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Thesis

**Useful Classroom Techniques: Games Focusing on Vocabulary
Acquisition**

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ABSTRACT

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One of the reasons for choosing the topic is mainly the increasing emphasis on role of vocabulary in foreign language teaching. However to learn new vocabulary is often very difficult. Therefore the thesis focuses on vocabulary games which seem to represent one of the pleasant ways to acquire vocabulary. The main goal of the thesis is to discover what effect has playing vocabulary games on vocabulary consolidation. Another aim of the thesis is to reveal learners' as well as teachers' attitude to vocabulary games. Its theoretical part deals with learners, vocabulary in general, vocabulary acquisition phases and games. Thus it provides the thesis with useful background. Next, the thesis describes the research which was conducted at ZŠ Nezvěstice. The tools used to gather data are an experiment and a questionnaire. Later, by means of analysis of the results, two hypotheses were verified and two hypotheses were disproved. It implies that vocabulary games are popular with the learners, that both the boys and the girls like the same games and that the learners regard vocabulary games as a useful tool in vocabulary consolidation process. Also, it reveals that in order to consolidate vocabulary, the English teachers introduce into the lessons rather other methods than vocabulary games. Finally the research question discovered that playing vocabulary games has a beneficial effect on vocabulary consolidation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.....	3
Students	3
Vocabulary.....	6
Vocabulary Acquisition.....	8
Significance of Games.....	13
Classification of Games.....	17
What to Take into Consideration When Choosing a Game.....	20
Age.	21
Gender	21
Students' learning style vs. multiple intelligences.	22
III. METHODS.....	24
Research Question and Hypotheses.....	24
Research Place and Subjects.....	24
Research Tools	25
Experiment	25
Questionnaires	27
IV. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES.....	29
Results of the Experiment	29
Final Remark	33
Results of the Questionnaire for Learners	33
First Hypothesis.....	34
Second Hypothesis	37
Third Hypothesis	40
Results of the Questionnaire for the Teacher	42
V. IMPLICATIONS	46
Implications for Teaching.....	46
Limitations of the Research.....	47
Suggestions for Further Research.....	48
VI. CONCLUSION	50
REFERENCES	51
APPENDIX A	53

APPENDIX B.....	55
APPENDIX C.....	56
APPENDIX D	60
SHRNUTÍ.....	62

LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 1:Initial Testing of Vocabulary.....	29
Graph 2: Final Active Vocabulary Test.....	30
Graph 3: Final Passive Vocabulary Test.....	31
Graph 4: Final Results of the Tests.....	32
Graph 5: Do you like playing games in English lessons?.....	34
Graph 6: Do you regard vocabulary games as an agreeable way to learn new vocabulary?.....	35
Graph 7: What methods does your teacher use to review the vocabulary?.....	35
Graph 8: Choose the option that describes you best when doing the review in ordinary way.....	36
Graph 9: Choose the option that describes you best when playing vocabulary games.....	36
Graph 10: The best game- boys.....	38
Graph 11: The best game- girls.....	38
Graph 12: The worst game- boys.....	39
Graph 13: The worst game- boys.....	39
Graph 14: According to you what was the reason for playing the games?.....	40
Graph 15: Did you learn new vocabulary thanks to these games?.....	41
Graph 16: Do you consider vocabulary games to be useful? Do the students learn something?.....	41
Graph 17: Learners' opinion on frequency of playing games.....	43

I. INTRODUCTION

In the last years the approach to language teaching has changed dramatically. The main aim is not to learn about the language, its grammatical structures and its system. Nowadays, the most important thing is to learn to communicate. As Janíková (2005) says, “the foreign language should be perceived as a tool of communication, international understanding and learning about foreign countries and their cultures” (p. 11). Thus schools endeavour to develop language skills and learning habits instead of mere passing knowledge on the students.

The vocabulary becomes one of the key components of foreign language acquisition. The change of the approach to the purpose of foreign language influenced the way it is taught. Grammar is no longer the most significant part of the language. Now the emphasis on grammar is tantamount to emphasis on other language systems. However vocabulary is sometimes considered even more important than grammar. Scott Thornbury (2002) claims, “you can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with words” (p.13); and he is completely right. Perfectly correct use of grammar does not allow people to communicate efficiently without knowledge of the vocabulary. On the other hand it is quite possible to speak with others and to be understood without knowledge of grammar. If a Czech tourist comes to a shop in Greece and says, “One milk, two yoghurts and bread”, s/he will get those even without polite request such as “Could I have a bottle of milk, two cups of yoghurt and a loaf of bread, please?” That is one of the reasons why the emphasis on teaching vocabulary grows.

It is evident that to expand learners' vocabulary is important but the question is how should teachers do that? It is not very amusing to read long lists of new words and learn them by heart. Moreover, often to remember a new word it is crucial to repeat it or use it in different contexts several times. One of more pleasant ways to learn the vocabulary is to introduce games into language lessons as a vocabulary game may emerge as very beneficial tool in vocabulary acquisition process. In addition many authors as for example I. Pýchová promote a humanization of education. She believes it is important to decrease emphasis on the output and focus more on attractiveness of education and on experiences or enjoyment of learners (as cited in Choděra & Ries, 1999, p. 117). That is precisely what games do. They make learners to be involved in the learning process and enjoy it.

So the increasing importance of the vocabulary and common underestimation of games are the reasons I have chosen this topic. Therefore the thesis is going to deal with

vocabulary games and their effect on vocabulary consolidation process but also with learners' and teachers' attitude to these games. Simply it is going to discover whether vocabulary games are really so useful in vocabulary consolidation process or whether they are just an overestimated source of enjoyment.

The main question of the thesis is what effect has playing vocabulary games on consolidation of new vocabulary? Next there are four hypotheses to be verified. H1: Sixth graders enjoy playing vocabulary games more than ordinary activities their teacher uses for vocabulary consolidation. H2: Sixth graders do not realize the utility of vocabulary games and regard them rather as an activity which is introduced into the lessons for fun than as a learning tool. H3: Boys like the most the different types of games than girls. H4: The teachers use rather other methods for vocabulary consolidation than vocabulary games.

The thesis consists of six chapters. First there is an introduction which briefly reveals the main area of the research as well as the reason for choice of the topic. The second chapter, called "Theoretical Background", presents and analyses the knowledge and opinions of various authors, who deal with the language in general, with vocabulary acquisition and with introduction of games into English lessons. The following chapter describes the methods used within the research. The fourth and fifth chapters present the results of the research and the implications. The very last chapter concludes the whole thesis.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter describes the theoretical background which is beneficial for realisation of the research. The very first part of theoretical background focuses on the learners at lower secondary. It describes the way they learn, the specific behaviour connected to their age and appropriateness of introducing games in their classes. The second section deals with the vocabulary. At the beginning it explains what the term vocabulary means and how the approach to the vocabulary has changed. Next it shows one of the possible classifications of the vocabulary, and finally it discusses how many lexical items the learners should acquire and which vocabulary should be taught. The third part of the theoretical background describes the process of vocabulary acquisition and focuses more closely on vocabulary consolidation, the memory, the process of remembering and on the significance of review in the lessons. The fourth section is the most fragmented one. Primarily it concentrates on games in the process of learning and it is divided into several parts. The very first part focuses merely on games. It reveals the historical interconnection of games and education and describes the difference between ordinary games and didactic games which are used in education. Furthermore there are listed various reasons why it is beneficial to introduce vocabulary games into language lessons. The final subsections describe different classifications of vocabulary games and the important aspects teachers should keep in mind when choosing a vocabulary game. Here, the aspects of age, gender and learning style are discussed separately in detail.

Students

In general, when dealing with teaching it is necessary to know who is going to be taught. Teachers should find out the age and the level of the learners, the purpose of their study and many other key elements which may influence the teaching. The following paragraphs focus on adolescents and examine whether their ability to learn foreign language differs from the ability of younger learners. Next the text describes students at lower secondary from the point of view of basic features characteristic of this age group, and finally it reveals the way adolescents acquire the language and how it differs from children and adults way of learning. In brief the purpose of this subchapter is to present the learners of English at lower secondary and to discover appropriateness and usefulness of playing games with them.

First it is important to discover whether adolescents may acquire a language as quickly and well as young learners or whether it is necessary to make much more effort to teach them something. Roberts and Penfield's critical period hypothesis presumes that children can learn language naturally and effortlessly only till the age of ten. Later the learning cannot be "completely successful" (as cited in Ellis, 1994, p. 484). It may imply the students over the age of ten, which means also teenagers, learn the foreign language with more difficulties. However today it is commonly known fact that this theory is not completely true. What is more, Krashen, Long and Scarcella even claim that, "older children learn more rapidly than younger children" (as cited in Ellis, 1994, p. 485). It is partially because older children have longer attention span, thanks to cognitive development learn more explicitly and have wider knowledge of world around them which may become a kind of scaffolding when acquiring new knowledge.

Another problem to solve is how should be this unique group called. They attend sixth, seventh, eight or ninth grade at primary schools and their age is somewhere between eleven and fifteen (sixteen). Thus the term teenagers would be quite inaccurate. Also it would be possible to call them young learners as this notion covers children from the age of four to eighteen (Ellis & Leclere, 2003). However as this term is not appropriate for our purposes it would be better to use the term defined by the authors of *This We Believe* "young adolescents" (as cited in Salyers & McKee, p. 1).

The term young adolescents covers students from the age of ten to fifteen. This period is connected with changes in physical, social, emotional and intellectual sphere. Many teachers do not like teaching this age group because of their lack of interest in most of topics, problematic behaviour, lack of attention and passive approach to learning. So it may seem they must be the worst group to teach language at school. However Penny Ur believes adolescents are the best language learners (as cited in Harmer, 2001, p. 38). One of the reasons may be the fact they combine advantages of older and younger learners. Their brain is still fresh and ready to learn but they have longer attention span and their cognitive processes develop.

There is a big difference between the children's and adults' style of learning. While the children learn mostly implicitly through repetition, miming, games, rhymes, songs, exposure and everything that surrounds them, the adults learn mainly explicitly. It means adults need to learn about the language, analyze it and understand its rules. The adolescents' way of learning still develops. As Dekeyser claims, "the older a student gets, the more explicit the learning processes he or she will use: accessing and applying

explanations, deliberate learning of lists of vocabulary, testing hypotheses, focused practice” (as cited in Ur, 2012, p. 258). It signifies the sixth graders may still wish to learn in more childish way while the approach to learning of ninth graders may be more adult like.

However is it appropriate to play vocabulary games with young adolescents? Wright, Betteridge and Buckby (1983) believe games can be played by people of all age groups. Nevertheless at the same time they admit there may be some obstacles teachers should realize when choosing games for teenagers. According to Wright et al. one of the problems is that [adolescents] tend to be self-conscious and reticent (p. 2), which may complicate the process of playing games. Also it is generally known they often find things silly, boring and have behavioural problems, but on the contrary when teachers know how to treat and entrance them, they may become great learners. That is precisely what Jeremy Harmer (2001) says, “Teenagers, if they are engaged, have a great capacity to learn, a great potential for creativity, and a passionate commitment for things which interest them” (p. 39). Therefore if teachers choose appropriate game which may seem interesting to young adolescents it may become as effective and enjoyable as if played with second graders because the “enjoyment of games does not depend on age” (Wright et al, 1983, p. 2). Thus there is no reason vocabulary games should not be played with young adolescents.

As already indicated, in case a game is appropriately chosen it becomes one of the powerful methods which are able to activate young adolescents. As soon as young learners enter the puberty their interest in things taught at schools decreases, they are more withdrawn, unbalanced and occupied with their problems which often may result in daydreaming. Moreover the adolescents tend to be hypersensitive and easily disconcerted. It may cause fear, worries, stress and stage fright which negatively influence their performance (Kohoutek, 2009). Also according to Svatava Šimková (2012), the older learners are, the more they are bored at schools and the more mutual trust in peers and the sense of security decrease. In addition contemporary learners have problems with the empathy, respect and attention. Thus as the games have the power to support the positive atmosphere in the classroom and to make learners to focus their attention on the language being practised, to be more motivated, to cooperate, to be relaxed and involved as discussed below, they seem as the ideal form of language practice.

In conclusion, the term young adolescents relates to very heterogeneous group which cannot be treated in the same way as children or adults. Their world is changing and so are they. That is the reason why the young adolescents need a bit different approach

within the learning process. For teachers, it is very important to keep in mind that to teach the learners at lower secondary means to teach both children and adults. The sixth graders are approximately eleven years old. They are still children who love to play, draw and do the similar things the younger learners do. But the games and activities must be chosen thoughtfully in view of the fact that some girls already enter the puberty. On the other hand, most seventh graders change fully into adolescent learners and ninth graders think of themselves usually as about adults. That is the reason why the learners at lower secondary have to be approached differently. Of course, this applies also to vocabulary acquisition by means of vocabulary games.

Vocabulary

The vocabulary has won its significance within the language systems quite recently. It has been underestimated and ignored for a long time. Teachers as well as the authors of various textbooks focused mainly on the grammar and the vocabulary was just a tool which was to help students to understand and build the grammatical structures (Janíková, 2005, p. 5). Nowadays the approach to vocabulary is completely different. For example Jack C. Richards (2002) claims that, “vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read and write” (p. 255). It shows how the importance of the vocabulary has increased. That is the reason following lines deal with the vocabulary more closely. First paragraph distinguishes the term vocabulary and lexis. Next part describes one of possible classification of the vocabulary and the last part discusses how many and which vocabulary should be taught at lower secondary and what is the aim of language acquisition at Czech schools.

It is impossible not to mention there are two main terms which may refer to the words within the language- the lexis and the vocabulary. While the “old-fashioned” term vocabulary refers only to single words or very tightly linked two or three words, the “modern” term- lexis is much wider. It includes the single words, collocations and multiword items (Scrivener, 2011, p. 186). However for the purpose of this thesis the term vocabulary will be used. It is mainly because most of the authors do not even mention the term lexis in their works and so it would be quite chaotic to use the term lexis on one page and the vocabulary on the others.

There are many various ways the vocabulary can be classified. For example Janíková (2005), distinguishes three types of the vocabulary- active, passive and potential (pp. 85-91). The active vocabulary signifies the words learners can use when speaking or

writing. Simply they can recall and apply them when they want to. Secondly there is a passive vocabulary. This kind of vocabulary represents the words that learners know and understand, but they are not able to use them on their own when speaking or writing. The last type of vocabulary is called potential. It is made of words with prefixes and suffixes or compound words students neither do know nor can use, but they can understand those words. In general it is possible to say that it is important to focus on all three types of vocabulary within the lesson. The main reason is that today the aim of language learning is the ability to communicate and to communicate effectively learners need to have both passive and active vocabulary, as well as they should be able to guess the approximate meaning of unknown words.

One of the common questions is how many and which English words should the learners at lower secondary know. In general it is possible to say the learners should acquire particular amount of the most frequent words plus such vocabulary which relates to their life and culture. In accordance with *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání* it is the vocabulary relating to such topics as family, culture, home, school, shopping, technologies and media etc. (MŠMT, 2013, p.27). However it is much harder to agree on number of words learners need to communicate at appropriate level. In Oxford English Dictionary there is half a million entries. According to Scott Thornbury (2002), the English native speaker's vocabulary consists of 20 000 word families while the second language learner acquires approximately 5000 word families if successful (p. 20). It seems it must take many years to make language learners to understand and be understood. Fortunately to communicate in common situations it is sufficient to know only 2000 words as this is the amount of words native speakers use in daily conversation. And what is more, it has been discovered that almost fifty percent of most English texts are made of one hundred most frequent words (Thornbury, 2002, p. 20). It means that the vocabulary consisting of 2000 words should be enough to enable learners to communicate in English. Thus hypothetically, supposing that the learners start to learn English at lower secondary. They learn it for four years, usually three times a week and each school year lasts approximately one hundred and eighty-nine days. It follows the learners should ideally learn 4.5 words per lesson to reach 2000 acquired words after four years. That is not too much.

The main aim of the English lessons at elementary schools should be to help the learners to acquire the key vocabulary related to various topics which would enable them to communicate in everyday situations. At the end of lower secondary education, the level

of foreign language learners should reach is A2 which refers to learners as to beginners (MŠMT, 2013, p.18). Jim Scrivener (2011) believes that the real difficulty in vocabulary acquisition relates to the process of teaching learners to use old words in new ways. Therefore he suggests that by intermediate level the teachers should support the use of already known words in different combinations and patterns they do not know (pp. 205-207). As the learners at lower secondary reach the elementary and later the beginner level, it follows the necessary goal of the learners at lower secondary should be to adopt the basic set of vocabulary they would be able to use or recognize in everyday life. This fixed amount of words would provide them with a base for further and deeper study as well as it would enable them to communicate in common situations.

In conclusion, as the approach to the vocabulary has changed it catches more and more attention of teachers. It is right because the vocabulary is crucial to the ability to communicate. Thus the teachers at the lower secondary schools should realize their goal is not only to teach the learners to form present perfect, but also to provide them with the essential amount of vocabulary crucial for the future studies as well as ordinary everyday communication on holiday or with friend via internet.

Vocabulary Acquisition

There are various approaches to language acquisition in general. For example Penny Ur (2012) mentions four basic attitudes to it. The first one believes language is acquired the same way as the first language, the second supposes language is set of habits students need to learn, the third presumes to learn language means to learn rules and the last approach compares language learning to learning skills (p. 6). However it would not be effective to explain the process of vocabulary acquisition through these theories. Thus the following paragraphs describe only the basic difference between incidental and intentional learning, the way our memory works, the process of forgetting and remembering, the importance of review and the most important thing-what it means to know a word.

Two main approaches refer to the incidental language acquisition and intentional / deliberate language learning. The former supposes the best way to acquire the vocabulary is to do it unintentionally while the latter believes the best way to acquire the vocabulary, is to learn it intentionally. In other words, incidental vocabulary acquisition means students learn the word without the intention to learn it. They simply focus on particular activity or its goal and when doing so, they learn new words. It is very often connected with extensive reading. However Laufer questions this way of acquisition. He claims that it is rather

ineffective when applied in ordinary school lessons (as cited in Ur, 2012, p.65). As various authors indirectly say it is not efficient to encounter new words many times but do nothing with them. In such case it would be very hard to keep the words in learners' memory. On the other hand the intentional learning means students deliberately learn what they should learn. According to Penny Ur (2012):

Deliberate vocabulary-teaching procedures can be divided into two groups: those that are aimed to teach new items for the first time in order to expand the students' vocabulary; and those that are designed to provide opportunities for review in order to consolidate and deepen students' knowledge of new items. [The presentation, review and assessment model] deals with these. (p. 65)

It is obvious that the vocabulary games, the thesis is interested in, would fall into the later group.

However, the first essential question to deal with when talking about vocabulary learning is how the memory works because as Thornbury (2002) says, "vocabulary learning is a memory task..."(p. 31). There are many models which divide the memory into sensory, short-term memory, working memory and long-term memory differently. The model this thesis works with is composed of short-term, working and long-term memory (Thornbury, 2002, p. 23). When learners encounter new word it goes to short-term store where it stays only a few seconds if the learners do not work with it further. If the learners pay attention to the word or works with it, the word goes to working memory. The working memory enables the learners to use words before they are fully memorized. But as the working memory has limited capacity, it stores the word only for a while and then it is either forgotten or sent into long-term memory which is said to have limitless capacity.

But how should teachers help their learners to move the vocabulary from working memory to long-term memory? Thornbury (2002) believes it may be done through repetition, retrieval practice effect, putting words to use, imaging and personal organizing. For example by using the imagination learners create certain pictures which are connected to the words. On the other hand, personal organizing and putting word into use enables learners to classify it within the mental lexicon and make the associations between the words and learners' world and opinions. Those things, as well as retrieving and repeating, help learners to remember the words better. The retrieval practice effect facilitates learners

to recall the word easier when doing so next time. On the other hand, repeating does not relate to mere repetition of the word but rather the repetition of encounters with it (p.24).

Zahar et al. claim that in order to learn the item, in this case a word, a collocation etc., the learners need from six to sixteen re-encounters of it (as cited in Ur, 2012, p.64). Thus if the teachers at lower secondary want to provide the learners with the stable basement of key vocabulary, they have to enable the learners to encounter those many times. However again it is not efficient to only encounter the vocabulary but to encourage the learners to work with it. It is because the mere repetition of the word does not contribute to its transfer from short-term to long-term memory. In order to make this transfer possible, the learners need to work with words, “use them within working memory and subjected them to different operations” (Thornbury, 2002, p. 93).

When looking at Ebbinghaus’ forgetting curve it is obvious a great deal of information people learn disappears within very short time. To be more accurate the process of forgetting is the most intensive within twenty minutes after the moment learners firstly learn information and it slowly decreases after forty-eight hours (Coon, 2006, p. 313). Later the information vanishes more and more slowly. However after two days, unbelievable more than 70% of the newly acquired information get lost (Coon, 2006, p. 313). That is the reason why teachers should revise the vocabulary. Each time the learners review the items they have learnt, the amount of forgotten items decreases in future. However the meaningful information are not forgotten as quickly as nonsense letters combinations Ebbinghaus used for his experiment (Coon, 2006, p. 313). It follows that if teachers provide learners with the opportunity to personalize the words, to make the connection between the new word and previous knowledge, to cluster the words and to make associations with feelings and emotions, the forgetting will also become less intensive.

The process of teaching the vocabulary may be as well divided diversely. There are many ways to classify the individual phases vocabulary acquisition consists of. Therefore it is not easy to define precisely which stage of vocabulary acquisition the process of consolidation belongs to. One of the detailed concepts is based on six-stage process- presentation, understanding, consolidation/practice, review, application and examination of acquisition. The phase this thesis focuses on is consolidation. However for the purpose of the thesis, it would be better to use the concept of Penny Ur which consists of three stages- presenting new vocabulary, vocabulary review and vocabulary assessment (2012, pp. 65-71). It is because the review is in general a method which enables to fix the vocabulary and

so it seems quite redundant to distinguish consolidation and review phase. Similarly even the application phase may be considered as superfluous as it is often involved in the review stage.

The revision is crucial element in vocabulary acquisition. O'Dell says that, "memory plays a key role in vocabulary learning and the benefits of revision and repetition have been clearly demonstrated in studies of vocabulary learning (as cited in Tuan, 2012, p. 261). The review activity has usually two goals. The first goal is to refresh and to fix the vocabulary and the second goal is to make the use of vocabulary automatic (Janíková, 2005, p. 106). Both of these goals, refreshment and consolidation and automation of the vocabulary may be reached by means of vocabulary games. McCallum believes games are perfect for vocabulary review. He claims that, "games can lend themselves perfectly to quick bursts of revision. Using some of the games, the teacher can revise a massive amount of vocabulary and grammar in a few minutes. Clearly, students have more chance to be exposed to vocabulary through games" (as cited in Tuan, 2012, p.261).

Nevertheless the opinions on how often and when the vocabulary review should be done vary from person to person. For example Janíková (2005) believes the best way to remember newly gained information, in this case vocabulary, is to re-encounter it shortly after the moment students first see it and then to do the review three times within the lesson (p.107). However when looking at Ebbinghaus' curve it seems the review should be ideally done within the first twenty minutes, alternatively at the end of the lesson, then after approximately nine hours e.g. in the form of homework and then the next day.

There are certain aspects which may negatively influence the process of remembering words. First it is learning a big amount of lexical items at once. It is recommended the foreign language learners should acquire approximately eight lexical items per lesson (Ur, 2012, p. 69), and the same applies to review activities. Thus more frequent revision of a few words is much effective than one big revision at the end of the week or some period. Secondly the review should be done in a right time as mentioned above. Thirdly the mechanical and monotonous revision does not result in effective vocabulary acquisition. And finally the superfluous revision of the lexical items which have been already fixed well may cause forgetting these items (Janíková, 2005, p. 107).

On the other hand the use of many senses within the revision, real situations, words organized in particular way, creative activities, motivation and active involvement help the learners to acquire vocabulary better. Also it is important to stimulate the learners' creativity because as E. P. Torrance has found out the learners who are creative experiment

with the items they are acquiring rather than mechanically remembering them (as cited in Janíková, 2005, p.40). It may be also supported by the fact that students can remember 10% of the stuff they read, 20% of what they heard, 30% of what they saw, 50% of what they saw and heard at the same time, 70% of what they said themselves (Janíková, 2005, p. 40). Therefore it is more than important to let the learners play and produce the words actively rather than let the students just read through their vocabulary lists.

The very last, but the most crucial thing to mention when speaking about vocabulary acquisition, is what it means to know a word. It seems to know the form (spelling and sound) and the meaning of the word is quite sufficient. Of course it is the most important thing the learners should know about a word, however as many authors agree it is not enough. Thornbury (2002) says the learners should know also grammatical function which is another important part of the meaning, the collocations in which the word tends to appear, connotations, register and cultural accretions (p.15). Similarly Penny Ur (2012) mentions all these components knowledge of word may consist of, but on top of that she adds three categories-appropriateness, meaning relationship and word formation (pp. 61-63). It reveals it is not so easy to learn vocabulary. Moreover as mentioned above, the teachers have to distinguish the productive and the passive vocabulary. Usually it is believed to learn words passively is easier and it often precedes productive learning. On the other hand, the teachers should keep in mind it is not necessary to teach the learners each word they encounter productively. In case of some words it is sufficient to recognize them and guess their meaning approximately.

To summarize, it is important to realize that some words are simply quite easy to remember while others are not. It may be influenced by several aspects as pronunciation, spelling, length, meaning, range and idiomaticity (Thornbury, 2002, p. 27). For example, a word whose pronunciation is difficult or does not correspond too much with the spelling is harder to remember than a word with clear pronunciation without silent letters etc. Also a word that is long tends to be forgotten easily. This happens mainly because English basic vocabulary comprises a lot of shorter words of Anglo-Saxon origin. Thus the longer words are less common in English and the learners do not encounter them so often. The fewer chances to see, hear or use the word, the more probably it will be forgotten. Similarly it is more difficult to remember words whose meanings may be easily confused. Those are the reasons why it would be useful to pay attention to such words and to focus on them more closely when playing games.

Significance of Games

Although games and education look like two seemingly remote notions, it is interesting to realize how interconnected they are. As Luca Botturi and Christian Sebastian Loh (2008) mention, the teachers were in past called *magister ludi* (literally, Game Master), and what we could call today schooling was called *ludus* (literally, Game). Similarly they advert to the fact that learning and playing are two activities which originally have one important feature in common- they are performed for themselves (p.17). Furthermore when observing children games it is possible to discover a lot of them simulate real life roles or situations and prepare children for their future lives. Also in the past the knowledge of older and wiser was presented to children by means of various games, rhymes and songs and it is still possible to observe it in traditional tribal life. It follows the games were always closely linked to the process of learning. So the following text will explain the difference between games and didactic games and present at least basic advantages of the games. Also, it will give the reasons why the games should be used in the vocabulary consolidation process.

First of all it is good to know what a game is. Unfortunately it is not easy to define it. Holsbrink-Engels points to the fact that while many other languages have just one word for game and play, English distinguishes those. A game is a competition and a play is an experience of pleasure (as cited in Pivec, Koubek, & Dondi, 2004, p.30). In this case it would be necessary to distinguish the vocabulary play and the vocabulary game. However as many authors speak about “cooperative and competitive games”, it is obvious it is not possible to understand the notions of play and game this way in the area of education. Therefore it would be appropriate to quote another definition of game. For example Maňák and Švec (2003) say that a game is a spontaneous activity which does not follow any goal as it involves the goal and value in itself (p. 126). Similarly Johan Huizinga mentions some elements of games which fully correspond with Maňák’s definition and thus reject the necessity to distinguish the word game and play. Besides other things he states that a game is an informal act or activity accompanied by a feeling of tension and/or enjoyment whose goal is the activity itself (as cited in Pivec et al, 2004, p.30).

On the other hand a didactic game has certain specifications. The most important difference between a game and the didactic game is an educational goal which should be reached. Therefore the didactic games are usually organized by the teachers who supervise its realization within the class. The key components of the didactic game are a goal, a structure, an organization, rules and a feedback. Some of the most common goals of games

are to fix newly gained knowledge or to motivate students (Šikulová, 2006, p. 21). It means that the learners either fix knowledge or /and skill they already acquired, or they are prepared to gain new knowledge or skills through motivational aspect of games. However there are many other purposes why didactic games are introduced into lessons.

Playing games is natural and it deserves to be used in education. Generally, we distinguish three basic activities in our lives: learning, working and playing (Hartl, Hartlová, 2000, p.195). It means playing is a natural aspect of human life. A lot of people may think that when playing games students just play and have some fun. Simply it seems that playing is the opposite of work. The students either learn or play. L. Botturi and C.S. Loh (2008) believe that people consider going to school to be students' job. And as adults are paid for how much time they spend in working and not in playing, the educational system also advances work and suppresses play (p. 2). However, as Rieber claims the leisure, not playing, is the opposite of work (as cited in Botturi & Loh, 2008, p.2); and so it would not be reasonable to regard games as mere relaxation. Regrettably many teachers do so and thus underestimate the benefits of games in learning process.

The teachers very often use games in an unproductive way. They decide to play a game at the beginning of the lesson just to start the lesson or when there is still some time left at the end of the lesson. Often a game serves as a reward for good behaviour or work. The teachers also introduce games to classroom to enliven boring lesson and when there is nothing else to do. Thus games often serve as mere fillers, coolers or warm-up activities. However it does not imply it is not beneficial to use a game as a motivational tool.

There are many reasons to employ vocabulary games in language lessons. They can be used to present new words, to do the controlled practice or the communicative practice. Furthermore it is possible to focus both on spoken and written form of words either passively or actively thanks to vocabulary games. And as Penny Ur (2012) suggests a vocabulary review activity should be part of each lesson (p.69), and as it is recommended not to do the same types of review all the time, games can be considered a suitable tool to provide teachers with countless ways to practise and fix the vocabulary.

Games, if appropriately chosen, may emerge as a very useful tool in language learning. Thanks to their features, the process of learning the vocabulary may become easier, faster, more effective and more pleasant. Therefore it is good to mention several arguments for introduction of vocabulary games into language lessons. Firstly vocabulary games may help the learners to use the vocabulary as much as the drill exercises. However, in addition they provide the learners with "[the] opportunity to sense the working of

language as living communication.” Wright et al. (2006) also believe some games make the learners to practise even more language items than drill (p. 2). It means instead of mere drill exercises which often seem boring, the teachers do not have to be afraid to spend the lesson time on playing a game. Thus many teachers should realize that to play a game is not just a waste of time.

Secondly the games are usually connected with fun and enjoyment which may induce positive emotions. The positive emotions cause that “the meaning of the language is ... more vividly experienced” (Wright et al, 2006, p. 2). And so if the words or topics to which the acquired lexical item relates are interconnected with positive feelings or associations, it is more likely they will be remembered well. In addition these positive feelings will facilitate the learners the process of retrieving the words.

Thirdly the games support the development of positive and friendly atmosphere in the classroom which is crucial to effective language learning. As S. M. Silvers states, “in easy, relaxed atmosphere which is created by using games, students remember things faster and better” (as cited in Uberman, p. 2). Moreover it helps the learners to become involved in the game without fear or stress. It is because the games often combine the element of fun, cooperation and the sense of belonging within the members of groups or the whole class which leads to positive relations. In addition, many games require physical movement which makes the learners both physically and psychologically relaxed and thus they are able to produce better oral performance (Choděra, Reis, 1999, p. 119). However there is one key part of the games the teachers tend to forget about and which crucially influences the positive atmosphere - after each game, even the competitive one, the feedback should follow. It should respond to the game, the peers’ performance and the performance of the learner himself/ herself. This contributes to the atmosphere without grievance or sense of inferiority and helps the learners to feel successful.

Fourthly the games positively influence the discipline and cooperation. When playing games the learners have to obey the rules and respect peers. Furthermore the games contribute to rise in the ability to cooperate, which is especially important to sixth grades of lower secondary where most of the learners still remain a bit egoistic. That is why it is beneficial to introduce also the cooperative games even though the competitive games are in general considered to be more effective. However, the cooperative games contribute to positive atmosphere and relations as they teach the learners solidarity and cooperation. Also as Andrew Wright et al. (2006) emphasize, it is not the competition, but challenge that is important when playing the games (p. 2). It follows it is not essential to

focus only on the competitive games but it is necessary to make the game challenging so that it may fully serve its purpose.

Fifthly Jeremy Harmer (2001) believes that what makes a good lesson is amount of the students' activity not the teacher's performance (p. 56). That is precisely what games do. They make students become actively involved in the lesson and thus help to reduce the teacher talking time. Instead of sitting in the row and listening to the teacher or mere reading the textbooks, the students use the language themselves and often they even do not realize they learn something. In addition most of the games make all the learners within the class take part. It is indisputable advantage of games. Again with games the process of remembering becomes easier because the learners get the chance to be involved in what is going on in the lesson, think about it and try to work with the language. Janíková (2005) aptly expresses it when she says that it is much harder to remember something when we just listen to it or read it, but do not use it intensively (p. 40).

Sixthly games are motivating and "help the teacher to create context in which the language is useful and meaningful" (Wright et al., 1983, p. 1). It means the learners do not speak or think about the vocabulary just because the teacher requires it but because the situation requires it. When playing the game the learners are so motivated they often even do not realize they retrieve words, use them and discuss them. The principle is simple and the effect may be great. The learners review the vocabulary when listening to the instructions, when speaking with peers and listening to them and finally when giving feedback on the game, its development and performances of others. And so thanks to many games the learners may discover they are able to use the vocabulary they have learnt to communicate in ordinary situations which is, besides other things, highly motivating.

Finally, the games help the foreign language learners to pay attention, focus on language and have a beneficial effect on storing and systematization of the new vocabulary. They have the ability to make learners to concentrate on lexical items to such extent that it would be scarcely possible to reach it by using other methods. Moreover thanks to the attractiveness and authenticity of game activity the process of learning becomes less demanding (Šikulová, 2006, p. 21). As for the positive influence on remembering the vocabulary according to Scott Thornbury (2002), the learners have their own mental lexicon, where the vocabulary is stored in organized way (p. 16). By providing the learners with the activities, such as games, which enable them to systematize the words and to create useful associations, the ability to remember the words raises (Janíková, 2005, p. 110).

In conclusion it is obvious why the games have been always connected with the education. As mentioned above there are many advantages in using games in language lessons. One of the most important reasons is the fact the games are motivating, they contribute to the positive atmosphere without stress and may provide the learner with the same amount of vocabulary practice as traditional drill exercises. Therefore it would be a nonsense to agree with the statement of Vladimír Choděra and Lumír Reis (1999) who believe the motivation and review are mutually exclusive notions and that the review causes decline in motivation (p. 85). As the review and consolidation can be done through games it does not have to be demotivating necessarily.

Classification of Games

It is impossible to simply classify the language games. There are so many different approaches and criteria on which the classification may be based that it would take a lot of time to mention all of them. This is the reason why the thesis closely focuses only on the most important and well known types of classifications. The following paragraphs deal with the difference between the competitive and cooperative as well as the communicative and linguistic language games. Next they show the detailed classification of vocabulary games by Jill Hadfield. Apart from those the games may be classified according to the duration, place, type of prevailing activity, type of assessment (Šikulová, 2006, p. 22), and others which, but these won't be discussed here.

Basically it is possible to speak about the spelling, pronunciation, writing, conversation and many other types of didactic games which deal with language. This thesis focuses only on vocabulary games. However as mentioned above, to know a word means to know its form, meaning, grammar, pronunciation etc. so it implies, it is not easy to distinguish the individual types of the games as they may overlap. Nevertheless there are several classifications of didactic games which significantly relate to vocabulary games and so they should be mentioned.

First, the games may be either cooperative or competitive. Therefore many teachers should realize that the game is not tantamount to competition, as these two notions refer to two different activities. The most important aspect of each game should be to take part, but of course the didactic games involve also an educational goal. On the other hand, the goal of the competition is to win or to finish in good position. Surprisingly it proved that from the pedagogical point of view the competitive didactic games are the most effective. Among others it is because the learners are very interested in the results of the game and

thus they are able to activate their strengths in order to reach the goal (Vališová, Kasíková, 2011, p. 209). And as Scott Thornbury (2002) says, “like it or not, a competitive element often serves to animate even the most lethargic students” (p. 102). It follows apart from the fact that the students usually endeavour to do their best to become the winners, they take part in competitive games willingly even though otherwise they are passive. On the other hand, as mentioned above the challenge is more crucial to motivation and engagement of the learners than the competitive aspect. That is the reason why the teachers should introduce more cooperative vocabulary games and do not consider them as less effective or inferior. However in conclusion, Vališová and Kasíková (2011) aptly state that almost each game can be approached as a competition or as a cooperative activity (p. 209).

Second, Jill Hadfield (1999) differentiates between communicative and linguistic games. She also calls the linguistic games memorization games as they are used in the first stage of learning new vocabulary- the memorization stage. While the linguistic vocabulary games focus on the accuracy of words, the communicative games presume the performance of a task by using certain language items. For example filling in the picture or exchanging information may be regarded as the communicative games (p. 4). Thus when the teachers take into consideration contemporary trends in second language acquisition which emphasise the ability to communicate, it is obvious they should introduce more communicative vocabulary games. Moreover Scott Thornbury (2002) claims that, “it seems the brain is better disposed to begin the search [for the word] via the meaning-based (thesaurus-like) lexicon rather than the form-based (dictionary-like) one” (p. 17). Logically it follows that is more useful to deal with meaning when playing games and the relationships between various meanings rather than on accuracy as it may help students to retrieve the words easily. In addition games are usually relaxed and enjoyable rather than stressful and so according to W.R. Lee they “make learners use the language instead of thinking about the correct forms (as cited in Uberman, 1998, p. 2).

Finally, there is one more detailed classification of vocabulary games again by Jill Hadfield. She distinguishes information gap, guessing, search, matching, matching-up, exchanging, exchanging and collecting, arranging, puzzle-solving, card and board games, in accordance to activity learners do while playing them (1998, pp 4-5). Later in the following work called *Intermediate Vocabulary Games* she adds category of sorting, labelling and role-play games (Hadfield, 1999, p. 5).

The first group consists of information gap, guessing and search games which work on the similar principle - missing information. The information gap games are based on the

principle that a person A has the information while a person B does not have it. The aim is to complete the task by getting the information. It may be either one-sided or reciprocal. The guessing games are quite similar but only one person usually holds the information while others try to guess it. The search games involve the whole class where everyone has a piece of information and is both collector and provider of the information. The aim is to collect information and be able to fill in a questionnaire or to solve a problem.

The second group of the games is quite miscellaneous. It consists of matching, matching-up, exchanging, exchanging and collecting, arranging, sorting, ordering, card and board games, puzzle-solving, labelling and role-play games. In the matching games the learners match the pairs of cards or pictures. It can be also played as the whole class activity. On the other hand the goal of matching-up activity is to make students to reach the agreement on various preferences, wants, opinions etc. During the exchanging games the learners exchange cards, pictures and such things in order to make themselves as well as their peers satisfied. The similar type, exchanging and collecting games, proceed from exchanging games. The aim is to exchange the items to get the set. The arranging games, ordering and sorting games require the learners to arrange or to sort items in accordance with various criteria. The items can be cards, pictures, people etc. The puzzle-solving games are based on the activity during which the students share or bring together information to solve a puzzle or mystery. The card and board games are quite common and well known. The goal of board game is to be the first round a board while the aim of card games is to collect all cards or get rid of all cards. The last two types of games are role-play and labelling games. The aim of labelling games is to label the objects in the picture. Finally, in the role-play game the learners are given their roles. However it is not real role-play which is open-ended, but in this type, which is intended for vocabulary practice, the way it develops is predetermined and the end is closed (Hadfield, 1998; 1999).

In conclusion there are many types of classifications of vocabulary games. Each game focuses on different aspects of knowledge of the vocabulary. While some games may help the learners just to organize the words and make them part of their lexical web of relations in their head, the other may consolidate spelling or pronunciation. Thus it is beneficial to realize on what aspects of vocabulary knowledge particular game orients and use the different types alternately. Also it is important not to pay attention only to the competitive vocabulary games. Even though the cooperative games seem to be less popular they contribute to pleasing climate in the class. Last, the teachers should not concentrate

only on accuracy and rather they may try to introduce more communicative vocabulary games.

What to Take into Consideration When Choosing a Game

Sometimes it is a bit challenging for teachers to choose an appropriate vocabulary game. And so before they choose it, they should think about several criteria. For example according to Agnezka Uberman (1998) to choose an appropriate game means to reflect firstly the age, level, gender and number of students, and secondly the materials, topic, mode and length of the game (p. 3) Moreover when thinking about the materials, topic, mode and length of vocabulary game it is important to consider whether the quantity and quality of newly acquired vocabulary equals the effort and time the teachers invest into the game. The reason is some games may be time consuming, either when being played or when prepared, and still their effect on vocabulary acquisition may be very poor. However as well some games do not require special preparation but their teaching potential may be very low. An example of such game is a hangman which is obviously one of the most popular vocabulary games. Nevertheless when examined in detail, it emerges most of the time the learners just guess individual letters and as soon as the correct word is revealed it disappears or it is just ignored. Thus the probability that the learners will remember the word and will be able to use it in speech is very low.

As mentioned above the most important aspects to think of when choosing a vocabulary game are the age, level, gender and number of students. The number of students limits the teachers in choice of the game. For illustration it would not be very effective to play a game, during which everyone should go to the blackboard and write something, in the class consisting of thirty learners. It follows the teachers should take into consideration the number of students and decide whether the game is feasible and whether it may be effective. Another category which is crucial for the selection of appropriate game is the learner's level. Andrew Wright et al. (1983) believe it is even more important than the age of the learners (p. 3). It is certainly true that the language level of the learners might be more significant in the process of vocabulary game selection than the age. However on the other hand it is funny to imagine adult beginners enjoying playing some childish game popular with children in kindergartens. It follows the level of the learners is important but as well the age is. However there is nothing to discuss when talking about the level of learners as it is quite evident. Thus the following text deals with the category of

the age of students, gender and the concept of learning style and multiple intelligences as they may influence the choice of vocabulary games as well.

Age. The age is one of the important aspects which help teachers to choose the game correctly. It is not possible to teach little children using the same methods, tasks and strategies as when teaching adults in evening schools. However on the other hand, as mentioned above, it would be nonsense to believe that it is more challenging for older students to learn foreign language or to say that older students should not play games while learning foreign language. Nevertheless the teachers should approach differently to older learners and realize whether the particular game may be appropriate for the age group they work with. It is also important to know that almost each vocabulary game can be modified. So the teachers should not just copy the game from the book or other source but also think about the way they can adjust it to the learners.

Gender. It is generally known that girls mature a bit earlier. They usually reach puberty at the age from ten to fourteen while boys reach it from the age of twelve to sixteen. Thus in general, the girls in sixth and seventh grade are very sensitive, giggle and they are being ladies who consider most of activities “silly”. The boys on the other hand still resemble children who do not understand girls and their moods.

So when choosing a vocabulary game it is crucial to consider the differences between young adolescent boys and girls. For example the miming game would be great fun for boys who will probably enjoy it but the girls may find it embarrassing to mime something in front of the board. Therefore in such case it would be better to modify the game somehow or to divide the class into teams where there is approximately the same number of boys and girls. Furthermore Gurian, Henley and Trueman describe other differences between boys and girls which do not relate to age:

Girls have more active frontal lobes and faster maturing language centres. Girls have a greater facility for language. Their verbal ability is considered to be greater. Girls tend to interact more with others through language. Overall, they are better at multi-tasking... Boys are visually oriented. Their spatial abilities appear to be much more advanced than most girls. Boys tend to be better at abstract reasoning. They tend to be better at storing trivia for a longer period of time than girls...boys tend to be more goal oriented. How each gender uses games in the educational process can have an impact on the learning which will take place. Girls prefer inductive

problem solving, discussion, and contemplation. (as cited in Nettleton, 2008, pp. 65-67)

It follows when there is a class full of boys the games chosen by the teacher should be different than in the class which consists only of girls. Each gender has a bit diverse needs and the teachers should try to fulfil those by choosing various games. Gurian et al., claim that boys prefer games which are visually stimulating and competitive or limited by time while girls tend to like inductive problem solving, discussions and contemplation (as cited in Nettleton, 2008, p. 67). In other words it is not sufficient to play just hangman and bingo and hope it will support vocabulary acquisition sufficiently.

Students' learning style vs. multiple intelligences. Various games may focus on various learners' needs. As mentioned above each student is different and personal characteristic is one of the possible reasons for the diversity. The personal characteristic may be defined by personality, interests and attitude, motivation and of course learning style (Ur, 2012, p. 273). It is necessary for teachers to realize what the learners' preferences are and thus help the learners to facilitate their vocabulary acquisition.

Many teachers know the term learning style which is, as Gardner (2013) says, based on the idea that people have different minds and personalities and so they should be taught in the appropriate and effective way (par. 6). Unfortunately there are so many diverse classifications of learning styles that it is not possible to mention all of them. For instance Andrew Wright et al. (2006) divide learning styles of learners into visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, creative, analytical, cooperative, individual, serious, amusing, dramatic and real (pp. 6-7). Also they explain teachers which game fits best for particular leaning style. But it does not mean teachers have to reflect all learning styles A. Wright et al. mention. The important thing is to change the type of game often to enable all learners to succeed.

However, today the concept of multiple intelligences comes to the foreground and overshadows the learning styles theory. In the Valerie Strauss' article, Howard Gardner (2013) criticizes the concept of learning styles by describing it as incoherent and adds that there are no results which would prove its effectiveness. He claims, "say that Johnny is said to have a learning style that is 'impulsive'. Does that mean that Johnny is 'impulsive' about everything? How do we know this? What does this imply about teaching—should we teach 'impulsively', or should we compensate by 'teaching reflectively'? What of a learning style that is 'right-brained' or visual or tactile?" On the other hand, the concept of

multiple intelligences is based on the existence of seven to ten intelligences. Each person or learner has all these intelligences but some of them are dominant while others are not. May be it would be more realistic, effective and simple to take into consideration few types of intelligences and control whether the games played do not favour only one type of intelligence.

In summary it is very useful to record all the games the teachers already used as it might help them to decide which vocabulary game they should choose next time. As there are many various learners with different learning styles preferences and different intelligences there should also a variety of games. Thus it is important to check the games being introduced into the lessons and ensure such games which focus on visual, kinaesthetic and also on auditory learning style. For example, A. Wright et al. (2006) help teachers to focus on different learning styles by saying which game is appropriate for particular learning style (pp. 5-8). In the same way the games cannot aim just at linguistic and visual intelligence dominated learners but also provide others with the opportunity to learn effectively through games. One big advantage is that almost each game can be easily changed or modified in accordance with the target learners' needs.

To conclude this chapter, it is possible to say that the theoretical background discusses at least the most crucial aspects related to vocabulary acquisition by means of the games at lower secondary schools. It shows that the learners at lower secondary schools can learn a language as efficiently as younger learners and that they may enjoy playing games. It also describes the importance of revision in the process of vocabulary consolidation and the benefits of playing games within the lessons. The final part of the theoretical background focuses on choice of vocabulary games and emphasises how crucial this process is, as it may influence the success and effectiveness of vocabulary games. And as the theoretical background related to the topic of the thesis is complete, the methods of the research will be described.

III. METHODS

This chapter describes the methods chosen for the research as well as the way it was conducted. First it restates thesis question and hypotheses. Secondly it focuses on time and place of the research and the classes who participated in the research are introduced. Next the tools which were used to gather the crucial information are mentioned - an experiment and a questionnaire. First the experiment is described in detail day after day and then the final part of the whole chapter deals with the questionnaires which were given to learners as well as to English teachers.

Research Question and Hypotheses

First of all it is important to mention the aim of the thesis. The main question is what effect has playing vocabulary games on consolidation of new vocabulary? Then there are several hypotheses to be verified. H1: Sixth graders enjoy playing vocabulary games more than ordinary activities their teacher uses for vocabulary consolidation. H2: Sixth graders do not realize the utility of vocabulary games and regard them rather as an activity which is introduced into the lessons for fun than as a learning tool. H3: Boys like the most the different types of games than girls. H4: The teachers use rather other methods for vocabulary consolidation than vocabulary games.

Research Place and Subjects

In order to find the answers to the question and to confirm or disprove the hypotheses the research at the lower secondary school was conducted. The school which enabled me to do it was elementary school in Nezvěstice. It is the same school where I did the teaching practice so the learners were already used to me and my style of teaching. It means the research was done without occurrence of distracting elements. The teacher who helped me with the research was a teacher X. She teaches English in both classes 6.A and 6.B where the research was done.

As it has been already mentioned the classes chosen for the research were 6th grades. There were two main reasons for it. The first reason is the fact that a lot of them still resemble little children who love to play and so it might be more enjoyable to play the games with them. The second and crucial reason was the fact, that there are only two parallel classes at the lower secondary school in Nezvěstice - 6.A and 6.B, and 8.A and 8.B. However while all sixth graders are taught by the teacher X, the eight graders are

taught by two different teachers and so they do not know the very same vocabulary. Therefore the choice of the class was quite simple.

The classes 6.A and 6.B were the most suitable classes for the research. They are two parallel classes, taught by the same teacher three times a week and their lessons are nearly identical. Moreover there are twenty-one students in both classes and most of them study English for four years. In 6.A there are thirteen boys and eight girls. This class is regarded as calmer and more “clever”. Moreover there is one girl who used to live in the United States of America for many years. Thus her results may be different from those of the rest of the class. In 6.B there are twelve boys and nine girls. The class is regarded as “slower” and more problematic one. Thanks to four boys and one girl who disturb all the time, it is much harder to present new vocabulary, to explain the rules of the game as well as play a game. Thus it is expected, this fact might influence the results of the final tests in the class.

Research Tools

Two tools were chosen for gaining the results - an experiment and a questionnaire. First, in both classes there was conducted an experiment in order to answer the main question of the thesis- what effect has playing vocabulary games on consolidation of new vocabulary? It consisted of various steps which are described below. Next there were two types of the questionnaires. The first type is intended for the learners and the second one for the teachers.

Experiment

As for the experiment the very first thing was testing of ten vocabulary items (see Appendix B). These were chosen together with the teacher of both classes and it was supposed the learners do not know these words. Next the learners played five games in two weeks. As the classes were falling behind the schedule I have chosen such games which can be played in ten minutes and won't influence the common learning process so much. These were two guessing games, two matching games and one labelling game (see Appendix A). The games were supposed to focus on the active knowledge of the vocabulary. Thus four of the five games practised the active vocabulary knowledge. When the fifth game had been played the learners took two tests (see Appendix B). The first one tested the active vocabulary and the second one the passive vocabulary knowledge. The vocabulary was practised only by playing games. The learners were not told to learn the

words, they did not write them in their exercise books and except for the initial presentation, the words were not used or mentioned in the classroom.

The first day of the experiment was 12th February. In 6.A it was done at the end of the first lesson which started at 7:55 and finished at 8:40. In 6.B the experiment was conducted at the end of second lesson which lasted from 8:50 to 9:35. The whole experiment started with testing of knowledge of lexical items representing protected species in the Czech Republic. All the learners tried to translate *motýl, orel, vydra, čáp, veverka, rak, bobr, rys, labuť* and *netopýr* into English. Later the words were briefly presented to the learners and the first game was played. The principle of the game was to solve ten anagrams of animals, to write them correctly on the piece of paper and to label the picture cards. The game was rather cooperative as the children worked in pairs. Each pair who reached the goal was winner and was awarded grade one. There was no time limit in order to motivate even slower pairs to solve it and get grade one. The aim was to practise completely new words, mainly their spelling and meaning.

The second game of the experiment was played during fifth lesson on 13th February in 6.B. and during second lesson on 14th February in 6.A. In 6.B it was more complicated to play a game. It is because 6.B is more problematic class and during the fifth lesson, which starts at 11:40 and finishes at 12:25, it is almost impossible to make the learners even to listen to the teacher. In both classes the students were divided into pairs. Each pair received set of twenty picture cards and they played pelmanism game. When a learner found a pair of pictures s/he was allowed to keep it provided s/he says the English name of the animal. The aim was to get as many pairs as possible. The purpose of the game was mainly memorization of the English words and their meaning. The children practised the active vocabulary knowledge.

The third game was played during the first lesson on 17th February in 6.A and during the second lesson on 18th February in 6.B. The children wrote down numbers from one to ten. Then a volunteer came to the blackboard and mimed or drew an animal s/he got on the picture card. The rest of the class wrote down the English name of the first, second, third etc. animal. Those who guessed and wrote down all animals correctly were awarded little grade one. The aim of the game was to practise mainly the meaning and also the spelling of the words. The learners needed to know the vocabulary actively.

The fourth and fifth games were played within one lesson. It was on 19th February during first lesson in 6.A and during second lesson in 6.B. First the learners played bingo and then the guessing game. The aim of the bingo was again to practise the meaning and

spelling of the words. The learners wrote down the English words and I chose and read the words in Czech. The purpose of the second game was to guess the animal the teacher described in English. Each team wrote the English word on a piece of paper. If the animal was guessed, the team scored a point. A team who got the most points became a winner. Again the main goal of the activity was to practise the meaning of the words. The only reason children wrote down the words was to motivate all the teams to guess the animal and score a point. In both games the active knowledge of the word was needed.

On the same day the learners passed the final test. First the active knowledge of words was tested. The students were again supposed to translate *motýl, orel, vydra, čáp, veverka, rak, bobr, rys, labuť* and *netopýr* into English. As soon as everyone finished it, the passive knowledge was tested. There were ten pictures of animals and eleven English words. The learners were supposed to match the picture with the correct word. Everyone was working on his/ her own, the tests were on two separate papers. First paper contained only the Czech words, the second paper contained only English words and the pictures of the animals (see Appendix B).

Questionnaires

The very last day of the research another tool was used- a questionnaire. There were two versions of the questionnaire. Both of them were written in Czech in order to enable the respondents to understand the questions and to make them answer more accurately. One version was given to the teachers and a different type was given to the learners in 6.A and 6.B (see Appendix C, D). The learners filled in the questionnaire on 20th February in 6.B and on 21st February in 6.A. It consisted of thirteen questions and the learners were given enough time to fill it in. The aim of the questionnaires was to verify the hypotheses. First that the sixth graders enjoy playing vocabulary games more than ordinary activities their teachers use for vocabulary fixation. Second, the sixth graders do not realize the utility of vocabulary games and regard them rather as an activity which is introduced into the lessons for fun than as a learning tool. Third, boys like the most the different types of games than girls. And finally, the last hypothesis, which says that the teachers use rather other methods for vocabulary fixation than vocabulary games, was verified by means of the questionnaire for the learners as well as the questionnaire for the teachers.

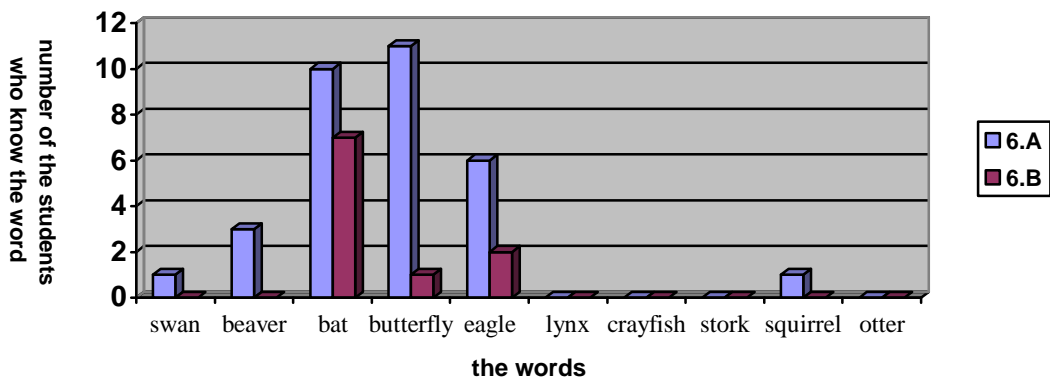
In brief the chapter mentioned the tools used in the research as well as it described the whole process of getting information from the learners and the teacher. The experiment

and the questionnaire seemed to be the best way to answer the thesis question and to verify or disprove the hypotheses. The next chapter will analyze the results of the experiment and the answers from both questionnaires.

IV. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

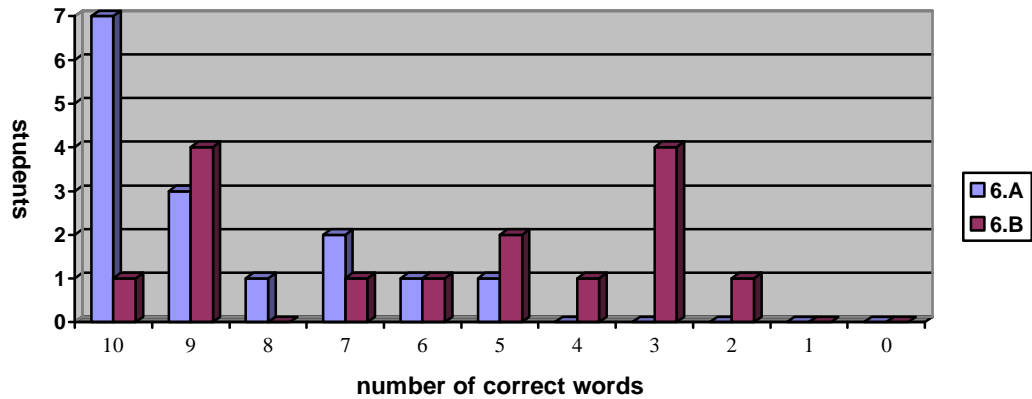
This chapter shows the results of the research. The data achieved by various tools are presented separately. In the chapter firstly the results of the experiment are discussed, next the results of the questionnaire for learners are revealed and finally the questionnaire intended for teachers is analysed. In order to make the findings easily understandable the chapter includes various graphs which provide the visual interpretation of the results. After each visual presentation of the results a description of the findings and a commentary follow.

Results of the Experiment



Graph 1: Initial Testing of Vocabulary

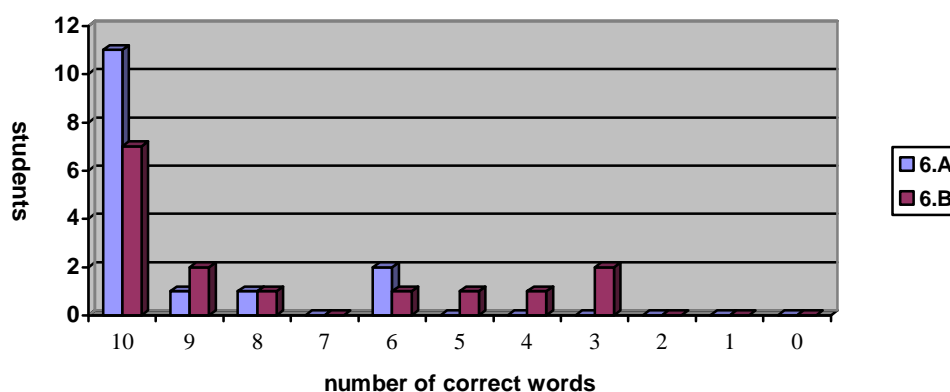
The testing was done with forty learners. Unfortunately, in the end there were only thirty learners who participated in all five games and passed both active and passive vocabulary test. Thus only their results were analyzed. The initial test revealed that a lot of them already know the words *bat*, *butterfly* and *eagle*. However the spelling was often very inaccurate. In 6.A ten learners knew the word *bat*, eleven of them knew the word *butterfly* and six the word *eagle*. Other words were translated only by few learners. In 6.B only seven learners knew the word *bat*, one learner knew the word *butterfly* and two learners knew the word *eagle*. The rest of the class did not know any of the words. In total there were six learners who knew no word. The teacher X described 6.B as a bit slow and undisciplined in comparison with 6.A and the results of 6.A are indeed much better. However it is important to keep in mind that this class is attended by the student who lived in the U.S.A. for many years. She knew almost all words except for *lynx*, *crayfish*, *otter* and *stork*.



Graph 2: Final Active Vocabulary Test

At the end of the experiment there were only fifteen learners in each class who participated in all five games. Thus just their results of the tests could be taken into consideration. Other learners missed some of the games we played in the lessons. In the test there was no emphasis on the correct spelling of the words. As most of the games focused on the meaning, the approximate spelling of the words was regarded as correct. On the other hand, totally incorrect spelling as well as no answer were considered to be a mistake.

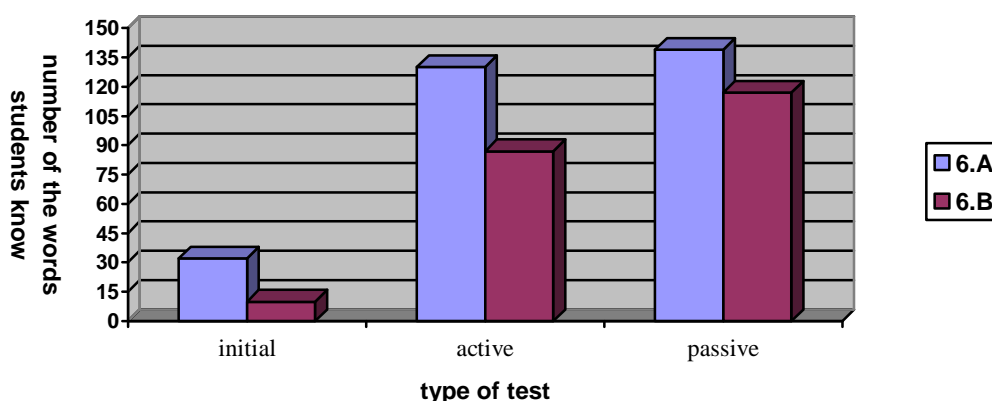
In 6.A seven learners knew all the words, three learners made one mistake, two learners knew eight words, two learners knew seven words, one learner knew six words and one learner knew only half of the words. In comparison with 6.A the results in 6.B were much worse. Only one learner made no mistake, four learners made one mistake, one learner knew seven words, one learner knew six words, one learner knew four words, two learners knew five words, four students learned three words and one learner knew only two words. However this learner is quite undisciplined boy who does not care about English at all. Moreover he did not know any of the words in the very first test and so the fact, he learned two words actively might be regarded as a success.



Graph 3: Final Passive Vocabulary Test

The results of the passive test were better than the results of the active vocabulary testing. Again the test was taken only by the learners who participated in all vocabulary games. It was fifteen students in each class. In 6.A eleven learners made no mistake, one learner knew nine words, one learner knew eight words and two learners knew six words. On the other hand, in 6.B only seven learners made no mistake, two learners knew nine words, one learner knew eight words, one student learned six words, one learner knew five words, one learner knew four words and two students learned only three words.

Again, the student from 6.B who has been already mentioned above knew only four words. The seven mistakes were made by a girl and a boy who attend 6.B. The girl has a kind of learning disability. It is interesting she knew four words in the active vocabulary test and after two minutes she knew only three words in the passive vocabulary test. Moreover she has already known two words before the experiment started and so she learned only one word- *butterfly*. On the other hand, the boy is quite clever but he sits next to his friend who is disturbing all the time. Together they either disturb or do nothing. Nevertheless the boy knew no word at the beginning and at the end of the experiment he has learned three words.



Graph 4: Final Results of the Tests

This graph shows the progress of both classes. There were fifteen students in each class. Each class could potentially learn one hundred and fifty words. Nevertheless it was impossible as there were some words students had already known before the experiment started. In 6.A the learners knew thirty-two words in the initial test. Later the results revealed the learners know one hundred and thirty-two words actively and one hundred and thirty-nine words passively. It means the students who attend 6.A learned ninety-eight words actively and one hundred and seven words passively. On the other hand, the initial testing in 6.B discovered the class knows only ten words. However after playing the five games the results were better. The learners knew eighty-seven words actively and one hundred and seventeen words passively. It means they learned seventy-seven words actively and one hundred and seven words passively. Finally when expressed as a percentage, the success rate in 6.A is 21.3% in the initial test, 86.6% in the active vocabulary test and 92.6% in the passive vocabulary test. In 6.B the success rate is 6.6% in the initial test, 58% in the active vocabulary test and 78% in the passive vocabulary test.

In conclusion it is possible to say that playing vocabulary games has a positive effect on consolidation of new vocabulary. Finally the results of the initial test as well as of the active and passive vocabulary tests were compared individually. Thus it was possible to discover how many words the individual students learned. The results of the active vocabulary test showed that by mere playing these games, each student learned on average 5.8 words s/he did not know before. Furthermore the results of the passive vocabulary test were much better. Each student learned on average 7.16 words. Even though the number may seem quite low it is important to realize that the students just saw one presentation of the new words and played five short games. It means they were just having fun and by

using a technique which is often used as mere filler, they have actively acquired approximately 6 lexical items per learner. It means the research question can be answered positively.

However the results of the tests were again different in 6.A and 6.B. Despite the fact that in 6.A there is a girl who knew six words before the experiment started and so she was not able to learn as many words as others, each student in this class learned on average 6.53 words actively and 7.2 words passively. On the other hand in 6.B each student learned on average 5.06 words actively and 7.13 words passively. Thus it is interesting the results in both classes vary even though there were introduced the same games in the same way. Beside this, there is approximately the same amount of girls and boys in 6.A and 6.B and the grades in both classes do not differ very much. It follows the knowledge of English probably is not the reason for the worse results in 6.B. But they might be influenced by undisciplined behaviour of a few students in 6.B. It often disturbs other students who could otherwise learn more. One girl in 6.B even answered that it was not pleasant to play games in the class because of the noise. So, it means even though there are two almost identical classes which differ only in their discipline, the consolidation of vocabulary by using games may be more effective in one than in another. Nevertheless, the positive effect of vocabulary games on vocabulary consolidation is obvious.

Final Remark

The very last fact I would like to mention is one thing that surprised me and pleased me very much. Three out of four students with the worst grades in 6.A. learned a lot of words. Two girls were awarded grade three in their school report. One of them learned eight words actively and nine new words passively. The second girl did not know any of these ten words before and she made no mistake in both tests. Similarly a boy, who is awarded grade four in his school report, learned seven words actively and seven passively. In 6.B the results were not so great. However one boy who is awarded grade four learned three words actively and all ten words passively. Thus I was very happy to find out even the learners who usually do not learn very well succeeded in the tests.

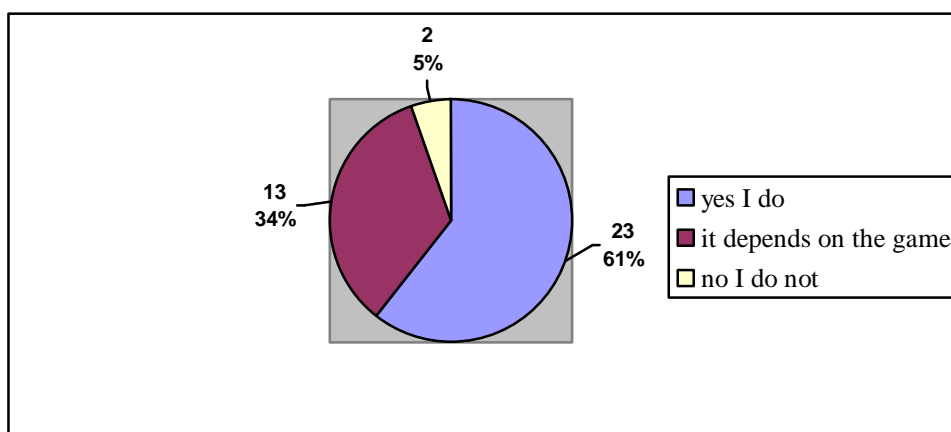
Results of the Questionnaire for Learners

The questionnaire was filled in by nineteen learners in each class. In total there were thirty-eight respondents. These were the students who took part in most of the games. Four students missed almost the whole experiment because of illness. The aim of the

questionnaire was to affirm or to disprove several hypotheses. It had thirteen questions and students were given enough time to fill it in. As some of the students found it very difficult to choose only one option to answer a question, sometimes there are more than thirty-eight answers in one graph. The following paragraphs will present the results and relate them to the hypotheses.

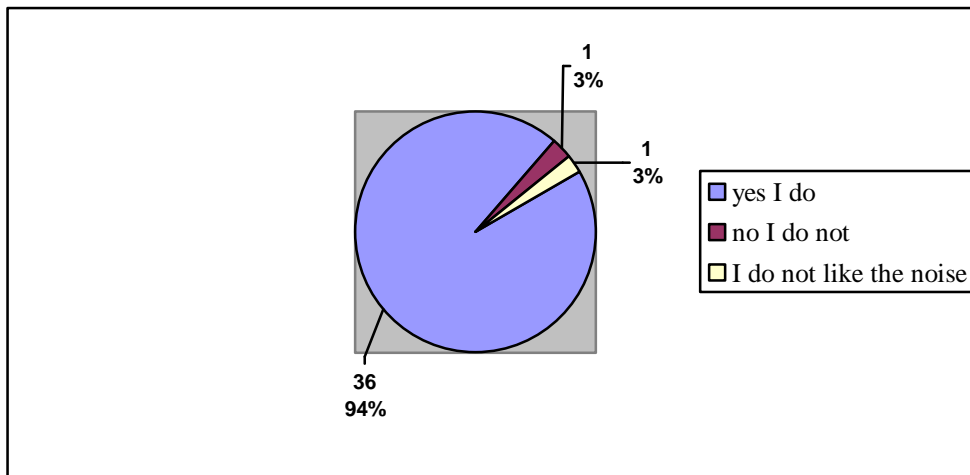
First Hypothesis

First, in different works there are mentioned many benefits of vocabulary games but do the learners at lower secondary really like them? The following set of questions should confirm the hypothesis which says that sixth graders enjoy playing vocabulary games more than ordinary activities their teachers use for vocabulary consolidation. In order to affirm or disprove it, the answers of questions number two, ten, eleven, twelve and thirteen were gathered.



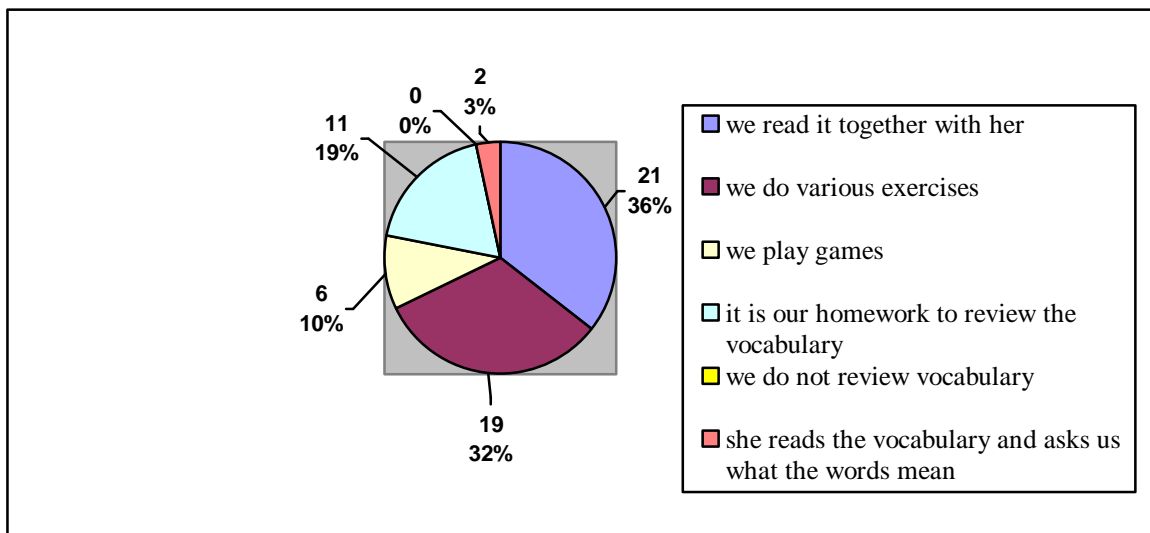
Graph 5: Do you like playing games in English lessons?

The graph reveals that twenty- three out of thirty-eight students like vocabulary games. In total it is 61%. Thirteen students answered that whether they like or do not like game depends on its type. Finally only two students replied they do not like playing games. One of them is a “good” student who is usually awarded grade one. Nevertheless from my point of view he is negligent of any activities that take place in the lessons. He attends 6.B. The second student who does not like playing games attends 6.A. It is again quite clever boy who almost never pays attention to what is going on in the lesson. Usually he is speaking with a classmate.



Graph 6: Do you regard vocabulary games as an agreeable way to learn new vocabulary?

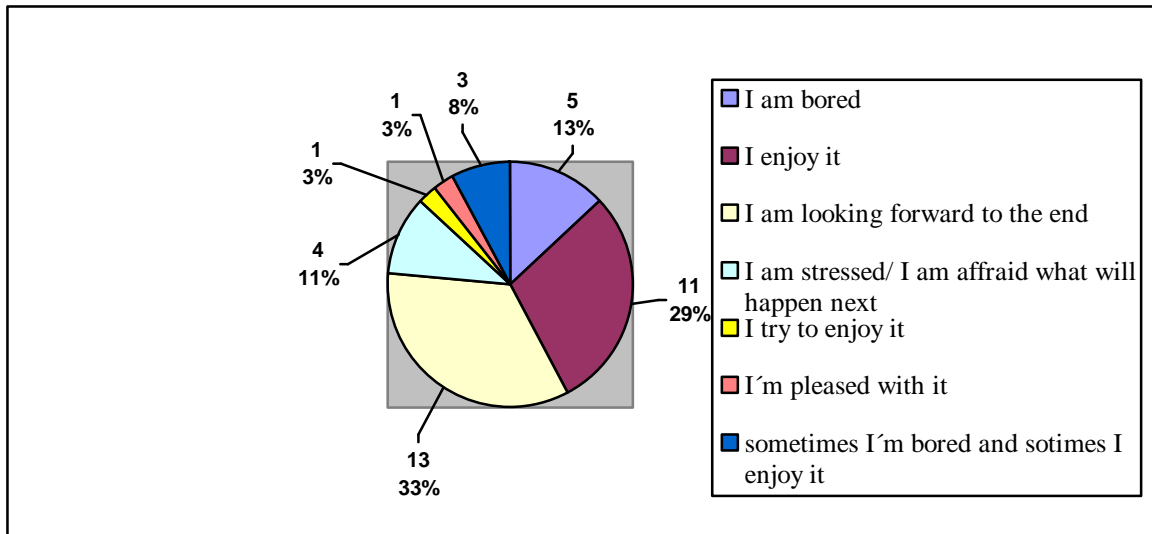
In this as well as in the preceding graph the learners' attitude to vocabulary games is clearly visible. It seems most of the students perceive vocabulary games as a pleasant way to learn vocabulary. Thirty-six learners answered positively and only one learner did not consider vocabulary games to be agreeable way to learn vocabulary. Also there was a girl who said that because of the noise it had not been pleasant to learn new vocabulary by means of the games. She attends 6.B.



Graph 7: What methods does your teacher use to review the vocabulary?

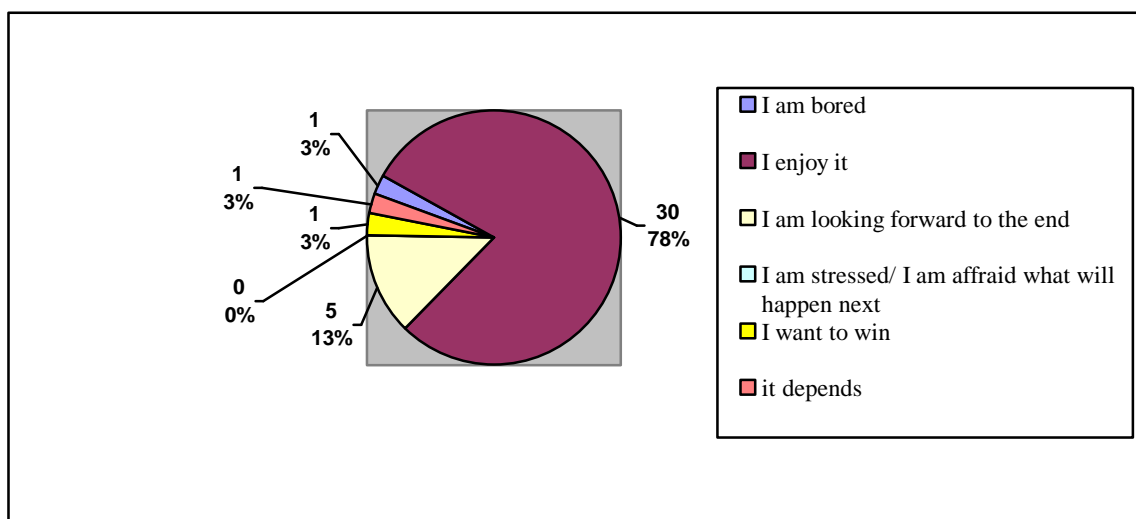
This was one of the questions where the learners could choose more than one option. It is possible to say that the teacher mostly combines three techniques to review and consolidate vocabulary. Mostly she reads the words together with the students. Also she often makes the learners to do various exercises or she lets the learners to review the vocabulary at home. On the other hand only six learners replied they play games to review

the vocabulary. Finally there are two students who described common vocabulary review as a kind of translation exercise with the teacher.



Graph 8: Choose the option that describes you best when doing the review in ordinary way.

The previous question showed usual methods the teacher uses to review the vocabulary in classes 6.A and 6.B. The learners usually read the vocabulary with their teacher, do various exercises or it is their homework to review the vocabulary. This graph illustrates whether the learners like it or not. Thirteen learners are looking forward to the end. It follows they do not like it so much. Next five learners are bored, four learners are stressed or afraid what will happen next and three learners are sometimes bored and sometimes they like it. On the other hand eleven learners enjoy these common review methods. However in the upshot, the number of students with rather negative feelings is much higher than the number of students who enjoy it.



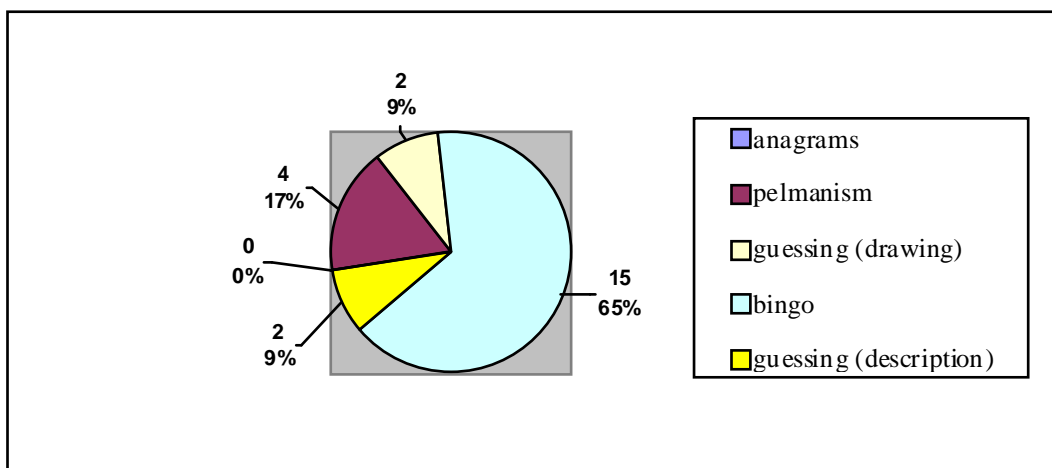
Graph 9: Choose the option that describes you best when playing vocabulary games.

The graph number nine reveals the way the learners feel when reviewing the vocabulary by playing the games. The overwhelming majority, which is represented by 78% of the learners, enjoy this kind of review. Only five learners do not enjoy it very much, one learner wants to win, one learner thinks the enjoyment depends on the type of game and one learner is bored. The only student who is bored attends 6.B and he was already described in “Graph 5”. He is the one who does not like the games and he answers all questions which relate to the games negatively. However still most of the learners enjoy review of the vocabulary by means of playing the vocabulary games.

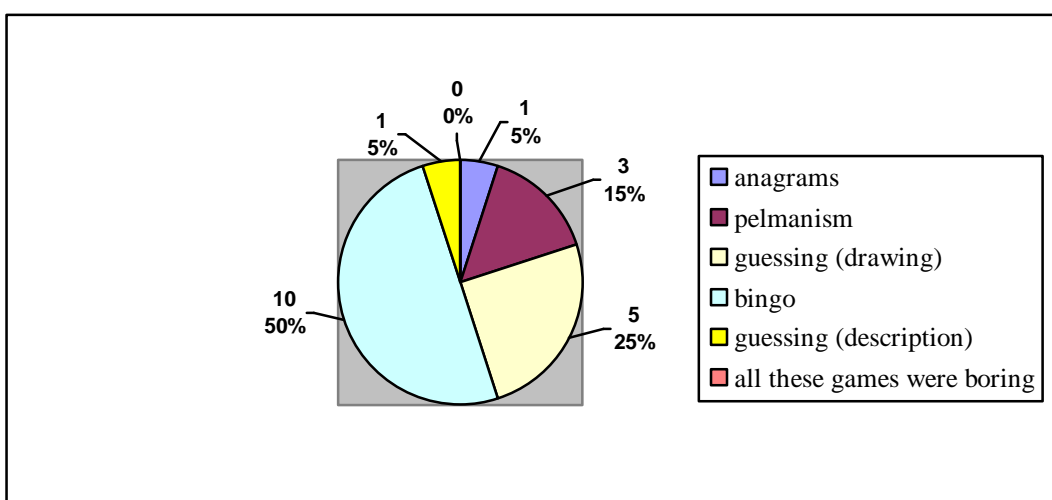
To conclude, it is possible to say that the first hypothesis was verified. The sixth graders enjoy playing vocabulary games more than “ordinary” activities, their teachers use for vocabulary consolidation. The graphs above clearly illustrate the learners mostly like playing games and overwhelming majority of them regard vocabulary games as an agreeable way to learn new vocabulary. Also while the feelings connected with the common vocabulary review were more miscellaneous and rather negative, the emotions connected with the review by means of the vocabulary games were mostly positive.

Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis to verify says that boys like the most the different types of games than girls. As described in the theoretical background, cognitive processes may vary a bit when talking about boys and girls and thus they may prefer diverse methods of learning. Therefore also the boys and girls who attend 6.A and 6.B should like various games. To confirm the hypothesis answers to questions number three and five were gathered. Furthermore in order to understand the reason why some games were so popular and some were not, the questions number four and six ask the learners to explain why they like or do not like particular game. Finally, at the end of the questionnaire there are emoticons which should also help to reveal the game the students did not considered to be the worst, but it was the least popular.



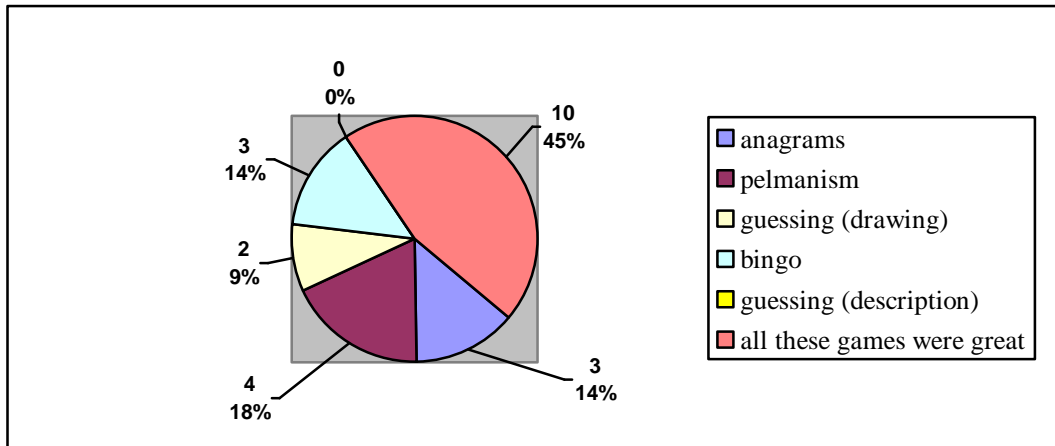
Graph 10: The best game- boys. The learners were supposed to answer question number three, “Which of the games was the best?”



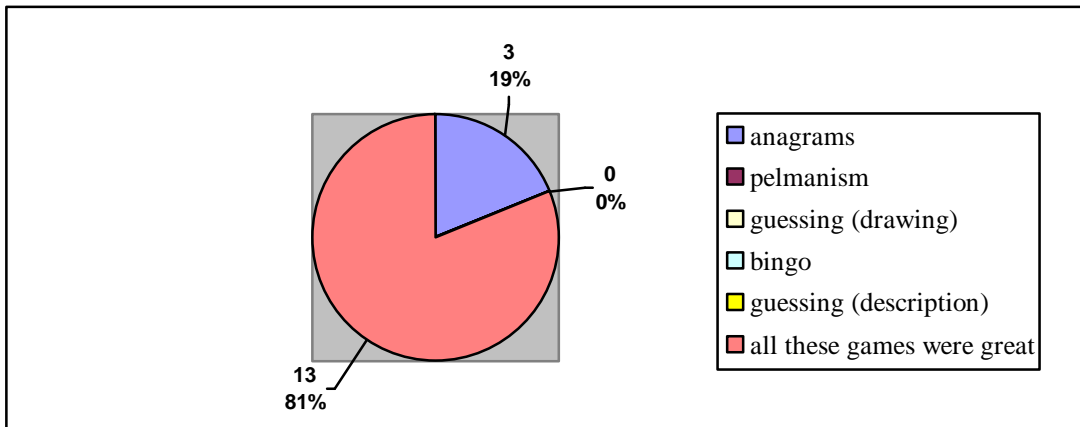
Graph 11: The best game- girls. The learners were supposed to answer question number three, “Which of the games was the best?”

The results surprisingly reveal both boys and girls regarded bingo as the best game. They think it is a good game even though they had already played it several times. To the question why the bingo is the best game the learners answered e.g., “I like it.” “It is the most exciting and amusing game out of the five games we played.” “It helps to practise vocabulary.” “Everyone has a chance to win.” “We can shout bingo.” “It is the best to practise words.” “It is fun and we learn a lot.” “I like competitions.”

Other favourite games are pelmanism, guessing (drawing) and guessing (description). The learners answered they like those games because, “The pictures looked funny.” “I like drawing.” “I like guessing.” One girl also answered that she likes both guessing games because you cannot win just by chance but you have to think about it.



Graph 12: The worst game - boys. The learners were supposed to answer the question number five, “Which of the games was the worst?”



Graph 13: The worst game - girls. The learners were supposed to answer the question number five, “Which of the games was the worst?”

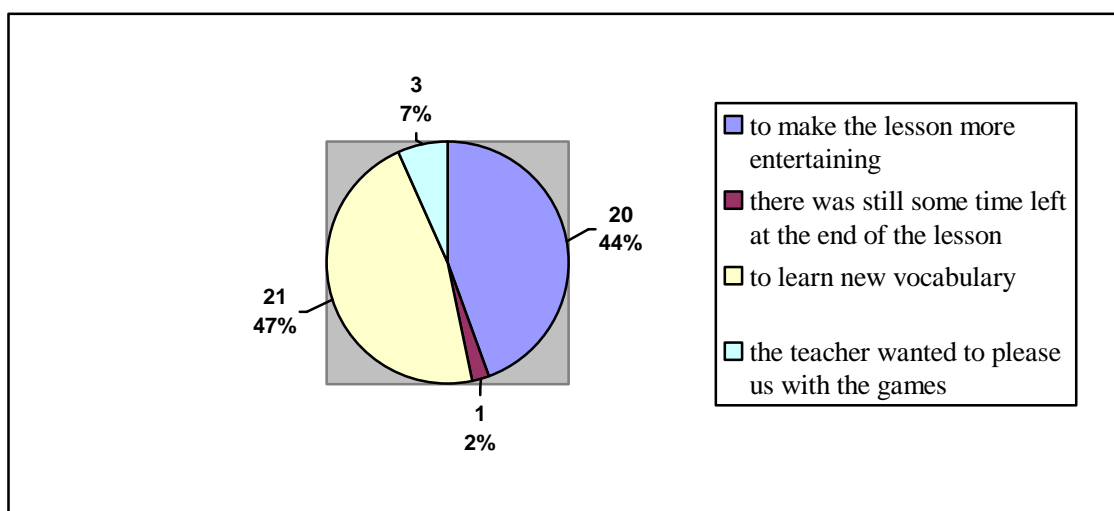
As obvious both the boys and the girls mostly do not dislike any of the games. The boys regarded pelmanism, bingo and anagrams as the worst game. Only two boys think the worst game is guessing (drawing). The girls reckoned anagrams as the worst but most of them liked all the games. Thus it seems many learners simply considered no game to be so bad so that they would call it the worst. Nevertheless when taking into consideration the emoticons at the end of the questionnaire, the worst game would be guessing (description). All sad and straight face emotions next to individual games were counted and the guessing (description) game was the winner. Five girls and twelve boys coloured sad or straight emoticon in the case of this game. It means they regarded it as boring or not so bad. The second worst game was guessing (drawing) which received fifteen sad or straight face emoticons. However the learners probably did not find those games to be the worst when they were supposed to decide in question number five.

It is quite surprising both guessing games were the least popular with the learners. When observing them working in the lesson it seemed the learners enjoyed the most just the guessing (description) game and bingo. On the other hand I expected pelmanism and anagrams will not the most popular games as these are quite calm and not very exciting. As well it is unbelievable that bingo, such ordinary, simple and time-saving game, is so popular with both boys and girls in both classes in spite of the fact that the learners already know this game. There are only few learners who do not like it. One of them says it is because they play bingo quite often.

However, in conclusion the hypothesis is disproved. Both girls and boy liked the most bingo and mostly they did not regard any of the game as the worst. Moreover the boys and the girls even unknowingly concurred in the worst game in the emoticon passage of the questionnaire. The guessing (description) game received the lowest number of smiling emoticons by both boys and girls even though it was never mentioned in answers to question number six.

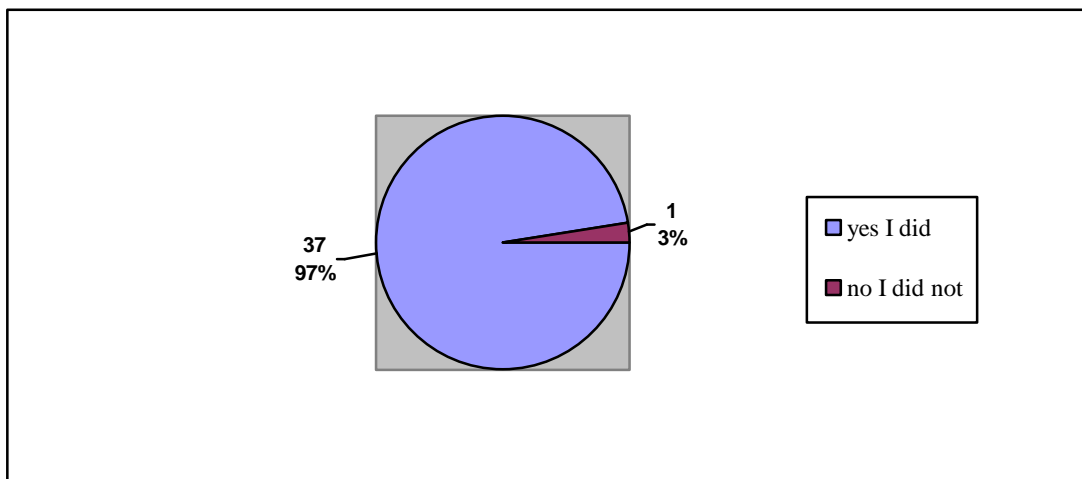
Third Hypothesis

Another hypothesis tries to verify that sixth graders do not realize the utility of vocabulary games and regard them rather as an activity which is introduced into the lessons for fun than as a learning tool. It is because people often believe that when playing games children do not even realize they are learning something. Of course they subconsciously learn words, phrases and grammar when listening to the instructions or communicating when trying to solve a problem, riddle etc. However do they at least partially realize the games are played for a particular purpose?

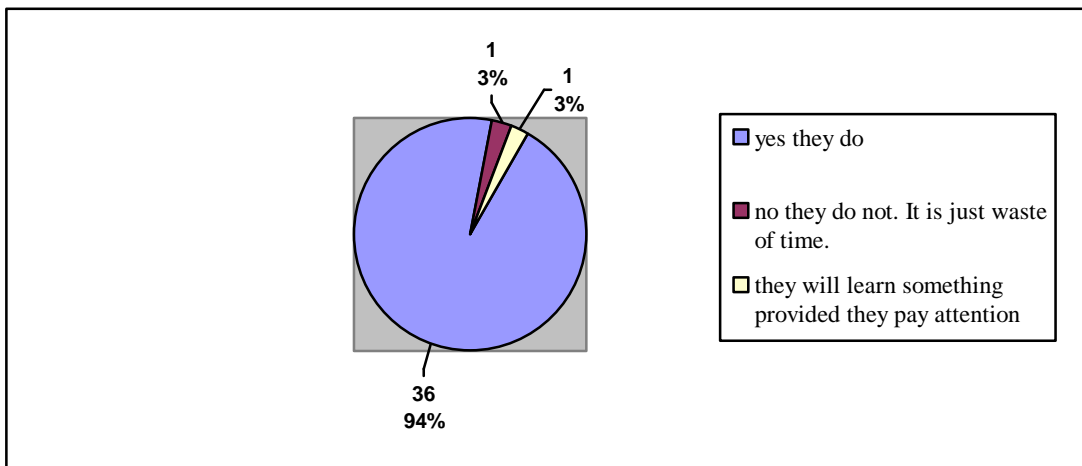


Graph 14: According to you what was the reason for playing the games?

Even though the result shown in “Graph 14” is not very convincing, most of the learners think they were playing games in order to learn something. The second most frequent answer was b) to make the lesson more entertaining. However this is another of the questions where many learners chose more than one answer. The most frequent combination of the response options was a) to make the lesson more entertaining and b) to learn new vocabulary. It follows many learners perceive vocabulary games as something which should better the lesson as well as a tool intended for learning.



Graph 15: Did you learn new vocabulary thanks to these games?



Graph 16: Do you consider vocabulary games to be useful? Do the students learn something?

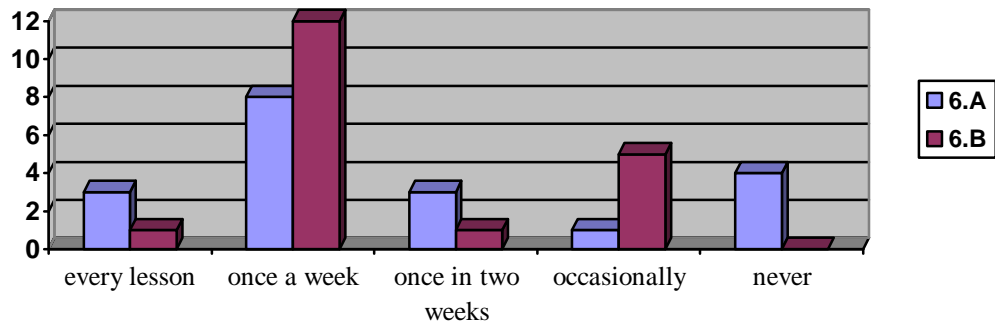
Both “Graph 15 and 16” show the unequivocal results. In the first graph thirty-seven learners believe they have learned new vocabulary thanks to playing the vocabulary games. Only one student, who was already mentioned several times in the text above, thinks he has not learned anything. In general he has a negative attitude to the games. As

well he was the only one who answered negatively the question in “Graph 15”. The rest of the learners, except for one girl, regard vocabulary games as a useful tool in vocabulary learning process. The girl thinks vocabulary games lead to acquisition of vocabulary but just in the case the students pay attention.

In conclusion the hypothesis, which says that sixth graders do not realize the utility of vocabulary games and regard them rather as an activity which is introduced into the lessons for fun than as a learning tool, is disproved. Despite the fact that many of the students believed the games were introduced into the lesson to make it more entertaining most of them understood the real aim of the games. Thus even the learners at the age of eleven or twelve realized the games served for vocabulary learning. Even though the learners quite enjoyed the games they also became conscious of the fact they have learned something new thanks to them. Moreover they considered vocabulary games to be useful in vocabulary learning process.

Results of the Questionnaire for the Teacher

The English teachers at ZŠ Nezvětice were given the questionnaire which consists of seven questions (see Appendix D). Unfortunately, nowadays there are only two teachers - the teacher X and her colleague. Teacher X teaches 6.A, 6.B and 7th grade and her colleague teaches 8th and 9th grade. The aim of the questionnaire was to discover the approach to use of games in general and to vocabulary games. Another reason for the creation of questionnaire for the teachers was to confirm the hypothesis that the teachers use rather other methods for vocabulary consolidation than vocabulary games. Also some of the answers of the teacher X were compared with the answers of the learners in order to affirm their plausibility.



Graph 17: Learners’ opinion on frequency of playing games. The learners were supposed to answer the question number two, “Do you play vocabulary games in English lessons?”

Firstly, in answers to the first and the second question, both the teacher X and her colleague say they play educational games with their learners but that they introduce them only occasionally. However the learners who attend 6.A and 6.B mostly agreed on a different frequency of playing games. Twenty learners answered the teacher introduces games into lessons approximately once a week, six learners think they play games once a month, one learner believes the class plays games every lesson, one learner thinks the class plays games once in two weeks and one learner has allegedly never played games with the teacher.

Nevertheless there are two possible reasons for such a big discrepancy. Firstly, I taught both classes for quite a long time and we played games very often. When filling in the questionnaire one of the girls asked me whether she should take into consideration only my lessons or also the lessons with their teacher. Even though I emphasized the question relates to ordinary lessons with their teacher it is quite possible many learners were responding to my lessons. Secondly, maybe the learners do not understand the difference between a game and an ordinary activity and so they believe they play games more often than they do. In this case it would be great that the common exercises and activities are presented in such an entertaining way so that the learners believe they play a game.

Secondly, the questionnaire discovers the teachers’ approach to the games. It asks Q3: what types of games the teachers introduce into lessons most often and Q7: which vocabulary games they like. While the teacher X usually uses games focusing on vocabulary and pronunciation her colleague uses mostly vocabulary games. The favourite

games of the teacher X are hangman, guess what... and interactive whiteboard games. Her colleague does not name any game.

The last two questions are Q5: What do you think of the vocabulary games whose aim is to consolidate new vocabulary, are they useful? and Q6: Do you consider vocabulary games to be an effective tool in the process of vocabulary consolidation or do you think teachers just waste the time by introducing them into the lesson? The results show that the teacher X as well as her colleague regard vocabulary games as beneficial and that they think it is not waste of time to use them in order to consolidate vocabulary. However, even though they both believe vocabulary games are useful, they rather do various exercises, as discovered in Q4 of the questionnaire (see Appendix D). In addition to it the teacher X often reads the vocabulary together with the learners. This was also proved by the questionnaire intended for her learners. Most of them answered their teacher usually reads the vocabulary them or they do various exercises to consolidate the vocabulary.

To conclude, even though the two teachers are quite small amount of respondents, they are the representatives of the lower secondary of one school. The research reveals they introduce vocabulary games into the lessons rather occasionally. Also it shows that they use such methods as reading together with the learners or various exercises to consolidate the vocabulary. Thus if we take into consideration this school, the hypothesis would be verified. The two representatives really use rather other methods for vocabulary consolidation than vocabulary games.

In brief, the chapter presented the results of the research. In total there were four hypotheses to be verified. In the end, two of them were affirmed. The research showed that sixth graders enjoy playing vocabulary games more than the ordinary activities their teacher uses for vocabulary consolidation. As well it proved the teachers use rather other methods for vocabulary consolidation than vocabulary games. On the other hand the hypotheses number two and three were disproved. Thus it is not true that sixth graders do not realize the utility of vocabulary games and regard them rather as an activity which is introduced into the lessons for fun than as a learning tool. Similarly, it is not possible to say that boys like the most the different types of games than girls. Nevertheless the final aim of the research, which was supposed to discover what effect has playing vocabulary games on consolidation of new vocabulary, was answered positively. It was discovered that that playing vocabulary games has a beneficial effect on consolidation of vocabulary.

However there is a question whether the research itself was of some benefit to foreign language teachers or learners. It will be discussed in the following chapter.

V. IMPLICATIONS

This chapter consists of three subchapters. The first one presents useful and interesting findings of the research which may be important for language teaching. The second subchapter discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the research. Finally the third subchapter describes the way the research could be improved. Also it suggests possible areas and ideas for future researches dealing with vocabulary games.

Implications for Teaching

Two out of the four hypotheses were confirmed, two were disproved and the research question of the thesis was positively answered. Altogether it signifies games are generally perceived as a pleasant way to consolidate vocabulary. As well the research revealed most of the learners know what the main goal of the games is and that they regard the games as useful. Furthermore the majority of the learners enjoyed playing the vocabulary games more than the other ways of vocabulary consolidation their teacher uses.

On the other hand, the teachers regard vocabulary games as a useful tool in vocabulary consolidation process but they introduce them into the lessons only occasionally. Usually they rather do various exercises to consolidate the vocabulary or they read the words together with the learners. So it seems quite illogical to introduce vocabulary games into the lessons only occasionally even though the teachers as well as their learners believe vocabulary games are useful.

Therefore it would be great if the teachers introduced more vocabulary games into the lessons. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the games have a beneficial effect on vocabulary consolidation. Moreover almost each game the learners played took no more than ten minutes. It means, it is not time consuming to play games as teachers usually spend ten minutes on doing an exercise or other vocabulary review too. In addition the learners at lower secondary, in this case sixth graders, not only enjoy playing the games but also they consider them to be useful. It follows they know they are doing something beneficial which may be very motivating. Furthermore the research revealed both girls and boys like the most the same type of game. And what is more, bingo became the most popular game despite the fact the learners had already played it many times with their teacher. So the teachers do not have to introduce a new game every time they decide to play vocabulary games in the lessons. Similarly they do not have to worry about the selection of a game which would appeal to both girls and boys.

In brief, the learners like playing games and realize their usefulness. The teachers as well consider vocabulary games to be beneficial but they do not introduce them into the lessons very often. Thus it would be great to let learners enjoy the games and at the same time consolidate new vocabulary. As described in the theoretical background there are many types of vocabulary games which are effective and focus on many aspects of vocabulary knowledge. It means the teachers have a large selection of various games for various learners and various purposes. However there are such classes where it is not appropriate to play the games very often and an occasional introduction of a vocabulary game is sufficient. But in the classes where there are no serious disciplinary problems vocabulary games should be used more often. It is an effective and amusing way to consolidate vocabulary.

Limitations of the Research

It is important to say that the research has its strengths as well as weaknesses. As for the strengths, it was good to consolidate vocabulary only by means of vocabulary games. As mentioned above, the ten words were just once presented to the learners. The learners were told neither to write the words into their exercise books nor to review them at home. Then the learners played five short vocabulary games. Theoretically it means the learners consolidated the words only by playing the games. Thus it was possible to prove the effectiveness of vocabulary games in vocabulary consolidation process without the influence of other methods. Another positive aspect of the research was its length. The learners participated in the research from 12th February to 21st February. Therefore they had enough chances to review the words within various time periods. The very first review took place shortly after the presentation of new words. On the other hand between the second and the third game the interval was much longer.

However the research has also its weaknesses. Firstly I am sorry I forgotten to test the passive vocabulary knowledge at the very beginning of the experiment. The learners passed only the active vocabulary knowledge test. Unfortunately after the presentation of the words it was too late to test the passive knowledge of the vocabulary. Secondly, another weakness of the experiment was its length. Even though it has already been mentioned as one of the strengths of the research it was also one of its weak points. In each lesson at least one of the learners was missing. Out of the number of forty-two learners only thirty learners participated in all five games. It means only their results could be taken into consideration. On the other hand for the purpose of the questionnaire it did not matter

whether a learner took part in all five games. Thus there were thirty-eight respondents who played most of the games and their answers were analyzed in the thesis. So, if the experiment lasted only one day there would be more respondents and it would be less difficult to analyze the data. The third weakness of the research was very low number of teachers who responded to the questionnaire. It is a pity but on the other hand it would not be very relevant to ask teachers from Plzeň and other schools. Finally the last tiny weakness of the research was the inability of the learners to sign their tests and questionnaires. Therefore it took a lot of time to search for an “author” of particular test or questionnaire.

As well the research has its limitation which should be taken into consideration. The vocabulary games the learners played focused on the meaning of words. It follows the positive effect of vocabulary games on vocabulary consolidation cannot be generalized for all aspects of vocabulary knowledge. Thus it is not possible to say that e.g. vocabulary games focusing on spelling of the words have also beneficial effect on consolidation of vocabulary spelling.

Suggestions for Further Research

First if the very same research was conducted again I would recommend its author not to forget to test the passive vocabulary knowledge before the experiment starts. As well the research could be done with more learners. Next it would be great to repeat the experiment with the different types of games which focus e.g. on spelling and discover their efficiency. Similarly it would be interesting to introduce into the lessons less known communicative games and observe their effectiveness as well as their popularity with the learners. Last it would be beneficial to find more teachers who could take part in the research.

As for the further research it would be interesting to do the experiment with all grades at the lower secondary school. Then the approach of learners and the efficiency of vocabulary games could be monitored. Another possible area of the research might be just the teachers’ attitude to vocabulary games. There is a question why do the teachers at lower secondary schools introduce vocabulary games into lessons only occasionally even though they as well as their learners believe vocabulary games are useful? Thus the research may discover the reasons why the teachers do not introduce the games so often, what difficulties they have to face when playing vocabulary games, which games they like, what they think about vocabulary games etc.

In conclusion, the chapter presented the results of the research in relation to vocabulary teaching. Next it discussed its strengths and weaknesses in the subchapter called “Limitations of the Research”. Unfortunately it revealed the weaknesses prevail over the strengths. On the other hand the research was quite time consuming, difficult to organize and realize. One of the biggest complications was the absence of different learners. Finally the last part of this chapter deals with possible areas of the future researches. There are still many interesting questions to be answered and the more I analyzed the results the more possible improvements and ideas appeared. However this research and its result have been already analyzed and now the very last part of the thesis follows.

VI. CONCLUSION

As mentioned in the theoretical background the grammar is not the most crucial aspect of foreign language acquisition anymore. Instead the vocabulary becomes more and more significant. However it is not easy to learn new vocabulary especially in the case of students who have to learn foreign language at schools compulsorily. It is mainly because the learners need several encounters of a word. Also they need to use a word in different contexts and review it in various intervals in order to learn it properly. Unfortunately such process may be quite demotivating. Therefore various vocabulary games should be introduced into the lessons as they are perceived as amusing and motivating way to learn vocabulary. However are the vocabulary games effective in vocabulary consolidation process? And are they popular with learners and teachers? These were the questions the thesis tried to answer.

There were four hypotheses and one research question which were supposed to reveal useful facts about the vocabulary games. First the vocabulary games really proved to have positive effect on the vocabulary consolidation. Even some of the learners who are not usually doing well learned quite a lot of words by means of playing the games. Also the research showed the learners enjoy playing vocabulary games more than the common techniques used by their teacher in order to consolidate the vocabulary. Moreover it was discovered the learners realize the usefulness of playing the games. Thus when playing games they are not only having fun but they know it is beneficial to their English. Last even though the theoretical part suggests boys and girls should like the different types of games it emerged that the most ordinary game is at the same time the most popular with both sexes. The very last hypotheses proved the teachers do not introduce vocabulary games very often into the lessons despite the fact they consider them to be useful.

Thus the fifth chapter of the thesis recommends to the teachers not to be afraid to introduce vocabulary games into the lessons more often. It emerged it is not waste of time to play vocabulary games with the learners for the purpose of consolidating new vocabulary. As well it is obvious most of the learners appreciate it. However the thesis also admits there may be such classes where it would not be effective to play vocabulary games. These may be the classes with the disciplinary problems.

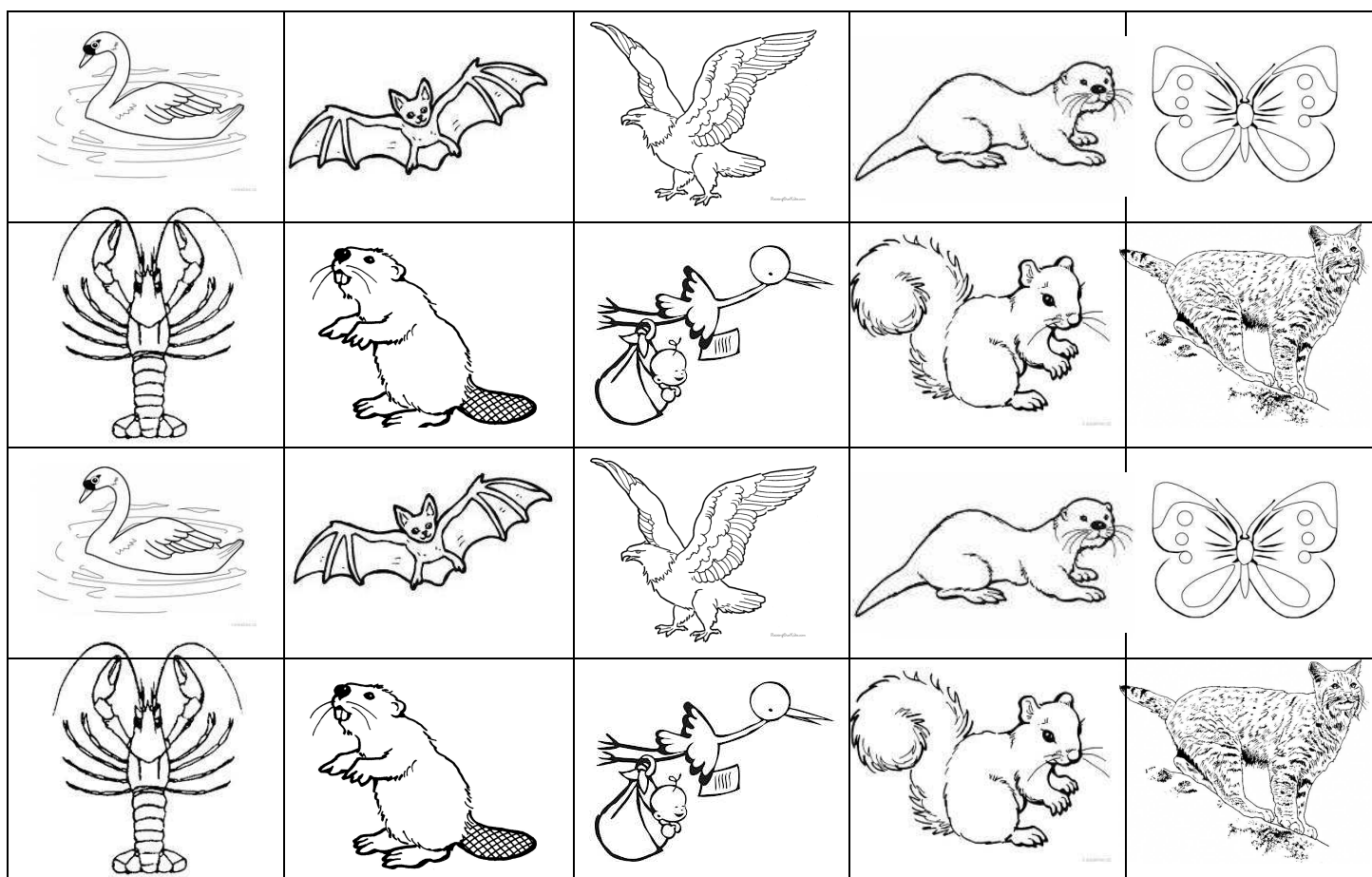
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APPENDIX A

Pelmanism cards, cards for anagrams, cards for choosing an animal in the guessing game (draw or mime).



Anagrams:

AGLEE SAWN BEAREV NYLX SHARIFCY TAB RULERSIQ
 FLUTTERYB KROTS TORTE

Guessing game (description):

Butterfly - it lives in the air. It can fly. You can see it on flowers. It has many colours.

Eagle- it lives in the air. It can fly. It eats other animals. It is a symbol of America. You can see it near forest.

Bat- it lives in the air. It can fly. It is black and you can see it only at night.

Swan- it can fly and it can swim. It is big, white and beautiful. People often feed it with rolls.

Crayfish- it lives in the water. It is brown, green or red and often it walks in different way than we do. It can walk backwards.

Beaver- it lives near water. It can walk and swim. It has fur, big teeth and big tail. It can cut trees.

Stork- it lives in the air. It can fly. It is white and black and it has long legs. People believe it brings them babies.

Otter- it lives near water. It can walk and swim. It has fur and it looks like a big mouse. It eats fish and it is a celebrity of a fairy tale for children.

Lynx- it lives in the forest. It looks like a big cat and it eats meat. You can see it in a ZOO or in Šumava.

Squirrel- it lives in the forest. It climbs trees and likes nuts. It has fur, big teeth and a big tail. You can also see it in parks.

APPENDIX B

The testing of the potential knowledge of unknown words

Přelož:

motýl-	vydra-	veverka-
orel-	rak-	rys-
labuť-	netopýr-	čáp-
bobr-		

The active vocabulary test

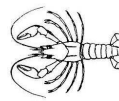
Přelož:

motýl-	vydra-	veverka-
orel-	rak-	rys-
labuť-	netopýr-	čáp-
bobr-		

The passive vocabulary test

Přiřaď anglický název ke správnému obrázku:

butterfly bat eagle squirrel swan beaver lynx stork deer crayfish otter



APPENDIX C

The questionnaire for the learners in English

class.....

name.....

final grade.....

1. Do you play vocabulary games in English lessons?

- a) yes we play the games approximately every lesson
- b) yes we play the games approximately once a week
- c) yes we play the games approximately once in two weeks
- d) yes we play the games but only occasionally
- e) no, we do not

2. Do you like playing games in English lessons?

- a) yes I do
- b) it depends on the game
- c) no I do not

3. Which of the games was the best?

- a) anagrams
- b) pelmanism game
- c) guessing (drawing)
- d) bingo
- e) guessing (description)
- f) all these games were boring

4. Why did you like the game? (learners who marked f) in 3rd question do not answer)

5. Which of the games was the worst?

- a) anagrams
- b) pelmanism game
- c) guessing (drawing)
- d) bingo
- e) guessing (description)
- f) all these games were great

6. Why did you not like the game?

7. According to you what was the reason for playing the games?

- a) to make the lesson more entertaining
- b) there was still some time left at the end of the lesson
- c) to learn new vocabulary
- d) the teacher wanted to please us with the games
- e) different answer (explain it)

8. Did you learn new vocabulary thanks to these games? What do you think?

- a) yes I did
- b) no I did not

9. Do you consider vocabulary games to be useful? Do the students learn something?

- a) yes they do
- b) no they do not. It is just a waste of time.
- c) different answer (explain)

10. Do you regard playing vocabulary games as an agreeable way to learn new vocabulary?

- a) yes I do
- b) no I do not
- c) different answer (explain)

11. What methods does your teacher use to review the vocabulary?

- a) we read it together with her
- b) we do various exercises together
- c) we play vocabulary games together
- d) it is our homework to review the vocabulary
- e) we do not do the review
- f) different answer (explain)

12. Choose the option that describes you best when doing the review in ordinary way?

- a) I am bored
- b) I enjoy it
- c) I'm looking forward to the end
- d) I am stressed/ I am afraid what will happen next
- e) different answer (explain)


13. Choose the option that describes you best when playing vocabulary games?

- a) I am bored
- b) I enjoy it
- c) I'm looking forward to the end
- d) I am stressed/ I am afraid what will happen next
- e) different answer (explain)


Assess the games by colouring one of the emoticons: (excellent 😊 not so bad 😐 boring 😞)

1) anagrams 

2) pelmanism 

3) guessing (drawing) 

4) bingo 

5) guessing (description) 

Did you miss any of the games?

Thank you 

The questionnaire for the learners in Czech:

třída..... jméno..... známka na vysvědčení.....

1. Hrajete se svojí paní učitelkou hry v hodinách angličtiny?

- a) ano, každou hodinu
- b) ano, přibližně jednou za týden
- c) ano, přibližně jednou za dva týdny
- d) ano, ale jen občas (1x za měsíc a méně)
- e) ne

2. Hraješ rád/a hry v hodinách angličtiny?

- a) ano b) ne c) někdy (záleží na hře)

3. Která z her se ti líbila nejvíce?

- a) přesmyčky b) pexeso c) hádání (podle kreslení) d) bingo e) hádání (dle popisu) f) žádná, všechny byly nudné

4. Proč se ti líbila? Proč byla nejlepší? (ti co zvolili u 3. otázky f), neodpovídají)

5. Která hra tě naopak vůbec nebavila?

- a) přesmyčky b) pexeso c) hádání (podle kreslení) d) bingo e) hádání (dle popisu) f) žádná, všechny byly super

6. Proč se ti nelíbila? Proč byla nejhorší? (ti co zvolili u 5. otázky f), neodpovídají)

7. Proč myslíš, že jste hráli tyto hry?

- a) aby byla hodina zábavnější
- b) protože byl volný čas navíc
- c) abychom se naučili nová slovíčka
- d) protože nám paní učitelka chtěla udělat radost
- e) jiný (napiš)

8. Myslíš, že ses díky těmto hrám naučil/a nějaká nová slovíčka?

- a) ano b) ne

9. Myslíš, že je hraní her pro žáky užitečné (naučí se tím něco) ?

- a) ano b) ne, je to jen ztráta času c) jiný (napiš)

10. Myslíš, že je hraní příjemný způsob jak se naučit nová slovíčka?

- a) ano b) ne c) jiný (napiš):

11. Jak si opakujete slovíčka v hodinách angličtiny?

- a) čteme si je s paní učitelkou b) děláme cvičení c) hrajeme hry d) dostáváme to za domácí úkol e) neopakujeme si je f) jiný způsob(napiš):

12. Který popis by se na tebe nejvíce hodil, kdyby ses měl/a popsat při hodině angličtiny, když si opakujete slovíčka?

- a) nudím se
b) užívám si to
c) nějak to vydržím, ale už se těším na konec
d) bojím se/ jsem ve stresu/ jsem v napětí, co přijde
e) jiný (napiš)

13. Jak by ses popsal/a při hraní tří her, které jsme hráli?

- a) nudím se
b) užívám si to
c) nějak to vydržím, ale už se těším na konec
d) bojím se/ jsem ve stresu/ jsem v napětí, co přijde
e) jiný (napiš)

Ohodnot' jednotlivé hry vybarvením smajlíka: (skvělá 😊 ujde to 😞 nuda 😐)

1) přesmyčky 😊 😐
😐

2) pexeso 😊 😐
😐

3) hádání (podle kreslení) 😊 😐
😐

4) bingo 😊 😐
😐

5) hádání (dle popisu) 😊 😐
😐

Chyběl/ a jsi na některou z her?

Děkuji za vyplnění dotazníku



APPENDIX D

The questionnaire for the teachers in English classes you teach:

1. Do you introduce educational games into the lessons?
 - a) yes I do
 - b) no I do not
2. How often do you play educational games within the particular class?
 - a) every lesson
 - b) approximately once a week
 - c) approximately once in two weeks
 - d) once a month
 - e) only occasionally
 - f) never
3. The educational games you use usually focus on:
 - a) grammar
 - b) vocabulary
 - c) pronunciation
 - d) other (explain):
4. What methods do you usually use to consolidate new vocabulary?
 - a) you read the vocabulary together with learners
 - b) you do various exercises together with learners
 - c) the learners are told to review the vocabulary at home
 - d) the learners are given various homework to practice the vocabulary
 - e) you play vocabulary games with learners
 - f) you do not care about the consolidation of new vocabulary
5. What do you think of the vocabulary games whose aim is to consolidate new vocabulary? Are they useful?
 - a) yes they are
 - b) no they are not
 - c) different answer (explain):
6. Do you consider vocabulary games to be an effective tool in the process of vocabulary consolidation or do you think the teachers just waste the time by introducing them into the lesson?
7. Do you have a favourite vocabulary game you like to introduce into the lessons?

The questionnaire for the teachers in Czech:

třídy, ve kterých učíte:

1. Užíváte v hodinách AJ jazykové didaktické hry?
 - a) ano
 - b) ne
2. Jak často zařazujete hru do hodin v rámci jednotlivé třídy?
 - a) každou hodinu
 - b) přibližně jednou za týden
 - c) přibližně jednou za dva týdny
 - d) jednou za měsíc
 - e) jen výjimečně při různých příležitostech
 - f) nikdy
3. Pokud užíváte didaktické hry, jsou zaměřeny spíše na:
 - a) gramatiku/gramatické jevy
 - b) slovní zásobu
 - c) výslovnost
 - d) jiné (napište)
4. Jaký způsob opakování používáte nejčastěji k upevnění nové slovní zásoby?
 - a) čtete si slovíčka se žáky
 - b) děláte různá cvičení
 - c) dáváte žákům za domácí úkol, aby si slovíčka opakovali
 - d) dáváte žákům domácí úkoly, v rámci kterých si slovní zásobu opakují a upevňují
 - e) hrajete hry zaměřené na slovní zásobu
 - f) nijak se na upevňování slovní zásoby nezaměřujete
5. Co si myslíte o užívání her zaměřených na upevňování slovní zásoby v hodinách anglického jazyka? Jsou užitečné?
 - a) ano
 - b) ne
 - c) jiné (napište)
6. Myslíte si, že hry zaměřené na upevňování slovní zásoby vedou k upevnění slovní zásoby či je to jen ztráta času?
7. Máte nějaké oblíbené hry, které se zaměřují na upevňování slovní zásoby? Které to jsou?

SHRNUTÍ

Jedním z důvodů vedoucích k výběru tématu této práce, je zvyšující se důraz na roli slovní zásoby v cizojazyčné výuce. Ovšem naučit se nové výrazy je často velmi komplikované. Proto se tato práce zaměřuje na didaktické hry, které mohou představovat jeden z příjemnějších způsobů osvojování si slovní zásoby. Hlavním cílem diplomové práce je zjistit, jak hraní her, zaměřujících se na slovní zásobu, ovlivňuje osvojování slovní zásoby. Dalším cílem je odhalit jaký postoj mají k hraní her žáci a učitelé. Teoretická část diplomové práce se zabývá žáky, slovní zásobou obecně, různými fázemi osvojování slovní zásoby a hrami. Dalším bodem diplomové práce je popis výzkumu, který probíhal na ZŠ Nezvěstice. Nástroji pro shromažďování dat byly experiment a dotazník. Díky analýze výsledků získaných těmito nástroji, byly dvě hypotézy potvrzeny a dvě vyvráceny. Z toho vyplývá, že didaktické hry zaměřující se na slovní zásobu, jsou žáky oblíbené, že dívky a chlapci mají rádi stejný typ her, a že žáci považují didaktické hry za užitečný nástroj k upevnění slovní zásoby. Rovněž to poukazuje na fakt, že učitelé angličtiny k upevnění slovní zásoby volí raději jiné metody než hraní her. Nakonec bylo výzkumem zjištěno, že didaktické hry zaměřující se na slovní zásobu, mají pozitivní vliv na upevňování slovní zásoby.