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Activating learners as a preventive strategy for indiscipline in the classroom

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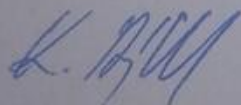
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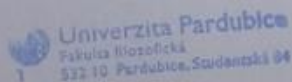
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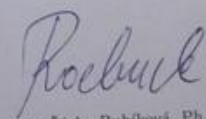
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ABSTRACT

This master thesis deals with preventing learner indiscipline in the classroom with the help of so called active learning. The thesis is divided into the theoretical and practical part. The theoretical part, firstly, introduces classroom discipline, manifestations of learner indiscipline as well as strategies for maintaining discipline in the classroom. Then, active learning as one of the preventive strategies for indiscipline is described. Lastly, the interconnection of active learning with the Czech curricular reform as well as CEFR descriptors presented.

The following practical part introduces a research which aim is to find out if learner disruptive behaviour occurs while active learning tasks are being implemented in instruction.

KEY WORDS

discipline, disruptive behaviour, preventive strategies, active learning, learner involvement, curricular reform, organizational forms

ABSTRAKT

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá prevencí nekázně žáků za pomoci využití tzv. aktivního učení. Práce je rozdělena na dvě části – teoretickou a praktickou. Teoretická část nejprve představuje školní kázeň, projevy nekázně žáků a také strategie pro udržování kázně ve třídě. Poté je popsáno aktivní učení jako jedna z preventivních strategií nekázně. Poslední dvě kapitoly pak pojednávají o propojení aktivního učení s kurikulární reformou České republiky a CEFR deskriptory.

Následující praktická část představuje výzkum, jehož cílem je zjistit, zdali při úkolech zaměřených na žákovo zapojení se do výuky dochází k rušivému chování ze strany žáků, či nikoliv.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

kázeň, rušivé chování, preventivní strategie, aktivní učení, žákovo zapojení se, kurikulární reforma, organizační formy

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INTRODUCTION

Discipline of learners is considered one of the essential factors for achieving effective teaching as well as learning. However, according to numerous experts in the field, the situation concerning learners' behaviour deteriorated in recent times in many countries all over the world.

This thesis emphasizes the importance of maintaining classroom discipline. More specifically, it focuses on maintaining discipline by preventing learner misbehaviour. There are theories claiming that it is possible to prevent learner misbehaviour by engaging pupils in the learning process. As a result, active involvement of learners in instruction should help to ensure maintaining set rules in the classroom.

Various approaches focusing on learner active participation during lessons have been introduced in the past fifty years. In many books approaches focusing on engaging learners in instruction are described as very beneficial in several ways for the teaching as well as learning process. Thus, the approaches have become the centre of attention of current education systems. One of those approaches is called 'active learning'. Its characteristic features, including the focus on understanding, cooperation of learners, the development of their autonomy and promoting lifelong learning, are regarded as inevitable factors of teaching and learning in numerous developed countries. The Czech Republic is not the exception.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, a curricular reform of the Czech education system took place. It emphasized the role of learners as active participants rather than passive recipients of knowledge, which is characteristic for the traditional approach. Also, the reform shifts its focus away from memorizing pieces of knowledge to understanding subject matter and developing so called 'key competencies'. In *Framework Education Programmes* (FEPs), the core documents of the reform and the current education system in the Czech Republic, the individual key competencies are described. The key competencies also serve as expected educational outcomes which a learner should acquire at the end of their studies within the particular level of education. As a result, the Czech curricular reform has much in common with the active learning approach.

Therefore, on the basis of the above mentioned theoretical outcomes, the thesis focuses on implementing active learning in instruction in order to prevent learner misbehaviour in the classroom.

The thesis is divided into two parts – the theoretical and practical part. In the theoretical part, firstly, classroom discipline is defined. Then, functions of discipline as well as manifestations of indiscipline are explained. The attention is specifically focused on disruptive behaviour, which is examined in the practical part of the thesis. Also, strategies for maintaining discipline are presented. Preventive strategies are the focal point of the chapter. Active learning is introduced as one of the preventive strategies and its characteristic features as well as benefits and potential drawbacks are further described in detail.

Then, the interconnection of the active learning approach with the principles of the Czech curricular is analyzed. However, since the expected outcomes in the FEPs are not specific enough for the purpose of the research that will be introduced in the practical part of the thesis, the last chapter of the theoretical part deals with the CEFR (the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*) descriptors. In the practical part they serve as criteria for observing operations done by learners during the lessons.

Finally, a research based on the theoretical outcomes is carried out. The aim of the research is to find out if learners' disruptive behaviour occurs or not while tasks focused on active learning are being implemented into instruction. For the research two classes of elementary school pupils are selected. With the help of the observation schemes the data are collected and the results analyzed in detail. At the end of the practical part, conclusions of the research are drawn.

To note, throughout the whole thesis the terms 'learners', 'pupils' and 'students' are used as synonyms. The same is applied when dealing with a 'teacher', 'educator' and 'lecturer'. Lastly, 'uncooperative behaviour', 'misbehaviour' and 'indiscipline' are also treated as words of the same meaning. The reason for this is the fact that even though the literal meaning of the terms might be slightly different, various sources, studied when writing the theses, use the terms in a very similar context or even for describing the same situation/person/behaviour. Hence, the terms are used as synonyms in the thesis as well.

THEORETICAL PART

1. CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE AS A PROBLEM

Discipline of pupils at schools has become a discussed issue in the last few decades (Bendl 2011, 40). There has been detected an increase of discipline problems in educational institutions all over the world which was proved by many researches in the recent past, such as Bendl (2001), Kolář (2001) and Cangelosi (2014). In the Czech Republic that was also confirmed by the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports as well as by the Czech School Inspectorate. They repetitively proved the increase of discipline problems of learners at elementary schools (Bendl 2011, 40).

It has also been found out that not only the number but also the seriousness of such problems increased (Rotterová n.d., 579). Thus, there have appeared calls for finding a solution to the current situation and bringing the level of learners' discipline up again (Bendl 2011, 40). In many western countries increasing discipline problems even led to the constitution of a pedagogical sub-category – so called 'Classroom management' (Ibid., 15).

Unfortunately, an ultimate solution has not been found yet and as a result, maintaining discipline in the classroom is much more challenging for teachers nowadays than it was couple of decades ago (Bendl 2011, p. 16). However, to be able to maintain discipline in the classroom is still absolutely essential for effective learning (Kyriacou, 2007, p. 83). Hence, numerous studies as well as researches have been and are being done in order to bring new outcomes to overcome this current problem (Ibid.). Some of them will be introduced later in this thesis when dealing with specific aspects of (in)discipline.

Nevertheless, finding a single way to solve this problem all around the world seems to be almost impossible because there are many factors influencing learners' discipline, such as culture, age, timetable, etc. (Bendl, 2011, 15-16). Therefore, when applying any methods and techniques solving discipline problems, teachers have to take into consideration a specific group of learners and their characteristics. Probably they will also need to apply more methods or techniques at the same time to deal with indiscipline in their classroom effectively (Ibid.).

After introducing the issue of (in)discipline as a widespread problem, it is necessary to be able to understand what the term ‘discipline’ actually means.

1.1 Definitions of ‘classroom discipline’

There are numerous definitions of discipline in the classroom. To begin, discipline can be explained as conscious following the rules, which are established either by an authority (e.g. a teacher) or a group of learners together with their teacher (Cooney 2016). At this point definitions of discipline by various experts differ.

Bendl (2005, 49) explains classroom discipline as conscious following the school rules and directions set by teachers, eventually by other school staff. According to this definition, the rules are set only by an authority. Even more radical definition offered Uher (1924) in the first half of the twentieth century, when discipline at school was highly required and even physical punishments were used by teachers when dealing with discipline problems in the classroom. He (1924, p. 23) defines discipline in the classroom as voluntary or forced subordination of an individual to an authority, certain rules and standards.

In contrary, Cooney (2016) agrees that establishing rules in the classroom is absolutely essential thing that should be done right at the beginning of the educational period, but she stresses the importance of learners’ participation in creating the rules. That way, “students will feel more invested in following the rules and creating an environment where others will want to follow them as well.” (Ibid.) Therefore, the rules should not be created just by the authority who leads the group. Auger and Boucharlat (2005, 72) also claim that there is higher likelihood that classroom rules will be kept if the learners are allowed to contribute in creating the rules.

The regulations established either at school or in a particular classroom should be followed not only by learners but also by teachers and the rest of school employees as well (Cooney 2016). Unfortunately, it happens that authorities break some of the established rules as they do not come in-time, use a cell-phone or eat during instruction. Thus, learners need to see models in their teachers and school staff which might be a possible reason for not following the rules by learners themselves (Ibid.).

To add, Kyriacou (2009, 107) describes discipline in the classroom as the maintenance of order and control necessary for effective teaching and learning He continues that the maintenance “involves pupils acting in accordance with the teacher’s intentions for their behaviour.” (Ibid.) The mentioned effectiveness of the teaching and learning process as

well as other reasons why promoting discipline at school is inevitable will be explained in the subchapter 1.2 Functions of discipline.

To sum up, discipline at school is understood as following the set of rules by all the participants of the educational process. The rules might be established either by an authority on their own or by a whole group of learners together with the authority. As previously explained, the second option has several advantages in comparison with the first one.

After defining the term ‘discipline’, the following section of the thesis will be focused on the importance of sticking to established rules and standards.

1.2 Functions of discipline

Learners at school often hear that it is important to have a set of rules to follow and that they simply cannot do anything they want to. The specific reasons why this is so, are to be presented in this chapter because maintaining discipline has numerous significant functions in the teaching/learning process.

At first, discipline serves for creating a safe environment for learners and teachers at school (Bendl 2011, 28). It means that they feel comfortable and not being in danger, thus, they can focus themselves on the teaching/learning process. That may bring better results of the educational process on both sides (Ibid.).

Bendl (2011, 28) presents two perspectives of discipline being very important – the protection of learners and the protection of teachers.

1.2.1 Protection of learners

Firstly, he explains why it is necessary to provide the protection to learners. Maintaining discipline helps to ensure the learners’ protection, their feeling of safety and security in the point of view of physical health (Ibid.). However, that is not the only reason for having and keeping rules at school. Bendl (2011, 30) continues by presenting other respects in which rules may protect and help learners either while physically being at school or while forming their personal development. He labels it ‘orientation’ and describes as protecting a learner from losing the right direction of a life journey (Ibid.). Rotterová (n.d., 583) agrees by claiming that discipline helps learners in their self-realization and self-formation.

Another very important respect is ‘performance’ because discipline helps in increasing the effectiveness of work (Bendl 2011, 30). Kyriacou (2009, 121) agrees and explains that the

effectiveness is achieved when “the teacher’s expectations and requirements [...] are made explicit and applied consistently” and also when the teacher is able to keep learners engaged in the learning experiences. Rotterová (n.d., 583) adds that the results of a group work also proved to be better when the set rules are followed.

Moreover, the relation between discipline and effective teaching/learning is mutual. Maintaining discipline in the classroom is necessary for achieving the effective teaching and learning process and, at the same time, Kyriacou (2007, 83) believes that it is possible to maintain discipline in the classroom through effective teaching.

To continue, discipline is significant also in a ‘hygienic’ way because it helps to increase cleanliness in the classroom (Obst 2002, 387) as well as it protects learners from detrimental effects, such as drugs, alcohol, etc. (Bendl 2011, 30).

Also ‘economic’ factors of maintaining discipline are very important for a learner because the rules help to prevent vandalism and thefts leading to financial losses on both sides - learner and institution (Bendl 2011, 30; Obst 2002, 387).

Last but not least, ‘safety and security’ respect must be included again. Classroom discipline protects learners not only from accidental injuries but also from intentional harms and bullying between learners themselves (Bendl 2011, 30).

1.2.2 Protection of teachers

The second perspective of keeping classroom discipline is from the point of view of a teacher as it serves as a tool used for the protection of teachers themselves (Bendl 2011, 31). Obviously, following the rules keeps not only learners but also teachers safe from several detrimental effects (Obst 2002, 387).

Bendl (2011, 31-32) labels this respect of discipline again as ‘security’ and adds that safety of teachers is not definite anymore. With decreasing discipline at schools not only the authority and respect but also teachers’ lives are in danger. Unfortunately, serious violations of set rules against teachers, such as physical violence or even bullying (nowadays also cyberbullying) have been noted in many countries in the world in the last couple of decades (Ibid.). Maintaining regulations at schools helps to ensure security of teachers which is very important for doing their job (Obst 2002, 391-392) and dealing with security problems may have negative consequences for teachers.

As a result, discipline is essential for teacher's 'performance' as well because following the rules helps to increase the smoothness and effectiveness of the activities prepared by a teacher as well as the flow of the whole lesson (Kyriacou 2009, 121). When dealing with learners breaking regulations, teachers are often much more exhausted and must put more effort into the teaching process (Bendl 2011, 33).

Moreover, constant classroom indiscipline may lead to losing effort and energy of a teacher to work. Consequently, that may even cause the end of the teacher's career. Unfortunately, numerous cases when teachers ended their jobs for such reasons were also registered in the Czech Republic (Bendl 2011, 31-33). All of this shows that discipline protects teachers also in the respect which is called by Bendl 'prognostic' as it helps to prevent teachers from the burn-out syndrome (Ibid.).

To conclude, the subchapter 1.2 described various reasons why maintaining discipline at schools is absolutely crucial for all the participants of the teaching and learning process. At this stage, the most common manifestations of school indiscipline are to be presented.

1.3 Manifestations of learners' indiscipline

It has previously been mentioned that the situation concerning keeping discipline at schools has deteriorated in recent times (Charlton and David 2003, 6). Therefore it is very likely that all teachers, no matter how effective, will face some kind of misbehaviour and then, it is extremely important to be able to deal with it (Kyriacou 2009, 120).

Before looking at various manifestations of learner misbehaviour, the term 'pupil misbehaviour' itself should be defined. According to Kyriacou (Ibid., 121) it is "any behaviour by a pupil that undermines the teacher's ability to establish and maintain effective learning experiences in the classroom."

Kyriacou (Ibid.) further stresses the ambiguity of at what point occurring deviations constitute misbehaviour and at what point they do not because quite often there arise situations in which a certain degree of misbehaviour can be tolerated (e.g. talking out of subject matter during the instruction). Then, it is the teacher who decides if the situation requires his/her action or not. In spite of this ambiguity, it is very important to create clear borders what can be tolerated and what is already beyond the borders as "where they stand in relation to a teacher's judgements of misbehaviour". (Ibid.)

After a brief introduction to the issue of learner misbehaviour, specific manifestations of such behaviour are to be presented. To begin, there exists a wide variety of learner behaviour breaking set rules. The vast majority of that is represented by not severe violations either within an individual (such as ‘daydreaming’, not paying attention, etc.) or affecting also other pupils (e.g. talking out of turn, making unnecessary noises, etc.) (Charlton and David 2003, 7-8).

Then, also more serious kinds of misbehaviour may occur in the classroom. It is, for example, verbal abuse towards teachers as well as physical aggression towards both teachers and pupils (Charlton and David 2003, 8). Unfortunately, the number of these violations has increased in the recent times. What is more, even the brutality of such assaults has been proved to be at higher level (Bendl 2011, 40–41). There exist extreme cases all around the world when teachers or pupils were seriously injured or even died after a learner’s attack (Ibid.). Thus, even though the occurrence of brutal deviations is far less frequent in comparison with ‘minor’ misbehaviour, it should not be overlooked and solutions for such situations should be sought (Charlton and David 2003, 8).

At this point, more examples of misbehaviour manifestations will be introduced. Nevertheless, for better orientation in the text it is necessary to structure the manifestations somehow. For the purpose of this thesis, the division by Cangelosi was used. He (2014, 330) distinguishes two groups of pupil misbehaviour – these are ‘non-disruptive’ and ‘disruptive’ behaviour. Both groups are to be analysed in greater detail further.

1.3.1 Non-disruptive behaviour

At the beginning, the terms need to be explained again. ‘Non-disruptive’ behaviour is a label for such behaviour that does not “interfere with the learning activities of a class as a whole; a student interferes only with his or her own learning” (Cangelosi 2014, 330). He consequently develops the definition by claiming that a “student usually suffers only minor consequences from one isolated incident” of non-disruptive behaviour (Ibid.). Teachers may easily overlook such behaviour, however, they should monitor the class carefully and deal with this uncooperative behaviour when noticing it (Ibid.).

The most frequent manifestation of non-disruptive behaviour is that learners do not pay attention. That phenomenon occurs mostly in two ways. These are ‘mind wandering’ and ‘daydreaming’ (Cangelosi 2014, 331). ‘Mind wandering’ is an uncontrolled coursing of ideas whereas ‘daydreaming’ is a cognitively controlled flow of thoughts (Ibid.). Also,

refusing to participate in class activities, failing to complete homework assignments, failing to bring needed materials to class, being absent or tardy, cheating on tests, etc. are considered to be the manifestations of non-disruptive behaviour (Cangelosi 2014, 333-349). However, all of the examples were just mentioned to give a general overview and are not to be developed further as the focus of the practical part of the thesis is ‘disruptive’ behaviour.

1.3.2 Disruptive behaviour

The second group of learner misbehaviour, ‘disruptive’ behaviour, can be defined in a similar way as non-disruptive behaviour. However, the different attribute is that disruptive behaviour affects not only the transgressor but also other pupils in the classroom (Kyriacou 2009, 121). Cangelosi (2014, 357) adds that by behaving disruptively students “tread on the rights of other students to learn” and teacher can hardly ignore such behaviour. Since disruptive behaviour affects more pupils at the same time and it includes also violent assaults, it is considered to be more serious than non-disruptive behaviour (Charlton and David 2003, 8).

To continue, disruptive uncooperative behaviour may further be divided into two other (smaller) groups – ‘non-violent disruptions’ and ‘violent disruptions’ (Cangelosi 2014, 357).

1.3.2.1 Non-violent disruptive behaviour

‘Non-violent disruptions’ represent the vast majority of disruptive uncooperative behaviour (Kyriacou 2009, 122). They are not offensive to other participants of the instruction. Learners and teachers are neither verbally nor physically harmed by non-violent disruptions of a transgressor (Ibid.). Though non-violent disruptive behaviour disturbs the flow of a lesson and may also distract the attention of others. Hence, it negatively influences the instruction and teachers should deal with the situations when such misbehaviour occurs (Kyriacou 2009, 121-122).

At this stage, before looking at manifestations of non-violent behaviour it is necessary to mention that learner behaviour is considered to be misbehaviour only when the pupil actions break the set rules. It is important to realize that some manifestations of misbehaviour, especially when speaking about non-violent disruptive behaviour, might be punished in some schools whereas in the others they would not be considered crossing the

borders at all (Bendl 2011, 35). Therefore, the following examples of non-disruptive violations might not be valid for all the schools generally.

Cangelosi (2014, 357-361) presents several specific examples of non-violent disruptive behaviour which according to studies done happen the most frequently. These are as follows: disruptive talking, interrupting, clowning, failing to clean up, etc. Charlton and David (2003, 8) add hindering other pupils, late coming, getting out of seat without permission and throwing little objects (such as pieces of paper). Also, especially the current topic of modern times, using a cell phone might often be spotted in some classrooms (Bendl 2011, 40-41).

Only few of the mentioned examples require further explanation and thus, there will not be elaborated on all of them. Disruptive talking includes cases, for example, when a pupil talks without raising a hand. Or, it might be any talking not related to the ongoing activity in the classroom (Cangelosi 2014, 357-359). Clowning happens when learners desire to get the attention of the others, often by trying to be funny (Ibid., 361). Learners might also be disrupted by classroom disarray (a littered playing field, inaccessible equipment and damaged supplies) as the learning conditions are disorganized (Ibid., 365). Hence, it is important pupils do not fail to clean up after themselves because all these seeming details “interfere with the effectiveness of learning activities.” (Ibid.)

Lastly, using a cell phone is one of the modern types of pupil misbehaviour. Not only pupils using the phone but also other classmates might be distracted from the learning process by the transgressors. Besides the sounds coming out of the phones, even just spotting a pupil playing with the phone might be disturbing for the others (Bendl 2011, 40). Unfortunately, nowadays cell phones offer many enticements for learners (e.g. texting, playing games, browsing the Internet, etc.).

Teachers should be vigilant about all of the previously mentioned types of non-violent disruptions for many reasons. First of all, the effectiveness of both the teaching as well as learning process decreases when such misbehaviour occurs (Kyriacou 2009, 122). Furthermore, the violations ruin the exhausting home preparation and cost the teacher much more energy during instruction (Ibid., 123). Lastly, some pupils might even feel uncomfortable in the classroom when any of the misbehaviour happens (Ibid.).

1.3.2.2 Violent disruptive behaviour

The second group of disruptive behaviour is called ‘violent disruptions’. They are considered to be the most serious type of pupil misbehaviour as it has the most harmful effect on affected individuals (Charlton and David 2003, 8). Cangelosi (2014, 366-377) gives several examples of such misbehaviour, both verbal and physical, such as bullying, fighting, assaults on teachers, vandalizing, etc.

Bullying is “antisocial behaviour intended to intimidate and threaten the well-being of another.” (Ibid., 366) As already mentioned, the aggressor might attack a victim verbally or (and) physically. Both ways have usually severe impacts on victims. However, bullying is not the focus of this thesis. For the purpose of this work it is important to point out that “bullying others – even outside the classroom – is disruptive to [teacher’s] planned learning activities” as the affected pupil may have problems with focusing on instruction during the lessons as well as on learning at home (Cangelosi 2014, 366-367).

Furthermore, pupil misbehaviour has developed throughout the time and as a result, also new types of bullying have appeared. Nowadays one of the most expanding misbehaviour phenomena is so called cyberbullying (Bendl 2011, 40-41). It means “abusing the ICT (Information and Communication Technologies), especially the Internet and mobile phones, for the purpose of bullying other people – such as blackmailing, shaming, maltreatment, harassment, etc.” (Police of the Czech Republic) Not only learners but also teachers have been affected by cyberbullying as they have become targets of problem learners. Unfortunately, despite various intentions, cyberbullying has not been eliminated out of schools as new cases of such misbehaviour still appear (Bendl 2015).

In addition, during the second half of the twentieth century as well as in the twenty-first century even cases of brutal physical assaults in schools have been registered (Bendl 2011, 40-41). In the USA, France, Germany, the Czech Republic and other countries the aggressors (learners) attacked their victims with knives and guns. That resulted in serious injuries and even deaths of learners and teachers (Vossekuil 2004, 4; Tondlová 2014). Although such attacks happen very rarely in comparison with the other discipline problems, solutions to prevent such tragic situations should be intensively sought.

To conclude, in this subchapter various manifestations of indiscipline have been presented. It is said that all the violations have certain causes. Identifying reasons for pupil

misbehaviour may help to find ways to prevent the misbehaviour. Thus, causes of indiscipline will be briefly introduced in the following subchapter.

1.4 Causes of indiscipline

First of all, it is necessary to realize that classroom indiscipline of learners is not a monocausal phenomenon as there are many factors (internal, external as well as situational) influencing pupil misbehaviour (Bendl 2011, 74). Understanding the causes of indiscipline is absolutely essential for dealing with the misbehaviour because it may help the teacher in seeking solutions of the problem situation, or even better, it may be helpful in preventing the misbehaviour (Kyriacou 2009, 123).

Specific causes of learner indiscipline will be discussed further on. For the purpose of this subchapter, the above mentioned division by Bendl (2011, 74) will be used. The internal factors are mostly the biological ones. Many aspects belong to this group, such as heredity and genes, temperament, hyperactivity, etc. All of these influence behaviour of a learner and hence, they might be possible causes of learner misbehaviour (Bend 2011, 77.; Charlton and David 2003, 22-31).

Then, there is a group of external factors which consists mainly of the social environment factors. These are: learner's family, friends, classmates, school as such and even the broader community around the individual (society) (Bend 2011, 77; Charlton and David 2003, 32). They explain that several aspects here have a great influence, for example: parent's way of upbringing the individual; parent's attitudes; a peer group learners attach to; attitudes and values within the group; conditions and overall atmosphere at school (e.g. providing supportive and collaborative environment by the institution); a global situation in society; mass media; etc. (Ibid.).

Kyriacou (2009, 124) mentions also a teacher as an external factor of misbehaviour causes. He claims that according to studies done, some pupils gave reasons for their misbehaviour as follows: a teacher was boring; a teacher could not teach; a teacher made unfair comparisons (Ibid.). Harmer (2001, 127) agrees that boredom might be a cause for behaving disruptively. He (Ibid.) also adds that it depends on a teacher's attitude when problem behaviour first takes place.

The third group of possible misbehaviour causes is called 'situational factors'. Examples of such factors might be e.g.: the current classroom atmosphere; the current mood of an

individual; workload of learners; physical conditions (weather, temperature, noise in the street, etc.); tiredness, hunger and others (Bendl 2011, 78).

After describing the causes and all the other characteristics of both discipline and indiscipline that were necessary to be defined, attention can finally be paid to the strategies for maintaining discipline in the classroom.

1.5 Strategies for maintaining discipline

Keeping classroom discipline is one of the most essential skills teachers should acquire because sooner or later all the teachers face some kind of learner misbehaviour throughout their careers (Kyriacou 2009, 120). Then, it is highly important that the teacher is able to solve a problem situation occurred and, at the same time, prevent the misbehaviour in the future (Ibid.).

Basically, there are two groups of strategies that should help to keep learners in the classroom disciplined. The first one is called 'intervention strategies' which focuses on dealing with misbehaviour that has already occurred; and the second group is called 'preventive strategies' which help the teacher to forestall the misbehaviour before it actually happens (Bendl 2005, 228). Both groups are to be described in greater detail in the following subchapters.

1.5.1 Intervention strategies

At first, when teachers notice misbehaviour in the classroom, they have basically two possibilities – react to the problem or ignore it (Bendl 2005, 217). Not reacting at all to learner misbehaviour is a bit risky because learners may feel that their behaviour is not inappropriate, consequently it may become even worse and very probably it will spread to the rest of the class (Petty 2009, 107). Therefore, the teacher's reaction to misbehaviour in the classroom is recommended (Ibid.).

To continue, teachers may use various strategies to react to and consequently to solve classroom indiscipline. However, the strategy should be considered carefully. Each situation is very individual and the chosen strategy should reflect many factors, for example learner's individuality and age, the seriousness of misbehaviour; the situation as such, etc. (Bendl 2005, 246). Hence, choosing an appropriate strategy requires a high degree of teacher's skilfulness and responsibility (Ibid.).

Specialists in the field, such as Kyriacou, Petty, Cangelosi and others offer various intervention strategies which teachers may use in their practice. At this stage, the specific strategies are going to be presented.

To start with, in some cases of indiscipline occurrence using eye-contact, or a 'stern facial expression', might be sufficient. Simply, "it is important to indicate to the pupil that you have noticed this" because many times it makes the learner stop misbehaving (Kyriacou 2007, 91). Eye-contact is often recommended as the first step when noticing a discipline problem (Petty 2009, 100).

Similarly to that, teachers may also use proximity which means that the teacher moves towards the learners disturbing the lesson. Again, by doing that the teacher indicates to the learners that he/she is aware of their behaviour (Kyriacou 2007, 90). The great advantage of this strategy is that the teacher actually does not have to interrupt the instruction (Ibid.).

Another non-verbal intervention strategy is silence. When noticing misbehaviour, Kyriacou (Ibid.) as well as Rogers (2011, 60) suggest making a pause in a speech and remaining silent for a few seconds. As in the above-mentioned strategies, the awareness of uncooperative behaviour is shown to the learners. However, using silence affects not only the misbehaving learners but also the whole class as well as the teaching/learning process. The instruction is interrupted this way, which might be considered a disadvantage of the strategy.

In addition, it is possible to use gestures, movements as well as the posture. Specifically, clapping hands may be a powerful tool to stop learner misbehaviour and at the same time to get a higher level of attention of all the pupils in the classroom (Petty 2009, 106).

To continue, non-verbal strategies have been just presented. However, there are, of course, also verbal intervention strategies. It means that the misbehaving learners are directly verbally addressed by the teacher. In such cases, various utterances may be used. For example, the teacher can address the off-task learners (= not working on the task set by the teacher) calling their names or asking them questions concerning what is going on in the classroom (Kyriacou 2007, 90-91).

Then, if there are rules established in the classroom, the teacher may simply remind the rule to the learners (Rogers 2011, 86). Also, Kyriacou (2007, 93) suggests the use of reprimands, which he defines as teacher's "disapproval of the misbehaviour that has

occurred.” However, using reprimands might be very tricky. Thus, he further stresses the importance of the effective, non-harming use of reprimands and provides numerous tips on how to achieve that. These are as follows: teachers should “target correctly, be firm, avoid anger, criticize the behaviour not the pupil, use private rather than public reprimands, avoid unfair comparisons, be consistent, avoid reprimanding the whole class” etc. (Kyriacou 2007, 93-96).

In addition, even after using all the strategies described, “pupil misbehaviour may persist” and “the use of punishments may be effective in restoring discipline” (Kyriacou 2007, 96). He (Ibid.) describes a punishment as “a formal action which the pupil is intended to experience as unpleasant, as a means of helping the pupil to behave appropriately in the future.” However, as in the case of reprimands, Kyriacou (Ibid.) stresses the importance of the effective, non-harming use of punishments. Petty (2009, 123) agrees and claims that “a punishment should be fair and sufficiently onerous” and “should attempt to achieve rehabilitation of the transgressor.” Kyriacou (2007, 99-101) mentions the same necessary qualities of an effective punishment as well and adds some more, such as “sparing use, timing, tone, etc.” Moreover, Petty and Kyriacou (Ibid.) agree that an inappropriate usage of punishments may have serious negative effects on learners (e.g. feeling hurt, feeling unfairly treated, even losing sympathy for the teacher or/and the subject as such, etc.) and therefore, using punishments and their severity has to be considered very carefully each time according to the given situation.

1.5.2 Preventive strategies

It is always better to prevent indiscipline in the classroom than consequently solve discipline problems and diagnose their causes (Kyriacou 2002, 103). Teachers may use various strategies to prevent misbehaviour in the classroom. These strategies are called ‘preventive’ which means that the strategies should contribute to the situation in the classroom when the actual misbehaviour of learners does not occur (Bendl 2005, 228).

Ur (1996, 265) claims that three essential strategies for preventing indiscipline in the classroom are: careful lesson planning; giving clear instructions; and being in contact with learners. It means: to plan each individual phases of the lesson (including time needed, teaching aids, etc.) and anticipate problems ahead; to make sure that learners understand what they are supposed to do (also to check for comprehension is recommended); and to

use eye-contact with learners as well as proximity (moving around the room in order to be near to learners) (Ibid., 265-266).

Kyriacou (2002, 103-104) agrees with Ur and adds a few more specific ways for teachers to prevent indiscipline directly in the classroom during a lesson. These are, for example, observing all learners during instruction and questions targeted to specific learners.

Kyriacou (Ibid.) also claims that teachers should adjust the pace of instruction according to learners' understanding. By doing so, the teachers forestall the situation when some learners are not able to follow the teaching/learning process and get lost. If they do, they might stop paying attention to the teacher and start being off-task which leads to their misbehaviour (Ibid.).

In addition, Kyriacou (2002, 104) gives two more recommendations which may have a preventive effect on learner misbehaviour. Firstly, teachers should help their learners not only with subject matter but also in their personal development (e.g. by talking about their feelings and needs). This way teachers may help the learners to realize their (possible) misbehaviour (and perhaps to make them stop it by themselves) as well as the teachers may find out the causes of learner's misbehaviour which may also help the teachers to stop or prevent it in the future (Ibid.). Secondly, teachers should make notes on any form of discipline violations in the classroom and consequently work with their notes in order to do both stop increasing the problem as well as prevent it in the following lessons (Ibid.).

In a similar vein, Cangelosi (2014, 57) introduces suchlike ideas as Kyriacou in the concept called a 'businesslike atmosphere'. With the help of this concept teachers can do their job "of leading [learners] to achieve worthwhile, meaningful learning goals without spending inordinate amounts of energy and time dealing with matters that distract [teachers] from doing that job." (Ibid.) 'A businesslike atmosphere' in the classroom is further explained as "a learning environment in which the students and the teacher conduct themselves in ways suggesting that achieving specified learning goals takes priority over other concerns." Cangelosi (2014, 58)

Then, Cangelosi (2014, 58-60) offers also specific steps for achieving such an environment:

- taking advantage of the beginning of a new school year or term to set the stage for cooperation (rules and clear expectations for conduct, important dates, etc.)

- being demonstratively prepared and organized (careful lesson planning)
- minimizing transition time between the individual activities
- using a communication style that encourages a comfortable, nonthreatening environment.

All of the above-mentioned characteristics provided by Cangelosi suggest that careful lesson planning as well as using effective instruction methods (focused mainly on engagement of students- and purposefulness of tasks) may contribute to prevent classroom indiscipline (Cangelosi 2014, 59).

In accordance with this claim, Kyriacou (2007, 84) also believes that classroom indiscipline may be avoided by skilful teaching. He describes the ability of ‘skilful teaching’ as a combination of ‘careful planning and preparation of the lesson’ and the actual ‘lesson presentation and lesson management’ (Ibid., 85).

Planning of the lesson includes e.g. setting the aims and objectives, deciding on types of activities, teaching aids, time needed, interaction patterns as well as organizational forms (Ibid.). The lesson presentation and lesson management consist of, for example, establishing teacher’s authority and good classroom relations, setting rules for learners as well as the teacher, monitoring learners’ behaviour, maintaining eye-contact, working with the voice, etc. (Ibid., 86).

In conclusion, various intervention strategies as well as preventive ones for maintaining discipline in the classroom have been presented in this subchapter. Also, their functions and positive effects on the teaching and learning process have been explained. Lastly, it is important to add that there is no general model telling which strategies to choose and when. It depends on the decision of each individual teacher in each individual situation. Teachers should make these decisions with consideration of learner individuality, the nature of misbehaviour and many other factors (Bendl 2005, 228).

The experts in the field such as Kyriacou (2007, 84), Cangelosi (2014, 51) and Harmer (2001, 127) agree that learner misbehaviour might be prevented by effective teaching consisting of the engagement of learners (actively involved in the teaching/learning process) and the purposefulness of the activities introduced by the teacher. Thus, the following chapter of the paper will deal with a specific teaching approach (called ‘active learning’) which is based on active participation of learners as well as their engagement in

the instruction. Chosen specific characteristics of ‘active learning’ will also be used in the practical part of the thesis.

2. CONSTRUCTIVISM

Before the actual ‘active learning’ is described, it is necessary to give some background information about constructivism in which this approach has its roots.

First of all, in the second half of the twentieth century, education was dominated by an approach what is nowadays called ‘traditional’ (Feden 1994, 19) and will be briefly introduced. Learning was regarded as “a process of accumulating bits of information and isolated skills” (Ibid.). The responsibility of a teacher is primarily to transfer knowledge to learners who are passive observers in the teaching/learning process (Ibid.). In traditional approach it is said that textbooks and lectures provide truth and there is just very little time for questioning, independent thinking and learners’ interaction (Murphy 1997, in Brown 1998, 6).

In contrast, J. Piaget, later known as one of the most prominent representatives of cognitive constructivism, did not agree with the traditional approach and presented a theory of cognitive development. He believed that “the fundamental basis of learning was discovery” (Mvududu and Burgess 2012, 110). Thereafter, L. Vygotsky, an influential representative of social constructivism, was convinced that J. Piaget centred too closely on the internal process of individuals and thus, he added the element of interaction and collaborative learning (Ibid.).

Then, also other psychologists and philosophers, such as Dewey, Bruner, Perry and others, contributed to the development of constructivism and its diverse branches. Although, there are differences between the individual tendencies within constructivism, they will not be compared in this work as it is not the aim of the thesis. Instead, characteristic features of constructivism as such are to be described at this point because active learning, which will be analyzed later, has much in common with constructivist ideas.

2.1 Features of constructivist learning

In constructivism, teaching and learning is based on the premise that cognition (learning) is the result of ‘mental construction’ (Olusegun 2015, 66). Pupils learn by fitting new

information together with what they already know and so they “continually update their own mental models to reflect the new information, and will, therefore, construct their own interpretation of reality” (Ibid.). As a result, learners gain knowledge as well as skills and form meaning on the basis of their own experiences (Ibid., 67).

Similarly to that, Kerka (1997, in Brown 1998, 9) explains that learners “construct knowledge by integrating new information and experiences into what they have previously come to understand” and they also reinterpret old knowledge “in order to reconcile it with the new”. Obviously, learner’s prior knowledge and experiences are very important for the learning process and subsequent actions of learners as well as teachers (Brown 1998, 6).

As the cornerstone of constructivism is the idea that learning is based on individual’s personal experience and interaction with others to build new knowledge, learners become active participants in the teaching/learning process (Billett 1996, in Brown 1998, 6). It is another crucial difference between the constructivist and traditional way of learning in which learners were just passive recipients and observers (Olusegun 2015, 68).

In constructivist learning, a teacher is not the sage on the stage and strict authority but rather the facilitator or guide of the learning process (Brown 1998, 8). Teachers should “engage learners in the discovery of knowledge and provide them opportunities to reflect upon and test theories through real-world applications of knowledge.” (Ibid.) In consequence, pupils become active creators of their own knowledge and gain a higher level of autonomy as well as responsibility in the learning process (Olusegun 2015, 68).

Also, constructivism demands the student’s focus on ‘why’ and ‘how’ of learning which leads to the necessity of using critical thinking (Manus 1996, in Brown 1998, 6). Therefore, in the learning environment teachers must provide opportunities for active learning via active techniques (such as experiments, authentic materials, problem-solving tasks, etc.) (Olusegun 2015, 67). Then, it is necessary that the teachers ensure the opportunities for cooperation (interaction) as well as sharing knowledge between learners (Tam 2000, in Olusegun 2015, 68). The same point is stressed also by Feden (1994, 19) as he agrees that great emphasis should be put on teamwork and interpersonal communicating skills because it is “an important source of motivation and support”.

There are a few more important features of constructivist learning. Not only knowledge but also authority is shared by pupils and teachers. The mutual respect of a teacher and a learner is required (Tam 2000, in Olusegun 2015, 68).

Moreover, students should be encouraged to engage in dialogs with one another as well as with their teacher (Brooks and Brooks 1993, in Olusegun 2015, 69). They should also be provided with enough time to construct relationships of their knowledge (Ibid.) and, at the same time, to talk about what they are doing and how their understanding is changing (Olusegun 2015, 67). This way, the awareness of the knowledge construction process (reflection and metacognition) can be reached which is one of the goals of constructivism (Honebein 1996, in Olusegun 2015, 68).

To conclude, from the characteristic features previously described it is obvious that the constructivist learning approach has several benefits. Pupils learn more in comparison with the traditional approach as “education works best when it concentrates on thinking and understanding, rather than on rote memorization.” (Olusegun 2015, 68) They also enjoy learning more because they are actively involved in the learning process. At the same time, constructivist activities focus on authentic, real-world context which stimulates and engages students as well (Ibid.). Lastly, constructivist learning fosters social and communication skills, fundamental for the personal development of learners, by emphasizing collaboration and exchange of ideas (Ibid.).

In this subchapter, underlying features of constructivism were presented. Describing constructivist learning could easily form the basis of an entire thesis. However, the objective of the subchapter was just to give a brief, general overview and the necessary context for the active learning approach, which is going to be characterized further on.

3. ACTIVE LEARNING

The approach of active learning was chosen for the practical part of the thesis as one possible strategy of making learners active in the learning/teaching process and, at the same time, preventing their disruptive behaviour. However, before the actual characteristics of active learning are presented, it is important to classify the term ‘active learning’ in advance.

On one hand, it might be associated with some other approaches, such as ‘student-centred learning’, ‘problem-based learning’, ‘discovery learning’ or ‘experimental learning’ (Cambridge 2015), which means that the relation between all the terms is equal. On the

other hand, by some experts in the field of education, ‘active learning’ is viewed as an umbrella term referring “to several models of instruction, including cooperative and collaborative learning, discovery learning, experiential learning, problem-based learning, and inquiry-based learning (Barkley 2010, 16), which means that the approach called ‘active learning’ is superior to the others.

Although many authors define the relation between the individual terms as well as their qualities slightly differently, it is obvious that characteristic features of the approaches often overlap with each other (Cambridge 2015). Therefore, in the thesis ‘active learning’ is to be regarded as the general term including the signs of all the previously mentioned approaches. In addition, the main reason for this decision was the implementation of the practical part which would have been too limited focusing on just one specific approach, such as ‘discovery learning’ or ‘problem-based learning’.

3.1 Definition and characteristic features of active learning

According to Cambridge (2015), active learning is “a classroom approach which acknowledges that learners are active in the learning process by building knowledge and understanding in response to learning opportunities provided by their teacher.”

Similarly to that, Bonwell and Eison (1991, in Brame 2015) describe active learning as “instructional activities involving students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing”. The activities should stimulate the learners to use higher order thinking skills, which include critical, logical, reflective, metacognitive, and creative thinking (Brame 2015). Active learning also puts the emphasis on pupils’ exploration of their own ideas, attitudes and values (Ibid.).

The definitions are further developed by claiming that active learning means that pupils take responsibility for their learning and teachers are in the role of enablers and activators of learning, not lecturers or deliverers of ideas (Cambridge 2015). As a result, not only knowledge but also the learning process (a process of making meaning) and understanding are the main goals of the active learning (Brame 2015).

As it is clear from the definitions given, active learning is based on a theory of learning called constructivism (Cambridge 2015) which stresses “connecting new ideas and experiences to existing knowledge and experiences to form new or enhanced understanding” (Bransford et al. 1999, in Brame 2015). It means that “learners can either assimilate new information into an existing framework, or can modify that framework to

accommodate new information that contradicts prior understanding.” (Ibid.) In consequence, learners build (construct) their knowledge on their own by adapting or replacing their existing understanding with deeper levels of understanding (Cambridge 2015).

The role of a teacher, as mentioned, is an activator/facilitator/guide of learners. Cambridge (2015) points out that teachers, when implementing active learning, should provide “learning environments, opportunities, interactions, tasks and instruction that foster deep learning”. Specific examples of such activities will be given later on. However, it is necessary to comment on one more feature of active learning and that is the interaction of learners.

Active learning “often embrace[s] the use of cooperative learning groups, a constructivist-based practice that places particular emphasis on the contribution that social interaction can make.” (Brame 2015). That is a clear connection to social constructivism which suggests that learning happens primarily through social interaction with others (e.g. a teacher or other pupils) (Cambridge 2015).

Moreover, to highlight the importance of the interaction and cooperation between teachers and learners, Lev Vygotsky, a prominent representative of social constructivism, described the ‘zone of proximal development (ZPD)’. That is the area lying between “what the learner can achieve independently and what the learner can achieve with the teacher’s expert guidance.” (Cambridge 2015) Vygostky also suggests that learning takes place in this area as pupils “solve problems beyond their current developmental level with the support of their instructor or their peers.” (Brame 2015)

The activities designed by teachers, therefore, should be focused on the zone (Cambridge 2015). Such activities are often also called ‘scaffolding’ tasks. Bruner used the term ‘scaffolding’ as a metaphor for a kind of teacher support where, however, the pupil is still the one who does the work (not the teacher) (Kyriacou 2009, 30). The teachers should ‘just help the learners to direct their cognitive processes’ which has been proved in practice as not an easy task for the teachers and it “requires a high level of skill and a sensitive awareness of both the pupil’s needs and of the subject matter in hand” (Myhill and Warren 2005, in Kyriacou 2009, 30).

After defining the term ‘active learning’ as such and also describing characteristic features of the approach, the following subchapters are going to analyse advantages as well as some possible disadvantages of active learning.

3.2 Advantages of active learning

If implemented properly, active learning offers benefits to all participants of the teaching/learning process – pupils, teachers and for the institution, too. Most of the benefits that can be reaped by implementing active learning have already been mentioned when describing the approach and its characteristic features. Therefore, at this point there will be just a brief reference to the advantages and then, some other advantages not mentioned so far will be added. To start with, advantages of active learning for pupils will be included.

3.2.1 Advantages for learners

Firstly, the change of the pupil status, from a passive observer to an active participant, is good for the pupil’s level of interest and entertainment as they enjoy learning more (Olusegun 2015, 68). Secondly, the emphasis is on deep learning and understanding which, in comparison with rote learning facts, helps to keep pieces of information for much longer and promotes life-long learning, too (O’Neill and McMahon 2005, 28; Cambridge 2015). Thirdly, there is an increased autonomy as well as responsibility of the learner in the educational process which “appears to be reflective of today’s society where choice and democracy are important concepts” (O’Neill and McMahon 2005, 33).

Then, fostering a mutual respect between learners as well as within the learner teacher relationship is definitely another advantage of the approach (Olusegun 2015, 68). Also, promoting the interaction and collaboration between learners helps to evolve their social and communication skills important for the personal development of the individual (Brame 2015).

Furthermore, numerous studies have proved that active learning is a more effective approach across the schools subjects (including language teaching) and the students achieve better results when active learning is applied. For example, Lee et al. (2003, 322–323) presents a six-year study of Lonka and Ahola (1995) who found that groups learning according to the active approach develop better study skills as well as understanding. Similarly, Hall and Saunders (1997) proved that pupils’ participation, grades as well as motivation increased with the help of active learning (Lee et al. 2003, 323). To add, Freeman et al. (2014, in Brame 2015) examined class sessions with at least some active

learning versus traditional lecturing. They concluded that a failure rate of learners is much higher in the case of traditional lecturing. Moreover, the evidence for the advantages of the active learning approach was so strong that they even stated that:

If the experiments analyzed here had been conducted as randomized controlled trials of medical interventions, they may have been stopped for benefit—meaning that enrolling patients in the control condition might be discontinued because the treatment being tested was clearly more beneficial. (Ibid.)

To conclude, Cambridge (2015) also claims that by using active learning, students will be able to prepare themselves for their examinations more effectively. This means that “revision really is ‘re-vision’ of the ideas that they already understand”.

From the previous analysis of the advantages it is obvious that active learning might be very beneficial for pupils in various aspects. At this point, the thesis will focus on benefits of the active learning approach which might be appreciated by teachers.

3.2.2 Advantages for teachers

At first, as pupils are actively involved and motivated in the learning/teaching process via active learning, there might be better cooperation with such students for teachers (Attard et al. 2010, 9). When the learners actually are they who do the work, there is more time for teachers to relax during lessons in comparison with the traditional approach. Hence, the work is not that exhausting for teachers (Brame 2015).

To continue, active learning has also a positive impact on working conditions of teachers because the role of a teacher (such as facilitator or guide) might be more interesting (than in the case of a lecturer or deliverer of ideas) and educators may avoid routine that way (Attard et al. 2010, 9).

3.2.3 Advantages for institutions

Lastly, there are some advantages of active learning for educational institutions as such, too. The previously mentioned researches proved that learners achieve better results and acquire more skills when active learning is implemented in the classroom. It is, therefore, beneficial for the institution as well because pupils may represent the institution in competitions, have a higher rate of success in entrance examinations and also represent the institution in pupils’ future professional careers (Attard et al. 2010, 10-11).

Also, some researches (e.g. Hall and Saunders 1997) found out that the majority of students taught according to the active approach would recommend it to others over the

traditional approach (in the case of Hall and Saunders' research it was 94%) (O'Neill and McMahon 2005, 33). It means that on the basis of students' positive feedback and recommendations, the institution may get more potential applicants for the fields of study offered.

In addition, it was proved that applying active learning helps to achieve better retention rates in higher education, which means that a lower number of students choose to leave their studies before completing them (Attard et al. 2010, 11).

After presenting various advantages of implementing active learning in the classroom, possible drawbacks and critiques of the active approach will be introduced further.

3.3 Disadvantages of active learning

Despite its popularity, active learning is not without its critics. The most discussed aspect is the focus on the individual learner and their specific needs. Simon (1999, in O'Neill and McMahon 2005, 33) claims that focusing completely on the individual learner can be dangerous as "it does not take into account the needs of the whole class". Active learning is a student-centred approach and therefore, it should reflect needs of individual learners. However, Simon (Ibid.) also asserts that if each learner "requires a specific pedagogical approach [...], the construction of an all embracing pedagogy or general principles of teaching become an impossibility."

Also, the approach of active learning might not be the best choice for all the learners in the classroom. "Students who value or have experienced more teacher-focused approaches, may reject the student-centred approach as frightening or indeed not within their remit." (O'Neill and McMahon 2005, 33) Thus, all the benefits of active learning may not work with such pupils and their study results may not be as positively affected as in the case of learners who consider active learning suitable for them (Ibid.).

In conclusion, active learning "requires highly skilled teaching that uses a wide range of instruction" (Cambridge 2015) and hence, the teachers should be well educated not only in their fields of study but also in the methodology of the approach. Only then real active learning can take place in the classroom (O'Neill and McMahon 2005, 27). Unfortunately, "many institutions or educators claim to be putting student-centred learning into practice, but in reality they are not." (Biggs 1999, in Lee et al. 2003, 322)

3.4 Common misconceptions about active learning

There are some preconceived ideas about active learning that people might have. Many of them are false and people are often mistaken about the approach. In this subchapter, the most common myths about active learning are to be refuted.

To begin, ‘active learning will cause bad behaviour’. Although students are encouraged to discuss and work in groups, the teacher is still the one who is in control of the class. Then, it depends on the teacher what level of noise is acceptable for them (Cambridge n.d.).

‘Students have to be physically active’. The active learning approach “is about making the brain active, not the person” (Ibid.). Thus, while using active learning, students do not have to move around the classroom.

Another misconception is that ‘active learning requires a higher amount of resources’. Actually, it does not need any additional source and do not have to build new rooms or install multi-media packages into already existing classrooms (Attard et al. 2010, 61). In consequence, the idea that ‘students/teachers need to be technologically-minded’ is wrong, too (Ibid., 63).

Then, ‘active learning makes students less respectful’. The approach requires critical thinking as well as expressing ideas and opinions in discussions. However, “healthy discussion in a respectful environment does not mean that the students will respect their teacher less.” (Cambridge n.d.) On the contrary, as described in the previous subchapters, one of the aims of active learning is to promote collaboration and a mutual respect between learners as well as within the learner teacher relationship (Olusegun 2015, 68).

Also, the myth that ‘active learning undermines the teaching profession’ is not true. Actually, “it is likely that the teaching profession will actually become more valued” (Attard et al. 2010, 62) because “active learning does not mean reducing the role of the teacher” who “is still the director of their students’ learning” (Cambridge n.d.). Moreover, the active learning approach requires mastering several additional skills by teachers in comparison with the traditional approach (Ibid.).

‘Students have more work to do’ is another misconception. Active learning does not necessarily put a higher workload on students. Even though it requires higher order thinking skills, students do not have to memorize long texts and innumerable pieces of information (Attard et al. 2010, 62).

Lastly, ‘active learning is not suitable to all academic fields’. When dealing with advantages of active learning, researches proving very positive results of pupils in various subjects were presented. Therefore, it is obvious that active learning may be used across disciplines (Ibid.; Brame 2015; Lee et al. 2003, 322–323).

The above mentioned misconceptions often originate in not being sufficiently familiarized with the characteristic features of active learning. However, in the thesis all the necessary aspects of the approach have been already described and therefore, the final subchapter dealing with active learning will introduce specific techniques within the approach that can be implemented in instruction.

3.5 Examples of active learning techniques

There is a wide range of feasible techniques reflecting the principles of active learning that can be used by teachers in their lessons. However, it is impossible to include dozens of techniques and subsequently other dozens of varieties of each technique in this subchapter. Thus, only a few examples relevant to English language teaching will be characterized. All of them are presented by several sources as model representatives of active learning as they follow more key features of the approach at the same time. In addition, some of them are more focused on subject matter of a particular discipline (‘what’) and the others on the way of thinking about and solving the task (‘how’).

3.5.1 Role play

In this creative and participatory activity pupils “assume fictional identities or envision themselves in unfamiliar situations” (Barkley 2010, 232). Students usually work in pairs or small groups and they need to apply knowledge and skills to fulfil the role they play. Using their imagination and having fun, students work together trying to perform the given situation (Ibid.).

3.5.2 Discussion (debate)

Another way to get pupils engaged and think critically is a discussion (O’Neill and McMahon 2005, 31). Not only talking about everyday life and asking pupils about their opinions but also more challenging topics may be discussed in debates. Using interesting quotes, controversial statements or ethical dilemmas encourages learners to think about values within the context of real-world situations (Barkley 2010, 313). Also, assertiveness and mutual respect, key features of active learning and indispensable qualities of a

successful debate, should be fostered in learners when having a classroom discussion (Brame 2015).

3.5.3 Concept map

A concept map is an example graphic organizer that can be used for many purposes (Barkley 2010, 219). More specifically, Brame (2015) defines concept maps as “visual representations of the relationships between concepts. Concepts are placed in nodes (often, circles), and the relationships between indicated by labelled arrows connecting the concepts.” Students may work individually, in pairs as well as in groups. Usually, just a piece of paper and a pen is needed. Students write their ideas (concepts) on a paper and gradually create a whole map of these concepts. This technique helps students to examine and understand relationships between individual elements (concepts) of the topic handled (Barkley 2010, 219).

3.5.4 Problem-solving

This technique includes a variety of tasks that can be implemented in the lessons. Generally, a learner must firstly recognize the nature of the problem in the given phenomenon and then, determine appropriate solution(s) to the problem (Barkley 2010, 252). “To do this, students must be able to look beyond surface differences among problems and perceive underlying similarities.” (Ibid.) The technique requires creative and critical thinking and when used in pairs or groups, cooperation of learners is also necessary (Attard et al., 2010, 32). In English language teaching, both tasks on solving life situations (e.g. survivor scenarios, moral dilemmas, etc.) and language issues (such grammar elements) can be implemented in instruction (Barkley 2010, 251-274).

3.5.5 Questioning

Teachers may also use questions very well, especially when the answer requires higher order thinking (e.g. application, analysis or evaluation) (Brame 2015). One specific example of questioning might be, for instance, a technique called ‘think-pair-share’. A teacher asks pupils a question requiring higher order thinking skills and gives the pupils one minute to think about or write an answer. After that pupils discuss their answers together for two minutes (Ibid.). In this activity as well as in questioning generally, pupils are also encouraged to think critically as they are asked to consider and comment on their classmates’ answers (Ibid.; Cambridge 2015).

3.5.6 Retrieval practice

‘Retrieval practice’ is an activity when teachers make pauses for two or three minutes every 15 minutes. They ask students to “write everything they can remember from preceding class segment” (Brame 2015). Teachers also encourage questions. This activity “prompts students to retrieve information from memory, which improves long term memory, ability to learn subsequent material, and ability to translate information to new domains.” (Brame and Biel 2015, in Brame 2015). In a similar way, writing reflections on learning in the lessons (three to four minutes) is suggested by O’Neill and McMahon (2005, 31), too.

3.5.7 Peer assessment and self-assessment

Lastly, various tips on how to work with assessment in active learning will be introduced. At first, providing learners with feedback on their work is very important. Teachers should also share assessment criteria with their learners. That actually might be a good start for involving learners in assessing their own work, which is also one of the key features of active learning (Cambridge 2015). However, not only sharing of the criteria but also giving learners the opportunity to participate on creating them might be of great benefit. A teacher can discuss the assessment criteria with learners when creating them by himself/herself or, after some practice, he/she can even let the learners create their own criteria (O’Neill and McMahon 2005, 32).

Further, teachers should promote peer assessment as well as self-assessment of their learners. That includes encouraging the learners to comment on their own work or the work of their classmates and also, teachers might even let the learners suggest or negotiate grades (Cambridge 2015; O’Neill and McMahon 2005, 32).

Nevertheless, letting the pupils to mark their performances might seem a large jump from current practice. Teachers can therefore start making smaller steps. Even by participating on creating the criteria, pupils take higher responsibility for their learning and, at the same time, reach a higher level of autonomy in the learning process (Cambridge 2015).

In conclusion, there are many other techniques and activities based on the active learning principles such as games, quizzes, etc. However, the aim of this subchapter was just to present several practical examples of the active learning approach. After doing so, the whole chapter concerning active learning can be concluded as all the necessary aspects of the approach have been described. At this point, the focus of the thesis will shift to the

curricular reform of the Czech educational system because many features of active learning can be found among essential principles of the reform.

4. CZECH CURRICULAR REFORM

The development of the world as well as society is constantly going forward. Especially during last few decades the changes are taking place very quickly. Obviously, education, its requirements as well as pupils and their needs have changed, too (Čechová et al. 2006, 8). Nowadays, learners are completely different from the learners attending school in the previous century, for whom the education system was created (Ibid.).

Also, society requires and will require the ability to solve unexpected situations of every individual (Hučínová et al. 2007, 5). Today learners will be required to meet new people, probably even work in so far unknown fields and use devices that will only be developed (Ibid.).

For all these reasons, also education systems need to be constantly developed so that learners are well prepared for their professional as well as personal life. Concerning the Czech Republic, the last significant change in the Czech education system so far was realized in 2004. Its focus was generally aimed at providing learners with a set of skills which can help them to cope with diverse life scenarios to come.

4.1 Fundamental principles of the reform

In the first decade of the twenty-first century a new system of curricular documents for the education of pupils between 3 and 19 years of age has been implemented. The system is in accordance with “the new principles of curricular policy formulated in the National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic (the so-called White Paper) and embodied in Act No. 561/2004 Coll.” (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 5).

The curricular documents are developed at two levels – state and school. Firstly, the state level consists of the *National Education Programme* (NEP) and *Framework Education Programmes* (FEPs). The NEP defines the education as a whole, whereas the FEPs formulate the binding scope of education for its individual stages (for preschool, elementary and secondary education) (Ibid.).

Secondly, the school level is represented by *School Education Programmes* (SEPs). Consequently, on the basis of the SEPs education is implemented in individual schools. Each school creates their own SEP according to the principles prescribed in the respective FEP (Ibid.). Teachers should follow the SEP in their teaching in the classroom. The idea of SEPs is “to create a school culture closely connected with the life of a local community, based on local conditions and realizing ideas and objectives of a specific school.” (Vališová and Kasíková 2011, 89) As a result, the curricular reform gives the opportunity to schools to create a SEP that exactly fits the needs and conditions of that particular school and people in it (teachers, learners and staff) (Ibid.). This also motivates the teachers to think about new and useful concepts for their school and to participate while putting the ideas into practice (Ibid.).

Although since 2004, when the Act No. 561/2004 Coll. came into force, slight modifications and innovations (based on changing society needs, teachers’ experience with SEPs as well as changing learners’ interests and needs) have been implemented (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 6), the fundamental principles of the FEPs have not changed (Vališová and Kasíková 2011, 88).

4.1.1 Principles of FEPs

The core principles are to be introduced in this subchapter. To begin with, the FEPs are open documents, so everyone can access them. They are based on “a new strategy emphasizing key competencies, their interconnection with the educational content and application of the acquired knowledge as well as skills in real life.” (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 6). Acquiring the key competencies is better than acquiring specific knowledge itself because the competencies possess longer durability (Čechová et al. 2006, 10). The key competencies will be commented on in greater detail later in the thesis.

Then, the FEPs stress the concept of lifelong learning (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 6) which is an essential part of the current quickly-changing world (Čechová et al. 2006, 8-9).

The FEPs also “formulate the expected level of education stipulated for all graduates of the individual stages of education.” (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 6) This shows that in each FEP expected educational outcomes are described. To explain, those outcomes mean what a learner should be able to do at the end of their studies.

Lastly, the FEPs promote pedagogical autonomy of schools as well as “professional responsibility of the teachers for the outcomes of the educational process” (Jeřábek et al.

2017, 6). The pedagogical autonomy is considered to be an advantage for schools as they can create their own SEP fitting their individual needs and specific conditions (Vališová and Kasíková 2011, 89).

Since an elementary school was chosen for the research in the practical part of the thesis, the most essential principles, specifically of the *Framework Education Programme for Elementary Education* (FEP EE), are going to be characterized further.

4.1.1.1 Principles of the FEP EE

All of the FEP EE principles that are going to be mentioned in this subchapter are taken from the FEP EE itself. Jeřábek et al. (2017, 6) presents several functions of the document. Firstly, the FEP EE is built on the *Framework Education Programme for Preschool Education* and at the same time, the FEP EE creates the basis for the framework education programmes for secondary education.

The FEP EE formulates everything that is necessary within the compulsory elementary education as well as “specifies the level of key competencies which should be attained by the pupils at the end of elementary education.” (Ibid.)

To continue, the educational content (expected educational outcomes of learners and subject matter), is also defined by the document. In addition, it “integrates cross-curricular subjects with distinctly formative functions as a binding part of elementary education.” (Ibid.)

Then, the FEP EE enables the modification of the educational content, working methods and also using additional supportive actions for educating pupils with special educational needs, talented learners and exceptionally gifted learners, too. (Ibid.)

To conclude, the FEP EE is also “binding for all secondary schools when determining their requirements for the entrance procedure for study at secondary schools.” (Ibid.)

After describing the fundamental principles of the FEP EE, the focus of the thesis will be laid on more specific educational trends, encouraged and supported by the FEP EE, in which elements of active learning can be identified.

4.1.1.1.1 Educational trends of the FEP EE

At this stage, just the tendencies connected with the features of the active learning approach will be introduced as the aim of the chapter is to show the interconnection of the curricular reform and active learning.

The FEP EE takes needs of every learner into consideration which leads to individualization of the teaching/learning process (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 6). It means that a teacher should establish optimal conditions supporting the individual development of a learner (e.g. providing assistance, enough time, etc.) (Hučínová et al. 2007, 17). In addition, schools should also offer a wide offer of optional subjects and so develop individual interests and capabilities of learners (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 6).

Moreover, schools as well as teachers themselves should create favourable social, emotional and working environment based on motivation, cooperation and activating/engaging methods of instruction (Ibid.). Subsequently, learners should also help to build such an environment by following the agreed set of rules, being respectful to one another and willing to help the others (Čechová et al. 2006, 10-11). Using activating methods is the essential aspect here as the role of a learner changes from a passive recipient to an active participant of the teaching/learning process (Ibid.). This aspect will be elaborated later in the thesis when dealing with the key competencies.

Another aim of the FEP EE is “to implement changes in the assessment of the pupils towards continuous diagnostics, individual assessment of their achievements and a wider use of verbal assessment.” (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 6) It is clear that all of the suggested changes are in compliance with the active learning approach as it stresses using formative assessment, assessing students individually and in consideration of their improvement, and using verbal assessment (not just grades) (Cambridge 2015).

To sum up, the general educational trends of the FEP EE going hand in hand with active learning have just been introduced. However, these are just a few examples of the parallel between the curricular reform and active learning. More examples are going to be showed in the following subchapter which is focused on the objectives of elementary education.

4.1.1.1.2 Objectives of elementary education

Elementary education should help learners to form and develop the key competencies and also provide them with a strong base in general education focusing mainly on real life situations (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 8). Specifically, there are nine objectives of elementary education stated in the FEP EE and the exact formulations of the objectives are going to be presented at this point. The objectives are defined as follows:

- to enable pupils to acquire learning strategies and to motivate them to lifelong learning;

- to stimulate creative thinking, logical reasoning and problem solving in pupils;
- to guide pupils towards engaging in effective and open communication;
- to develop the pupils' ability to cooperate and to respect their own as well as others' work and achievements;
- to prepare pupils to manifest themselves as independent, free and responsible individuals who exercise their rights and meet their obligations;
- to encourage pupils to express positive feelings in their behaviour and conduct; to develop in them perceptiveness and sensitive relations towards other people, the environment as well as nature;
- to teach pupils to develop their physical, mental and social health actively, protect it and be responsible for it;
- to guide pupils towards tolerance of and consideration for other people, their cultures and spiritual values; to teach them to live together with others;
- to help pupils to become familiar with and develop their own abilities according to their realistic possibilities and to utilise them along with the acquired knowledge and skills when making decisions on their own life and profession orientations.

(Jeřábek et al. 2017, 8-9)

To emphasize, it is obvious that all of the nine objectives mentioned above carry the characteristic features of active learning. Actually, in the formulations of the objectives there are almost all the key features of active learning: teaching pupils 'what' as well as 'how'; engaging pupils in activities as well as communication with teachers; stimulating critical thinking and problem solving; encouraging pupils to cooperate together; stressing the importance of lifelong learning; guiding pupils to mutual respect and tolerance; guiding them to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour, etc. (Brame 2015; Cambridge 2015; Kyriacou 2009, 30; Attard et al. 2010, 9; Olusegun 2015, 68)

As a result, this shows that active learning is not just a 'one-of-many' approach which may be implemented in the classroom. There are tendencies to incorporate its features into legal documents of the educational systems not only in the Czech Republic but also in the whole Western and Northern Europe (Čechová et al. 2006, 11). That suggests that the principles of active learning have become an important part of education in many developed countries and the potential of following the active learning principles might be of a great benefit.

The following subchapter connected with the Czech curricular reform will deal with probably the most important change that has been brought by the reform – the focus on the key competencies. It will be shown that in the descriptions of the key competencies there are clear links to the active learning approach, too.

4.1.1.1.3 Key competencies in the FEP EE

At first, the term ‘key competencies’ is going to be defined and after that specific aspects of the individual competencies connected to active learning will be outlined.

Jeřábek et al. (2017, 10) explains the key competencies as “a set of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and values which are important for the personal development of an individual and for the individual’s participation in society.” The competencies are not isolated. They are interconnected together and they overlap one another and hence, it is important to develop them altogether (not individually) (Hučínová et al. 2007, 7).

The competencies go beyond individual pieces of knowledge. Actually, they enable the effective application of the knowledge into practice (Čechová et al. 2006, 10).

According to the FEP EE, the objective of education is “to equip all learners with the set of the key competencies on the level that is reachable for them and thus to prepare the learners for further education as well as function in society.” (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 10)

The development of the key competencies is an individual, complex and lifelong process that can be labelled a ‘personality development’ (Čechová et al. 2006, 10). “The entire educational content and all of the activities taking place at school must therefore be aimed at and contribute to forming and developing these competencies.” (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 10)

At the elementary level of education, the FEP EE identifies the following six key competencies: learning competence, problem-solving competence, communication competence, social and personal competence, civic competence, professional competence (Ibid.).

At this stage, the individual competencies are to be described. However, not whole descriptions of the competencies will be analyzed in this subchapter as it is not the purpose of the thesis. The aim is to point out just the tendencies embodied within the key competencies that are closely related to the active learning approach. Again, as in the previous parts of the FEP EE, there are many common features.

Firstly, learning competence is to be introduced. Elementary-school graduates organize and manage their own learning, select suitable techniques and methods for effective learning and show willingness to carry out further studies as well as lifelong learning (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 10). They use critical thinking when working with information and compare the obtained results. Pupils are also able to assess their study results critically and discuss them (Ibid.).

Secondly, concerning problem-solving competence, graduates is able to: recognize and understand a problem and subsequently consider and plan “ways to address problems while employing [their] judgement and experience.” (Ibid., 11) Learners make prudent decisions and are able to defend them. In addition, they realize the responsibility for their decisions (Ibid.).

Thirdly, the focus will be shifted to communicative competence. It also contains a few characteristics of active learning as graduates: express their ideas as well as opinions in a logical sequence; take part in discussions; defend their opinions; and argue appropriately (Ibid.).

Another competence from the set is called social and personal competence. It has very much in common with active learning and therefore the exact formulations will be used. An elementary-school graduate:

- cooperates effectively in a group; participates – along with the teachers – in establishing the rules of teamwork;
- participates in creating a friendly atmosphere in the team; contributes to reinforcing good interpersonal relations by considering and respecting others when dealing with them; offers help or asks for when needed;
- contributes to a discussion within a small group as well as to an open debate of the entire class; understands the need to cooperate effectively with others when addressing an assigned task; appreciates the experience of others; respects different viewpoints and draws lessons from what other people think, say and do;

(Jeřábek et al. 2017, 12)

Especially, cooperating in a group, creating a pleasant environment and respecting others are the key features of active learning (Cambridge 2015; Olusegun 2015, 68). As a result, by following the descriptions of this competence, learners as well as teachers apply the active learning approach at the same time.

Further, in the descriptors of civic competence the respect of beliefs and values of others is stressed once again. Also, a learner is able to decide responsibly according to the given situations and offers effective assistance within their abilities (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 12). Brame (2015) agrees that mutual respect, help and protection between learners is crucial and considers it a significant part of active learning.

Lastly, the active learning features of professional competence are to be described. An elementary-school graduate “uses his/her knowledge and experience acquired in individual educational areas for his/her own development and preparation for the future.” (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 13) Considering the active learning approach, the ability to put individual pieces of knowledge together and apply them in practice is the most important feature of this competence.

In conclusion, all the six key competencies were introduced and their common characteristics with active learning analyzed. It has been shown that many of the key competencies features are simultaneously the essential principles of active learning. As a result, it can be concluded that the FEP EE promotes active learning in the teaching and learning process.

Nevertheless, for the purpose of the practical part of the thesis it is necessary to go into even greater details and define specific actions (operations) performed by English language learners while being taught in the classroom. In this case, two classes of seventh graders are to be chosen for the research. In addition, the attention is to be focused on speaking skills specifically. Thus, specific descriptors of active learning operations done by seventh-grade pupils acquiring speaking skills in the English language must be defined.

Unfortunately, the operations are not described specifically enough in the relevant part of the FEP EE. There are only three general descriptors dealing with speaking skills in the FEP EE and they are formulated from the position of a graduate (not a seventh-grader). Therefore, the SEP of the particular elementary school, where the research is to be conducted, was analyzed. Regrettably, the expected outcomes for the seventh-graders (in the English language speaking skills) are formulated in the SEP very similarly and still too generally, as in the case of the FEP EE.

As a result, it was decided to choose the descriptors from the CEFR (*Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*). More specifically, the language reference level A2 will be used for defining the specific pupils’ operations when learning speaking. Each

learner should attain the A2 (Elementary) level in the field ‘Foreign Language’ at the end of their elementary-schools studies (Jeřábek et al. 2017, 17). Also, it was confirmed by the teacher from the elementary school that the seventh-graders, who will be observed in the research, work with exercise books and materials at the A2 level.

Thus, the descriptors from the CEFR will be presented in the final subchapter of the theoretical part. However, at the beginning, brief information about the CEFR itself must be provided.

5. CEFR

To start with, the CEFR “presents a comprehensive descriptive scheme of language proficiency and a set of common reference levels (A1-C2) defined in illustrative descriptor scales, plus options for curriculum design.” (Council of Europe 2017, 25) To explain, learners start at the A1 level (Beginner) and gradually they can achieve the most challenging C2 level (Expert). The CEFR also promotes plurilingual and intercultural education as well as “the positive formulation of educational aims and outcomes at all levels” (Ibid.).

To continue, the CEFR describes a language learner as a ‘social agent’ who acts in the social world and exerts agency in the learning process. This implies a paradigm shift in course planning and teaching as well as in promoting pupils’ engagement and autonomy (Ibid., 26).

5.1 Action-oriented approach

On the basis of the previous characteristics, the CEFR presents an ‘action-oriented approach’ as the teaching and learning process is driven by action (Council of Europe 2017, 26). Obviously, it goes hand in hand with the active learning approach as well as with the Czech curricular reform documents. More specific examples of their common features will be provided later in this chapter.

The essence of the action-oriented approach is “a shift away from syllabuses based on a linear progression through language structures, [...], towards syllabuses based on needs analysis.” (Ibid.) The syllabuses are further focused on real-life tasks and “constructed around purposefully selected notions and functions” (Ibid.). This led to the formulation of

so called ‘Can do’ descriptors which function as the educational objectives and expected outcomes (Ibid.).

The intention is “to design curricula and courses based on real world communicative needs, organized around real-life tasks and accompanied by ‘Can do’ descriptors that communicate aims to learners.” (Council of Europe 2017, 26) As a consequence, the descriptors suggest what a learner needs to be able to do in the language at a certain level (Ibid.).

What is more, the action-oriented approach bears many other characteristics of the active learning approach. As the learners are seen as social agents, it means “to involve them in the learning process possibly with descriptors as a means of communication.” (Council of Europe 2017, 27) The aim is to imply purposeful and collaborative tasks and “to put the construction of meaning (through interaction) at the centre of the learning and teaching process.” (Ibid.) This clearly points at the constructivist theory background and emphasizes the importance of cooperation between pupils as in the case of active learning.

In addition, the collaboration should be fostered not only between learners themselves but also between a teacher and learner(s). It promotes the relationships between teachers and learners and it may even help to increase the study results of the learners (Ibid.).

After introducing the CEFR itself, its characteristic features as well as the connection to active learning and the Czech curricular reform, the focus can be shifted to the specific A2 level speaking skills descriptors.

5.2 CEFR descriptors

The CEFR believes that “language learning should be directed towards enabling learners to act in real-life situations, expressing themselves and accomplishing tasks of different natures.” (Council of Europe 2017, 27) Of course, these aspects must also be reflected in the criteria used for learners’ assessment. According to CEFR (Ibid.), “the criterion suggested for assessment is communicative ability in real life, in relation to a continuum of ability (Levels A1-C2).” The ability is defined in detail by the descriptors of the individual language levels.

The CEFR language level descriptors “provide a basis for the transparent definition of curriculum aims and of standards and criteria for assessment.” (Ibid.) They focus on ‘what’ (activities) as well as ‘how’ (competencies). However, before the descriptors will be

presented, it is important to highlight that the CEFR is a tool to facilitate educational reform projects, not a standardisation tool. At the same time, “there is no body monitoring or even coordinating its use.” (Ibid., 26) Therefore, each practitioner can utilize the ideas and concepts of the CEFR in their teaching/learning process, but there is no obligation for them to follow the document suggestions.

5.2.1 CEFR A2 level speaking skills descriptors

Despite the CEFR language reference levels are not standardised, they are commonly used in a large number of institutions all around the world (Cambridge 2015). In numerous other institutions the CEFR descriptors have functioned as a basis for producing one’s own assessment criteria (Ibid.). Thus, it has been decided to use the descriptors in the thesis, too.

As the focus of the research is put on speaking skills of seventh-graders, just the descriptors for speaking at the A2 level have been analysed. Moreover, the selected descriptors have been further narrowed and just the descriptors including the signs of the active learning approach will be incorporated in this subchapter. The descriptors will be quoted directly and parts relevant to active learning will be underlined.

The CEFR divides the speaking ability into two categories – spoken production and spoken interaction. Firstly, spoken production and its descriptors will be introduced. Spoken production may involve short utterances (e.g. a description or anecdote) or it may imply longer, more formal utterances (such as presentations) (Council of Europe 2017, 68). The CEFR further splits spoken production into five groups. These are: sustained monologue (describing experience; giving information; and putting a case); public announcements; and addressing audiences (Ibid.). However, the individual descriptors will be presented here altogether as for the purpose of the thesis it is not relevant from which group they are taken. In addition, some groups of spoken production contain no descriptors relevant to active learning.

According to the CEFR A2 level, a learner:

- Can describe everyday aspects of his/her environment e.g. people, places, a job or study experience.
- Can explain what he/she likes or dislikes about something.
- Can explain why he/she prefers one thing to another, making simple, direct comparisons.

- Can present his/her opinion in simple terms.
- Can cope with and answer straightforward follow up questions.

(Council of Europe 2017, 69-73)

To explain, the underlined words in the ‘Can do’ statements are: action verbs (to describe, *to explain, to make*, etc.) as they indicate learner’s active involvement; pronouns (*his* and *her*) as it is more engaging for learners to speak about themselves and their own environment (compared to speaking about an environment they have not experienced); nouns (*comparisons, opinion, questions*) as completing such tasks requires active involvement of pupils and sometimes even applying higher order thinking skills; and all of this are characteristic features of the active learning approach.

Secondly, spoken interaction and its descriptors connected to active learning will be presented. Spoken interaction “is considered to be the origin of language, with interpersonal, collaborative and transactional functions.” (Council of Europe 2017, 79) Also, interaction is an essential part in the learning process (Ibid.).

The CEFR splits spoken interaction into nine groups. These are: understanding the interlocutor; conversation; informal discussion; formal discussion; goal-oriented co-operation; obtaining goods & services; information exchange; interviewing & being interviewed; and using telecommunications (Ibid., 80). Again, the descriptors from all groups will be presented altogether and some groups contain no descriptors relevant to the focus of the thesis.

According to the CEFR A2 level, a learner:

- Can ask and answer questions and exchange ideas and information on familiar topics in predictable everyday situations.
- Can establish social contact.
- Can initiate, maintain and close a simple conversation.
- Can participate in short conversations in routine contexts on topics of interest.
- Can express how he/she feels in simple terms.
- Can say what he/she likes and dislikes.
- Can ask questions and understand the answers relating to most routine matters.
- Can express and exchange opinions and compare things and people using simple language.

- Can agree and disagree with others.
- Can discuss everyday practical issues in a simple way, what to do, where to go and make arrangements to meet.
- Can exchange relevant information and give his/her opinion on practical problems when asked directly.
- Can say what he/she thinks about things when addressed directly.
- Can discuss what to do next, making and responding to suggestions, asking for and giving directions.
- Can communicate in simple and routine tasks using simple phrases to ask for and provide things, to get simple information and to discuss what to do next.
- Can interact in predictable everyday situations (e.g. a post office, a station, a shop).
- Can communicate ideas and information on familiar topics.
- Can answer simple questions and respond to simple statements in an interview.

(Council of Europe 2017, 81-90)

Similarly to the previous list of presented ‘Can do’ statements, some of the descriptors overlap with each other and their formulations are close in some cases. However, all of them have been included to the list in order to create as detailed list of learners’ activities/operations as possible. As a result, the more operations are included in the list, the more operations might be consequently registered in the research. In addition, the principle of underlying the words in the statements is the same as in the previous list. Again, action verbs, pronouns and nouns related to the active learning approach have been highlighted.

In conclusion, the CEFR speaking skills descriptors have been analysed and those related to active learning have been incorporated into this subchapter. It will be elaborated on the use of the ‘Can do’ descriptors for the research in the practical part of the thesis. However, before the practical part will be opened, it is necessary to conclude the theoretical one.

6. CONCLUSION OF THE THEORETICAL PART

At the beginning of the thesis, the problem with indiscipline in educational institutions was introduced. After explaining why maintaining discipline in the classroom is important (such as the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process), various strategies to solve (potential) violations of the set rules were presented. One of them might be implementing active learning into the classroom. Therefore, the approach was characterized in detail including its benefits as well as potential drawbacks.

Further, the Czech curricular reform and its documents were described as they have a lot of in common with active learning. Focusing on the active involvement of learners in the teaching and learning process, acquiring not only knowledge but also (and mainly) skills and abilities, and fostering cooperation, autonomy as well as respect among pupils are the key features of both the reform and active learning as well. However, neither the FEP EE nor the SEP include speaking skills descriptors specific enough for observing individual operations of learners (at a specific level) during the lessons. Thus, it was decided to use the CEFR 'Can do' statements.

The CEFR itself was introduced at first. Then, after analyzing the CEFR speaking skills descriptors, those bearing common signs with active learning and the Czech curricular reform were presented in the thesis. The descriptors will further be used in the practical part, when an observation sheet will be created.

At this stage, after defining all the necessary theoretical background for the following research section, the practical part of the thesis can be opened.

PRACTICAL PART

7. RESEARCH DESIGN

At the beginning, the main objective of the practical part is to verify the outcomes introduced in the theoretical part. Specifically, to prove or refute the claims of the experts that active involvement of learners into the teaching and learning process may work as a preventive strategy of indiscipline. Harmer (2001, 127) states that “when students are engaged with a task or a topic they are unlikely to behave disruptively.” Further, Kyriacou (2002, in Rogers 2002, 40) presents a similar idea by claiming:

The golden rule of maintaining discipline is to realise that good discipline is natural consequence of good teaching. If we teach effectively by making the work clear and interesting and helping pupils to stay ‘on task’ by keeping them involved in the lesson and helping them when they have problems with the work, we will find that discipline will follow.

In a similar vein, Bendl (2011) and Cangelosi (2014) also agrees that engaging learners and making them active may help to obtain good discipline in the classroom. Moreover, since active learning and teaching is also the aim of the Czech curricular documents (introduced as pillars of the Czech curricular reform), it seemed topical and relevant to design a research verifying these theoretical conclusions. Therefore, such a research was carried out and in the practical part of the thesis the course of the research process as well as its results will be presented.

However, to start with, the structure of the practical part is to be described. Firstly, the aim of the research will be mentioned. Secondly, a theoretical conception of a research will be provided. Thirdly, the research questions will be formulated. Then, background information about the research conditions will be given. Further, the data collection tool selected for the research will be defined and a specific example of an observation scheme will be illustrated. The following subchapter will describe piloting the observations scheme. In conclusion, the last two subchapters of the research will deal with data analyses and the interpretation of the research outcomes.

7.1 Aim of the research

According to the theoretical base, the aim of the research was formulated as follows: “to find out if learners’ disruptive behaviour occurs or not while tasks focused on the active learning approach are being implemented into instruction.” This was examined with the help of an observation sheet while the researcher was present in the classroom. However, before introducing the research in greater detail, some more theoretical background needs to be provided.

7.2 Theoretical conception of a research

A research is a systematic and carefully planned process of obtaining new knowledge. The aim of a research is to answer research questions and consequently contribute to the development of the examined field of study (Hendl 2016, 26). Similarly, Gavora (2000, 11) defines a research as “a systematic way of solving problems by which the boundaries of human knowledge are extended.” By doing a research, existing knowledge is proved or refuted, or new knowledge is obtained (Ibid.).

There are two basic orientations of a research – quantitative and qualitative. A quantitative research deals with numerical data. Usually it finds out the amount, range or frequency of a phenomenon (Ibid., 31). It is possible to process the obtained mathematically. It means that the data can be summed up, expressed in percentage points, and/or the average can be calculated from the data (Ibid.). In a quantitative research it is presumed that human behaviour can be anticipated to a certain degree. The anticipated behaviour is further explored and measured (Hendl 2016, 42).

Then, the second type of a research is qualitative. To mention, there is no uniform definition of a qualitative research (Ibid.). Glaser and Corbin (1989, in Hendl 2016, 45) regard a qualitative research as “a research which results are not obtained by statistical methods or other ways of quantification.” However, many experts do not agree with the definition as according to them the uniqueness of a qualitative research consists not only in the absence of numbers (Hendl 2016, 45-46). The problem lies in the fact that a qualitative research is a broad label for various approaches (Ibid., 46). The thesis is not going to deal with specifications and individual differences of qualitative researches. Instead, rather general basic characteristics are to be introduced.

A qualitative research, in contrast with a quantitative research, presents its results in a word form. It includes a description which is accurate and detailed (Gavora 2000, 31). The

researcher “creates a complex, holistic picture, analyzes various types of texts, informs about opinions of the research participants, and conducts the research in natural conditions.” (Creswell 1998, in Hendl 2016, 46)

The research carried out for this thesis operates with both quantitative and qualitative data. Thus, it is called a mixed method research. It is defined as “a general approach in which quantitative as well as qualitative methods, paradigms or data are mixed within one study.” (Hendl 2016, 56) A mixed method research, similarly to quantitative and qualitative researches, consists of individual research stages, too. The first stage is defining research questions (Ibid.).

7.3 Research questions

To begin, research questions are an essential part of the research and they “create the core of each research project” (Švaříček and Šed'ová et al. 2007, 69). The research questions must be in compliance with the aim of the research as well as with the research problem. The questions represent further narrowing and specifying of the research problem (Ibid.).

Usually, there is not just one research question, but there are more questions defined for the research, especially if the research is more complex. Moreover, it is necessary to formulate all of the questions clearly so that the researcher is able to answer the questions at the end of the research (Ibid., 70).

For the purpose of this research, a set of specific research questions was developed. At this stage, the questions are to be presented:

Q1: Is the active learning approach applied in the classroom?

Q2: What kind of active learning operations do appear in the teaching/learning process?

Q3: Does disruptive behaviour occur while active learning tasks are being implemented?

Q4: What kind of disruptive behaviour does appear while active learning is being implemented?

After analyzing the data obtained in the research, the questions will be answered and the research conclusions will be made. Nevertheless, before analyzing the collected data, a few more elements of the research need to be covered. The following subchapter will depict the background of the research, which will include information about the school, teacher, learners and other conditions and specifications of the research.

7.4 Background of the research

The research was carried out in an ordinary elementary school in the Pardubice region. It was a relatively large school because during the research there were 24 classes of pupils. The school offered all nine grades of the elementary education (five grades of the primary education and four grades of the lower-secondary education). Each grade had two or even three parallel classes. Therefore, at the time when the research was being done, the school was attended by over 600 learners.

To continue, the research took place from the last week of January to the first week of March 2018. The school was chosen on purpose as the researcher spent teaching practice at that school. As a result, conducting the research was consulted and agreed with a teacher the researcher had already known.

Two classes of learners attending the same grade were chosen for the research. It was decided to do the research with two classes (instead of one) in order to verify the theoretical outcomes with a larger number of pupils. However, as a result, it was necessary to choose two classes at the same language level as the CEFR language descriptors fitted both classes. Thus, two parallel classes were needed for the research. The teacher taught parallel classes of seventh-graders and ninth-graders. In a random choice it was decided to focus the research on the seventh-graders.

The teacher as well as learners agreed with participation of the research. However, for ethical reasons the research will remain anonymous and hence, the name of the school, teacher and learners will not be made public).

After negotiating all the necessary terms, the research could have been started. Instruction took place in standard classrooms – a blackboard and teacher's desk in front; and learners' desks organized in three rows in the rest of the room. In addition, the classrooms were not equipped with ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) tools.

At this point, the information about the learners is to be given. Both the 7.A and 7.B class learners' were at the same CEFR language level and they dealt with the same topics in the lessons. Both classes consisted of more than 24 learners and thus, according to legislation, cannot be taught altogether. Consequently, they were divided into two groups (halves). One half of the 7.A class was taught by the teacher who participated in the research, the other was taught by other teacher. This worked the same way in the 7.B class.

As a result, in the research participated just halves of the 7.A and 7.B classes. The number of pupils was 13 in the 7.A group and 12 in the 7.B group. The groups consisted of approximately the same number of boys and girls in both classes and hence, the results of the research should not be affected by prevailing one gender in a group. Each group, 7.A as well as 7.B, attended three lessons of the English language per week.

It was scheduled that 10 lessons in each group will be visited by the researcher. That would have taken four weeks including the piloting stage of the research. Nevertheless, due to a week whole-school project and cancelling some other lessons (holidays, educational debate, etc.), the research was carried out for almost six weeks.

The researcher came to the lessons with a laptop and sat at the last desk in a corner of the classroom in order to have a good position for observing the learners. All the data was collected into a prepared electronic observation sheet, which will be described in the following subchapter.

7.5 Data collection tools

At first, the definition of data collection tools is to be provided. Gavora (2000, 70) explains a data collection tool as “a general term used for a procedure with which it is operated during a research.” A more specific definition claims that data collection tools are “specific procedures for cognition of certain phenomena used by the researcher in order to uncover and represent how people interpret and create social reality.” (Švaříček and Šed'ová et al. 2007, 142)

There are various data collection tools that can be used in a research. These are, for example, observation, questionnaire, interview, etc. Each tool has two basic attributes: validity and reliability (Gavora 2000, 70-71).

Validity means “the ability of a data collection tool to measure what it is supposed to measure.” (Ibid., 71) As a result, validity refers to the credibility of the research (Švaříček and Šed'ová et al. 2007, 32). It is considered the most important attribute of a data collection tool (Gavora 2000, 71).

Reliability is the degree to which the data collection tool produces stable and consistent results if the measured phenomenon has not changed (Švaříček and Šed'ová et al. 2007, 39). Thus, it is focused on the accuracy and consistency of the measurement (Gavora 2000, 73).

For this research, observation was chosen as the tool for collecting data. It will be characterized in greater detail further.

7.5.1 Observation

There are various types of observation. However, the basic type and, at the same time, also the type used in the research is called ‘participant observation’ (Švaříček and Šed’ová et al. 2007, 142). It can be defined as “a long-term, systematic and reflexive monitoring of ongoing activities right in the researched environment.” (Ibid., 143) The aim is not only the observation itself but also mediation of the finding to a reader (Ibid.).

Each observation has at least three key parameters. These are: the observer, the goals of the observation, and the procedures (McDonough and McDonough 1997, 102). Firstly, the observer is a university student doing a research for the practical part of the master thesis. Secondly, the objective of the observation is to answer the research questions and subsequently, to achieve the aim of the whole research, which is defined at the beginning of the practical part. Thirdly, the procedures and other specifications of the observation are to be depicted hereafter.

7.5.1.1 Implementing the research observation

The method of observation is suitable for doing a research in the classroom as the observation does not significantly disrupt social interactions and the educational processes during instruction (Švaříček and Šed’ová et al. 2007, 143). As already mentioned, the research that was carried out used ‘participant observation’. It means that the researcher is physically present in the classroom. The observation was also ‘overt’ which represents the fact that the observer admitted to be a researcher (Ibid., 146). In contrary, ‘covert’ observation happens when the researcher hides their identity and/or pretends to be a member of the group (Ibid.). The ‘covert’ observation was therefore not possible to apply.

Further, the observation met the conditions to be called structured (or also systemized). It means that pre-planned observational categories were used. More specifically, before entering the classroom it was precisely defined what the focus of the observation (categories) was (McDonough and McDonough 1997, 105). The categories were carefully structured and they put together an observation scheme, which is a common observational tool for documenting the process of instruction (Nunan 1992, 96).

7.5.1.1.1 Observation scheme

The observation scheme used in the research was designed in an electronic form (in MS Office Word file). Then, during the lessons, the data concerning the observation focus were noted down into the file (using a laptop) as they occurred. The whole observation scheme (the empty sample as well as filled in example) is attached at the very ending of the thesis (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). At this stage, individual elements of the observation scheme are to be described.

The observation scheme was entitled *Active learning and disruptive behaviour*. Right under the title, the identification data of the individual schemes were included. This section contained: class; date; number of students; and lesson number. It was supposed to serve mainly for better orientation in the observation schemes when analyzing the research data.

Then, a table consisting of three main fields of observation followed. The first field was called 'Operations focused on active learning'. It included the specific learners operations based on the CEFR descriptors. However, the variety of the operations was so wide that it was not possible to put them all in the table. Thus, just a few examples were written into the table. These were as follows:

- asking and answering questions;
- expressing opinions and ideas;
- making comparisons;
- using problem-solving;
- interacting with one another;
- cooperating with one another;
- using self-assessment;
- using peer assessment.

Further, many permutations of the mentioned operations as well as numerous other learners' operations following the active learning approach could not have been incorporated into the table due to the lack of space. Those would contain, for instance: contributing to the debate; agreeing or disagreeing with others (and giving reasons for that); describing his/her environment; liking or disliking something (and including explanation); preferring one thing to another (and giving reasons for the choice); expressing his/her feelings; etc. However, if they appeared in the lesson, they were, of course, noted down.

To highlight, all the operations (those suggested in the table; those introduced just here in the thesis; or any other) written down into the observation scheme were in compliance with:

- 1) the active learning features;
- 2) the general principles of the Czech curricular reform (the objectives of elementary education; and the characteristics of the key competencies of the FEP EE);
- 3) the CEFR speaking skills descriptors at the language level A2.

Those three points served as the criteria and each learner operation must have met those criteria in order to be noted down into the observation scheme.

To explain, some of the operations included in the table are not specifically described by the CEFR speaking skills descriptors, e.g. ‘using problem-solving’, ‘cooperating with one another’, ‘using self-assessment’ or ‘using peer-assessment’. However, they represent very important examples of the active learning approach features and moreover, they consist of the operations stated right in the CEFR descriptors, such as: making comparisons; expressing opinions; interacting; etc. Therefore, these operations were incorporated into the list, too.

The second field of observation was called ‘organizational forms’. The active learning approach stresses the importance of collaboration between learners as well as between a teacher and learners. If learners are supposed to cooperate with one another, they will probably need to work together (in pairs or groups). If the teacher cooperates with/provides help to learners, cooperation may also occur while frontal teaching or learners’ individual work. Therefore, four types of organizational forms were incorporated into the observation scheme in order to find out which organizational form was used in active learning tasks the most often.

Moreover, the organizational forms were noted down not just when active learning tasks took place but in all tasks altogether. The aim of this was to obtain additional data on the usage of the organizational forms by the teacher. The four organizational forms observed during the lessons were as follows: frontal teaching; individual work; pair work; and group work.

During the lessons, a vertical bar ‘|’ was written into a column belonging to a particular organizational form for each task. If there were two or more organizational forms combined during a task, the vertical bar was written to each organizational form observed.

The third field of observation dealt with disruptive behaviour. According to the studied literature, not all schools perceive indiscipline the same way. As a result, some behaviour might be allowed in some schools while it is forbidden in others. In a similar vein, disruptive behaviour might also be viewed differently in individual schools. Thus, manifestations of disruptive behaviour (put together on the basis of the theoretical part) were consulted with the teacher of the seventh-graders in order to adjust the list of disruptive violations to the rules set within the classes 7.A and 7.B.

As a result, the list was slightly modified. For example, the teacher did not consider using the mother tongue disruptive behaviour. The teacher explained that sometimes learners simply cannot find words for their ideas in English language but still they are eager to express them. Despite the learners do not speak English at that moment, they at least show the willingness to participate.

On the other hand, two manifestations of disruptive behaviour were added to the list after the consultation. The teacher advised to attach ‘poking’ to the list as it sometimes happened in the lessons taught. Also, the teacher perceived negatively ‘not listening to the instructions’. She explained that sometimes it happened that after explaining a task (even after asking if everything was clear) and starting to work on the task, few moments later a learner asked: “What are we supposed to do?”. The teacher continued that it was not a problem to explain a task once again when a learner did not understand and when he/she asked during assigning the task. However, in this situation it was clear that the learner had not paid attention to the instructions at all and then he/she had even interrupted the work of his/her classmates during the ongoing task. Consequently, this kind of misbehaviour was added to the list of disruptive behaviour in the observation scheme labelled ‘Not listening to the instructions’.

After consulting the issue of disruptive behaviour with the teacher, the list of the disruptive violations for the observation scheme was completed. In addition, the list contained also a column called ‘other’. This was added just in case that some other kind of disruptive behaviour, not included in the list, would occur. In such a case, a comment describing the behaviour was supposed to be written into a particular task column.

In the classroom, disruptive behaviour was observed in all the tasks throughout the whole lessons (not only during the tasks focused on active learning). The reason for this was to obtain data for a comparison of the occurrence of disruptive behaviour in tasks which did follow and which did not follow the active learning approach principles.

Each time any of the violations was registered, it was noted down in a form of a vertical bar '|'. As in the case of the two previous fields of observation, the disruptive violations were note down to each task of the lesson separately.

The completed list of disruptive behaviour used in the research after the consultation with the teacher consisted of:

- talking without raising a hand / shouting;
- chatting with a mate (mates);
- poking (each other)
- making noise;
- throwing objects;
- moving without permission;
- using phone;
- not listening to the instructions;
- other.

Furthermore, in the columns called 'Task 1 – 6', a brief description of each task was included. To give a few examples: "speaking – role play"; "reading – article with questions on comprehension – The world in 2050"; "grammar practicing – an exercise in the work book – going to"; etc. This was done in order to recall as detailed information about the particular task as possible when analyzing the research data.

Lastly, the section 'Comments' was added to the bottom part of the observation scheme. It served for researcher's non-structured notes on, for instance, transitions between individual tasks, the overall flow of the lesson and any other comments which were considered significant and/or interesting for the (potential) additional outcomes of the research.

After the observation scheme was completed and consulted with the teacher, the piloting stage began.

7.6 Piloting the observation scheme

Before any data collection tool is used for a research, it should be piloted in advance in order that the structure of the tool can be modified or improved according to obtained findings. The observation scheme used for the research was piloted, too.

The piloting stage was done at the end of January. One lesson of the 7.A class as well as one lesson of the 7.B class was observed. According to the smooth flow of making notes to the observation scheme by the researcher, it was decided not to modify the scheme in any way. As a result, the observation scheme was finally ready for collecting the data and hence, the research could have been carried out.

7.7 Data analysis

As the process of data collection has already been depicted in detail in the previous subchapters, the focus of the thesis may shift right to the data analysis.

To start with, the observation schemes of both classes will be analyzed separately at first. The intention of this is to find out potential differences in the results between the individual classes. Subsequently, the separate analyses will be interpreted altogether in the following subchapter 7.8 and on the basis of the analyses conclusions of the research will be drawn.

At the beginning of each analysis there will be the information about the amount of tasks in 10 lessons in total provided and then, the number of tasks that were focused on the active learning principles will be presented. Also, a description of those ‘active learning tasks’ will be included. Further, the occurrence of organizational forms will be described. It will be commented on the number and types of organizational forms within the ‘active learning tasks’ and within the ‘other tasks’. The following part will deal with manifestations of disruptive behaviour observed during the lessons. Again, the results of both disruptive behaviour during active learning tasks as well as during any other tasks will be presented. Lastly, some non-structured comments written down by the researcher while observing will be mentioned.

At first, the data analysis of the 7.A class is to be done. Afterwards, the analysis of the 7.B observation schemes will follow.

7.7.1 Analysis of observation schemes – 7.A

To begin, there were 10 lessons observed in the 7.A class. In all the lessons there were at least 10 learners present. Therefore, the results were in no lesson (negatively) influenced by a low presence of pupils and none of the lessons was excluded from the analysis. If there had been a significant absence of learners in any of the lessons, excluding the particular lesson would have had to be considered because the conditions for data collection would have been different from the other lessons.

Firstly, in 10 lessons observed, 43 tasks implemented in instruction appeared altogether. 14 tasks fulfilled the requirements – developed speaking skills and, at the same time, included an operation (or more operations) carrying active learning features. The most common ‘active learning tasks’ used in the lessons were as follows: questioning; describing an experience; making comparisons; and interacting with one another. Also, using problem-solving (in the form of a role play) as well as self- and peer-assessment were observed in the lessons.

In those 14 tasks there were 26 active learning operations identified. Most often used operations were: asking and answering questions; expressing ideas and opinions; comparing things/people and their qualities; participating in conversations/discussions.

Secondly, it will be commented on the occurrence of the organizational forms. In 43 tasks altogether there were 67 organizational forms noticed. Concerning the 14 active learning tasks, there appeared 24 organizational forms. In ‘the other’ 29 tasks, 43 organizational forms were identified. Specifically, the results were as follows:

ORGANIZATIONAL FORM	OCCURRENCE	
	ACTIVE LEARNING SPEAKING SKILLS TASKS (14)	OTHER TASKS (29)
Frontal teaching	9	16
Individual work	0	17
Pair work	10	7
Group work	5	3

Table 1 – 7.A organizational forms occurrence results

The results show that the most often used organizational form in the ‘active learning tasks’ was pair work. Then, also frontal teaching played an important role while implementing active learning (speaking skills) tasks. In contrary, individual work was not used at all.

Actually, it is hardly possible to incorporate a speaking task carrying active learning features into individual work of learners.

In the ‘other tasks’, frontal teaching was also frequently used. However, individual work was implemented most often. The learners were, for example, often asked to fill in exercises in their work-books. In addition, group work was almost unutilized in the tasks.

All in all, the data show that during the ‘active learning tasks’ (14), the teacher used 24 organizational forms. It is 1.71 organizational forms per a task in average. When considering the ‘other tasks’ (29), the teacher used 43 organizational forms. It makes an average of 1.48 organizational forms per a task. The difference between the averages is not regarded as huge by the researcher.

Thirdly, disruptive behaviour in the classroom is going to be analyzed. In 10 lessons in the 7.A class 88 manifestations of disruptive behaviour were noticed altogether. In the 14 ‘active learning tasks’, 18 violations occurred. In the ‘other tasks’ (29), there were 70 manifestations of disruptive behaviour observed. Specific results can be seen in the Table 2 below:

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR	OCCURRENCE	
	ACTIVE LEARNING SPEAKING SKILLS TASKS (14)	OTHER TASKS (29)
Talking without raising a hand / shouting	4	7
Chatting with a mate	8	31
Poking (each other)	2	9
Making noise	4	4
Throwing objects	0	15
Moving without permission	0	3
Using phone	0	0
Not listening to the instructions	0	1
Other (+ comment)	0	0

Table 2 - 7.A disruptive behaviour occurrence results

The Table 2 shows that although during active learning tasks some disruptive behaviour occurred, the amount of the violations was relatively small. The most frequent

manifestation was 'chatting with a mate'. However, in most of the cases it seemed that the learners were not completely 'off-task' but rather too eager to tell something more (not related to the topic) to their classmates while being engaged in the task.

In contrast, concerning the 'other tasks', the occurrence of disruptive behaviour was more frequent. However, even though the numbers in the Table 2 might seem high, the overall (subjective) impression of the researcher from the lessons was good. The researcher felt that the lessons were not broken down and the flow of the lessons was smooth. The reason for such high numbers, especially in the case of 'chatting with a mate' and 'throwing objects', was behaviour of three learners who caused the vast majority of the violations. That happened mostly while frontal teaching was being applied and teacher was facing the black-board and thus did not see what was happening in the classroom.

Nevertheless, also other disruptive behaviour, such as 'poking (each other)', 'talking without raising a hand/shouting' as well as 'moving without permission' appeared during instruction. As a consequence, there were definitely more violations observed than in the case of the 'active learning tasks'. Specific numbers are to be presented further on.

To sum up, the results will be expressed mathematically. During the 'active learning tasks' (14) just 18 violations were observed. It is 1.29 violations per a task. On the other hand, during the 'other tasks' (29) exactly 70 manifestations of disruptive behaviour were noticed. It makes an average of 2.41 violations per a task. This shows that there was a quite significant difference in the occurrence of disruptive behaviour between the two groups of tasks.

Lastly, a few notes taken from the column 'Comments' in the observation scheme are to be included. They may represent additional information or factors for the results presented. One of the notes comments on the situation that has been already mentioned previously: *"Two pupils repetitively threw pieces of paper to each other."* Another comment says: *"The teacher was helping a pair with a task in one corner of the classroom. Pupils in the other corner were chatting with one another and poking."* A comment from other lesson describes an atmosphere in the classroom. *"Pupils seemed very tired. They did not cooperate much. However, they did not behave disruptively either. Just three violations were observed during the lesson."* In addition, one of the comments mentions: *"Again, the two learners threw pieces of paper and chatted during the lesson very often. However, mostly when teacher was working with the black-board and could not have seen them."*

The comments included in the previous paragraph show that many of the manifestations of disruptive behaviour were caused by the two learners mentioned. Also, many of the violations took place while frontal teaching was being applied, e.g. when the teacher was working with the black-board and did not see what was happening in the classroom. As a result it was found out that not sufficient monitoring of the classroom while applying frontal teaching may have had negative consequences for learner discipline.

7.7.2 Analysis of observation schemes – 7.B

As in the case of 7.A, 10 lessons were observed in 7.B and none of them had to be excluded from the analysis. The group consisted of 12 learners and again, at least 10 learners were present each lesson. In addition, lesson structures very almost identical with the lessons in 7.A. As mentioned previously, the same teacher taught the pupils, both classes were at the same language level and they dealt with the same topics and issues. Therefore, some data collected in the 7.B lessons might be similar to the data collected in the 7.A class.

To start with, in the lessons 48 tasks were noted down altogether. 16 tasks met the criteria necessary to be considered ‘active learning task’ for the research. The tasks were most frequently focused on: questioning; making comparisons; cooperating with one another and describing a learner’s environment. However, again problem-solving as well as self- and peer-assessment were used in the lessons, too.

In those 16 tasks, 30 ‘active learning operations’ were observed. The most frequently used operations were as follows: asking and answering questions; expressing ideas and opinions; comparing things/people and their qualities; participating in conversations/discussions.

As a result, almost the same data were collected in the first field of the observation scheme (‘operations focused on active learning’). The number of ‘active learning tasks’ was similar and the types of tasks as well as the learner operations required in the tasks were almost identical.

To continue, the occurrence of organizational forms is to be analyzed at this stage. 48 tasks appeared during the lessons in total and 75 organizational forms were identified there. To provide individual numbers, in the 16 ‘active learning tasks’, 27 organizational forms were observed. In ‘the other’ 32 tasks, 49 organizational forms were noticed. Detailed results are presented in the Table 3:

ORGANIZATIONAL FORM	OCCURRENCE	
	ACTIVE LEARNING SPEAKING SKILLS TASKS (16)	OTHER TASKS (32)
Frontal teaching	10	20
Individual work	0	18
Pair work	11	6
Group work	6	4

Table 3 - 7.B organizational forms occurrence results

The Table 3 shows that pair work was most frequently used in the ‘active learning tasks’. An almost identical occurrence was observed in the case of frontal teaching. In contrary, individual work was not used at all in the ‘active learning tasks’, which is the same the results in 7.A. All in all, the occurrence of all organizational forms was almost identical in the ‘active learning tasks’.

Concerning the ‘other tasks’, frontal teaching was used most frequently. In addition, individual work played almost an identical role in instruction. On the other hand, again the pupils were often asked to work with their work-book on their own. Pair work and group work were utilized rather rarely in the classroom.

To sum up, the collected data show that during the ‘active learning tasks’ (16), the teacher used 27 organizational forms. It makes an average of 1.69 organizational forms per a task. When considering ‘the other tasks’ (32), the teacher used 48 organizational forms. It is exactly 1.50 organizational forms per a task in average. Similarly to the results of 7.A, the difference between the averages in not considered significant by the researcher.

In the following part of the analysis, disruptive behaviour of 7.B is to be examined. In 10 lessons 103 disruptive behaviour violations were registered in total. In the 16 ‘active learning tasks’, 24 violations occurred. In the 32 ‘other tasks’, 79 manifestations of disruptive behaviour were noticed. Detailed results can be seen in the Table 4:

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR	OCCURRENCE	
	ACTIVE LEARNING SPEAKING SKILLS TASKS (16)	OTHER TASKS (32)
Talking without raising a hand / shouting	7	10
Chatting with a mate	12	47
Poking (each other)	1	7
Making noise	3	8
Throwing objects	0	2
Moving without permission	0	2
Using phone	0	0
Not listening to the instructions	1	3
Other (+ comment)	0	0

Table 4 - 7.B disruptive behaviour occurrence results

The Table 4 shows similar results for ‘the active learning tasks’ as it was in the case of 7.A. Some disruptive behaviour occurred, the amount of the violations, however, was relatively small. Again, the most frequent disruptive behaviour appeared to be ‘chatting with a mate’. Also ‘talking without raising a hand/shouting’ occurred time to time. Generally, the group was very cooperative but chatty as well, no matter what the task was about. The reason for this cannot be given because the pupils were chatty not only during the ‘active learning tasks’ (which may be caused by a deep involvement in the tasks) but also during some other tasks while working individually. During them, some learners seemed bored and still they chatted with their mates. As a consequence, the fact that a high/low involvement influenced the violations during the tasks cannot be proved or confirmed in this case.

Concerning the ‘other tasks’, the occurrence of disruptive behaviour was more frequent as in the case of 7.A. However, in 7.B generally almost all learners contributed to the occurrence of disruptive behaviour in the lessons. As mentioned above, they were quite chatty and eager to talk all the time (even when they were not supposed to; or things they

were not supposed to talk about). On the contrary, in the case of 7.A many violations of the rules were caused just by two/three learners of the group.

Even though almost all learners behaved disruptively time to time, the overall (subjective) impression of the researcher from the lessons was quite good as in the case of 7.A. To explain, just twice the flow of a lesson was significantly disrupted by learners' indiscipline. The other 8 lessons went smoothly and disruptive behaviour was perceived by the researcher as well as the teacher (on the basis of an informal conversation about the research after it had been already finished) rather natural than 'ruining' the lessons.

However, according to the observation schemes, most of the violations happened while frontal teaching was being applied (when the teacher was writing on the black-board) and while individual work (when the teacher provided help to some learners – some other learners behaved disruptively). This was the same as in the 7.A class.

To evaluate, 'chatting with a mate' and 'talking without raising a hand/shouting' were the most frequent violations in the 'other tasks'. Then, also 'making noise' and 'poking (each other)' appeared time to time. The other manifestations of disruptive behaviour occurred rather rarely. However, the higher amount of violations observed in the 'other tasks', in comparison with the 'active learning tasks', is evident.

Specifically, during the 'active learning tasks' (16) just 24 violations were noticed. It makes an average of exactly 1.50 violations per a task. In contrast, during the 32 'other tasks' 79 manifestations of disruptive behaviour were observed. It is 2.47 violations per a task. Hence, similarly to the results of the observations carried out in 7.A, the difference between the two groups of tasks is quite significant concerning the occurrence of disruptive behaviour.

In conclusion, a few non-structured notes ('Comments') gathered while observing the lessons are to be presented hereinafter in order to provide additional pieces of information connected to the focus of the observation. To mention, one of the comments says: "*In transitions between individual activities some learners behaved disruptively as they chatted with one another and did not pay attention to the teacher.*" Another comment was written down in similar words in three lessons and it describes the classroom atmosphere: "*The learners willingly cooperated and were very active during the lesson. However, they also chatted with one another a lot and talked without raising a hand quite frequently. It seemed they were maybe too eager to talk about the topic and did not manage to control*

their behaviour (to be within the set rules) sometimes.” This shows that learners participated in the lessons very actively but they had problems with disruptive behaviour because of being engaged in the tasks. However, this is just a researcher’s subjective perception of the situations.

Lastly, several notes suggesting the appearance of disruptive behaviour while teacher was working with the black-board can be found within the ‘Comments’ column. One of them states: “*While teacher was writing sentences on the black-board, some learning poked each other and chatted with their classmates.*” This refers to the same situation that was noticed in the 7.A class. While the teacher was not monitoring the learners, disruptive behaviour occurred quite often in the classroom. However, this is the only general conclusion that can be made from the ‘Comment’ written down during the observation in 7.B. All the other comments were rather situational remarks and on their basis no generalization can be drawn.

7.8 Interpretation of research outcomes

In this subchapter, based on the two analyses, the research outcomes are to be presented and the research questions are to be answered.

In total 20 lessons were observed in the research. It was assumed that the structure of the lessons in 7.A would be very similar to the lessons in 7.B. The lessons were taught by the same teacher and the learners of both 7.A and 7.B were at the same language level and dealt with the same language phenomena as well as topics.

Generally, the assumption was confirmed during the research as the lesson structures were almost identical in both classes. Moreover, as it was shown in the analyses, the results of the observation schemes were very similar in both classes as well. At this stage, the outcomes obtained from the individual analyses are to be put together and used for answering the research questions.

To begin, the first research question was formulated as: “*Is the active learning approach applied in the classroom?*” When analysing both classes, it has been shown that active learning was applied in the classroom. More specifically, in total 91 tasks were observed. Features of active learning were identified in 30 of them. It means that one third of tasks assigned by the teacher included active learning principles. The ‘active learning tasks’ were focused most often on questioning, pair work dialogue, describing an experience and

discussions. Also, problem-solving tasks as well as self- and peer-assessment appeared in the lessons.

Further, the Question 2 was focused on the active learning operations: “*What kind of active learning operations do appear in the teaching/learning process?*” Within 30 “active learning tasks”, in total 56 active learning operations were noticed. The following CEFR speaking skills descriptors were observed most frequently: asking and answering questions; expression opinions and ideas; participating in discussions; making comparisons; and cooperating with one another.

To continue, the Question 3, “*Does disruptive behaviour occur while active learning tasks are being implemented?*”, is to be answered. Disruptive behaviour occurred in the active learning tasks. However, the amount of occurrences was lower than in the other tasks. According to the averages presented in the individual analyses, the occurrence of disruptive behaviour within the ‘active learning tasks’ was almost half frequent in comparison with the ‘other tasks’. Specifically, in the total average it was 1.40 manifestations of disruptive behaviour within the ‘active learning tasks’ and 2.44 violations within the ‘other tasks’. This might be considered a significant difference.

The last research question, “*What kind of disruptive behaviour does appear while active learning is being implemented?*”, dealt with manifestations of disruptive behaviour that occurred within the ‘active learning tasks’. Most often, ‘chatting with a mate’ and ‘talking without raising a hand / shouting’ appeared while the active learning tasks were being implemented. Also ‘making noise’ occurred several times. Other violations were rarely observed or were not noticed at all.

To elaborate, according to the ‘Comments’ written during the observations, the researcher (subjectively) supposes that the occurrence of disruptive behaviour in the ‘active learning tasks’ might have been caused by an excessive level of learners’ engagement. As a result, if the teacher works with the learners on keeping their task engagement within the set classroom rules, even less violations might occur within ‘active learning tasks’.

Furthermore, additional outcomes from the data collected are to be presented. Concerning the ‘other tasks’, not only the violations mentioned while describing the ‘active learning tasks’ appeared. ‘Throwing objects’ and ‘poking (each other)’ were registered several times, too. It shows that not only frequency but also the diversity of disruptive behaviour was greater within the ‘other tasks’. Then, many of all the manifestations were observed

when the teacher was writing on the black-board while using frontal teaching. This suggests that not sufficient monitoring of learners could have caused the learners' misbehaviour.

Also, during the lessons, no 'other (+ comment)' disruptive behaviour was noticed. This shows that the list of disruptive behaviour, consulted with the teacher, was accurately created for the learners of the 7.A as well as 7.B class.

In addition, no 'using phone' was noted in all 20 lessons. This is considered surprising by the researcher because nowadays the vast majority of pupils have their own mobile phone. Therefore, it was assumed that this type of disruptive behaviour would appear in the classroom sometimes. However, the real situation was completely opposite and the learners did not touch their phones during instruction at all.

Lastly, it will be commented on using organizational forms by the teacher. The most frequently used organizational forms within the 'active learning tasks' were frontal teaching and pair work. The 'other tasks' consisted mainly of frontal teaching and individual work. The amount of organizational forms used in instruction was almost the same when considering the 'active learning tasks' and the 'other tasks'. In the total average it was 1.7 organizational forms per an 'active learning task' and 1.49 organizational forms per 'other task'. The difference between the averages is not considered significant by the researcher.

To conclude the research, the aim of the research was achieved. On the basis of the observation schemes it was found out that disruptive behaviour occurred within the 'active learning tasks'. However, the frequency of the disruptive behaviour occurrence was markedly lower than in the case of the 'other tasks'. Thus, it might be concluded that applying active learning during instruction may reduce the number of violations and hence, the active learning approach may serve as one of the preventive strategies for indiscipline in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The thesis dealt with active learning as a preventive strategy for indiscipline in the classroom. It was divided into two parts. After defining all the necessary theoretical background, a research was conducted in the practical part of the thesis.

At first, the issue of classroom discipline was introduced. Gradually, the term ‘classroom discipline’ was defined and functions of discipline described. Then, manifestations of indiscipline were introduced. Specifically, disruptive behaviour was examined in detail. Further, causes of indiscipline were presented. The last subchapter dealing with (in)discipline was focused on strategies for maintaining discipline in the classroom. There are intervention and preventive strategies. It is always better to prevent misbehaviour and therefore, the attention was paid mainly to the preventive strategies.

Active learning was identified as one of the preventive strategies. It was found out that by effective teaching and engaging students in the learning process, classroom discipline might be achieved. Moreover, since active learning has become a respected educational approach in many countries around the world (including the Czech Republic), the approach was further depicted in detail. Firstly, the constructivist background for the approach was provided. Secondly, the approach as such was defined and its characteristic features presented. Thirdly, advantages as well as potential disadvantages of active learning were analyzed. Lastly, the examples of active learning tasks were introduced.

Furthermore, the interconnection of the active learning approach with the Czech curricular reform was showed. The core principles of the reform as well as its documents (FEPs) were characterized. The main focus of the reform is developing the key competencies in learners and making them active in the teaching/learning process. Afterwards, the FEP EE and its specific characteristic features were presented.

In the last chapter of the theoretical part, the CEFR speaking skills descriptors were analyzed. Those carrying the active learning features were listed in the chapter. The descriptors subsequently served in the practical part of the thesis as the criteria for identifying learners’ active operations during the lessons.

After setting the theoretical background for the practical part, the research based on the outcomes of the theoretical part was introduced. The aim of the research was “to find out if

learners' disruptive behaviour occurred or not while tasks focused on the active learning approach were being implemented into instruction." This was examined by using the observation scheme which had been consulted with the teacher.

Two parallel classes of an elementary school were selected for the research. In each class 10 lessons were observed. The data collected showed the following results.

The active learning was identified in one third of tasks assigned by the teacher. The most frequently used tasks were as follows: questioning; pair work dialogue; describing an experience; and discussions. However, also other active learning tasks appeared, e.g. problem-solving tasks; and self- and peer-assessment. More specifically, during the lessons these active learning operations were observed: asking and answering questions; expression opinions and ideas; participating in discussions; making comparisons; and cooperating with one another.

Concerning indiscipline, specifically disruptive behaviour was the focus of the observation schemes. It was found out that disruptive violations occurred while the active learning tasks were being used in the classroom. However, the frequency of the occurrence was almost half in comparison with the other tasks. It is a significant difference between both groups of tasks. As a consequence, it was concluded that implementing active learning in instruction helped to prevent indiscipline in the lessons of the selected classes.

In addition, the analysis of the observations schemes showed that the most frequent disruptive behaviour within the active learning tasks was chatting with a mate and talking without raising a hand. According to the non-structured 'Comments' written down during the lessons, these violations might have been caused by an excessive level of the learners' engagement. Consequently, if the teacher works with the learners on keeping their task engagement within the set classroom rules, even less manifestations of disruptive behaviour might occur within 'active learning tasks' in the future.

In conclusion, even though the research was done with a very limited number of students, it confirmed the theoretical outcomes claiming that effective teaching may contribute to maintaining discipline in the classroom. As a result, the aim of the practical part was achieved. It was found out that disruptive behaviour of learners occurred while tasks focused on active learning were being implemented into instruction. Nevertheless, the occurrence was almost half frequent than in the case of the other tasks. Thus, on the basis of the research outcomes, it was concluded that using the active learning approach in

instruction may help to prevent disruptive behaviour of learners and so to contribute to maintaining discipline in the classroom.

RESUME

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá problematikou zhoršující se nekázně při vyučování. To bylo prokázáno mnoha studii v posledních několika desetiletích. Proto se pozornost zaměřila na strategie, které mají za úkol vyřešit kázeňské prohřešky žáků. Obecně mohou být tyto strategie rozděleny na dvě skupiny – intervenční a preventivní. Vždy je lepší nekázní předcházet, a proto jsou preventivní strategie považovány za první a velmi důležitý krok při udržování kázně ve třídě.

Podle několika autorů zabývajících se řízením vyučování může jednou z těchto strategií být i efektivní výuka. Jako znaky takové výuky autoři udávají například kladení důrazu na porozumění učiva (ne pouze memorování jednotlivých útržků) a aktivní zapojení žáka ve výuce. Dále by měla forma výuky žáka zaujmout a vzdělávací proces by se pro něj měl stát alespoň do jisté míry zábavným.

Tyto kvality vyučování jsou charakteristickými znaky vzdělávacích přístupů, které se na aktivitu žáka při výuce zaměřují. Takové přístupy se staly centrem pozornosti v průběhu druhé poloviny dvacátého století a v dnešní době mnoho zemí, zejména těch vyspělých, orientuje své vzdělávací systémy právě na aktivní vyučování. Výjimkou není ani Česká republika.

Jedním z konkrétních přístupů zaměřených na aktivitu žáka je tzv. aktivní učení. Tento přístup je v práci podrobně vymezen, neboť se nejedná pouze o jeden z mnoha takových přístupů. Drtivá většina znaků aktivního učení se totiž objevuje i v charakteristikách kurikulární reformy, která v České republice začala v první dekádě nového století a v podstatě probíhá dodnes.

Mezi její hlavní znaky patří zaměření se na rozvoj klíčových kompetencí. Tyto kompetence zdůrazňují aktivní účast žáka ve výuce a osvojení si souboru schopností a dovedností, které mají déle trvající účinek než útržkovité memorování poznatků.

Na základě výše vymezené situace bylo proto zkoumáno, zdali aktivní učení může napomoci k prevenci nekázně žáků během vyučování anglického jazyka. Diplomová práce je rozdělena do dvou částí – teoretické a praktické.

V teoretické části je nejprve definován pojem kázně ve třídě. Následně je vysvětlen význam dodržování kázně na základě jejích funkcí. Kázeň slouží zejména jako ochrana

žáků a učitelů před fyzickou či psychickou újmou. Dodržování stanovených pravidel také napomáhá k tomu, aby proces vyučování probíhal tak, jak naplánoval učitel a žáci si tak odnesli z hodiny co možná nejvíce.

Následně jsou popsány projevy nekázně. Ty mohou být dále rozděleny na nerušivé a rušivé chování. Výzkum, realizovaný v praktické části práce, byl zaměřen na chování rušivé, neboť nerušivé chování nelze jednoznačně prokázat. Jedná se totiž např. o nevěnování pozornosti probíhající výuce apod. Chování rušivé lze ve většině případů zpozorovat, a proto bylo ve výzkumu zvoleno pro zkoumání.

Na konci první kapitoly jsou pak představeny strategie pro udržování kázně ve třídě. Jak již bylo zmíněno, ty mohou být intervenční nebo preventivní. Mezi intervenční neverbální strategie patří např. využití očního kontaktu, přiblížení se k žákovi, krátkého odmlčení se, atd. Verbální strategie pak zahrnují např. oslovení žáka jeho jménem, připomenutí stanovených pravidel apod. Kázní je však vždycky lepší předcházet, a proto větší pozornost byla věnována strategiím preventivním. Mezi ně patří: stanovení pravidel, na kterém se podílejí sami žáci; monitorování situace ve třídě během vyučování; nebo například efektivní vyučování jako takové. To by mělo zahrnovat především aktivní zapojení žáků do výuky.

Ve druhé kapitole je proto poskytnutý teoretický základ, ze kterého vychází mnoho přístupů zaměřených na aktivní vyučování, včetně konkrétního přístupu vybraného pro diplomovou práci – tzv. aktivního učení. Jeho základnu tvoří konstruktivistické pojetí výuky. To zdůrazňuje, že žáci si během procesu učení vytvářejí duševní konstrukty, které jsou průběžně přetvářeny vlivem získávání nových poznatků. Význam se klade především na porozumění (ne na zapamatování si způsobem drilu, jak tomu je v tradičním pojetí výuky).

Důležitý je také směr konstruktivismu, který představil L. Vygotsky, tzv. sociální konstruktivismus. Ten zmiňuje význam interakce žáků mezi sebou a jejich vzájemné spolupráce, která je podle něj nezbytným prvkem v procesu učení.

Po definování teoretického základu, ze kterého vychází aktivní přístupy, samotné aktivní učení bylo podrobně popsáno. Mezi jeho charakteristické znaky patří kromě již zmíněného aktivního zapojení žáků ve výuce, porozumění učivu a vzájemné interakce a spolupráce žáků také: zvýšená odpovědnost za své učení, vzájemný respekt mezi žáky a učitelem, kladení důrazu na celoživotní učení, atd. Učitel by měl v procesu učení zastávat roli/role

„umožňovatele“, „rádce“ a „vůdce“. V tradičním pojetí výuky byla role učitele definována spíše jako „zprostředkovatel“ znalostí, které si měli žáci následně zapamatovat.

Dále byly ve třetí kapitole analyzovány výhody a potenciální nevýhody aktivního učení. V principech aktivního učení lze najít spoustu výhod nejen pro žáky ale také pro učitele. Díky důrazu kladenému na porozumění probírané látce by žákovy znalosti měly mít delší trvanlivost v porovnání s tradičním memorováním. Pro žáky by mělo být aktivní učení také o mnoho zábavnější, a proto by měli i lépe spolupracovat s vyučujícím. V rámci aktivního učení se žáci také lépe připravují pro budoucí uplatnění, neboť na ně budou v následujícím profesním i osobním životě kladeny nároky na porozumění novým technologiím a systémům, jednání s novými lidmi a řešení nově nastalých problémů.

Pro učitele pak aktivní učení nemusí představovat takovou zátěž při samotné výuce (jako tradičný výklad), jelikož učitel není hlavním aktérem dění ve třídě. Jsou to právě studenti, kteří by měli nést větší část výuky na svých bedrech. Učitel je totiž „pouze“ vede procesem učení za využití aktivizačních úkolů, ve kterých by se měli aktivně účastnit a získávat tak nové poznatky, schopnosti a dovednosti. Aktivní učení by mělo být pro učitele také méně stereotypní než tradiční výuka, což je považováno za další výhodu.

Jako nevýhoda je aktivnímu učení vytýkáno přílišné zaměření se na jedince. To je totiž ve skutečnosti velmi časově náročné. A v extrémním případě asi dokonce nerealizovatelné, neboť ve třídě o 30 žácích není možné vyhovět každému jednotlivci, pokud by všichni žáci preferovali odlišný způsob výuky. Za další nevýhodu je považováno, že ne všem žákům ve třídě musí vyhovovat aktivní zapojení se ve výuce. Někteří žáci mohou preferovat spíše tradiční pojetí výuky. A v neposlední řadě literatura uvádí, že správné vedení aktivního vyučování vyžaduje vysoce kvalifikované učitele, kterým se dostalo vzdělání přímo pro tento výukový přístup a kterých je v současné době stále nedostatek.

Přes několik zmíněných nevýhod, výhody zcela jasně převažují potenciální nedostatky aktivního učení. Možná právě proto jdou znaky aktivního učení ruku v ruce s kurikulární reformou, která proběhla v České republice v první dekádě nového století. Reforma a její hlavní znaky jsou popsány ve čtvrté kapitole. Stěžejními dokumenty reformy jsou kurikulární dokumenty, tzv. Rámcové vzdělávací programy (RVP), které jsou definovány pro jednotlivé stupně vzdělávacího systému. Jejich jádro tvoří tzv. klíčové kompetence, které jsou vysvětleny jako soubor schopností a dovedností, které by si žák měl osvojit během studia daného stupně vzdělávání.

Následuje podrobné rozebrání Rámcového vzdělávacího programu pro základní vzdělávání (RVP ZV), neboť v praktické části práce sloužily dvě třídy jedné základní školy jako výzkumný vzorek. Postupně jsou proto popsány principy a tendence RVP ZV a také obecné cíle základního vzdělávání. V klíčových kompetencích jsou poté identifikovány znaky aktivního učení.

Bohužel v RVP ZV nejsou uvedeny dostatečně podrobné jazykové deskriptory pro konkrétní jazykovou úroveň žáků potřebné pro výzkumnou část diplomové práce. Z tohoto důvodu byly využity jazykové deskriptory podle Společného evropského referenčního rámce (CEFR), který také zdůrazňuje aktivní pojetí vyučování a má tak mnoho společných znaků s přístupem aktivního učení. Jelikož by však bylo velmi náročné sledovat jednotlivé operace žáků u všech jazykových dovedností, pro výzkum byly vybrány pouze řečové dovednosti.

Ve výzkumu se objevily dvě třídy sedmého ročníku. Jejich jazyková úroveň odpovídala úrovni A2 podle CEFR. Proto byly analyzovány všechny deskriptory řečových dovedností na úrovni A2 a z nich byly vybrány ty, které mají společné znaky s aktivním učením. Následně byly tyto deskriptory uvedeny v páté kapitole teoretické části práce, neboť deskriptory ve výzkumném pozorování sloužily jako kritérium pro identifikování jednotlivých aktivních operací žáků.

Po vydefinování všech potřebných teoretických východisek byla představena část praktická. Ta měla za cíl zjistit za pomoci metody pozorování, zda při úkolech zaměřených na žákovo zapojení se do výuky dochází k rušivému chování ze strany žáků, či nikoliv. Po formulaci výzkumných otázek bylo detailně přiblíženo pozadí výzkumu.

Ten byl uskutečněn na jedné základní škole v Pardubickém kraji. Škola, vyučující, ani žáci nebudou z etických důvodů jmenováni. S účastí ve výzkumu však dobrovolně souhlasili. Byly vybrány dvě třídy pro ověření teoretických východisek z důvodu zvýšení reliability výzkumu. Za tohoto předpokladu však musely být vybrané právě dvě třídy, které se nacházely na stejné jazykové úrovni, aby mohly být použity stejné deskriptory pro obě třídy. Vybráni byli žáci sedmého ročníku.

Žáci 7.A i 7.B byli rozděleni při výuce anglického jazyka na dvě poloviny. Jedna polovina 7.A měla jiného vyučujícího než ta druhá. To samé platilo i v případě 7.B. Výzkum byl proto realizován s jednou polovinou třídy 7.A a jednou polovinou třídy 7.B, které byly obě pod vedením jednoho učitele/učitelky. Realizace výzkumu proběhla od konce ledna do

začátku března roku 2018. Žáci měli podle rozvrhu tři hodiny anglického jazyka týdně. V každé třídě bylo pozorováno 10 hodin, takže v konečném součtu bylo navštíveno 20 hodin.

Následovalo definování vybrané metodologie pozorování a dále pak popsání konkrétního observačního schématu využitého při pozorování. Schéma obsahovalo tři základní oblasti – operace žáků zaměřené na aktivní učení, rušivé chování a organizační formy výuky. K jednotlivým úkolům byly zaznamenávány zpozorované operace, pokud vyhovovaly daným kritériím. V průběhu celé hodiny pak byly evidovány projevy rušivého chování žáků a frekvence jejich výskytu. Typ organizačních forem pak měl zajistit dodatečné informace, např. jaký typ výuky byl nejvíce používán při aktivním učení apod. Stejně tak nestrukturované komentáře ve spodní části observačního schématu měly za úkol doplnit případné vysvětlující informace k zachycenému dění ve vyučovacích hodinách. Observační list je vložen v přílohách diplomové práce.

Výsledky výzkumu týkající se výskytu aktivních úloh a operací v nich byly v obou třídách velmi podobné. To ovšem bylo předpokládáno, neboť obě třídy byly pod vedením stejného učitele/učitelky. Zároveň byly na stejné jazykové úrovni a zabývaly se při hodinách stejnými tématy. Výsledky analýzy pozorování však byly velmi podobné i v oblastech týkajících se rušivého chování a organizačních forem. Proto budou nyní výstupy analýz obou tříd prezentovány společně.

Ve výzkumu bylo zjištěno, že se ve výuce objevují úlohy zaměřené na aktivní učení přesně v jedné třetině úkolů. Nejčastěji se vyskytovalo dotazování, dialog v páru, popis zážitku/zkušenosti a diskuse. Během těchto úloh byly zpozorovány následující operace zaměřené na aktivitu žáků: kladení otázek a odpovídání; vyjadřování názoru nebo myšlenky; účast v diskusi; porovnávání; a spolupráce s ostatními.

Dále z výzkumu vyplynulo, že i při aplikování úkolů zaměřených na žákovu aktivitu se rušivé chování v hodinách vyskytovalo. Nicméně frekvence výskytu takového chování byla téměř poloviční v porovnání s ostatními úkoly. To je výzkumníkem hodnoceno jako velmi výrazný rozdíl.

Nejčastějším přestupkem při aktivních úlohách bylo povídání si se spolužákem a mluvení bez přihlášení/vykřikování. Z doplňujících komentářů však vyplynulo, že tyto přestupky mohly být zapříčiněny někdy až velmi vysokou mírou angažovanosti žáků. Proto

v případě, že bude učitel/učitelka s žáky pracovat na ovládnutí tohoto aspektu, mohly by být výsledky v oblasti ukázněnosti žáků při využívání aktivního učení ještě lepší.

V závěru práce byl výzkum zhodnocen. Cíl praktické části a zároveň i celé diplomové práce byl dosažen, neboť zvolenou výzkumnou metodou byla sesbírána data, která měla zodpovědět a která následně také zodpověděla, zda dochází k rušivému chování při využití úkolů zaměřených na aktivitu žáka. Bylo zjištěno, že k rušivému chování žáků při aktivních úlohách sice dochází, avšak toto číslo je výrazně nižší než v případě jiných úkolů zpozorovaných ve vyučovacích hodinách, které byly navštíveny. A i když si je výzkumník vědom, že výzkumný vzorek, a zároveň i výzkum jako takový, byl velmi omezený a nedají se z něho proto vyvodit obecně platné závěry pro všechny situace, teoretická východiska byla ve výzkumu potvrzena. Aktivní učení může sloužit jako jedna z preventivních strategií pro nekázeň žáků při vyučování, protože jeho využití napomohlo k udržení kázně žáků ve zkoumaných třídách.

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OBSERVATION SHEET – Active learning and disruptive behaviour

Class:

Date:

Number of students:

Lesson number:

FIELDS OF OBSERVATION	TASK 1	TASK 2	TASK 3	TASK 4	TASK 5	TASK 6
	e.g.: - asking/answering questions - expressing opinions/ideas - making comparisons - using problem-solving - interacting with one another - cooperating with one another - using self-assessment - using peer-assessment					
OPERATIONS FOCUSED ON ACTIVE LEARNING						
ORGANIZ. FORMS						
Frontal teaching						
Individual work						
Pairwork						
Groupwork						
Talking without raising a hand/shouting						
Chatting with a mate						
Poking (each other)						
Making noise						
Throwing objects						
Moving without permission						
Using phone						
Not listening to the instructions						
Other (+ comment)						
DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR						

Comments:

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Observation scheme (sample)

OBSERVATION SCHEME – Active learning and disruptive behaviour

Class: 7.B

Date: 6th February 2018 10:00 – 10:45

Number of students: 13

Lesson number: 4

FIELDS OF OBSERVATION	TASK 1	TASK 2	TASK 3	TASK 4	TASK 5	TASK 6
	"going to" grammar structure revision	Work-Book exercise (going to)	Work-Book exercise (going to -> negative)	describing plans	role play	
e.g.: - asking/answering questions - expressing opinions/ideas - making comparisons - using problem-solving - interacting with one another - cooperating with one another - using self-assessment - using peer-assessment	- asking and answering questions - interacting with one another			- expressing ideas	- using problem-solving - cooperating with one another	
OPERATIONS FOCUSED ON ACTIVE LEARNING						
ORGANIZ. FORMS						
Frontal teaching						
Individual work						
Pair work						
Group work						
Talking without raising a hand/shouting						
Chatting with a mate						
Poking (each other)						
Making noise						
Throwing objects						
Moving without permission						
Using phone						
Not listening to the instructions						
Other (+ comment)						

Comments: Learners very actively cooperated and the atmosphere in the classroom was very friendly. Even though some disruptive behavior occurred, the flow of the lesson was not broken down. In addition, however, some misbehavior appeared also in transitions between the tasks.

Appendix 2 – Observation scheme (filled in)