1995, cit. In Nunan, 2000, p. 11

²⁴ Checking homework in pairs, exchange exercises in pairs

²⁵ "Involving students in assessment of themselves and their peers occurs when we ask a class *Do you think that's right?*" (Harmer 2007, p. 140)"

with homework. Even though the questions were predetermined, the method of questionnaire would be too straightforward. Additionally, in such a low number of respondents personal contacts were more reasonable (Denscombe 2003, p. 165).

To increase the reliability of the research, interviews were conducted after finished observations. The questions were designed in a form of semi-structured interview with open-ended questions in order to provide respondents with the opportunity to answer according to their feelings and do not influence them. As written above, all the interviews were given in interviewees' mother tongue. The respondents were interviewed individually. Each interviewee was first asked the question for what reason they assign homework to describe one's own role and attitude toward homework policy. After that, they were asked to comment on their expectations of learners concerning homework. And finally, respondents' expectations of parents as potential participants in homework were discussed. Additional questions were also prepared, if necessary. Although, the pilot study had proved that the system of open-ended questions is sufficient and the more detailed questions were not even asked.

5.4 Research

The following chapter is divided into two parts and in both the obtained data of the research are interpreted and analysed at the same time. In the first section, the observation of homework is divided into four subsections according to the observed classes. Each class is supplemented with a summary table of homework. It explores the background of homework assignments, its purposes and assessment. Secondly, the interviews which ascertain teachers' expectations on homework are discussed.

5.4.1 Observations

This chapter is leading us through the observations and their analysis. Since the teacher is not obliged to assign homework, first lessons were arranged to be observed before spring break to raise a possibility of homework assignment. As it was defined above, the data on homework details were registered into the observation sheet. Individual lessons are analysed in descending order. The observation is primarily focused on homework itself: the process of assigning with the stage of a lesson, homework type and objective and also needed material. Then, development of communicative competence and learner autonomy is analysed. Lastly, the assessment of homework is commented on.

5.4.1.1 Observation – The ninth class

The ninth class was observed in duration of five lessons. The ninth class together with the second class were those with the less number of assigned homework. The first homework assigned to the ninth class, described in the observation sheet (see Appendix 2) was a project on specific topic. The teacher determined it as the project work on 'Famous Cities'. The aim stated by the teacher was to create any type of project work, on chosen famous city in a written form and be prepared for presenting it in front of the class. To avoid copying, the teacher also emphasized that the project facts can be based on different sources but interpreted by own words. This activity was supposed to reveal learners' ability to create a coherent written text and spoken interpretation as well as the ability to gather appropriate data by searching the Internet, books and other similar sources. Aids needed for processing this task were chosen by learners' themselves.

The process of an assignment started in the middle of the lesson as a follow-up to a speaking activity aimed at similar topic. It was firstly assigned and after that commented on. It is obvious that already characterised task connects a broad range of homework types and objectives. The 'Famous City' project largely referred to processing and extension in the way of revising knowledge to create new extended product. Lastly, 'preparation' for the lesson was perceived as well.

Homework types included in this particular project are definitely reading, listening (searching for information) and writing. Also focus on language and lexis is important here. Due to the final assessment, which took form of spoken presentation, learners were supposed to be prepared for spoken interpretation and pronouncing the text correctly. And finally, learners were encouraged to prepare additional questions and be prepared for a discussion. As a result of this task, interaction was achieved as the following activity.

Through project work, students were developing linguistic competences and pragmatic competence in all components while interpreting fluent speech and writing coherent text. The teacher allowed learners to choose the city according to their interest, the way of collecting facts and they could decide on what information they would like to mention. Consequently, learner's interest into the language may have risen thanks to the unlimited freedom of the content. Lastly, this project work enabled learners to become masters of their own learning.

The second task assigned in this class was divided into two parts. Teacher specified the homework as a writing activity. The goal was to read and write a film review. This task was assigned by the end of the lesson as a follow-up to audio-visual listening activity (film). Learners were firstly given the worksheets with open-ended questions designed by the

teacher. Their homework for the next session (the week after) was to answer the questions. The deadline for the review was scheduled for the week after.

This homework was focused on grammatical sentence creation, extensive reading and writing. The instructional objective of this homework was categorised as extensive and creative. Phrases, vocabulary and slang expressions (related to the audio-visual reception²⁶ provided in the forgoing lesson) were mentioned in the worksheet. Thereby, linguistic, linguistic markers of social relation and discourse competences were identified.

Learners were free to express their opinion. They were obviously attracted to the review task. Owing to the range of this assignment learners had to plan and organise it. It emerged that at least one stage of learner autonomy according to Nunan (chapter 2.2) was adjusted to the learner and non-instructional qualities were fulfilled.

To sum up tasks designed for the ninth class, all the obtained data are in accordance to the theoretical part. As we can see, only two assignments were set the learners during the four week observing and both together are able to fulfil the aim of language learning in all aspects of communicative competence. All the types of homework were involved as well as objectives except for practising already learned knowledge in coursebook-types of exercise. The table 1 below summarises the range of homework types used in only two homework assignments.

Table 1

	Lexis	Grammar	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing	Pronunciation
Practise							
Prepare	✓		✓	✓			✓
Extension	✓	✓		✓			
Creation		✓			✓	✓	

Another aim of this research was to find out whether these tasks are in favour of development learner autonomy. As it is visible in observation and either summarised later in conclusion of the thesis, the learner autonomy was being developed in more than one stage in this class. Both assignments evoked an interest in further study and provided an experience with planning and organization of the learners' time. Although, the formative assessment

²⁶ CEFR p, 71-72

came before the presentation itself, a learner could reflect on it later and the class commented on the style and interpretation. Thus self-assessment came through.

5.4.1.2 Observation – The seventh class

During five observed lessons of the seventh class, five similar tasks were assigned. The first observation of this class showed that the teacher tries to assign homework in each lesson. At the beginning, a short exercise aimed at practising grammar was self-assessed. The assessment was provided by learners. Some of the learners wrote the answers on the board and others were commenting on the right and wrong answers. The Teacher was supportive in a way of asking questions *Do you agree? Do you have another opinion?* to let the learners think about the results:

By the end of the lesson, the new tasks were set. The aim of the first one was stated as practising already presented vocabulary with an intention to be prepared for the test. This kind of task was complemented by another one which was aimed at practising vocabulary when complementing the sentences. Their purpose is the same – to practise particular area of vocabulary. Both assignments are included in learners' workbook and both are focused on lexis. The only aspect of communicative competence attached to these tasks is the mentioned focus on the lexical competence.

While the second task provided also the context of the given word, the first one was only aimed at memorizing it. Here, it depends on the learner and his/her decision on the way of realising the learning. We cannot define whether the learners are aware of their learning style or whether the teacher has ever provided any advices on learning vocabulary. On the assumption that the learning ways were discussed in this class, we may consider this activity as worthwhile to acquire given vocabulary. Possible ways to learn vocabulary are described in chapter 3.2.

The assessment of these two assignments was done in the next lesson. Workbooks were collected and knowledge of vocabulary was tested afterwards. At the end of the lesson new task aimed at practising grammar in student's book was assigned. This 'multiple choice' exercise was about to decide what is the correct form of the verb in the past. The purpose was functioning as a practise again. The entire lesson aim was designed as revision of the past tense grammar. Homework in this sphere is used as an extension of the lesson. This 'multiple choice' task has similar characteristics as previously analysed 'fill-in' exercise. The only contrast is that this directs toward practising grammar. This exercise was checked the next day. The teacher was calling out the individuals who were reading it and the teacher either

agreed on the answer or she asked others whether it is correct. This assessment can be considered as self-assessment (C→L), (L↔L).

Penultimate observation of this class brought two other homework samples. Both were assigned at the end of the teaching process again. This time, the two tasks were designed to answer the questions based on an article, which was chosen by the teacher from the pupils' workbook. After that, learners' were supposed to create additional questions to this text. The teacher also placed emphasize on being careful when translating new vocabulary and she recommended learners to note down the pronunciation too. The purposes of these two assignments are slightly different to the previously assigned exercises. These two are trying to reach more than one single objective. Firstly, the objective is an extension. The article contains grammar and lexis which were already learned and revised. Through answering the questions teacher can find out whether learners understand to the context. Another objective is a preparation. While finding out new vocabulary and creating additional questions, students are preparing for the following activity which will be partly in their arrangement.

Different focuses are seen as well. Focuses presented in these assignments are reading, lexis and language. We can summarize it as the reading with comprehension. Furthermore, focus on pronunciation ought to be mentioned. As the following assessment showed, learners were asking their peers the self-designed questions. The pronunciation and new vocabulary were rewritten on the board and entered into learners' vocabulary notebooks.

The tasks met linguistic competence standards especially in sentence/questions creation as well as acquiring new lexical items. Lastly, the reading task can foster learners' interest in extensive reading of English texts outside of the classroom.

Table 2

	Lexis	Grammar	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing	Pronunciation
Practise	✓	✓		✓			
Prepare	✓			✓	✓		✓
Extension	✓	✓					

The next table shows the facts about the seventh class' homework. We can define that even if five tasks were assigned they do not fulfil all the skill areas. It is emphasised that for this group is primarily important grammar and vocabulary practising and extension.

This short period observation also proved that this class is not evolved to be more independent in own learning. On the other hand, assessment was mostly made by the learners. Concerning learner autonomy, the self-reflection was extended at least.

5.4.1.3 Observation – The fifth class

The fifth class homework was always assigned at the end of the lesson. Aids included for completing given tasks were both coursebooks (work/pupils' book) and notebook. Homework number one was targeted on practising pronunciation through a dialogue from the pupils' book. The dialogue was presented in that lesson and the pronunciation was revised. After that, the teacher assigned the task and announced its aim to the learners.

The objective of this assignment is practising pronunciation and interaction with the focus on phonological as well sociolinguistic competences with linguistic markers of social relations. The learner autonomy is not being well developed in this task but non-instructional objective is to allow learner to become more confident in spoken interpretation of given expressions.

The next task was a grammar 'fill-in' exercise. All the factors observed are almost identical to a grammar 'multiple-choice' exercise mentioned above in the part where the seventh class observations are analysed. Only the content and the form differ a little.

The last homework assigned while observing this class is a creative writing. By the end of the lesson pupils were told to write five words connected to daily routines on the small piece of paper. After the pupils were ready, the papers were collected by the teacher and mixed. Each pupil then chose one of the papers and rewrite them into own notebook. After, the task with the aim was defined. Pupils were supposed to create a short coherent text about one day activity using words they had drawn. Extending learners' knowledge and processing are the main objectives of this assignment. Learners were expected to use their already acquired knowledge of the subject matter. Focus on lexis (daily activities expressions) and grammar (present simple) were considered. These are reflected in grammatical and lexical competences. Creation of a coherent text refers to discourse competence. Formative assessment was provided by teacher. Notebooks were collected and the teacher commented on in a written form.

To summarize the task focused on creative writing, learners could affect their peers' assignment but not purposively. They were announced the task after finishing the words. The main focus on writing was stated by the teacher, however the length and content was up to the

learners themselves. Five words were already given but not the context. That is why the learners were allowed to modify the assignment to their needs and to free own imagination.

Table 3

	Lexis	Grammar	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing	Pronunciation
Practise	✓	✓			✓		✓
Prepare							
Extension	✓	✓				✓	
Creation						✓	

According to the observation and the amount of given assignment we can claim that homework is not very frequent in this class. It is not easy to cover all the skill areas into three tasks in the fifth year level. Therefore it is commendable that creative writing is part homework at this level. Due to creative writing learners can “self-discovery which promotes effective learning” (Gaffield-Vile 1998, In Harmer 2007, p. 328).

5.4.1.4 The third class

The last class observations to be analysed are situated in the third class. Two different tasks were assigned within five observations. One was a picture colouring with function as preparation for the following lesson activity and as revision of colours. Secondly, it was the assignment aimed at learning a rhyme by heart.

To start with, the colouring assignment had an only effect in non-instructional objective. With young learners, this kind of homework enhances good character traits and an attitude toward school with connection between school and home. Their academic achievement in homework is not the main focus here. Their self-regulated learning can arise in the case of choosing the colours they have remembered. While colouring the picture, they tend to name the colours.

Nevertheless, the second task is assigned at the beginning of the lesson, listened and practised as the main activity of the lesson and all the new vocabulary is explained by the teacher. The pronunciation is emphasised. The teacher encourages learners to present the rhyme to their parents and practise it at home. She wanted to foster their confidence and motivate learners to pronounce sounds correctly.

Focus on pronunciation and phonological competence with the objective to practise is the crucial factor in this task. The assessment is led as learners’ individual recitation marked

by the animal stamps to motivate them. While recitation, teacher tries to help them or correct their wrong pronunciation.

Table 4

	Lexis	Grammar	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing	Pronunciation
Practise	✓						✓
Prepare	✓						

In fact, within one month all the English lessons were observed in this class and only two assignments were set. Most of the knowledge were acquired, practised and produced in the lesson. The type of homework assigned to the third class learners was chiefly aimed at preparation and practising of vocabulary and pronunciation. The secondary function is generally to develop good character traits and show the young learners that English can be done also outside the school building.

5.4.2 Interviews

The interview was designed as a semi-structural dependent on three specific questions to be answered by the teacher. The questions were asked in Czech language. Thus the answers may be slightly modified in translation and interpreted in the language of the study. Four teachers of different classes were asked to determine their expectations of homework.

In the first question ‘*Why do you assign homework?*’ teachers were summarizing the gist for giving homework to their learners. After analysing the observations it was realized that their answers to this question were in the concord of homework purposes they mostly assign. The ninth class teacher explained that she assigns homework mostly as a preparation, extension and creative work in the form of projects and a revision of already in class learned material. The seventh and the fifth class teacher agreed on Practising, revising and extension as the main reasons for assigning homework. Also the third class teacher assigns preparative homework for the next lesson. The only difference is that this preparation is not aimed directly at revision and extension of the given material but principally in preparing and completing different aids to be used in the following lesson such as colouring pictures when the topic of colours is thought or bingo chart for numbers. All activities that can save the time for more important ones are used. Furthermore, this teacher uses homework to inform parents about already learned subject matter.

The seventh class teacher replied that without assigning homework her learners do not prepare for the lesson at all. Therefore, she insists on completing homework as compulsory. The fifth class teacher acknowledged that she sometimes uses homework for finishing exercises not already finished during the lesson. The reason she gave for is that without these activities the particular subject matter would not be fully acquired. In fact, it serves as a practising of that learned material

The next question '*What do you expect from learners when doing homework?*' was to determine opinion on learners' attitude toward homework. All three teachers expect their learners to practise and prepare for the lessons by doing their homework duties. The ninth class teacher responded she would like to prepare learners for the secondary school. Thus she expects them to be creative and self-confident.

Also the second class teacher expects learners to get used to doing English outside the school.

In the last question, they were asked '*What is your opinion on parental role in homework?*' This one reflects to teachers' expectation of parents concerning homework. The lower-secondary teachers' (the ninth and the seventh class) opinion were analysed to be identical. Both agreed on the same expectation that no parental participation is needed in homework. They perceive homework as learner's response to care about. The ninth class teacher also explained that learners' parents do not want to be a part of their child homework at all.

The fifth class teacher insists on positive parental attitude toward homework in the way of checking the fact that their child completes it.

And finally, the third class teacher expects parents to support their child in doing homework especially concerning young learners. While asking the last question to primary level teachers they both mentioned that due to an unknown level of English language among parents, they prefer parents to do not help their child with learning and revising particularly when practising pronunciation. The only suggestions they have are parental interest into their child's knowledge and an emotional support.

These interviews revealed the difference between primary and lower-secondary teachers' expectations of homework. Those who teach the lower-secondary level had the same expectation of homework as well as those who teach at primary level. Although, the primary level teachers' expectations of parental role for homework are equal to the theory, the

purposes of homework all the interviewees tend to use the most in their classes is not broad enough. As it was seen in analysing observations, homework is not always utilised sufficiently.

5.5 Conclusion of the Research

The aim of this study was to investigate homework assigned at one particular basic school and to explore whether these assignments are developing communicative competence and learner autonomy.

Since the conclusion of interviews is already drawn in the previous chapter, the summary of the pivotal problem of the research is concluded here. The results proved by observation present that the preponderance of the teachers at this basic school seem to favour homework for practicing and extension of in class learned knowledge. The least assigned homework focus is listening. As a consequence of homework oriented to lexical and grammatical knowledge, it is self-evident that mostly linguistic competences, overwhelmingly grammatical and lexical competence, are affected.

The third section of observation sheet identifies impact on learner independent learning. Whether English homework at the basic school develops self-directed learning was another aim of this research. This leads us directly to the concept of learner autonomy. Homework itself can provide non-instructional objectives, however to reach self-directed learning, these objectives are not enough. More than half of the observed assignments have almost no effect on developing autonomous learning. Nevertheless, if we regard to the assessment part of this study, we can monitor that for many activities self-assessment is frequently used. And as we explained in the above part self-assessment contributes to autonomous learner. To give an overview learner autonomy in homework activities the fifth table is created. This table describes the participation in homework in each class and homework organisation. The ticks stand for amount of assignments in which these stages appeared whilst observing.

Table 5

	Strictly by a teacher	L can choose out of options	L can modify the task	L creates own task	Self-assessment
9th		✓	✓		✓
7th	✓✓✓✓✓			✓✓✓✓	

5th	✓✓			✓	
3rd	✓		✓		

The outcomes of this research demonstrate that all the types in the context of skill area as well as instructional and non-instructional homework objectives are applied to both levels of this particular basic school. However, the preferred way is practising already learned knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. In any case, the fact that none of the homework purpose is omitted support homework function as a useful device for extending learners' knowledge and skills with the impact on improving communicative competence.

6 Conclusion

To start with, if the teacher decides on assigning homework he/she ought to be aware of the range of possibilities to make it as beneficial as it is possible. It is irresponsible to assign worthless homework. Such homework can easily marred learner attitude toward learning outside classroom. We, as the teachers, should support learners' interest and help them enjoy English everywhere.

The thesis dealt with homework issue through its history, functions and types in accordance with developing communicative language competence and learner autonomy. Generally, homework seems to be an unpopular component of an educational process. The practical tries to present homework in more positive view.

The first chapter of this thesis goes back to the past as a witness of homework origin. As shifting through the history, the opinions on homework are arising. With homework origin, the advocates and opponents originate, too. Contrary to the first part, the second part of this chapter depicts contemporary view on homework. Following chapter is considering the purposes of homework. Three subchapters in here are describing attainable objectives of homework. Crucial purposes are described first. Communicative competence as an overall aim of English language is explained and divided into smaller components in accordance with Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. After that, autonomous learner and (non-)instructional objectives are defined. The last two chapters focus on types of homework and homework participants. Homework types are categorised in relevance to the skill area linked with communicative language competence. Home participants are divided into three groups- teacher, pupil and parental role are mentioned.

The practical part consists of five sections. After an introductory part, the aims of this research are stated. Then, the characteristics and methodology conducted by means of observation and short semi-structured interview are described. The final section is about research itself and outcomes of assigned homework at the basic school are interpreted.

RESUMÉ

Problematika domácích úkolů se řeší již řadu let. Někteří, ať už z laické veřejnosti, tak i mnozí pedagogové a psychologové se staví proti zadávání domácích úkolů a to především na základních školách. Často zdůrazňují, že veškeré znalosti by měly být osvojeny a procvičeny v rámci výuky. Zastánci domácích úkolů naopak úkol hodnotí, jako nedílnou součást výuky, která napomáhá přenést učení i do jiného prostředí, než je školní budova. Vzhledem k tomu, že výuka na českých školách má 45 minut, domácí úkoly umožňují rozšířit výuku i mimo vyučovací hodinu. Také zastávají názor, že domácí úkoly propojují školu s domácností a rodiče tak mají možnost sledovat, co a jak se jejich potomci učí. V každém případě by úkol neměl být orientován na dlouhé, vyčerpávající, někdy až zbytečné úlohy, ale měl by poskytovat možnosti být neustále v procesu získávání znalostí, v tomto případě anglického jazyka a zařadit Anglický jazyk do běžného života žáka nenásilnou cestou. Proto je důležité, aby se úkoly zadávaly zodpovědně a byly uzpůsobeny na potřeby a zájmy žáků. Tato práce se soustřeďuje na domácí úkoly v anglickém jazyce, jejich druhy v rámci jazykových dovedností a s ohledem na rozvoj komunikační kompetence. Dále pak zvažuje jejich cíle a to jak na vzdělávací, tak i na ty, které rozvíjí spíše žákovu samostatnost. Autonomie žáka je zde stěžejním faktorem.

Teoretická část, kromě problematiky současných domácích úkolů, také obsahuje definici komunikační kompetence a to na základě CEFRU (Evropský referenční rámec pro jazyky). České kurikulární dokumenty v rámci výuky jazyků často odkazují na CEFR. Komunikační kompetence je zde rozdělena do jednotlivých částí a její prvky jsou vysvětleny. Následující definice popisuje autonomního žáka na základě literatury věnované rozvoji autonomního učení (Holec, Nunan a Janíková). Tato kapitola pojednává o rozvoji autoregulovaného učení, kdy žák, nezávisle na učiteli, organizuje vlastní učení. K tomuto rozvoji mohou napomoci i zmíněné domácí úkoly. Jsou zde zváženy vzdělávací i výchovné funkce domácího úkolu, kdy vzdělávací cíle se zaměřují na procvičování, rozšiřování, přípravu a kreativní zpracování daného obsahu učiva, zatímco výchovné cíle se věnují rozvoji žákovi samostatnosti a zodpovědnosti vůči vlastním povinnostem a připravují ho tak na budoucí samostudium.

Třetí kapitola se věnuje typům domácích úkolů v anglickém jazyce. Jak již bylo řečeno, typy domácích úkolů, na kterých je založen i výzkum prováděný v této studii, jsou řazeny dle oblasti osvojovaných dovedností, jako jsou: poslech, čtení, komunikace, psaní a

zaměření na výslovnost, slovní zásobu a gramatiku. Jednotlivé typy jsou rozebrány na příkladech Lesley Painterové, která se tomu to tématu věnuje ve své knize *Homework*. Tato kapitola je i jistou inspirací. Ukázali jsme si zde několik návrhů jak zlepšit kvalitu domácích úkolů a jak je využít produktivně, aby žáka zaujaly a aby si z nich odnesl co nejvíce.

Poslední kapitola teoretické části se zabývá různými přístupy učitele, žáka a také rodiče k domácím úkolům. Jsou zde diskutovány role učitele v zadávání domácích úkolů a jejich hodnocení. Nejprve jsou zmíněny povinnosti, které by měl učitel na základní škole v rámci úkolů splňovat a také jak žákům pomoci využívat domácí úkoly efektivně. Motivace je zde také velmi ceněna. Tato kapitola dále odkazuje na Harmerovu knihu *The Practise of English Language Teaching*, kde je uvedeno několik způsobů hodnocení žákových výstupů. Kontrola domácích úkolů je velmi důležitá. Jakmile se učitel vypracovaným úkolům nevěnuje, ztrácí úkoly význam a žákům se velmi rychle zprotiví. Velmi vítané se zdá být i využití daného úkolu v následující aktivitě při hodině. K těmto způsobům hodnocení je zde ještě připojeno sebehodnocení žáků, které neodmyslitelně patří do koncepce autonomního žáka. Úkolům by se měla věnovat stejná příprava, jako se věnuje plánování vyučovací hodiny. Další úroveň, která je zde komentována, je role žáka. Domácí příprava by měla žákům posloužit jako způsob, kterým mohou rozvíjet svou samostatnost při učení se bez dohledu učitele. Úkol, který nemohou zvládnout samostatně, není ve shodě s jejich současnými znalostmi a je tedy bezvýznamný. Aby žáci úspěšně a samostatně plnily své domácí úkoly, musí být úlohy dostatečně promyšlené a přizpůsobené žákově úrovni.

Jako poslední jsou zde uvedené role rodičů v domácí přípravě žáků. Rodič není v žádném případě povinen vypracovávat či se účastnit vyhotovení domácích úkolů. Navíc se ani nepředpokládá rodičova znalost anglického jazyka. Z toho důvodu by mohlo dojít k nevhodnému osvojení dané látky a to hlavně v oblasti anglické výslovnosti. Co se týče přístupu rodičů, měla by se jejich pomoc zaměřovat především na podporu a kontrolu, zda dítě úkol splnilo a asi nejdůležitějším faktorem a to ne jen pro domácí úkoly, je přizpůsobení prostředí, v kterém má žák úkoly vypracovávat.

Cílem teoretické části je připravit podmínky, terminologii a přehled k níže zmíněnému výzkumu.

Empirická část zjišťuje, jaké úkoly jsou na vybrané základní škole využívány a jak který úkol ovlivňuje komunikační kompetenci. Dalším cílem zjištění je také podíl domácích úkolů na rozvoji autonomie žáka. Posledním úkolem bylo zjistit, co učitelé od svých žáků a

jejich rodičů, v rámci domácích úkolů z anglického jazyka očekávají. Výzkum byl proveden pomocí observační metody a interview na jedné ze základních škol v Pardubicích. Výzkum byl cíleně uskutečněn v době před jarními prázdninami, za předpokladu čtenějšího zadávání úkolu. Pozorování bylo zaznamenáváno do pozorovacích archů.

Interview s jednotlivými učiteli bylo provedeno v češtině, aby se učitelé necítili nepohodlně. Interview obsáhlo poslední cíl tohoto výzkumu, což je očekávání učitele. Otázky byly navrhnuty tři a to první jako shrnující důvod, proč učitelé úkol zadávají s cílem zjistit, zda jejich odpovědi sedí se sebranými daty z pozorování. Druhá otázka zahrnovala žáka a třetí rodiče a jejich očekávané funkce v domácích úkolech.

Studie poskytla přehled domácích úkolů zadávaných na základní škole a to na prvním i druhém stupni. V kontextu s teoretickou částí, veškeré typy úkolů byly použity. Jak se dalo očekávat a jak ukazuje i Maňákův výzkum z roku 1991, nejvyužívanější jsou a byly především úkoly na procvičování předem získaných znalostí. Nicméně, několik velmi zajímavých a kreativních úkolů se objevilo. Navíc se zjistilo, že velmi častou metodou hodnocení je sebehodnocení žáků, což příjemně přispívá k rozvoji žákovi autonomie. Veškeré výsledky výzkumu jsou uvedeny v části 5.4.

Ačkoliv byl výzkum limitován rozsahem, dalo by se toto téma zpracovávat i z více pohledů. Další výzkum by mohl být realizován za účelem zjistit názory žáků na domácí úkol v anglickém jazyce. Tento výzkum sice nepřinesl mnoho nových informací k anglickým domácím úkolům v rámci základní školy, ale umožnil nahlédnout do způsobu jejich zpracování a především do možností, jak úkol správně aplikovat.

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APPENDIX 1 – Nunan’s table of learner autonomy stages

1	Awareness	Learners are made aware of the pedagogical goals and content of the materials they are using	Learners identify strategy implications of pedagogical tasks and identify their own preferred styles/strategies
2	Involvement	Learners are involved in selecting their own goals from a range of alternatives on offer	Learners make choices among a range of options
3	Intervention	Learners are involved in modifying and adapting the goals and content of the learning program	Learners modify and adapt tasks
4	Creation	Learners create their own goals and objectives	Learners create their own learning tasks
5	Transcendence	Learners go beyond the classroom and make links between the content of classroom learning and the world beyond the classroom	Learners become teachers and researchers

APPENDIX 2 – Questionnaire on learning styles (Painter)

Questionnaire

Where and when

- 1 Do you learn better in the evening, morning, afternoon, or at night?
- 2 When do you have time for yourself so that you can study without distraction?
- 3 Where do you prefer to study: at home, at work, in the school library, over a coffee, outside?
- 4 Do you like to be in complete silence or with background noise, such as music?

How

- 5 Do you like to complete exercises from a workbook or a coursebook?
- 6 Do you like to create your own sentences and ideas?
- 7 Do you like to listen to English more than you like to read it?
- 8 Do you like to work with a friend?
- 9 Do you like to read aloud?

Give yourself a tip, perhaps by completing one of the following, if it applies to you:

I like to work with someone, therefore I should _____

I like to listen to music, so maybe I should _____

I like to read aloud, so I should _____

I like to be alone, therefore I should _____

The aim of the homework:

Through this assignment, learners will be able to provide coherent written text and fluent speech on the basis of ascertained information on specific topic.

Assignment (introduction to the task)	Stage of a lesson	Aids	Type /Focus on	Objective			
				Prep are	Practi se	Process /Creation	Extension
Project work topic: any Famous City	M	Documentary Magazines Internet Dictionaries Quarter paper Powerpoint Pc ...	Writing Reading Listening Pronunciatio n Lexis Grammar	✓		✓	✓

Additional descriptive comments: the task is presented orally and discussed with learners

Communicative Competence (Homework activities/assignments)		
Linguistic competence	Sociolinguistic competence	Pragmatic competence
-grammar pronunciation -lexis semantic -Orthographic Orthoepic	- - -	Discourse/functional Express themselves through fluent and cohesive, coherent text in both interpretation – written, spoken

Teacher's/ learners' participation in assigning homework	✓	Additional descriptive comments:
Learners can choose from a range of assignments (content, objective, form...)	✓	Self-study of required info
Learners can modify assignment to make it more suitable to their needs (content, objective, form...)	✓	
Learners create own assignments		
Learner assigns tasks to other learners		
Homework is strictly stated by the teacher (objective, form, exercise...)		

Homework Assessment		✓	Mark	Comment	Additional descriptive comments:
Formative assessment T→L					Feedback on 27 th February
Self- assessment	L1↔L2 (in pairs)				The project was firstly checked by the teacher (formative assessment) and now it is being presented to the class.
	C→L	✓		✓	After the presentation, speaking activity begins
Homework is not checked at all					

The aim of the homework:

To be able to distinguish particular range of vocabulary and understand them the in the context.

Assignment (introduction to the task)	Stage of a lesson	Aids	Type of HW /Focus on	Objective			
				Prepare	Practise	Process /Creation	Extension
-To learn vocabulary -To match the words into the sentences	E	WB WB	Lexis		✓		✓

Additional descriptive comments:

Communicative Competence (Homework activities/assignments)		
Linguistic competence	Sociolinguistic competence	Pragmatic competence
Lexical competence	X	X

Teacher's/ learners' participation in assigning homework	✓	Additional descriptive comments:
Learners can choose from a range of assignments (content, aim, form...)		
Learners can modify assignment to make it more suitable to their needs (content, aim, form...)		
Learners create own assignments		
Learner assigns tasks to other learners		
The task is stated by the teacher (aim, form, content, exercise...)	✓	

Homework Assessment		✓	Mark	Comment	Additional descriptive comments:
Assessment made by the teacher T→L		✓	✓	✓	The vocabulary memorizing homework is tested and then marked.
Self-assessment	L1↔L2 (in pairs)				The matching exercise is collected and will be commented on.
	C→L				
Homework is not checked at all					