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VYUŽITÍ ZJEDNODUŠENÉ ČETBY SE ŽÁKY DRUHÉHO STUPNĚ ZŠ

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Thesis

USING READERS WITH LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS

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Plzeň 2013

Tato stránka bude ve svázané práci Váš původní formulář *Zadáni dipl. práce*

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracovala samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

V Plzni dne 22. dubna 2013   …………………………….

Jana Staňková

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Abstract

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The thesis deals with using graded Readers with learners aged from 11 to 15 years. The thesis is divided into two parts – practical and theoretical (research). In the first part, theoretical information about reading and teaching of reading is provided. Then, the thesis focuses on extensive reading and the use of graded Readers in English language teaching. It also offers practical tips for integrating graded Readers into the teaching programme. The practical part of the thesis consists in a research. The research seeks to determine whether using graded Readers in English lessons has an impact on learners´ interest in further extensive reading. For that, two research tools, a questionnaire and an experiment, are used. The results of the research show that graded Readers have a positive impact on learners´ interest in further extensive reading. The results illustrated by graphs are presented in the theoretical part. Finally, implications for teaching resulting from the research are discussed.

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1 Introduction

"By reading, the students acquire language in a natural way. They learn to write accurate English by reading it. In the same way as we learn to speak by listening, we probably learn to write by reading." (Cross, 1992, p. 79)

The benefits of reading to English learners are incontestable. While intensive reading has found its permanent place in English language teaching (ELT), extensive reading tends to be omitted for a variety of reasons. One of the most frequent fears of English teachers is that if the learners do not read in their mother tongue, they would not be interested in reading in English. The interest of lower secondary school learners in extensive reading in a foreign language is the main topic being discussed in this thesis. The aim of the thesis is to find an answer to the research question whether using graded Readers[1] in English lessons has an impact on learners´ interest in further extensive reading.

First, the thesis provides theoretical background on reading and teaching of reading in general. Further on, the extensive reading and the use of graded Readers are focused on. The thesis shows the reasons why extensive reading is beneficial for students, and it presents practical tips for integrating the Readers into the teaching programme. The research procedure and tools are described in the third chapter. Two research tool, a questionnaire and an experiment, are used to answer the research question. The focus of the research is to find out the learners´ interest in reading before and after using graded Readers in the English lessons, and to evaluate the impact of graded Readers on the learners´ interest in reading. The results of the research are presented and commented on in the fourth chapter. The next chapter deals with implications for teaching. In addition, the limitation of the research and suggestions for further research are discussed. In the Conclusion chapter, the main ideas of the thesis are summarized.

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[1] Reader refers to a book and reader refers to a student

2 Theoretical background

This chapter presents theoretical information about the topic of research. The chapter is divided into four parts. In the first part, reading in general and its main components are defined, and the main purposes of reading, the role of the reader and the aspects of reading in a foreign language are explained. The second part concerns the teaching of reading and its characteristics. In the third part, the graded Readers are defined and their benefits to readers presented. Chapters 2.4 and 2.5 deal with the two major approaches to using graded Readers – using a class Reader and individual reading. These chapters also offer some practical tips for activities suitable for the two approaches. The last subchapter takes a closer look at the organisation and use of the class library.

2.1 Reading

People encounter reading in various situations and use it for various purposes in their everyday lives. Thus, a variety of possible definitions of reading from different points of view can emerge. People who are used to read aloud would probably use words like *articulate, speak* or *pronounce* to explain what reading is. The teachers of early reading would possibly use words like *decode, decipher* or *identify* in their definitions of reading (Nuttall, 1982, p. 2). And slightly different is the definition of the authors of ELT specialist literature. For instance, Nuttall (1982) describes reading as "getting a message of a text" (p. 4). Aebersold and Field (1997) claim that "reading is what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text" (p. 15). From these two definitions arises a basic feature of the reading process, which is the understanding of the message in the text.

2.1.1 Components of reading

Rather than a definition the ELT literature offers description of individual components of reading. Generally, reading involves *the reader*, *the text* and *the interaction between reader and text* (Rumelhart, 1977, quoted in Aebersold, Field, 1997). Alderson and Urquhart (1984) mention another important element of the reading process – the writer and his purpose of writing the text (p. 11). Understanding these individual components of reading will help us to understand the process of reading.

The reader is influenced by many factors. His past reading experience and his present engagement in the reading process are closely connected. The background information, which the reader brings to a text, is often referred as *schema* (Aebersold,

Field, 1997, p. 8). Each reader possesses his own personal schema, which is more or less different from the schema of others. This background information comes from various sources: family, community, school, sociocultural environment and individual differences (Aebersold, Field, 1997, p. 6).

The text, as well as the reader´s characteristics, plays a crucial role in understanding of the message. Nuttall (1982) discusses the possible sources of difficulties in understanding the message (pp. 5-6). One of the sources is the code, which is the language in which the text is written. If the reader and the writer do not share the same code, the message of the text cannot be understood. Another source of difficulty is the lack of knowledge, for example people who know little about science would find a scientific text complicated and looking up the unknown words would not help them. In some cases, the difficulties can be the complexity of sentence structures or unfamiliarity with the words.

The interaction between the reader and the text is influenced by the two elements mentioned above: the reader and the text. Assuming the text once written remains the same and does not change, the reader and his characteristics are the factors that have the strongest impact on the interaction. Readers bring to each text areas of knowledge that shape what happens in the reading process. "While the text remains the same during each reading of it, the information the reader brings to that text fluctuates as comprehension grows; thus, the interaction between reader and text is constantly changing" (Aebersold, Field, 1997, p. 20).

The communication between the writer and the reader is based on shared assumptions about the world and the way it works (Nuttall, 1982, p. 7). This means that, for example, the writer of a scientific text about a chemical experiment expects the reader to have a basic understanding of chemistry. If the assumptions do not correspond with the reality, then the problem of misunderstanding could appear. "Problems in understanding can arise when there is a mismatch between the presuppositions of the writer and those of those of the reader" (Nuttall, 1982, p. 7).

The reading process is also influenced by the purpose of reading. The readers´ needs and personal goals have impact on their approach to reading and the manner of reading (Aebersold, Field, 1997, p. 15). Some of them may read slowly and more carefully, others may read quickly through the text. Sometimes, they may need to reread some parts of the text. They may read the text to look for specific information (scanning) or for general comprehension (skimming). The form of interaction between the text and the reader depends on the purpose of reading.

2.1.2 Purposes of reading

People read for different purposes. Wallace (1992) deals with these more in detail (pp. 6 – 7). According to her, the most frequent reasons for reading are: *reading for survival, reading for learning and reading for pleasure. Reading for survival* includes all the short messages people come across in their everyday lives, for example the "stop" notice for a motorist or even more obvious "ladies" and "gentlemen" sign on the public toilets doors. For some people the reading for survival can represent reading instructions on some products or safety regulations on toys. Reading for survival involves an immediate response to a situation. *Reading for learning* means reading to find new information and thus extend our knowledge. As the title implies, this kind of reading is often but not exclusively school-related. *Reading for pleasure* unlike the previous two examples is not goal orientated but it is done for its own sake. The readers read not because they are asked to do so but because they enjoy reading.

2.1.3 Active involvement of the reader

Reading, as well as listening, are called receptive skills, which means that students do not produce a language while reading or listening (unlike while speaking or writing) but they receive and understand it. However, the role of the reader is very active. If his role was passive, all the work would be done by the writer and the reader would only have to "open his mind and let the meaning pour in" (Nuttall, 1982, p. 5). But in reality, not all the meaning gets into the reader´s mind as Nuttall (1982) states: "The fact that the meaning is in the text is unfortunately no guarantee that the reader will get it out, for we know from personal experience that a text that seems easy to one person may seem difficult to another." (p. 5). Grellet (1981) supports this idea by claiming that reading "constantly involves guessing, predicting, checking and asking oneself questions" (p. 8).

While reading, the writer is rarely available for consultation, so when the reader does not understand the message, the text is the only resource that can help him to understand it, thus, reading has been described as "active interrogation of a text" (Nuttall, 1982, p. 9). In order to get a message from a text the reader must be actively involved. Figure 1 represents the active approach to reading. Reader A has much in common with the writer and has only a few difficulties in understanding the meaning. Reader B, on the contrary, must produce much more effort to understand it. But both of them are active in getting the meaning from the text.
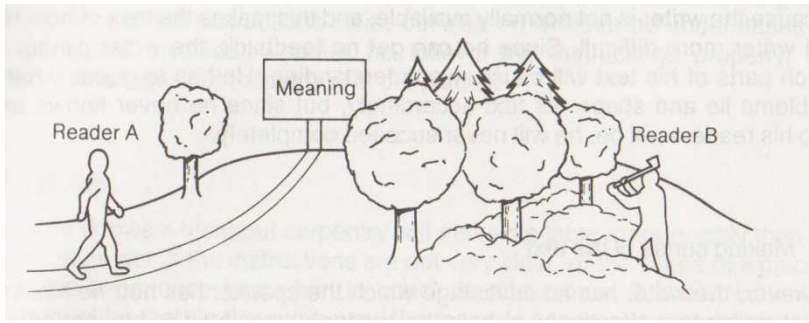
Figure 1: Active involvement of the reader (from: Nuttall, 1982, p. 9)

2.1.4 Reading in a foreign language

Reading in a foreign language and reading in the mother tongue share numerous basic elements. However, they can differ significantly. Reading in a foreign language can be influenced by many factors and each teacher of reading in a foreign language should be aware of them. Aebersold and Field (1997) distinguish the following factors that influence second or foreign language (L2/FL) reading (pp. 24 – 34): cognitive development and style orientation, reading performance and competence in the L1, metacognitive knowledge, L2/FL language proficiency, degree of difference between the L1 and L2/FL, and cultural orientation.

Reading in L2/FL is influenced by the level of the reader´s cognitive development and style orientation**.** The ability to grasp the written concepts and the ways of approaching the text depend on the reader´s age and level of cognitive development. Each person has a preferred reading style. For example, reflective learners tend to read more carefully than risk-takers, who try to guess the information they do not find in the text. Or, field-dependent learners would tend to see contrasts and relationships better than field-independent learners, who are able to pick out details.

Another important factor is the reader´s performance and competence in L1 reading. The reader´s performance and competence in L2/FL might be facilitated by the transfer from L1. The better the reading performance is in the mother tongue, the better it is supposed to be in the foreign language. In other words, "the more the person has learned to be flexible, adaptable, questioning, comprehension-monitoring reader in the L1, the more likely it is that the same person will be an adaptable, questioning and comprehension-monitoring reader in L2/FL" (Aebesold, Field, 1997, p. 25).

The metacognitive knowledge consists in describing the language. The learners who are able to discuss, describe, give rules for, and comment on L1 language use appear to be more proficient at improving their L2 reading process. The L2/FL proficiency, on the

other hand, represents the level of the student´s language production and understanding. Alderson and Urquhart (1984) claim that "foreign language readers will not be able to read as well in the foreign language as in their first language until they have reached a threshold level of competence in that foreign language" (p. 19).

The degree of difference between the L1 and the L2/FL plays a crucial role in foreign language reading. The greater the differences (in writing systems, rhetorical conventions, and purposes for reading) between the L1 and L2/FL are, the more difficult it is to acquire the target language and to read in it. Wallace (1992) supports this concept by claiming that "the languages themselves may be so different in the way they represent meaning in their written form that there is, arguably, no generalization from the first to the target language" (pp. 21-22).

The last factor, the cultural orientation, includes a group of factors that influence reading in the foreign language from the cultural point of view. These factors can be divided into six groups: the students´ attitudes toward text and purpose of reading, the types of reading skills and strategies used in the L2, the beliefs about the reading process, the students´ knowledge of text types in their L1 (formal schema), and their accumulated background knowledge (content schema) (Aebersold, Field, 1997, pp. 28-34).

Understanding of these factors that influence reading in the L2/FL is a crucial step for teachers to take before the teaching of reading can take place. The next chapter states the basic principles of a successful reading teaching.

2.2 Teaching reading

There are many reasons for teaching reading in a foreign language. Harmer (1998, p. 68) presents the most frequent ones: First, students themselves want to be able to read texts in the foreign language either for study purposes, for their careers or for pleasure. Second, he claims "any exposure to English (provided students understand it more or less) is a good thing for language students" (Harmer, 1998, p. 68). Moreover, reading texts provide good models for English writing and a lot of opportunities to study language (for example vocabulary, grammar structure of texts, or punctuation). There are some basic principles of a successful reading lesson that both the teacher and the students must be aware of.

2.2.1 The principles behind the teaching of reading

In order the teaching of reading to be successful, both the teacher and the students should bear in mind certain principles. Harmer (1998, pp. 70 – 71) presents the following six principles: *reading is not a passive skill, students need to be engaged with what they are reading, they should be encouraged to respond to the content of a reading text, not just to the language, prediction is a major factor in reading, and the task should be matched to the topic.*

As mentioned above (in chapter 2.1.3), reading is a receptive skill, but it does not mean that the reader´s role is passive. On the contrary, reading is an active occupation: the reader has to understand the written words, the arguments and he/she has to work out if he/she agrees with them. "If we do not do these things – and if students do not do these things – then we only just scratch the surface of the text and we quickly forget it" (Harmer, 1998, p. 70). Student engagement is also an important principle. If the students are not engaged and not interested with the reading text, they are less likely to benefit from it. On the contrary, if they are enthusiastic about the topic or task, they benefit much more from reading.

Teachers should remember that reading texts are valuable not only because they include a large number of language items to explore, but they also contain a message that should be examined with the students. The students should be given an opportunity to express their opinions and feeling about the content of the reading texts. When trying to explore the message, prediction may be very useful. Before the students start to read, they should be given "hints" so that they can predict what is coming. Harmer (1998, p. 70) claims that "It will make them better and more engaged readers". Before reading, we can get an idea of the content from the book cover, headlines, or pictures.

It is important to match the task to the topic. Choosing a good reading text is crucial. Another very important thing is to design appropriate and engaging activities and reading tasks. For example the right kind of questions or engaging and useful puzzles can be quite helpful. Harmer (1998, p. 70) explains the importance of this principle: "The most interesting text can be undermined by asking boring and inappropriate questions; the most commonplace passage can be made really exciting with imaginative and challenging tasks". Concerning the reading tasks, it is vital to exploit reading texts to the full. Good teachers do not get students to read the text and then leave it and move to another activity, they plan interesting reading sequences, and use the topic of the reading materials to further tasks and discussions.

Cross (1992) advises language teachers not to ask their students to read aloud for several reasons (p. 80). Firstly, reading aloud is not a real life skill. People will probably never need to read aloud in English. Secondly, when one student reads aloud, the others stay inactive. Thirdly, the student readers offer only a poor model. In addition to this, reading aloud is often interrupted for mistakes of pronunciation. When reading aloud, the reader concentrates more on the pronunciation than on the meaning. Cross (1992) also claims that reading aloud is "wasteful of valuable learning time" (p. 80), and he considers the practice harmful and unnecessary.

2.2.2 Extensive and intensive reading

There are two different ways of reading: intensive and extensive. In ELT, both approaches should be used as Harmer affirms: "To get maximum benefit from their reading, students need to be involved in both extensive and intensive reading" (Harmer, 2007, p. 283). He further explains the difference between extensive and intensive reading.

Intensive reading often involves teacher-directed reading of texts chosen by the teacher. The aim of intensive reading is to develop the students´ specific reading skills such as reading for gist (skimming), reading for specific information (scanning), reading for detailed comprehension or reading for interference and attitude (Harmer, 2007, p. 283). According to Aebersold and Field (1997, p. 45), in an intensive approach, "reading the text is treated as end in itself". They highlight the importance of teachers´ guidance and help before, during and after reading. In the intensive approach, students are required to work in depth on various aspects of the texts, such as looking at different levels of comprehension (main ideas vs. details), understanding what is implied vs. what is stated, determining the order in which information is presented and its effect on the message, and identifying words that connect one idea to another (Aebersold, Field, 1997, p. 45).

Extensive reading, on the other hand, represents reading for pleasure. Students are encouraged to choose a text or a book according to their interests and their own will. They read for the same reasons they would read in their mother tongue. For example, they read to learn something about a topic of their interest, to think about the ideas raised in the book or simply to enjoy a good story. Extensive reading can be very beneficial to the learners: "The enormous benefit of extensive reading to learners is that they are learning language as they read, through the high level of exposure to the foreign language which reading brings" (Dawson, 1998, p. 2).

The extensive reading is based on the belief that "when students read for general comprehension large quantities of texts of their own choosing, their ability to read will consequently improve" (Aebersold, Field, 1997, p. 43). Usually, in an extensive reading course, the reading is done outside the classroom without peer or teacher aid (Aebersold, Field, 1997, p. 43). The texts are read for general comprehension of the main ideas, not for every detail. Thus, the use of dictionaries is not necessary. Prentice (2012) explains: "When we read extensively, we forget our dictionaries because we are reading well within out comfort zone. Choosing freely what we read (and rejecting if we don´t like it) for our personal enjoyment and interest is liberating, motivating and empowering".

Extensive reading of authentic texts in a foreign language can be very difficult and unattainable for students whose L2 level is not high. Graded Readers, in which the language is simplified and graded into levels, represent a useful tool to extensive reading. Because the language is simplified, the readers do not need to use dictionaries, if the level is chosen adequately. Thanks to this, the readers can read for the same reasons as in the mother tongue. Since Readers are a part of extensive reading, the rest of the thesis will be focused on extensive reading.

2.3 Graded Readers

Graded Readers are books, both fiction and nonfiction, in which the language is simplified in order to match the reader´s competence. Readers are available at different levels from beginner to advanced, and they often possess a list of headwords – the more headwords, the more difficult the book is (Budden, Clandfield). Many graded Readers include glossaries, lists of new vocabulary, idioms, exercises, chapter by chapter questions focusing on understanding, and questions for discussion (Hedge, 1985, p. 113). In graded Readers, not only the language is simplified, but also the information. Hedge (1985) describes three types of control that can be found in the graded Readers: lexical, structural and information control (pp. 2-15).

Lexical control is the most obvious and well-known principle in graded Readers. Publishers follow this rule by grading the Readers into levels according to the number of headwords. The number of headwords belonging to individual categories varies from publisher to publisher and it is related to the number of levels provided by each publisher. Another important factor is the structure. Sentences in a beginner level are shorter than in advanced levels and they contain verb forms corresponding to the language level. The last

type of control – the information control – consists in omission or alteration of some descriptive details, events or parts of the dialogues in order to shorten and simplify the text.

2.3.1 Benefits of graded Readers to learners

Graded Readers can help language learners in several aspects (Hedge, 1985, pp. 22-36). First, they develop the readers´ knowledge of the language. Reading graded Readers help learners to master and expand vocabulary (both passive and active). Readers also help consolidate grammatical structures. While reading, learners also become aware of the text composition, which has an impact on their own writing in the foreign language. Second, the Readers help to develop the knowledge of language use. They help students to see how the grammar and vocabulary they are already familiar with can be used in communication. While reading the learners can observe how the language is used to communicate the important facts and the author´s or character´s feelings. Third, the Readers influence the attitudes to reading**.** Through reading, younger readers learn about the role and the value of books both in learning and in their lives. They can realize the difference between reading for information and reading for pleasure. "Introducing children to Readers is part of the process of getting children to read of their own accord, establishing the reading habits, encouraging them to read critically and think creatively about what they have read" (Hedge, 1985, p. 36). Finally, Readers help to develop reading skills and strategies.

According to Hedge (1985, p. 32), "A good reader uses a minimum of "clues" from the text to reconstruct the writer´s message". In other words, the more the readers read, the more fluent their reading is and the easier it is for them to understand the essence of what they read. Experienced readers possess the following reading skills (Hedge, 1985, p. 32): First, they can predict from syntactic and semantic clues and from their knowledge of the subject. Second, they read in phrases and are able to skip the words which are not needed for the general understanding. In addition to that, they learn to read "between the lines" and are able to critically evaluate the ideas mentioned in the text. They are also able to guess the meaning of new words from contextual clues or by applying the knowledge of word forming, and they are able to distinguish the facts from opinions or statements. And finally, they are able follow meaning through the text by recognising and understanding the linking words.

Dawson (1998) highlights another important impact of Readers. He claims that Readers help the learners by giving them psychological encouragement. "Successful understanding of graded Readers at a suitable level can give these learners enormous

psychological encouragement – a sense of achievement which will be more value than all the new words or structures they may learn" (Dawson, 1998, p. 2). Budden and Clandfield (2013) support his idea and they claim that successful reading leads to more reading. The more the students read, the better they become at reading and the more they want to read. They add other reasons for using Readers in ELT. According to them, Readers contribute to the development of learner independence because it is a way of learning the L2 without classes. In addition to this Readers grade the language, so that the students do not have to use dictionaries and they can read extensively in the L2.

2.3.2 Selecting Readers

Teachers can select from a variety of Readers from different publishers. No matter which publisher is chosen, the crucial issue to consider is the appropriate level of Readers. The language level of the selected book should be neither too low nor too high in order that the learner does not lose motivation for further reading. Dawson (1998) offers a useful guide to selecting a book at the correct level: If about twenty lines from the book are reproduced, every sixth word in this text is blanked out and the learners still feel they can understand the text, then they should be able to read the book (p. 18).

Another important factor when selecting Readers is the motivation of the actual reader. The teacher should think about what books will be attractive and interesting to the students and will encourage them to read (Hedge, 1985, p. 37). Concerning the students´ interests, Aebersold and Field (1997) propose carrying out a simple survey (p. 40). Dawson (1998) supports this idea claiming that "The content of the Reader is of great importance in motivating learners, and here it is often sensible to involve your classes as much as possible in the process of selection" (p. 3).

2.3.3 Using graded Readers in ELT

If teachers want to integrate extensive reading into their teaching programmes successfully, they have to think about the following (Hedge, 1985, p. 75): how to organise the use of graded Readers, how much time to spend on extensive reading, how to link extensive reading to the main course.

Concerning the organisation of the use of graded Readers, there are two alternative methods: individual reading from a class library and using a class Reader. Usually, teachers use the class Reader first in order to familiarize students with reading and later the students can read individually from a class library. Each of these methods has its own

advantages and it is up to the teacher to decide which method he/she wants to use. The two methods and their advantages are presented in chapters 2.4 and 2.5.

In addition to the organisation, teachers should consider the amount of time to spend on extensive reading. It is not always possible to take the books home, and in this case, the time for reading in class is vital. Spending time reading in class can also help the students set good reading habits. Besides the possibility to take Readers home, the appropriate amount of time to be spent on reading depends on the amount of time in the English course and the intensity of the course.

Finally, teachers should think about the way of linking the extensive reading to the main course. Extensive reading can be linked to the main course in several ways. Teachers can introduce Readers related to the topics in the course book. They can also refer to particular books at various points in the main course programme, pick up the links with the course book through character types, settings, situations and topics, and recommend the books to the students who might be interested. Teachers using the same course book can cooperate and produce a list of Readers that are related to the individual chapters of the course book.

Greenwood (1988) presents different attitudes that teachers have to class Readers. Some of the most common excuses and justifications for not using the Readers are following: the lack of finance, the lack of time and the lack of knowledge about how to deal with the class Readers. Some teachers think that reading for pleasure is a private and personal thing and thus it should take place out of the school (Greenwood, 1988, p. 5). However, the teachers and their attitude towards reading have a strong impact on the learners´ attitudes to reading. Aebersold and Field begin the first chapter of their book with a quotation from Christine Nuttall´s book: "Reading is like an infectious disease: it is caught not taught. (And you can´t catch it from someone who hasn´t got it…)" (Nuttall, 1983, p. 192). This quotation at the beginning of a book designed for English teachers makes them reflect on the extent to which they are able to motivate their students to read. The authors continue the chapter with further explanation: "The first step is for you to become aware of yourself as a reader – your reading skills and strategies, your assumptions about a text, your participation in the interaction between the text and the reader – things you may have never considered carefully before" (Aebersold, Field, 1997, p. 5).

2.4 Using a class Reader

One possibility of organizing extensive reading is using a class Reader. This is a traditional yet popular method that consists of choosing one Reader for the whole class to read within a certain period of time. In contrast to individual reading, the class should be equipped with multiple copies of the same Reader. The traditional method consists of reading the book in class with the teacher reading aloud or students reading "around the class" for one lesson a week. Hedge (1985) suggests another approach: "A much more successful approach is to set most of the reading for homework or to allow students to read at their own pace during class time. The greater proportion of class time can then be spent on checking reading, working with key passages, class discussion and various follow-up activities" (p. 109).

This approach provides the teacher and the students with many advantages (Hedge, 1985, pp. 78-79). First, the teacher can prepare the class thoroughly for reading, he/she is ready to provide background information and key language. Second, it is much easier for the teacher to support students and to check the students´ understanding during reading. Thus, weaker students can receive maximum help and guidance from the teacher. The teacher can also encourage students to think creatively and to evaluate critically the reading text through questions or discussion. In addition to this graded Readers can also be exploited for more intensive class work because they represent a resource for the teacher to draw on. When planning the reading lesson, teachers are advised to follow a certain structure.

2.4.1 Structure of a reading lesson

When planning the reading lessons, teachers are advised to incorporate these three stages: pre-reading, while reading, and after reading (Greenwood, 1988, p. 11).

Pre-reading

The pre-reading stage is important because it is aimed to stimulate the students´ appetites and curiosity about themes, characters, places, and actions (Greenwood, 1988, p. 15). Budden and Clanfield suggest four possible pre-reading activities. The first activity is called "Guess the story from the cover". In this activity students can be asked to make predictions about the plot of the story and they can write a summary of the imaginary plot. After having read the book, they can compare their predictions with the real story. Another activity suggested by Budden and Clanfield is called "Jumbled chapter titles". In this activity, students are given strips of paper with the chapter titles and they are asked to

decide the best order for the chapters and to think about the possible story. In the activity called "Find out about the author" students can be asked to find information about the author of the book. The last suggestion is to photocopy pictures from the book: If the book contains pictures or photos, they can be enlarged and used to familiarize the students with the main characters.

While reading

Greenwood (1988) emphasizes that students should be actively engaged in negotiating for meaning. She claims: "Students must be taught how to read and respond to books and not simply to answer questions. During the lessons students must be involved in activities which enable them to respond cognitively, emotionally and imaginatively to imaginative writing" (p. 59). Budden and Clanfield advise to read enough of the book in the first "go" in order to get students hooked on the story line.

They suggest the following activities: The first activity is called "Comic strips": a chapter of the book can be broken down into chunks to make a comic strip. Students can use their creativity to draw the characters and to fill in the speech bubbles. The second activity is called "Radio plays": In this activity, students can choose a part of the book to make into a radio play. Plays can be recorded and used for future pronunciation work. In the third activity, "News articles", the students become journalists and report on the story or on a part of the story. Another activity is called "Video parallels": if the Reader has a film version, it can be used to spot the differences between the book and the film. And finally, the students can carry out "Character interviews" – they can prepare questions they would like to ask the characters of the book and then they role-play interviews.

After reading

After having finished the reading, it is vital to incorporate activities based on revision and scrutiny of the author´s words in order to increase understanding and subsequent pleasure in future reading (Greenwood, 1988, p. 89). According to Budden and Clanfield, such activities can be the following: First, they suggest to do prepare quizzes to check the students´ knowledge of the book. The second suggestion is to "change the ending": In groups, students can be asked to rewrite the ending of the story. If it was happy, they can make it sad and vice versa. Third, the students can be asked to make "Cinema posters": imagining that the book is going to be made into a Hollywood blockbuster, the students can be asked to cast the actors to the roles of the characters and create an attractive poster for the movie. Another idea is to write "Book reviews". In reviews, students write down the most important information about the book (title, author´s

name, type of the book, subject, setting, time, characters´ description and main ideas).
Students can add their comments on the book, whether they liked it or not, and why. It is
vital to use a worksheet to help students to write their reviews (Appendix 1). They can
write notes in the worksheet first and then they can use it to write their book reviews. The
reviews can be displayed and thus encourage others to read the book (Hedge, 1985, p.
104).

2.4.2 Asking questions about the book

When asking the students questions about the book, there are three principles that
teachers should bear in mind (Hedge, 1985, pp. 118-119). First, the questions should be
relevant to the students´ age and language level. Second, not only teachers, but also
students can ask questions. Formulating questions involves the students in reviewing what
they have read and making sense of it. And finally, the questions should be focused on
comprehension, evaluation and response to reading rather than language details. "The main
point to remember is that the purpose of questions should not only be to assist
understanding but also encourage students to respond and reflect so that reading becomes
an enjoyable educational experience" (Hedge, 1985, p. 119).

2.5 Individual reading from a class library

Individual reading means that students can select books according to their interests
and abilities and they read them at their own pace at home or at school during reading
periods with the teacher´s help if needed (Hedge, 1985, p. 76). Hedge imparts that the
situation is not always favourable for individual reading: "The situation is obviously
"ideal" in the sense that in reality teachers are constrained by availability of space, time,
equipment and finance. The lack of these sources can present problems in organising a
class library but the undoubted success that many teachers achieve with class libraries is an
incentive to do whatever is possible to promote individualised private reading" (Hedge,
1985, p.76).

Hedge (1985, p. 70) presents three advantages of the individual reading. First,
students can read at their own pace, they can skim through several pages to see what comes
next in the book or they can reread some passages to check that they have understood it.
They can vary the reading pace according to their individual needs and they can stop to
think about the text. Second, individual reading is a self-directed process that is an

important factor in success. When the students work independently, they are more actively involved in the learning process and thus learning is more effective. And third, students can choose books according to their interests and experience. For example, some of the students would enjoy thrillers, some of them would be curious about a foreign culture they would like to visit, and others would be more likely interested in social issues. This diversity of interests is very natural and is present in every group of students. It is important to respect the differences in students´ interests: "Success in developing reading skills depends on respecting and allowing for these differences" (Hedge, 1985, p. 78).

2.5.1 Organisation of individual reading

Although individual reading allows students to read independently and at their own pace, they need to be given support before they start to read. Reading should be organized and guided by the teacher in the following way (Hedge, 1985, p. 94):

First, the students should be given a sufficient amount of time to read. When reading in class, the teacher should make sure that all students have a Reader to read and thus a particular task to do at every stage of the lesson. Browsing in the book corner can be very useful activity to start the reading time with. The teacher can help students to choose the book that corresponds to the level of their language proficiency and their preferences or interests. Hedge (1985) also highlights the importance of developing good reading habits: " Once a student has developed the habit of a good and reasonably rapid reading in English, the opportunities for language learning out of class are considerable compared with the few hours of teacher controlled classwork per week" (p. 94).

Second, teachers can hold short informal interviews individually with students about their reading and they can respond to the student´s questions and possible reading problems. "The role of the teacher, then, is to assist, remedy, widen the student´s interests and encourage him to analyse his own reading experience by talking about the books he has read" (Hedge, 1985, p. 95). The interviews can be held in the mother tongue or in the target language as they provide an opportunity to speak English in real communicative situations.

2.5.2 Individualising activities

The aim of individual reading is to make reading enjoyable and thus the "focus should always be on reading as an end in itself (Hedge, 1985, p. 101). Whilst some students enjoy being involved in various follow-up activities, others enjoy the reading itself and find the activities boring and demotivating. Hedge (1985) claims that it is

important to respect the learners individual preferences and not to force them into activities if they are not interested in them: "It is therefore important to allow for individual tastes and if a pupil prefers to spend all his time reading, then perhaps he should be encouraged simply to read" (p. 101).

Some of the activities for class reading mentioned in chapter 2.4.1 can be applied also for individual reading. These activities have already been described in the previous chapter and are only mentioned here. The possible activities suggested by Hedge (1985) are the following (pp. 101 – 108): First, she suggests writing book reviews, and preparing character interviews. These ideas have already been described in chapter 2.4.1. Second, she suggests keeping a book diary. Students can decide which information to write in their diaries (character and plot description, excerpts from their favourite passages, or comments). Even the students at lower levels of language competence can write their diaries, they can write simple sentences to describe the book and they can accompany it by drawings. The third activity proposed by Hedge is "Describing a character". This is a useful way exploiting Readers for vocabulary work, and a good language practice, too. Students practice the description of appearance, clothes, and personality. Another activity suggested by her is "Designing a book cover": Students can be asked to design the book cover for a new edition of the book. During this activity, other subjects can be integrated, e.g. art and design. The next option is to write a letter to the author. When writing a letter to the author of the book, students can practice formulating appreciative comments, questions, and criticisms about the book. Students can be also asked to carry out a small research project to find out more information about the topic of the Reader. The research can be done in the students´ mother tongue and the findings can be presented in the L2. Hedge also suggests preparing "workcards" for individual books. Students can use them individually and complete the tasks. Appendix 2 shows an example of a workcard.
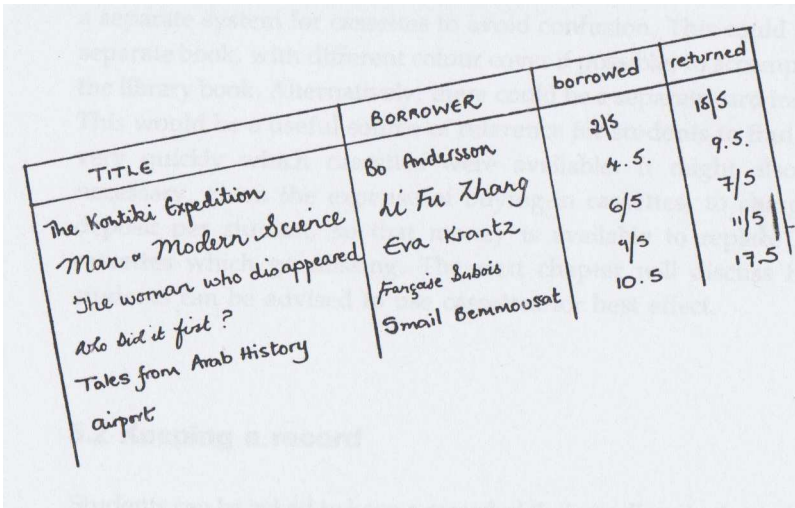

2.6 The class library

The class library can have a form of a box or shelf containing a selection of different Readers suitable for the age and language competence of a particular class (Dawson, 1998, p. 18). Teachers who want to set up the class library have to consider several practical issues: how to organise the library, how to keep records of reading, and how to direct and encourage students´ choice of books (Hedge, 1985, p. 83).

Organising the library

Organising a class library involves a number of steps: choosing the books, displaying them, classifying them for students and working out a borrowing system. Teachers are not the only ones to be in charge of these activities but students can take part in the organisation, too (Hedge, 1985, p. 83).

Students can help the teacher to choose the books according to their interest. Another possibility for the teachers when choosing Readers is to use students´ reading interest questionnaires for guidance (Hedge, 1985, p. 84). Concerning the number of books, Dawson (1998) suggests, "There should be one and a half times as many books in the library as there are learners in the class" (p. 18). The arrangement of the books and the way the books are displayed is at the teacher´s discretion. He/she should engage the students´ interest in reading and promote the books in an attractive way. Hedge (1985) asserts that "the best way a teacher can create interest in the library and a good atmosphere for reading is to make a conscious effort to promote books.

Another important thing to do is to classify the books carefully so that students can choose the books that are appropriate for them. This could be done according to the type, for example thrillers, technical books, or biographies or according to the language level (Hedge, 1985, p. 85). When organising a class library it is vital to design a borrowing system. Hedge (1985, p. 86) suggests keeping a library lending book (figure 2), in which a student writes his/her name, the title of the book, the date of borrowing and the date of return in the columns provided, or a library catalogue consisting of a card index (figure 3).

Figure 2: The library lending book (from: Hedge, 1985, p. 86)

Figure 3: The library catalogue: index card (from: Hedge, 1985, p. 87)

Dawson (1998, p.18) proposes using a class library record chart that lists the names of the students in the class down the side and the titles of the books in the class library along the top. Students can record the dates on which the book is borrowed and returned. By glancing at the dates, the teacher can quickly get an idea of how fast the learners are reading. He also suggests to indicate by a simple code method whether the book was enjoyed a lot, a little, or nor very much at all (Appendix 3).

Keeping a record

Students can keep a record of their reading in different forms. Hedge (1985, pp. 88-90) suggests the following possibilities. First, she suggests simple cards listing the title and the author. Another possibility is to use review notebooks, in which students can write a short description of the book. Younger students can draw a picture to represent the story or write a few sentences about the book. The third possibility is to use wall charts to display the reading progress of the whole class, e. g. a bar graph listing students on the horizontal axis and marking number of books read on the vertical axis.

Directing and encouraging the choice of books

It is very important that the students are encouraged to choose the Readers of their interest: "Forcing students to read books with the mistaken idea that they are "good for them" is a recipe for disaster" (Hedge, 1985, p. 91). A useful technique proposed by Hedge (1985) is browsing which "enables a student to pick up a book which interests him at a

cursory glance and to use the technique of skimming through the book in order to decide if he wants to borrow it" (p. 91).

In this chapter, theoretical information about the topic of using graded Readers was presented. First, the reading in general and its aspects were characterized. Then, the issue of teaching of reading was dealt with. Further on, graded Readers and their use in ELT were discussed. Besides the theoretical information, the chapter provides some practical tips on using graded Readers with learners and on organising the class library.

The chapter presented various benefits of graded Readers for learners. Readers can help the learners to develop their knowledge of the language and its use. They do not only help them to master new vocabulary items or grammatical structures, but they present them in a context. Thus, the learners can see how the language can be used in communication. In addition, Readers help to develop the learners´ reading skills and strategies. Successful reading can motivate the learners to further reading and it can encourage them psychologically. Moreover, the Readers can influence the students´ attitudes to reading.

In the next chapter, the research methodology is described. The research is focused on the interest of lower secondary school students in reading. The aim is to find out if reading of graded Readers at school has a positive impact on learners´ interest in further extensive reading in the foreign language.

3 Methods

The research focuses on interest of lower secondary school learners in graded Readers and extensive reading in general. The aim of the research is to find out whether graded Readers have an impact on learners´ interest in further extensive reading. In this chapter, the research methodology is described, and the subjects of the research, the places where research was conducted, and other research circumstances are specified. Two research tools – questionnaire and experiment – were used to find an answer to the research question. In the next section these tools are described in detail (chapters 3.1 and 3.2).

The research took place from December 2012 to March 2013 in my colleague´s classes in a private language school, and in a lower secondary school in Pilsen during my teaching practice. At both schools, the teachers had not used graded Readers with learners before. The private language school was not equipped with an English library, so the first step was to establish one. Fortunately the headmistress of the private language school was willing to invest in the library and authorized me to buy Readers of students´ interest. For that, questionnaire 1 was very useful because it enabled me to find out which books the students were interested in.

The students involved in the research were aged from 11 to 15 years. The group of learners of the state lower secondary school (G-SS) included nineteen 6th graders who started to learn English in the 3rd grade and were of approximately the same language level. The learners attended three regular English lessons and one conversation lesson a week. Both the experiment and the questionnaire were conducted during the conversation classes. The group of students at the private language school (G-PLS) was less numerous – there were only thirteen students. The characteristics of the private language school learners were more varied because the learners came from different backgrounds. Each of them attended regular English classes at a lower secondary school and they met up with each other for one English lesson a week at the private language school. They were grouped according to their actual language level, and thus the age of the learners within the group can slightly differ.

3.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first questionnaire (see Appendix 4) took place at the beginning, before the learners started reading graded Readers and doing activities connected with reading. The second questionnaire (see Appendix 5) was conducted immediately after finishing reading. Both questionnaires were written and conducted in the Czech language, taking into consideration the age and language level of learners.

The aim of questionnaire 1 was to find out what is the attitude of lower secondary school learners to reading. The questionnaire contained questions about both reading in the mother tongue and in English. The learners were asked about what they read and how often, which genre they prefer, and whether they would be interested in reading in English. Based on this questionnaire graded Readers for further class work were chosen. The questionnaire 1 consisted of six questions, from which three were simple yes-no questions. The remaining three questions were multiple-choice questions where the respondents could choose one or more answers, and they were also allowed to add their own answer if the provided answers did not suit them.

After finishing the Reader, the learners were given questionnaire 2. The aim of this questionnaire was to assess the work, to find out the students´ opinions on the use of Readers, and their interest in reading. The questionnaire consisted of five questions. In the first question, students were asked to assess the choice of the Reader, the process of working with Readers, the teacher´s and their own performance. In the second question, they were asked whether they enjoyed the reading and to which extent. The third and the fourth question focused on interest in further reading either at school (a class Reader) or at home (individual reading). The last question was open, and the students were given space to express freely what they liked or disliked, or write their suggestions about what could be done better.

3.2 Experiment 1: Lower secondary school

After completing the first questionnaire, the learners of the group G-SS started to use Readers in their English lessons. The work with graded Readers took place in the form of a class Reader, which means that each student in the class received the same book. The choice of the Reader was based on results of the questionnaire 1, according to students´ interests. The language level was determined on the basis of a consultation with their

teacher. The Reader used during the reading lessons was *Blackbeard* from the Oxford University Press DOMINOES series, which is designated for lower secondary learners. During the period of four weeks, the learners spent a 45-minute lesson a week reading the book and being involved in a variety of activities connected with the reading. The experiment was a means of finding out the interest of lower secondary school learners in reading, and thus only the interest in reading will be evaluated.

In each lesson, one chapter of the Reader was read. The lesson plans for the four lessons were very similar. The main objective of the lessons was to be able to read in a foreign language, and to provoke the students´ interest in extensive reading. The students were also asked to read one chapter for homework. Thus, during the experiment, the students read five chapters of *Blackbeard*. The audio CD was used to accompany the reading, and some of the interactive exercises from the CD were done on the interactive whiteboard (IWB). After the four reading lessons, the learners were given opportunity to borrow the Reader and to read the last chapter at home. They were familiarized with the school library system and they were offered to borrow another Reader from the school library for individual reading. In the next section, the individual reading lessons are described.

3.2.1 Lesson 1

First, the students were asked to look at the cover picture (see Appendix 6) and to describe it. They were asked to make predictions about the main character (Who is he? What is going to happen in the book?). Then, they did some pre-reading exercises from the Reader (see Appendix 7). In the first exercise, they were asked to match words with pictures. In the second one, they used the vocabulary to complete a text. Further on, reading of chapter 1 took place. The audio recording was used to accompany silent reading. After each page, I asked the students comprehension questions, or I asked them to recapitulate the main information. Finally, after reading the first chapter, the students worked in groups of three and they worked on dramatization of the last scene of chapter 1 (see Appendix 8).

3.2.2 Lesson 2

The second lesson started with an interactive matching exercise for vocabulary revision (see Appendix 9). In that exercise, the students were asked to match the words with pictures. Then, a brief introduction to the story took place. The students were asked to recapitulate the story of the first chapter and to describe the main characters. Further on,

they were asked to read the key vocabulary and the definitions at the bottom of the Reader´s page. I provided them with further explanation or Czech translation when necessary. After that, the second chapter of *Blackbeard* was read. The reading was accompanied by the audio recording. After reading the second chapter, the students´ task was to answer true/false statements to check their understanding - IWB exercise (see Appendix 10). For homework, the students were asked to read chapter 3 at home during the spring holidays. I explained to them that it was not necessary to understand every single word and that only general understanding of the story was important. I also informed them that in the next lesson they would be asked to complete a task connected with the reading and they could win extra points.

3.2.3 Lesson 3

We started the third lesson with a short discussion about the homework. The learners were asked to express their feelings about the reading at home and to talk about the problems they had to face when reading. Further on, the students were asked to list the most important events from chapters 1-3. As announced in the lesson 2, the learners were involved in a small competition in order to check the homework. The learners were divided into groups of 4-5 and each group was given a set of paper stripes. Each stripe contained a statement about the story of chapter 3. The students were asked to choose the statements that were true (see Appendix 11). Before we started to read the next chapter, the students were again asked to read the key vocabulary and the definitions at the bottom of the Reader´s page. To check understanding of the key vocabulary, the students were involved in doing an interactive exercise, in which they were asked to match words with definitions. After pre-teaching of the key vocabulary, the fourth chapter of *Blackbeard* was read silently with accompaniment of the audio recording. After reading, the students were asked to solve anagrams from the book and to use the words to complete sentences (see Appendix 12).

3.2.4 Lesson 4

First, we watched a short video about *Blackbeard* and we had a small discussion about it in the Czech language. The learners were asked which information about *Blackbeard* they had learned from the video. Second, they were asked to recapitulate the story of the previous chapters. Before reading, the students read the key vocabulary and the definitions at the bottom of the Reader´s page. Then, while silent reading, the audio recording was used as in the previous lessons. After reading, the learners were involved in

an exercise from the Reader called "Guess what" (see Appendix 13). In this activity, they were asked to make predictions about what was going to happen in the last chapter. In the last ten minutes of the lesson, the learners were offered to borrow the Readers at home and to finish the last chapter individually. They were given the questionnaires to assess the reading lessons and to express their interest in further reading. They were also offered other Readers from the school library to read at home.

3.3 Experiment 2: Private language school

The students of the group G-PLS used the Reader with their teacher. They spent about 15 minutes a week doing activities connected with reading and did most of the reading at home individually. The Reader chosen for this group was *Sherlock Holmes: The Blue Diamond* from the Oxford University Press DOMINOES series, level one. Each lesson started with a short discussion about the chapters that had been read and then the teacher asked the students to summarize the most important facts. Besides the discussion, one or two activities from the Reader were done as well.

After finishing the Reader, they were given the same questionnaire as the G-SS learners. They were also offered to borrow Readers from the school library and to read them at home individually. Thanks to the library lending book (see Figure 2), I was able to find out which students borrowed a book and thus observe the students´ interest in further individual reading. This experiment was aimed to prove or to disprove the learners´ real interest in further extensive reading. While through the questionnaires the interest is expressed only theoretically, the experiment can prove the students´ real interest in reading. As well as experiment 1, experiment 2 serves as a means of finding out the students´ interest in reading, and thus only the interest in reading will be evaluated.

In this chapter, the research methodology was described, and the subjects and the places of the research, and other research circumstances were specified. The two research tools – questionnaire and experiment – were described in detail. The results of the research are presented in the next chapter (Chapter 4).

4 Results and commentary

This chapter presents data collected from the questionnaire research. The results are illustrated by graphs and accompanied by commentaries. The questionnaires from the lower secondary school (G-SS) and from the private language school (G-PLS) are evaluated separately for the purpose of comparing the two groups. The aggregate results are also provided. In order for the comparison to be objective, the data are represented in percents, because the number of respondents in each group is different. The chapter is divided into two parts: the results of questionnaire 1 are presented in subchapter 4.1, and the results of questionnaire 2 in subchapter 4.2. This chapter also deals with the results of the experiments, which are presented and commented on in subchapters 4.3 an 4.4.

4.1 Questionnaire 1

The first questionnaire was answered by 17 students of the G-SS (2 of them were absent), and by 13 students of the group G-PLS.

Question 1: What do you like to read?

First, the students were asked to tick the kinds of reading material they like to read in their mother tongue. They were allowed to choose any number of answers. The proposed answers were: newspapers, magazines, comics, scientific literature and encyclopaedias, fiction, and other.
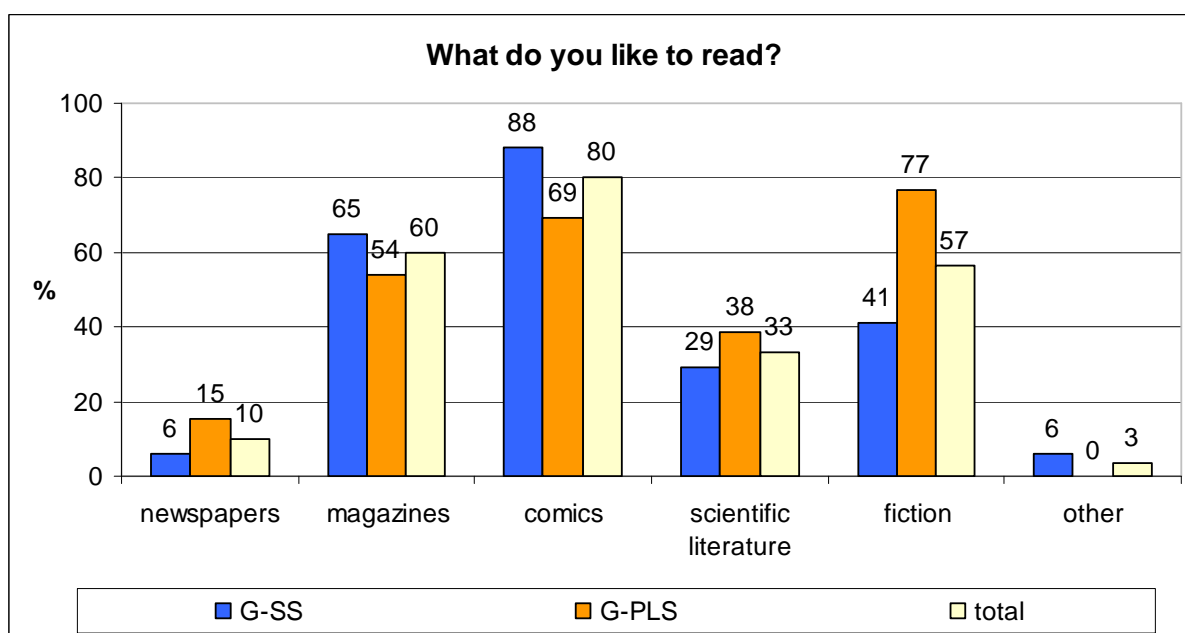
Graph 1: Preferred reading material

The proportion of individual answers was similar in both groups, but certain differences are observable. In group G-SS, the learners prefer to read comics, this answer was marked by 15 students (88%). 11 students (65%) like to read magazines, 7 students (41%) like to read fiction, 5 students (29%) the scientific literature, and only one student (6%) reads newspapers. One student (6%) wrote his own answer – detective stories (included in the answer "other").

The students of the group G-PLS are more interested in reading fiction: this item was marked by 10 respondents (77%). 9 students (69%) like to read comics, 7 students (54%) magazines, 5 students (38%) scientific literature, and two of them (15%) like reading newspapers.

In total, the most frequent answer was comics (80%), then magazines (60%), fiction (57%), and scientific literature (33%). Newspapers got only 3 answers (10%) and one answer was other (3%). The answers are represented by graph 1.

The fact that comics and magazines are the most favourite among lower secondary school learners did not surprise me. The popularity of fiction pleased me a lot, especially in the group G-PLS, in which this answer was marked by more than three quarters of respondents.

Question 2: What is your attitude to reading?

In the second question, the learners were asked about their interest in reading. They were allowed to mark only one of the following answers: I do not read because I do not like it, I read only the compulsory reading, I sometimes read voluntarily, I read often because I like it, and other.
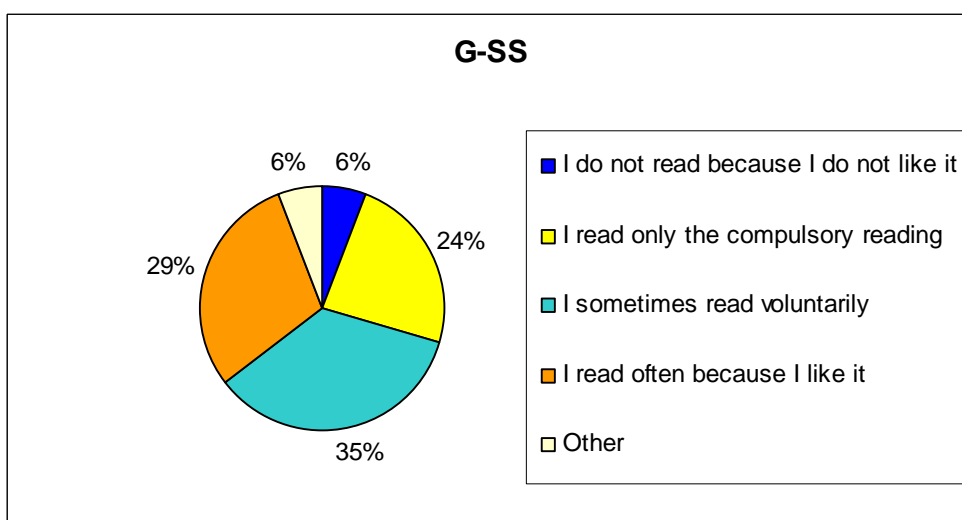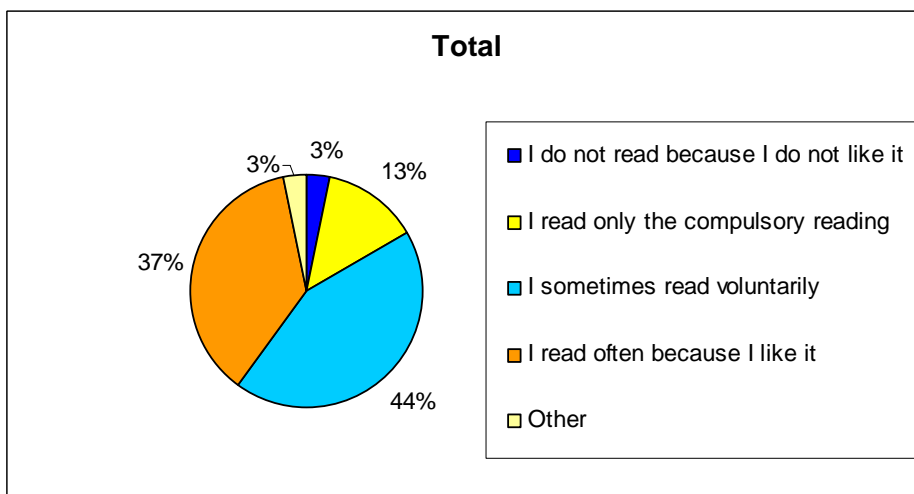

Graph 2: Interest in reading G-SS

The results of the group G-SS were as follows: 6 students (35%) sometimes read voluntarily, 5 students (29%) read often because they like it, 4 of them (24%) read only the compulsory reading for school, and one of them (6%) does not read at all because he/she does not like it. One student (6%) wrote his own answer: I read often because I am bored at home (included in the answer "other"). The results are represented in graph 2
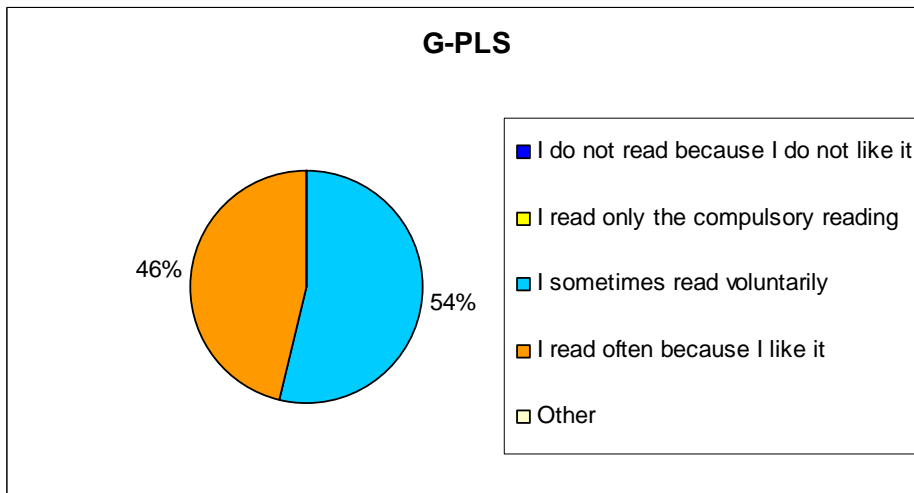
Graph 3: Interest in reading G-PLS

The results of the group G-PLS are not diverse. All of the respondents have a positive attitude to reading, 7 students (54%) sometimes read voluntarily, and 6 students (46%) read often because they like it. The answers are represented in graph 3. The differences in the level of interest in reading of groups G-SS and G-PLS can be interconnected with higher intellectual orientation of the private language school students, and with the fact that they are more motivated in learning in general.

Graph 4: Interest in reading - total results

In total, the majority of respondents (44%) read sometimes, 37% of them read often because they like it, 13% read only the compulsory reading, one person (3%) reads often because he/she is bored at home (included in the answer "other"), and one (3%) person does not read. The aggregate results are represented in graph 4.

In general, the results showed that the learners´ attitude to reading is mostly positive. Almost 85% of the respondents read voluntarily - some of them read more often, some of them less, but the proportion of those who do not read at all is surprisingly low.

Question 3: What kind of books do you prefer?

The third question was aimed to find out the preferred kind of books. The learners could choose more answers. They were offered the following answers: historical novels, travel books, biography, science fiction, detective stories, adventure, romantic, horror, mystery, and other.
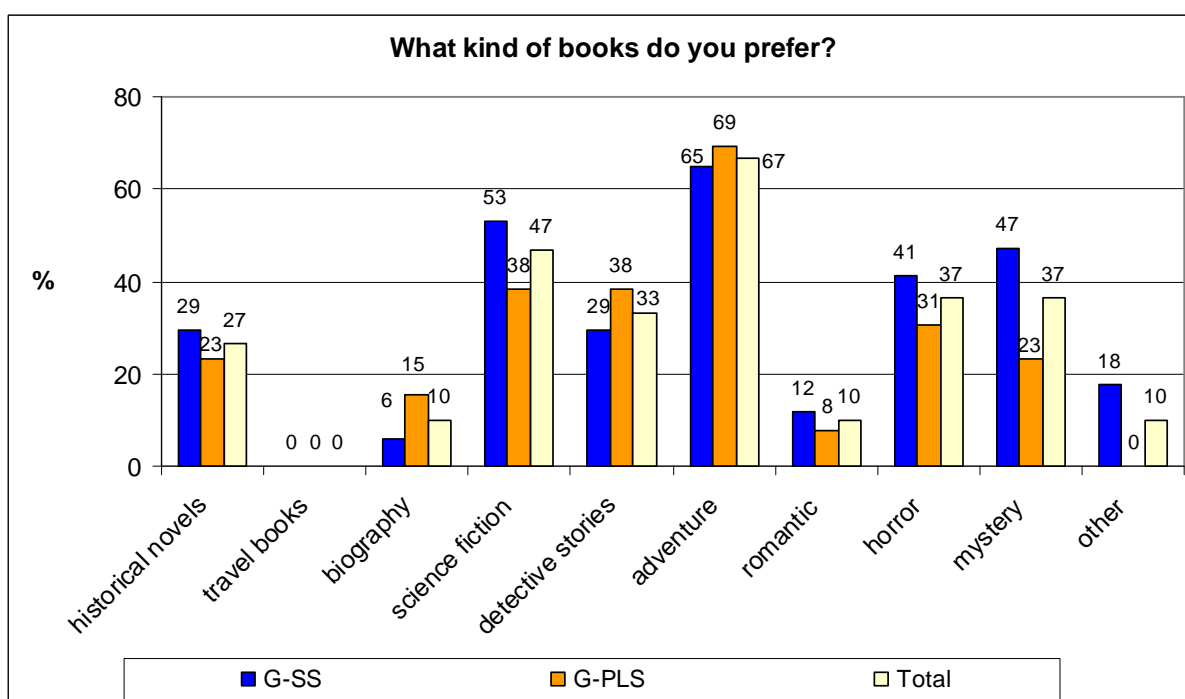
Graph 5: Preferred kinds of books

In the group G-SS, 11 students (65%) marked adventure, 9 students (53%) science fiction, 8 students (47%) mystery, 7 students (41%) horror, 5 students (29%) historical novels, 5 students (29%) detective stories, 2 students (12%) romantic, and one student (6%) biography. 3 respondents (18%) wrote their own answers which were: real life

stories, comedies, and books about animals (these answers are included in "other"). None of them marked travel books.

In the group G-PLS, the results were as follows: 9 students (69%) chose adventure, 5 students (38%) science fiction, 5 students (38%) detective stories, 4 students (31%) horror, 3 students (23%) historical novels, 3 students (23%) mystery, 2 of them (15%) biography, 1 (8%) romantic and none travel books.

In total, the most favourite kind of books among teenagers is adventure (67%), science fiction (47%), horror (37%), mystery (37%), and detective stories (33%). Less popular are historical novels (27%), romantic books (10%), and biography (10%). Travel books are not preferred by this age group. The results are represented in graph 5.

It is remarkable that the answers were nearly the same within both groups. The results show that no matter which group the students are in, they are still interested in the same genre of books, and the most popular is unequivocally adventure.

Question 4: Have you ever read a book in a foreign language?
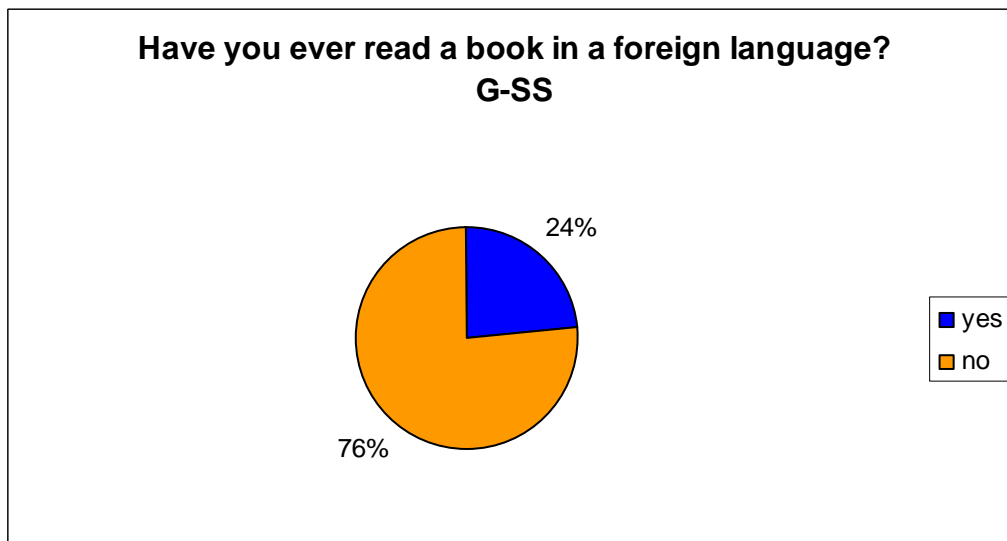
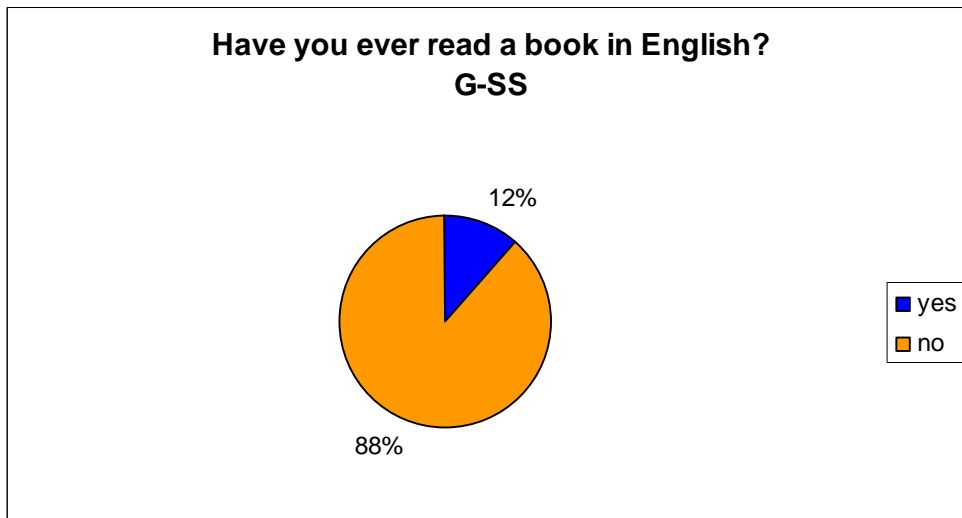**Graph 6: Proportion of students who have read a book in a foreign language G-SS**
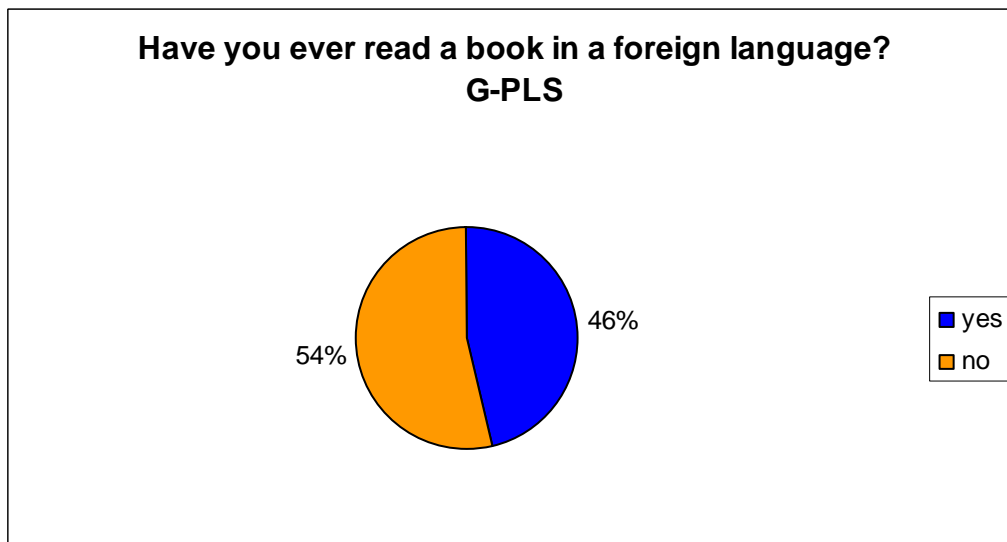
Have you ever read a book in a foreign language?
G-PLS

46%

54%

yes
no

Graph 7: Proportion of students who have read a book in a foreign language G-PLS

Have you ever read a book in a foreign language?
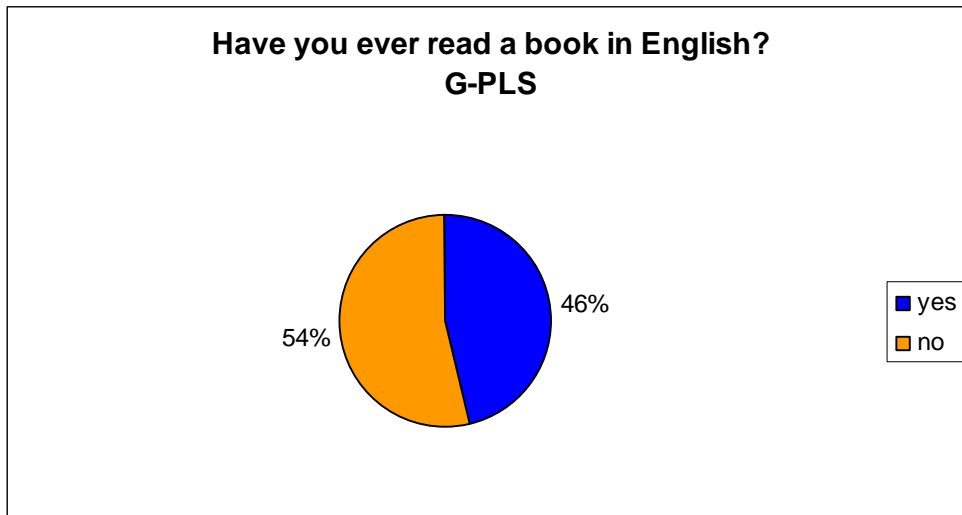**Total**

33%

67%

yes
no
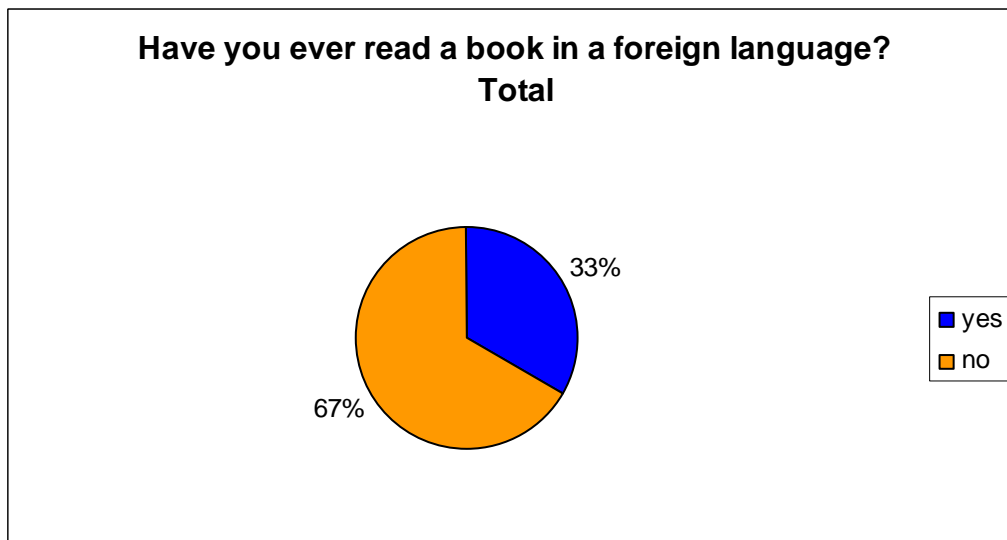
Graph 8: Proportion of students who have read a book in a foreign language - total

In the group G-SS, the majority of respondents (76%) marked the answer no. 4 students (24%) answered that they had read a book in the foreign language before. The percentage of students who had read a book in a foreign language was higher in the group G-PLS (46%). But more than a half of them (54%) answered negatively. In general, the number of students who had not read a book in a foreign language was prevailing (67%). Two thirds of the respondents had not read a book in a foreign language before. The answers of lower secondary school students are represented in graph 6, the answers of private language school students are in graph 7, and the aggregate results in graph 8.
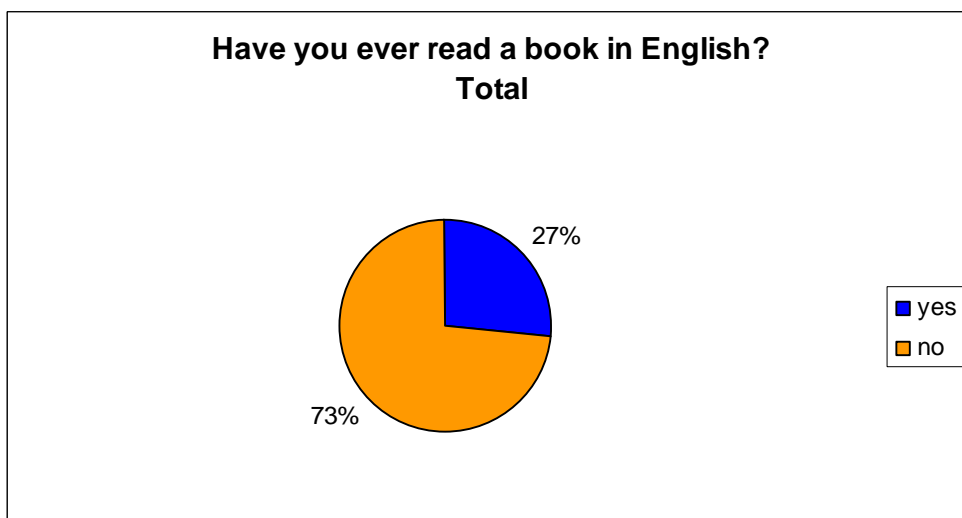
Question 5: Have you ever read a book in English?

Graph 9: Proportion of students who have read a book in English G-SS

Graph 10: Proportion of students who have read a book in English G-PLS
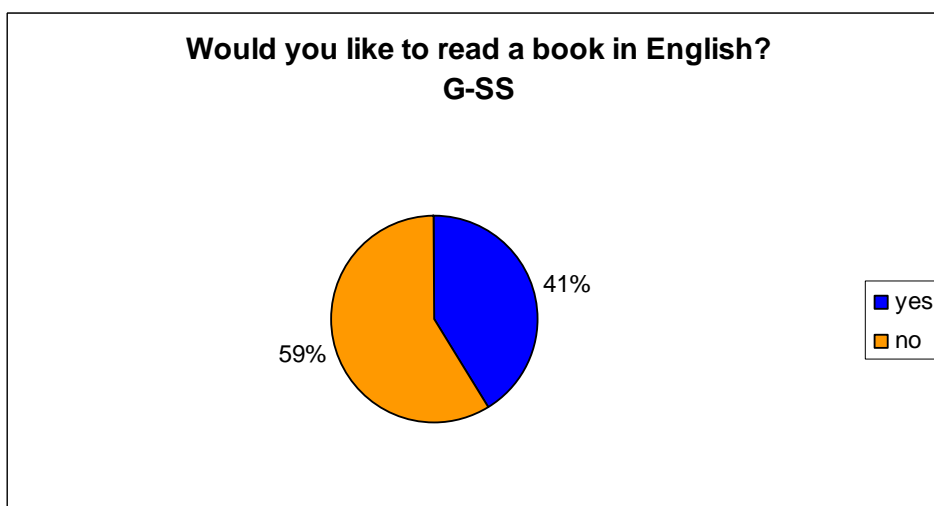

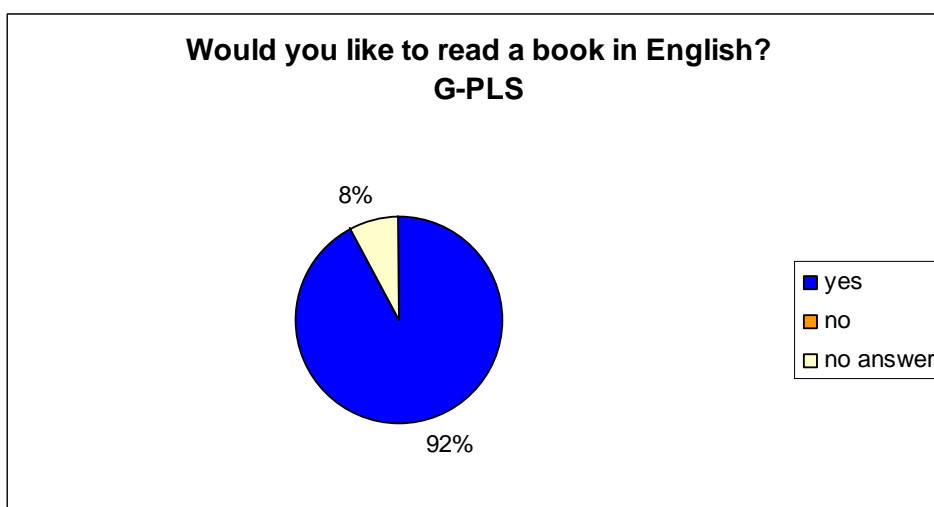**Graph 11: Proportion of students who have read a book in English – total**

In the group G-SS, 2 students (12%) had read a book in English, the rest of them (88%) answered negatively. The proportion of the students who had read a book in English was lower than of those who had read a book in a foreign language. This implies that at least 2 learners had read a book in a foreign language other than English. The answers of the G-SS learners are represented in graph 9.

In the group G-PLS, the proportion of the students who have read a book in a foreign language and in English was the same (46% in both cases). 7 private language school students (54%) have not read a book in English before. The answers of language school students are represented in graph 10, and the aggregate results in graph 11. In total, almost three quarters of respondents (73%) have not read a book in English.
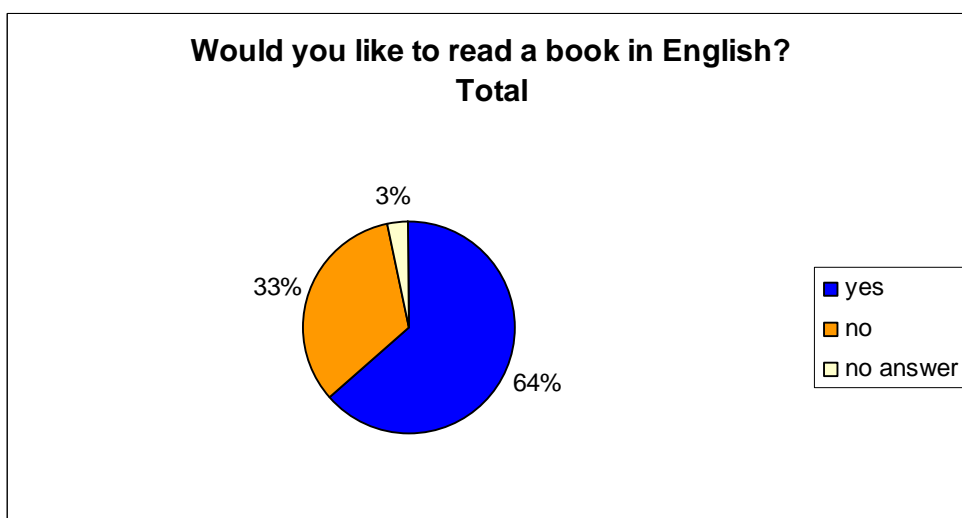
Question 6: Would you like to read a book in English?

Would you like to read a book in English?
G-SS

41%

59%

■ yes
■ no

Graph 11: Proportion of students who would like to read a book in English G-SS

Would you like to read a book in English?
G-PLS

8%

92%

■ yes
■ no
□ no answer

Graph 12: Proportion of students who would like to read a book in English G-PLS

Graph 13: Proportion of students who would like to read a book in English – total

In the group G-SS, 7 students (41%) answered that they would like to read a book in English, and 10 students (59%) answered negatively. The students´ answers are represented in graph 12.

The G-PLS students were more interested in reading in English. 12 of them (92%) answered that they would like to read a book in English, and only one student (8%) did not answer. The answers are represented in graph 12.

In total, 19 respondents (64%) were interested in reading a book in English, 10 students (33%) did not want to read a book in English, and one student did not answer this question. The answers are represented in graph 13.

The interest in reading in English was remarkably high. More than a half of the learners were interested in reading a book in English. In the group G-SS, the interest was not as high as in the group G-PLS, but still the proportion of learners who would like to read a book in English was not insignificant even in this group.

In this subchapter, the results of the questionnaire 1 were presented, and the learners´ interest in reading before the experiment took place was evaluated. The next subchapter presents the data collected from the questionnaire 2, which was carried out after the book in English had been read.

4.2 Questionnaire 2

     The second questionnaire was answered by 19 G-SS students, and by 12 G-PLS students. One student of the language school stopped attending the course, so he could not participate in the questionnaire 2.

     First, the students were asked to assess the choice of the book, the way of using the Reader in the lessons, the teacher´s performance, and their own performance during the reading lessons. They were asked to assign grades from 1 to 5 to each category. The grading system was analogous to the Czech grading system – grade 1 is the best, grade 5 the worst. I decided to use this grading system, because the students are familiar with it, and I supposed that it would be interesting and challenging for them to be in the role of those who are assessing rather than them being the one that is assessed.

1 a. How would you assess the choice of the book?
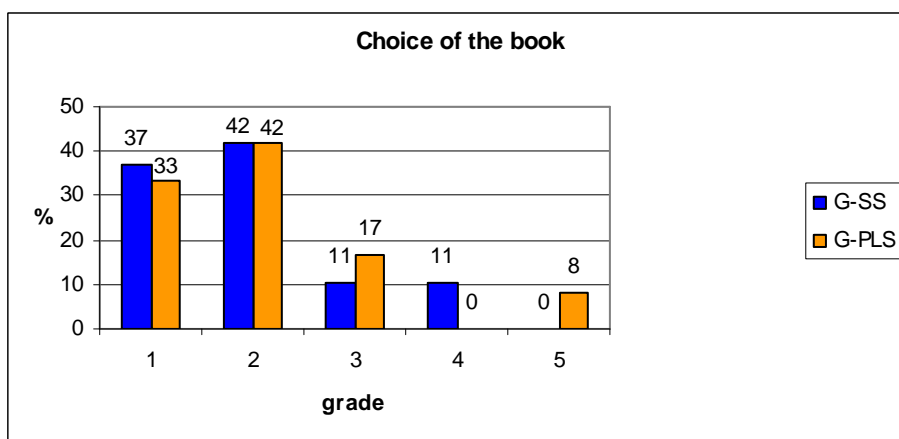
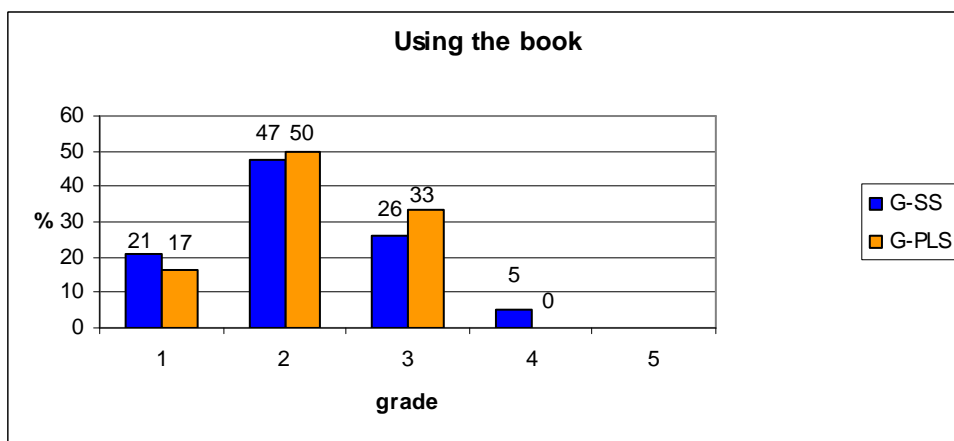**Graph 14: Students´ assessment of the choice of the book**
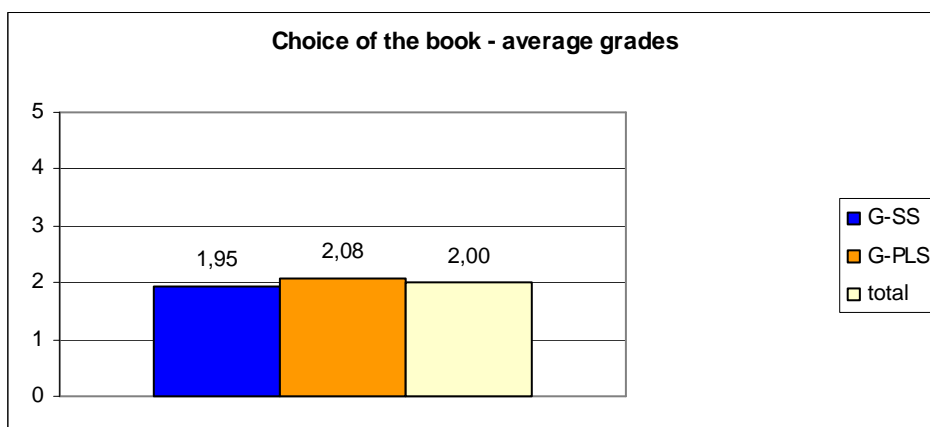
Graph 15: Students´ assessment of the choice of the book – average grades

Concerning the choice of the book, the grades were mostly positive. In the group G-SS, 8 learners (42%) gave it the grade 2, 7 learners (37%) grade 1, only 2 learners (11%) grade 3, and 2 learners (11%) grade 4. In the group G-PLS, 5 learners (42%) gave it the grade 2, 4 students (33%) grade 1, 2 learners (17%) grade 3, and 1 learner (8%) grade 1.

The books were chosen according to the interests of the majority of the students, which is proved by the results of the questionnaire. It is not possible to choose a book that would interest all students, thus all grades are present in the results, even the negative ones. The students´ assessment of the choice of the book is represented in graph 14. The average grades awarded to the choice of the book were very similar in both groups – 1,95 in G-SS, and 2,08 in G-PLS. The average grades at both schools, and in total are represented in graph 15.

Interestingly, the average grades were nearly the same within the two groups, in spite of the fact that the chosen books were different (*Blackbeard* in the group G-SS and Sherlock Holmes in the group G-PLS). However, both Readers came from the same series DOMINOES by Oxford University Press. The DOMINOES Readers are designated for this age group and this is possibly the reason why they were a success within both groups.

1 b. How would you assess the way of using the book?

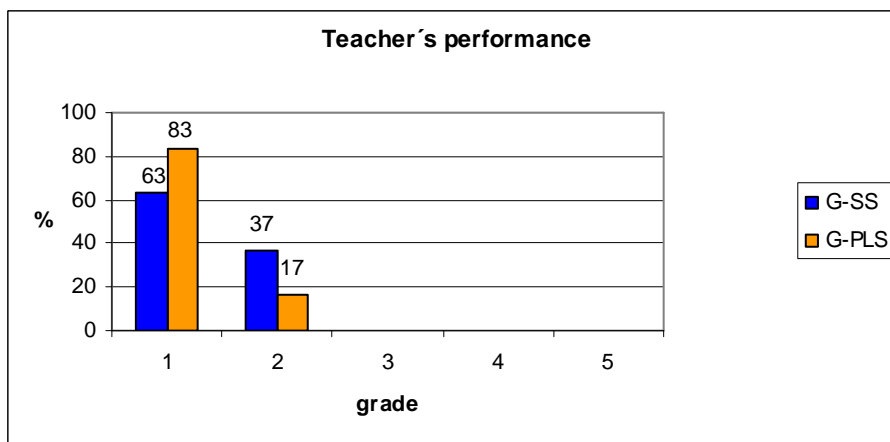**Graph 16: Students´ assessment of the use of the book**
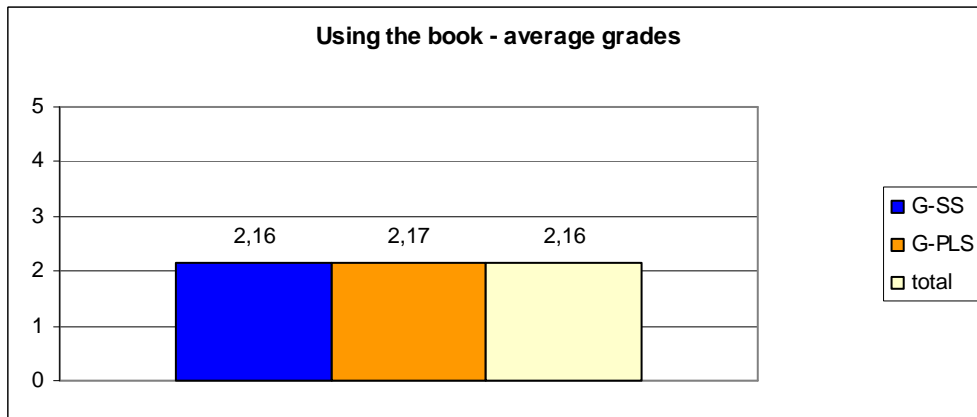
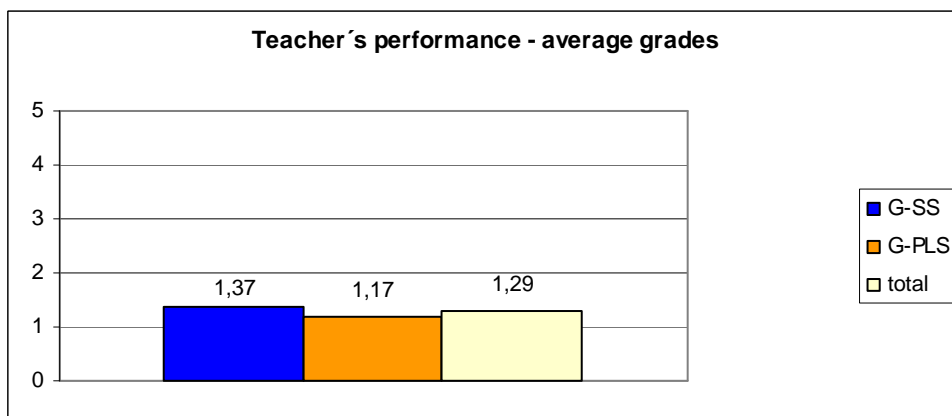**Graph 17: Students´ assessment of the use of the book – average grades**

In the group G-SS, 9 learners (47%) awarded it the grade 2, 5 learners (26%) grade 3, 4 learners (21%) grade 1, and 1 learner (5%) grade 4. None of them used the grade 5. In the group G-PLS, 6 learners (50%) gave it the grade 2, 4 of them (33%) grade 3, and 2 of them (17%) grade 1. None of them used the grades 4 and 5. The grades awarded to the use of Readers are presented in graph 16. The average grades are nearly the same in both groups – 2,16 in G-SS and 2,17 in G-PLS. The average grades are represented in graph 17.

In both groups, the reading lessons were different and taught by different teachers. But in both cases, the average grades were the same. This could be explained by the fact that in both cases the activities from the Reader were used. The activities taken from the Reader can be considered suitable and attractive for learners given the learners´ assessment.

1 c. How would you assess the teacher´s performance during the reading lessons?

Graph 18: Students´ assessment of the teacher´ performance

**Graph 19: Students´ assessment of the teacher´ performance – average grade**

In both cases, the grade 1 prevailed. It was awarded by 12 G-SS learners (63%) and by 10 G-PLS learners (83%). The grade 2 was chosen by 7 lower G-SS learners (37%) and by 2 G-PLS learners (17%). None of the respondents used the grades 3, 4, and 5. The representation of individual grades is presented in graph 18, and the average grades in graph 19.

The assessment of the teacher´s performance is very positive, and the results show that the students appreciate their teacher´s work. Even though the teachers were different in both groups, the average grades were similar. It implies that it is not the personality of the teacher that is most important, but his/her approach to the teaching of reading.

I was pleased that one learner from the group G-SS awarded me as the teacher the grade 1*. [2] This grade is involved in the grade 1 and thus does not have an impact on the average grade. However, it can be very motivating for the teacher to see that the learners appreciate his/her performance.

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[2] In the Czech grading system, the grade 1* refers to a grade better than the grade 1.

1 d. How would you assess your performance during the reading lessons?
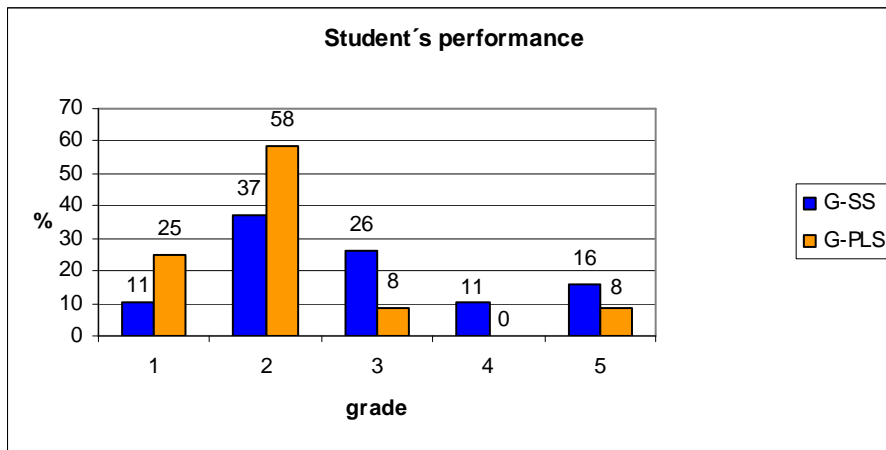
Graph 20: Students´ assessment of their own performance
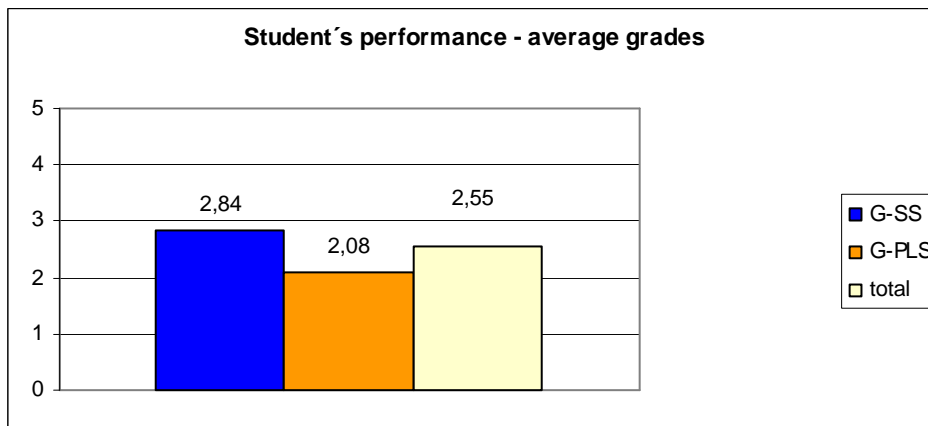
**Graph 21: Students´ assessment of their own performance – average**

Whilst the self-assessment of the G-PLS students was mainly positive, the G-SS learners used also the negative grades. The average grade 2,84 in the group G-SS was higher than the average grade 2,08 in the group G-PLS. In the group G-SS, 7 students (37%) awarded themselves the grade 2, 5 students (26%) grade 3, 3 students (16%) grade 5, 2 students (11%) grade 1 and 2 students (11%) grade 4. In the group G-PLS, 7 students (58%) gave themselves the grade 2, 3 students (25%) grade 1, 1 student (8%) grade 3, and 1 student (8%) grade 5. The representation of individual grades is presented in graph 20 and the average grades in graph 21.

It is remarkable that the students from the group G-PLS evaluate themselves with better grades than the G-SS students. This positive self-assessment may result from the learners´ self-confidence. The G-PLS students chose English as their free time activity and
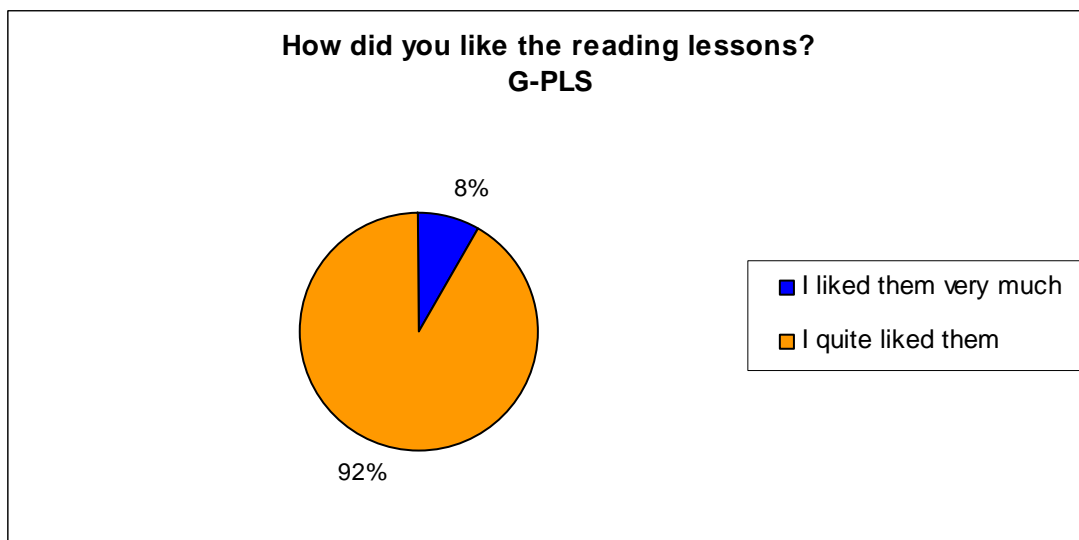
thus they are more motivated to participate in the lessons. Consequently, they are more likely to award themselves better grades than the G-SS learners.

2. How did you like the reading lessons?

In the second question, the respondents were asked whether they liked the reading lessons and to which extent. The proposed answers were: (a) I liked them very much, (b) I quite liked them, (c) I did not like them much, and (d) I did not like them at all. The most frequent answer in both cases was (b) I quite liked them.
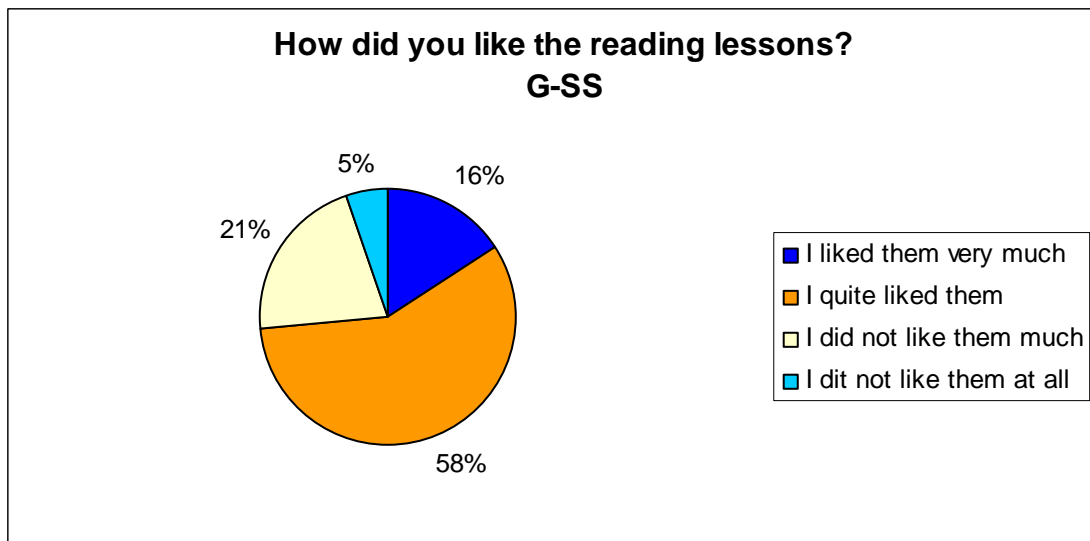
Graph 22: Proportion of answers G-SS

Graph 23: Proportion of answers G-PLS

How did you like the reading lessons?
Total

3%   13%

13%

71%

- I liked them very much
- I quite liked them
- I did not like them much
- I dit not like them at all
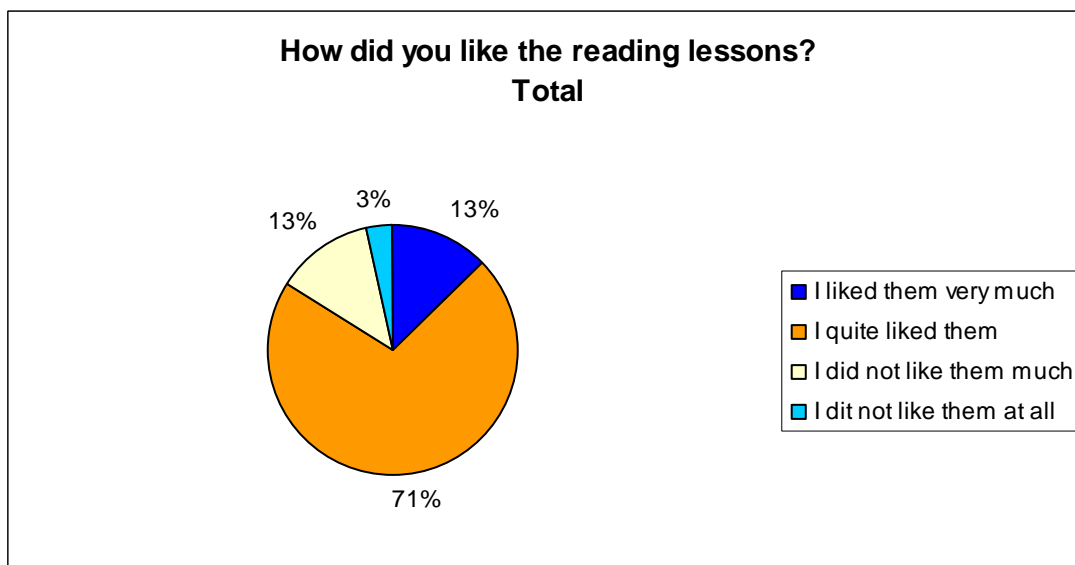
Graph 24: Proportion of answers – total

Most of the G-SS learners (58%) marked the answer (b) I quite liked them, 4 of them (21%) marked the answer (c) I did not like them much, 3 of them (16%) marked the answer (a) I liked them very much, and 1 (5%) marked the answer (d) I did not like them at all. In the group G-PLS, most of the respondents (92%) chose the answer (b) I quite liked them, and only one (8%) marked the answer (a) I liked them very much. These figures are presented in graphs 22 and 23. The proportional representation of the answers in total is represented in graph 24.

It is not easy to explain the differences in the students´ answers at both schools. First, since both lessons were conducted by different teachers the lessons were different. Second, G-PLS learners have chosen English as their free time activity and they are more motivated in learning it. This can explain the fact that they liked the reading lessons more than the lower secondary school learners. In the group G-SS, on the other hand, the very positive answer - (a) I liked them very much - was marked more times than in G-PLS. This means that there were more students who had enjoyed the reading lessons a lot in comparison with the private language school. There were also some students who had not enjoyed the lessons much or not at all. The variety of the G-SS learners´ answers is indicative of the diversity of the students´ interests and needs.
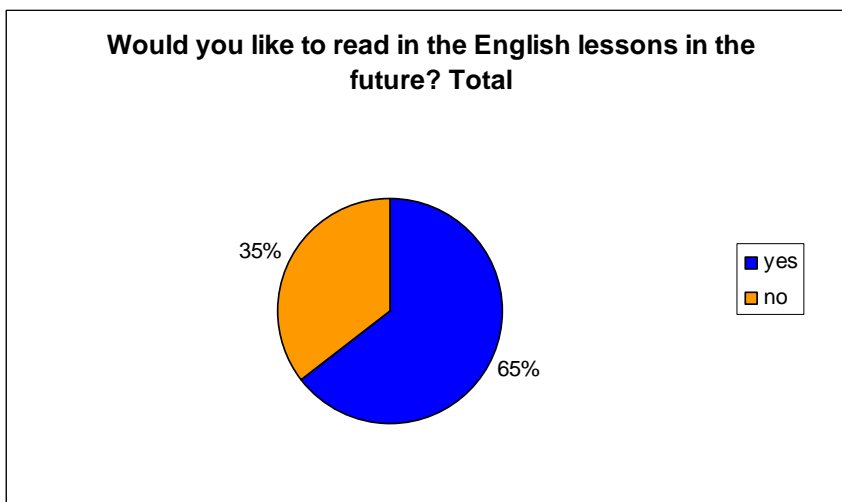
Question 3: Would you like to read in the English lessons in the future?
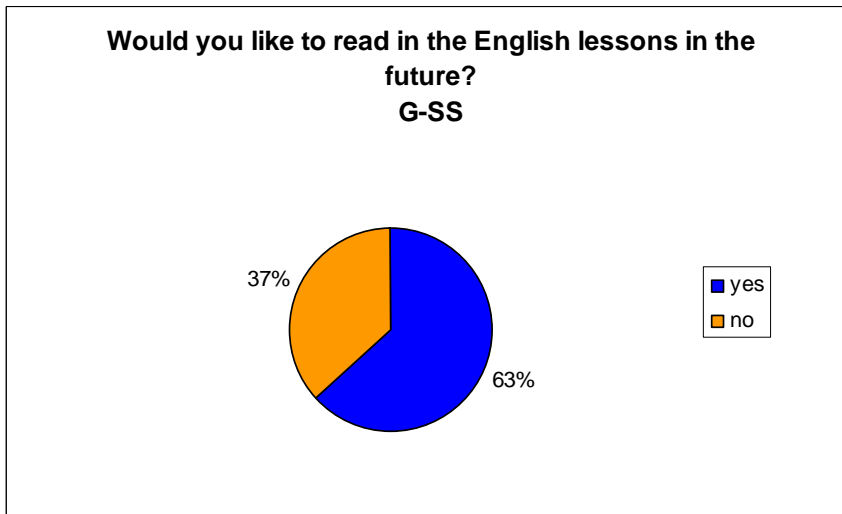
Graph 25: Proportion of students who would like to read in the English lessons G-SS
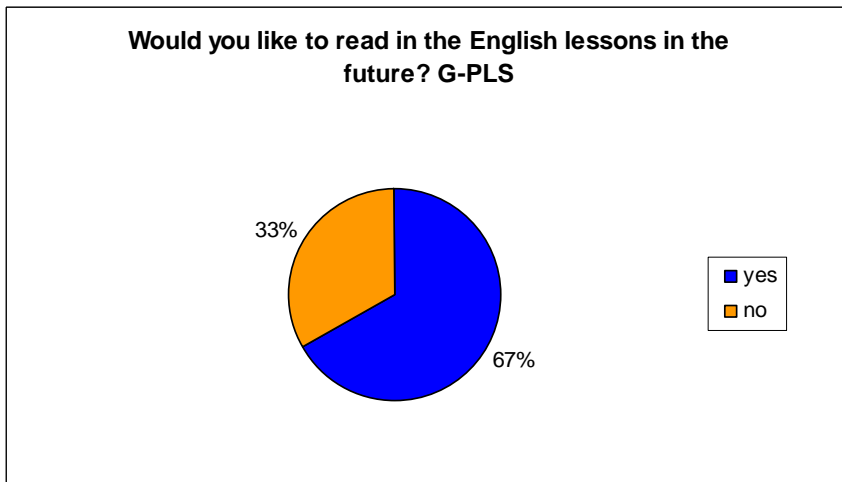
Graph 26: Proportion of students who would like to read in the English lessons
G-PLS

Graph 27: Proportion of students who would like to read in the English lessons – total

In the third question, the respondents were asked whether they would like to read in their English lessons in the future. The proportion of answers was nearly the same at both schools. 12 G-SS learners (63%) marked the answer yes and 7 of them (37%) marked the answer no. In the group G-PLS, 8 students (67%) chose the answer yes and 4 of them (33%) the answer no. In total, 65% of the learners would like to continue using a class Reader in their English lessons. The proportion of individual answers is presented in graphs 25 and 26, and the aggregate results are represented in graph 27.

Question 4: Would you like to borrow a Reader and read it at home?
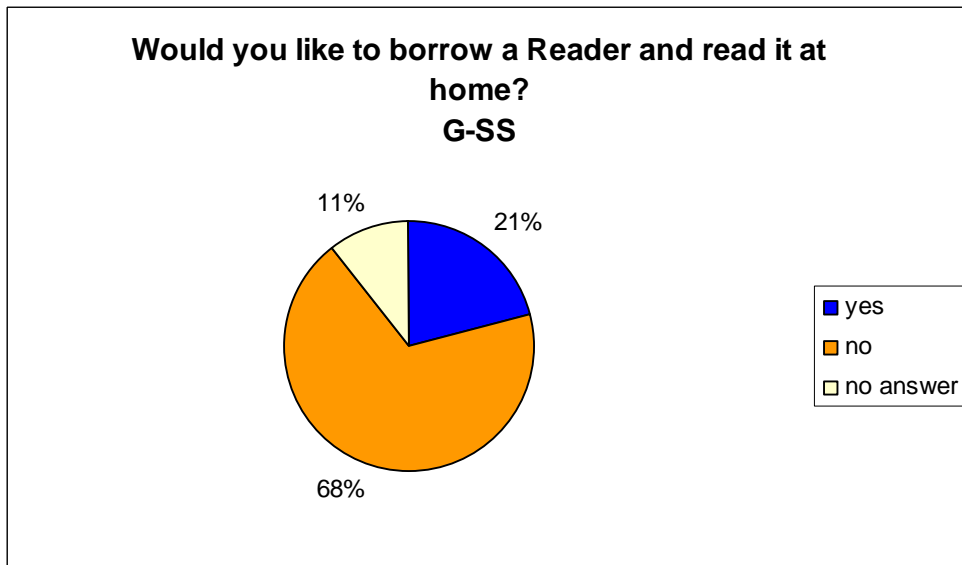
Graph 28: Proportion of students who would like to borrow a Reader G-SS
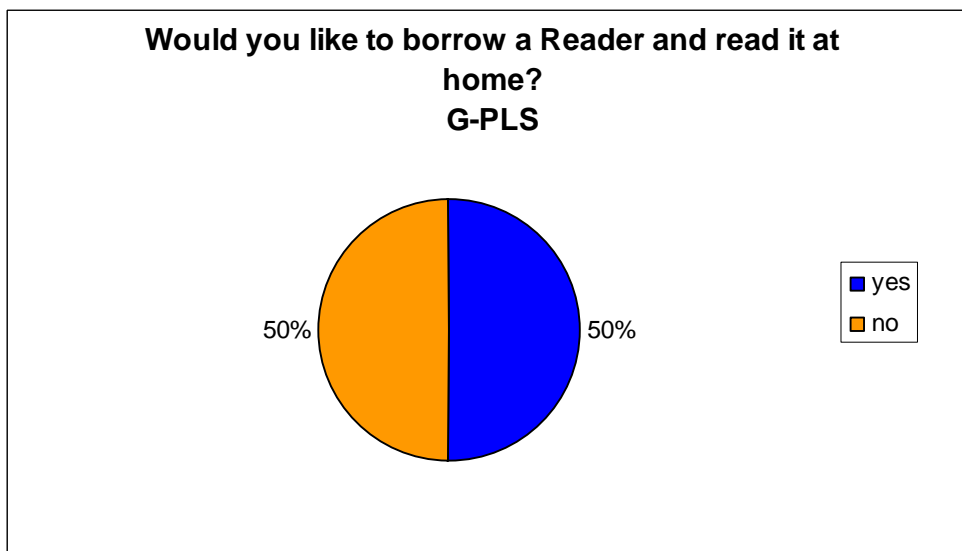
Graph 29: Proportion of students who would like to borrow a Reader G-PLS

Would you like to borrow a Reader and read it at home?
Total

6%

32%

62%

- yes
- no
- no answer

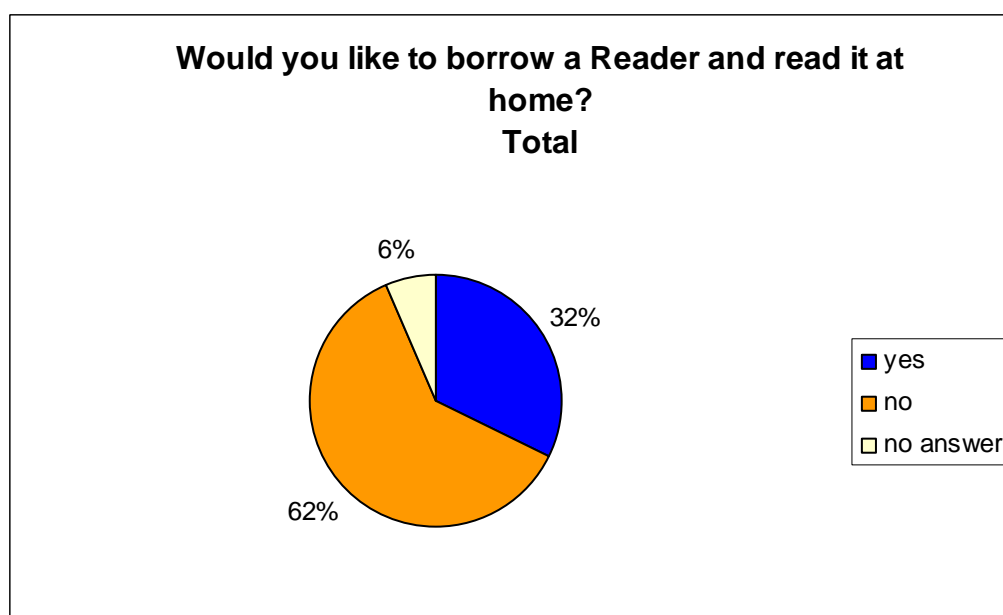**Graph 30: Proportion of students who would like to borrow a Reader – total**

In the fourth question, the students were asked whether they would like to borrow a Reader and read it at home, or in other words, whether they would be interested in individual reading in English. In the group G-SS, the majority of the students (68%) did not want to borrow a Reader, only 4 of them (21%) were interested in individual reading in English, and 2 students (11%) did not answer this question. In the group G-PLS, half of the students answered positively and half negatively. In total, more than 30% of the learners were interested in individual reading, 62% of them were not, and 6% did not answer. The results of this question are represented in graphs 28, 29 and 30.

An interesting fact to mention is that before the reading lessons, almost all learners of the group G-PLS (92%) were interested in reading in English (see graph 12), whilst after reading only 67% wanted to read in the English lessons (see graph 26), and only half of them wanted to borrow a Reader and read it at home (see graph 29).

In the group G-SS, on the other hand, a movement forward in the interest in reading is visible. At the beginning, only 41% of them were interested in reading a book in English (see graph 11). After four reading lessons, almost two thirds of them were interested in reading in their English lessons (see graph 25). So far only 21% of them were interested in individual reading at home. This figure is not high, but not insignificant either.

The G-PLS learners seem to prefer individual reading and they are not interested in reading in English lessons as much as the G-SS learners. The G-SS learners, on the other

hand, show an interest in class reading. They would probably need more guidance and support from the teacher before they would be able to read individually.

5. What did you like about the reading lessons? What did you not like about the reading lessons? What are your suggestions about what could be done better next time?

The last question was open. The students were asked to write what they liked or disliked and they could write their suggestions about what could be done better next time. In the group G-PLS, most of the students left this question without any answer. Only one of them used the opportunity to provide me with further feedback, he/she wrote that he/she liked everything during the reading classes. In the group G-SS, the students were more willing to answer the last question. I must admit that some of them did not know what to write and I had to show the main points they could comment on (reading itself, using audio CD, interactive activities, video, and vocabulary presentation). After the specification, all of them except for one student wrote a short answer to this question. The positive aspects of the reading lessons mentioned by the learners are presented in graph 31.
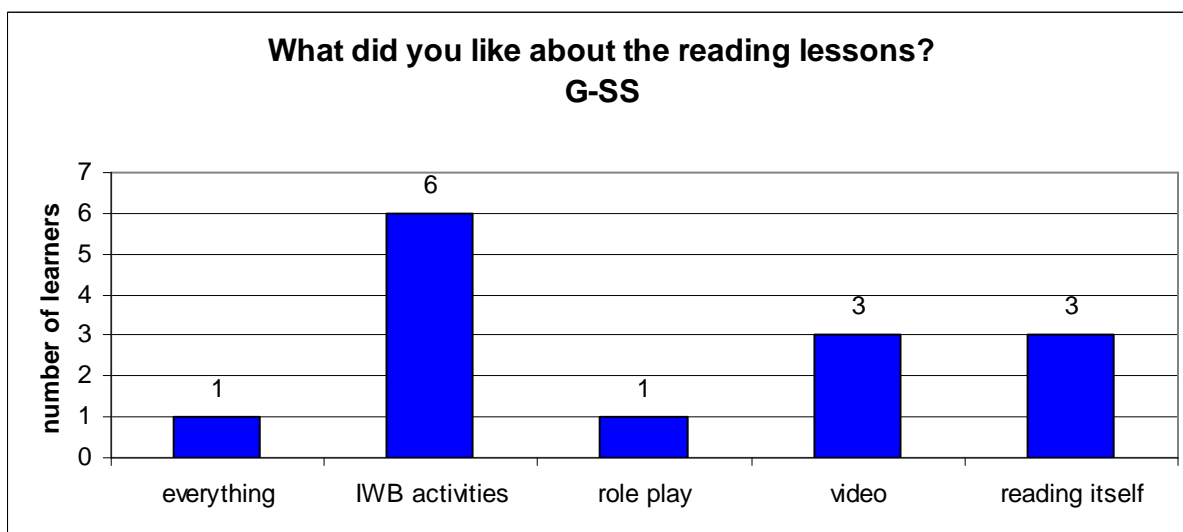
Graph 31: Aspects of the reading lessons appealing to students

The most frequent answer, written by 6 learners, was that they liked doing the IWB activities. 3 of them enjoyed watching the video about *Blackbeard* and 3 of them liked the reading itself. One person liked the role play and one wrote that he/she liked everything. Remarkably, the activities connected with reading play a crucial role in the learners´ interest in reading, and they are even more liked than the reading itself. Therefore, these

activities should not be omitted because they may enable the learners to enjoy reading. In the table below, the positive and negative aspects of the reading lessons as well as the students´ suggestions are presented.

| What did you like about the reading lessons?	What did you not like about the reading lessons?	What are your suggestions about what could be done better next time?
• IWB activities • reading itself • video • role play • everything	• lack of understanding	• translate the book into the Czech language • choose another book • read the book in a shorter period of time

Table 1: Students´ answers to question 5

To answer the question about the negatives of the lessons, two respondents wrote that they did not understand very much in the book. Concerning the students´ suggestions, one student wrote that he/she would like to translate the book in the Czech language during the reading classes, two of them would prefer another book, and one of them would like to read the Reader within a shorter period of time. I agree with the very last suggestion that it would be better to spend more than one lesson a week reading the book. When reading only 45 minutes a week, a lot of information tends to be forgotten during the week, and the story is in danger of becoming too long and boring.

4.3 Experiment 1

The four reading lessons with the group G-SS proceeded as described in chapter 3.2. Throughout the teaching, the feedback from the students (resulting from discussions in the mother tongue) and from the supervisor teacher was very beneficial to me. The reading activity level of the students varied during the lessons, some of the students were very active and some of them were not. As for the level of the Reader, some of them told me that it was easy for them, for some students it was difficult to understand the book. It is clearly understandable that some learners had difficulties with reading in English because they were not used to it. The biggest barrier was that the learners were not used to extensive reading in foreign language. They instinctively wanted to read the text aloud and

translate every single word. They had to learn to read for gist without trying to translate all words into the mother tongue. Whilst the informal feedback is only subjective, the following facts enable us to evaluate the results of the experiment objectively.

In the last lesson, the learners were offered to borrow the Reader and to read the last chapter of *Blackbeard* at home. The proportion of the G-SS learners who borrowed the Reader *Blackbeard* at home is represented in graph 32, and the proportion of the G-SS learners who borrowed another Reader is illustrated in graph 33.

The proportion of G-SS learners who wanted to finish the last chapter of Blackbeard at home

5%

95%

■ borrowed the Reader
■ did not borrow the Reader
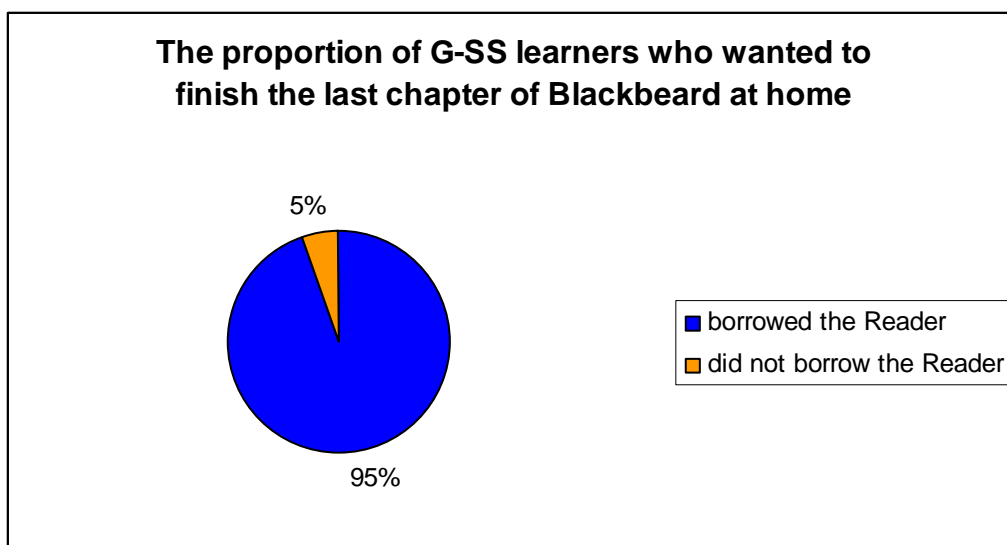
Graph 32: Proportion of G-SS learners who wanted to finish the last chapter of *Blackbeard* at home

The proportion of G-SS learners who borrowed another Reader

16%

84%

■ borrowed a Reader
■ did not borrow a Reader
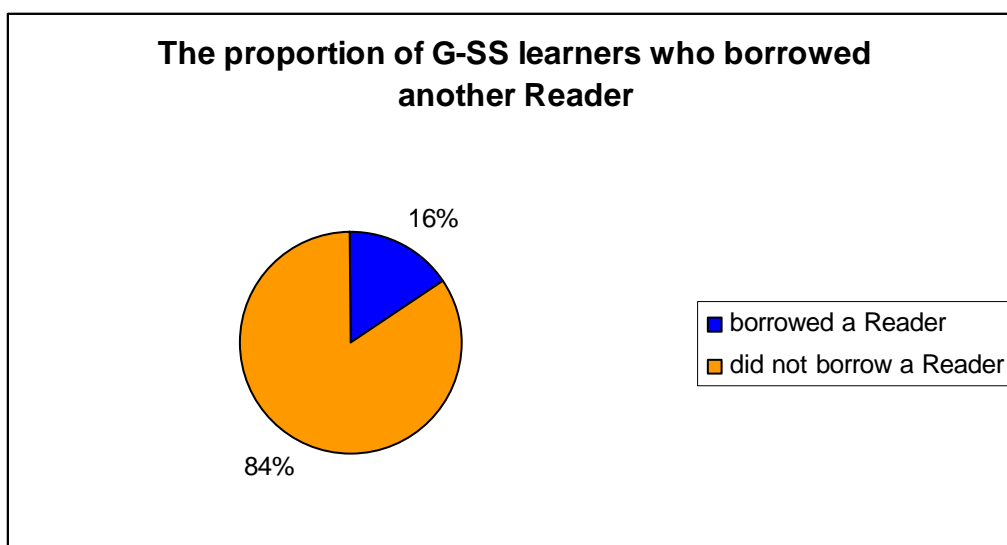
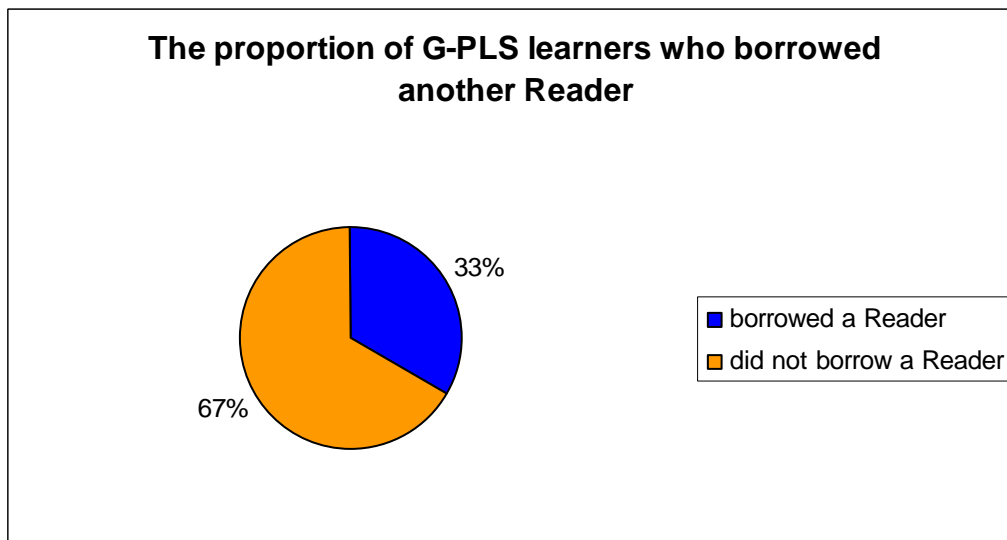**Graph 33: Proportion of G-SS learners who borrowed another Reader**

To my surprise, 18 learners of 19 wanted to borrow the book and to read it at home. In addition to that, 3 learners borrowed another Reader from the school library. One of the three G-SS learners who decided to individually read a Reader at home finished it 3 days, which is significant. In the next lesson, he brought the borrowed Reader back. I asked him in Czech what was his opinion on the book and he briefly explained his point of view. It is remarkable how this personal evaluation provoked interest of other learners who started to ask him additional questions about book immediately.

The results of the experiment were very surprising to me. At the beginning, in the first questionnaire, only 7 learners wrote that they would like to read a book in English. After reading the five chapters of *Blackbeard*, almost all of them wanted to read the last chapter and borrowed the book.

I was also pleased that after the experiment, the supervisor teacher told me that he would like to integrate reading of graded Readers into his English lessons. I highly appreciate his determination to start using graded Readers because extensive reading has its place in ELT and should not be omitted. The research showed that the learners are interested in reading in English but they need guidance from the teacher. The teacher´ role is important because he/she can help the learners to overcome possible problems and consequently strengthen their interest in further reading.

4.4 Experiment 2

As it was described in Chapter 3, the G-PLS students read the Reader individually at home. The teacher was not at their disposal during the reading time. In each lesson, they spent about 15 minutes being involved in activities connected with reading and discussing the main points of the Reader. According to their teacher, most of the learners read the book without difficulties. There were two learners who needed more support and encouragement from the teacher. However, all of them succeeded to read the book. After having read the Reader, the learners were given the second questionnaire and then they were offered to borrow another Reader from the school library. The proportion of G-PLS learners who borrowed a Reader is represented in graph 34.

The proportion of G-PLS learners who borrowed another Reader

33%

67%

- borrowed a Reader
- did not borrow a Reader

Graph 34: Proportion of G-PLS learners who borrowed another Reader

To my surprise, the proportion of learners who borrowed a Reader was not as high as I expected. The results of the second questionnaire showed that one half of the learners would like to borrow a Reader and read it individually at home. But in reality, only 4 of them (33%) borrowed a Reader.

The proportion of learners who borrowed another Reader - total

23%

77%

- borrowed a Reader
- did not borrow a Reader
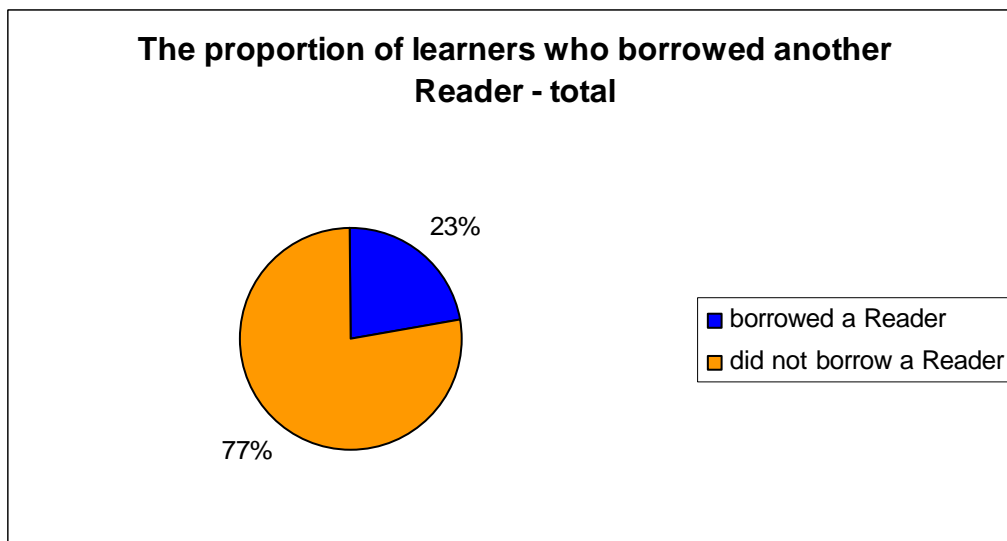
Grapg 35: Proportion of learners who borrowed another Reader – in total

In total, almost one quarter (24%) of the learners borrowed a Reader for individual reading (see graph 35). The results are not very striking, but a movement forward in the learners´ interest in extensive reading is visible.

The research sought to determine whether using graded Readers in English lessons can have an impact on learners´ interest in further extensive reading. The results of the research show that the impact of Readers on learners´ interest in further reading is positive. Especially in the group G-SS, where initially only 41% of learners were interested in reading a book in English (see graph 11), and after four reading lessons, nearly two thirds of them were interested in reading in their English lessons (see graph 25). In addition to this, almost all of them wanted to finish the Reader *Blackbeard* at home (see graph 32). After reading the Reader, in total 23% of the learners borrowed a Reader for individual reading. The Readers themselves can attract the learners by interesting topics, attractive layout and illustrations, challenging tasks, IWB activities or dramatized audio recordings. However, the teacher´s role and the way of using graded Readers in English lessons are also important.

In this chapter, the results of the research were presented and commented on, and the research question was answered. The next chapter provides advice for teachers based on the results of the research. It also discusses the limitation of the research and presents suggestions for further research.

5 Implications

In this chapter, implications for teaching are presented. The implications are based on the results of the research presented in chapter 4. Further on, the limitations of the research are discussed. The third part of this chapter is focused on suggestions for further research.

5.1 Implications for teaching

The results of the research show that using graded Readers have a positive impact on learners´ interest in further extensive reading. It also showed that the teacher´s role and the way of using Readers are very important. In this section, advice for teachers based on results of the research is presented.

First, the teachers should not underestimate their learners. All learners are able to read a book in English, but for some of them it will take more time and it will require more effort from the part of the learner, and more support from the part of the teacher. Concerning the interest in reading, the research showed slightly more positive results in the group G-PLS. But the learners of both groups were interested in reading in the English lessons.

Second, the teachers should be patient with the learners. The learners who are not used to reading in the foreign language, or even in their mother tongue need to learn to read first. And learning takes time. The learners need to be assured that it is not necessary to understand every single word of the sentence, but that it is the general understanding which is the most important. Teachers should help the learners to develop the reading skills and strategies such as prediction, skipping the words which are not needed for the general understanding, or reading "between the lines". The learners should be also encouraged to try to guess the meaning of the new words instead of just looking them up in the dictionary.

Before being able to read individually, it is vital to concentrate on class reading. As it was said above, the learners need to learn to read. During the period of class reading, the learners become familiarized with the process of reading and they start acquiring the reading strategies. The results of the questionnaire showed that the G-SS learners were more interested in reading in the English lessons than individually at home. The concern about individual reading may result from the lack of experience with reading in the foreign language.

Students enjoy being involved in a variety of activities connected with reading. It can be very difficult for some learners to concentrate on reading during the whole 45-minute lesson. It is therefore vital to integrate activities such as vocabulary revision activities, comprehension questions, drama, or video. According to my experience, the learners especially appreciate the IWB activities. The Readers themselves usually offer various activities, some of them also include interactive activities, or suggestions for project work. While the teachers have plenty of resources to choose from, they can always design their own activities.

Shared personal experience is a powerful tool for provoking interest in reading. As I described above in subchapter 4.3, the learner who expressed his opinion on the Reader he had read made his classmates interested in the book very naturally and spontaneously. On the basis of this experience I recommend that the teachers enable the learners to share their opinion on the Readers. This sharing of opinions can take any form – written or oral, and it plays an important role in the learners´ interest in reading the book.

In this section, the implications for teaching were presented. The next chapter is focused on limitations of the research.

5.2 Limitations of the research

One of the most important limitations of the research was its duration. Interest in reading cannot be gained overnight. In the four-week period the research could show a movement forward in the students´ interest in reading. But I suppose that after a longer period of time, the results would be slightly different.

Concerning the timing of the research, another limitation was apparent from the second questionnaire – reading only one lesson a week. If the book is read only for 45 minutes and then it is put aside for one week, a lot of information tends to be forgotten, and the interest in the book tends to decrease. Consequently, in my opinion, it would be much better to dedicate four lessons a week to reading, rather than only one lesson a week in a four-week period. It would keep the learners more motivated and interested in reading.

Throughout the research, the two groups G-SS and G-PLS are compared. However, the conditions were slightly different in each group, and this fact is not taken into consideration in the interpretation of the results. For example, the groups were taught by different teachers, they used different Readers, and the content of the lessons was different. While the G-SS learners did almost all the reading in the English lessons, the G-PLS learners read only at home individually.

Another disadvantage is that I was not present during the experiment with the G-PLS group, therefore I could not evaluate the process of reading personally. I obtained the information indirectly from the teacher and from the library lending book. In order for the comparison of the two groups to be objective I would need to be present in both groups during the experiment.

In this part, the limitations of the research were discussed. The next subchapter is focused on suggestions for further research.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

The suggestions for further research are of two kinds. The first kind of suggestions is about how the study carried out in this thesis could be improved or expanded. The second kind of suggestions concerns other research studies related to the topic of reading.

The suggestions for improving or expanding the research study carried out in this thesis emerge from the research limitations discussed above. First, I suggest changing the time structure of the experiment. It would be interesting to monitor the learners´ interest in reading if the Reader was read more often than one lesson a week. I would be also interested in observing how the learners´ interest in reading develops after using graded Readers for a longer period of time (a semester or a whole school year). The comparison of the two groups of learners would be more objective if the lessons were taught by the same teachers and if the same Readers were used. I would also suggest expanding the study to involve more groups of learners into the research. I suppose it would be also interesting to compare the interest in reading of different age groups.

The research was focused only on extensive reading. Another area which may benefit from further research is intensive reading. The research could be focused on the learners´ interest in intensive reading, and the interest in both extensive and intensive reading could be compared. During the experiment I noticed that the learners wanted to read aloud. I would be interested in finding out their attitude in reading aloud and finding out why reading aloud is so attractive for them.

The aim of this chapter was to present pedagogical implications of the research carried out in the thesis, to think about limitations of the research, and to discuss suggestions for improving or expanding the research study. In the last chapter, the main ideas of the thesis are summarized.

6 Conclusion

The aim of the thesis was to find out if using graded Readers in English lessons has an impact on learners´ interest in further extensive reading. In the first part of the thesis, theoretical information about reading in general, and the characteristics of teaching of reading were presented. Further on, the graded Readers and their benefits to learners were described. The two main approaches to using Readers – class Reader and individual reading from a class library were characterised, and practical tips for activities for the two approaches were presented. The theoretical background chapter also dealt with the organisation and the use of the class library.

To answer the research question, two research tools were used – questionnaire and experiment. In the second part of the thesis, the research tools and procedures were described. The first questionnaire showed the interest of lower secondary school learners in reading before they started to use graded Readers. Then, the experiment took place. The learners were involved in a series of reading lessons, in which, besides the reading itself, they did a variety of activities connected with reading. After that, the second questionnaire was carried out. The questionnaire was aimed to assess the reading lessons and to evaluate the learners´ interest in reading after using the Readers. Two groups were involved in the research: first, a group of 6th graders at the state lower secondary school, and second, a group of students of a private language school. The data collected in both groups were compared and the differences in the results were commented on.

 The results of the research showed that graded Readers do have a positive impact on learners´ interest in reading. The majority of the learners enjoyed the reading lessons and they would like to continue using Readers in their English lessons. Almost one third of them were interested in reading a similar Reader at home individually, and almost one quarter of them followed through and borrowed a Reader for individual reading. In conclusion, the research proved that extensive reading should be implemented into the English lessons. The implementation might be demanding, but it is definitely worth it.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The book review worksheet (from: Hedge, 1985, pp. 103 – 104)

```
BOOK REVIEW
WORKSHEET (Reviewing)

Write a review of a book that you have finished.

To help you, first complete these notes about your book.


A   Basic facts about the book

      1 Title
      2 Author
      3 Publisher
      4 Date of publication
      5 ISBN number
      6 (Price)

B   Type of book

      1 Fiction/non-fiction
      2 Long/short
        a) no. of pages
        b) no. of words (guess)
      3 illustrated/not illustrated
        a) photographs
        b) drawings
        c) other

C   Content MAKE NOTES ONLY!

      1 Fiction
        a) Story when
                 where
                 brief summary
        b) Characters how many
                      names
                      relationships

      2 Non-fiction
        a) subject/topic general
                        specific
        b) chapters/sections how many
                        topics

D   Reactions TRY TO GIVE REASONS!
      1 (too) easy/(too) difficult
      2 like/dislike
      3 interesting/boring

E   Conclusions
      1 When did you read the book?
      2 How long did it take to read it?
      3 Would you like another book by the same author/on the
      same subject/ of the same type?
      4 Would you recommend it to anyone?

NOW USE YOUR NOTES TO HELP YOU WRITE YOUR BOOK
REVIEW. YOUR TEACHER WILL HELP YOU MAKE THE RIGHT
SORTS OF SENTENCES

Good Luck!                                  Norman Whitney
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Appendix 2: Workcards (from: Hedge, 1985, p. 107)

ACTIVITIES

1 Imagine you are going to visit the USA. Where would you go and what would you do?

   a) Draw a map (use the one at the beginning of the book) and mark your route.

   b) Write a composition saying where you want to visit, and why, and what you would do there.

2 Use your book to find information and make notes about these things:

   — the weather   — travel

   — where to stay   — sightseeing

   — what to eat

Now make an 'information brochure' for tourists who are going to the USA.

3 Which of these towns would you most like to visit?

New York   Chicago   Washington DC   Los Angeles   San Francisco

Make notes about the town under these headings:

Where?	How big?	Why famous?	Where to go?	What to do?

Use your notes to write a short description of the town.

Appendix 3: Class library chart (from: Dawson, 1998, p. 14)

CLASS LIBRARY CHART	Titles of books																										
Write in the squares the dates on which each learner starts and finishes each book. Add a colour spot or A, B or C to indicate the learner's opinion of the book.																											
Names of learners																											

Appendix 4a: Questionnaire 1 in Czech

Jméno: **Věk:**   **Skupina:**

1. Co všechno rád/a čteš? (můžeš označit libovolný počet odpovědí)
- □ noviny
- □ časopisy
- □ komiksy
- □ naučné knihy, encyklopedie
- □ knihy (beletrii)
- □ jiné: _____

2. Jaký je tvůj vztah ke čtení knih? (vyber jednu odpověď)
- □ vůbec nečtu, nebaví mě to
- □ čtu jenom to, co mám za úkol do školy (povinnou četbu)
- □ občas si něco dobrovolně přečtu
- □ čtu často, protože mě to baví
- □ jiné: _____

3. Jaké druhy knih rád/a čteš? (můžeš označit libovolný počet odpovědí)
- □ historické
- □ cestopisné
- □ životopisné
- □ sci-fi
- □ detektivky
- □ dobrodružné
- □ romantické
- □ horory
- □ mysteriózní (tajuplné, záhadné)
- □ jiné: _____

4. Přečetl/a sis někdy knížku v cizím jazyce?
- □ ano
- □ ne

5. Přečetl/a sis někdy knížku v angličtině?
- □ ano
- □ ne

6. Lákalo by tě někdy si přečíst knížku v angličtině?
- □ ano
- □ ne

Appendix 4b: Questionnaire 1 in English

Name: **Age:**   **Group:**

1. What do you like to read? (choose any number of answers)

- □   newspapers
- □   magazines
- □   comics
- □   scientific literature and encyclopaedias
- □   fiction
- □   other: _____

2. What is your attitude to reading? (choose one answer)
- □   I do not read because I do not like it
- □   I read only the compulsory reading
- □   I sometimes read voluntarily
- □   I read often because I like it
- □   Other: _____

3. What kind of books do you prefer? (choose any number of answers)

- □   historical novels
- □   travel books
- □   biography
- □   science fiction
- □   detective stories
- □   adventure
- □   romantic
- □   horror
- □   mystery
- □   other: _____

4. Have you ever read a book in a foreign language?
- □   yes
- □   no

5. Have you ever read a book in English?
- □   yes
- □   no

6. Would you like to read a book in English?
- □   yes
- □   no

Appendix 5a: Questionnaire 2 in Czech

Jméno: **Věk:**   **Skupina:**

1. Jakou známkou bys ohodnotil/a:

(číslo zakroužkuj; 1 – nejlepší, 5 – nejhorší)

- výběr knížky Blackbeard/ Sherlock Holmes

1   2   3   4   5

- práci s knížkou (čtení, aktivity, otázky atd.)

 1   2   3   4   5

- **práci učitele/učitelky během hodin čtení**

1   2   3   4   5

- svoji práci během hodin čtení

1   2   3   4   5

2. Jak tě bavily hodiny čtení? (vyber jednu odpověď)

- □   bavily mě hodně
- □   docela mě bavily
- □   moc mě nebavily
- □   vůbec mě nebavily

3. Chtěl/a by ses i nadále v hodinách angličtiny věnovat čtení?

- □   ano
- □   ne

4. Měl/a bys zájem půjčit si podobnou knížku v angličtině domů a číst ji ve volném čase?

- □   ano
- □   ne

5. Co se ti na hodinách čtení líbilo, nebo naopak nelíbilo? Máš nějaký návrh, co by se příště mohlo udělat lépe?

Appendix 5b: Questionnaire 2 in English

Name: **Age:**   **Group:**

1. How would you assess:

(circle your answer, 1 – the best, 5 – the worst)

- the choice of the book Blackbeard/ Sherlock Holmes

1   2   3   4   5

- the way of using the book (reading, activities, questions etc.)

1   2   3   4   5

- **the teacher´s performance during the reading lessons**

1   2   3   4   5

- your performance during the reading lessons

1   2   3   4   5

2. How did you like the reading lessons? (choose one answer)

- □ I liked them very much
- □ I quite liked them
- □ I did not like them much
- □ I did not like them at all

3. Would you like to read in the English lessons in the future?

- □ yes
- □ no

4. Would you like to borrow a Reader and read it at home?

- □ yes
- □ no

5. What did you like about the reading lessons? What did you not like about the reading lessons? What are your suggestions about what could be done better next time?

Appendix 6: *Blackbeard* **cover**[3]
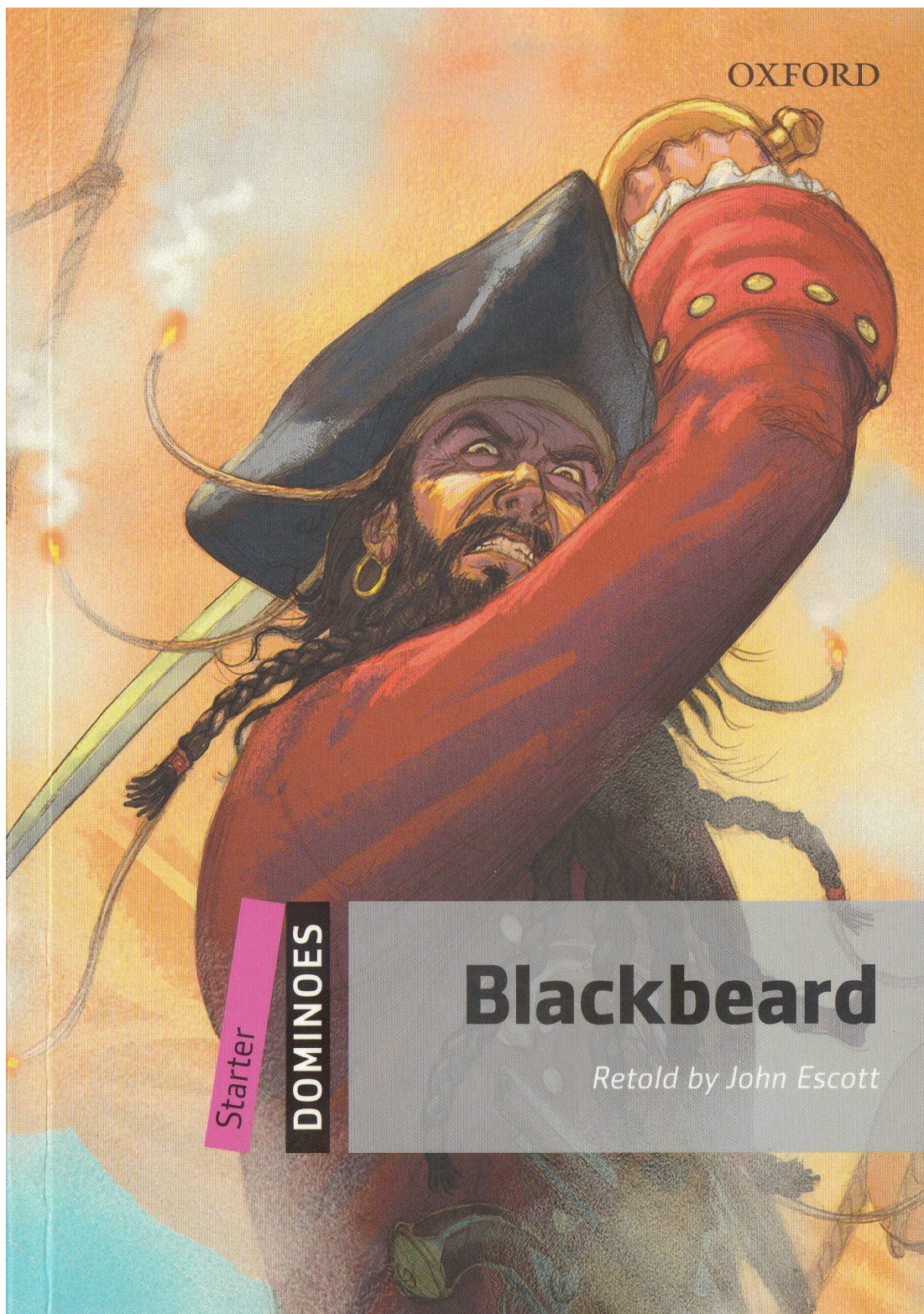
OXFORD

Starter

DOMINOES

Blackbeard

Retold by John Escott

Appendix 7: Before reading (exercises taken from *Blackbeard*, p. 1)

BEFORE READING

1 Match the words with the pictures. Use a dictionary to help you.

governor   pirate   pistol   ship   sword   treasure
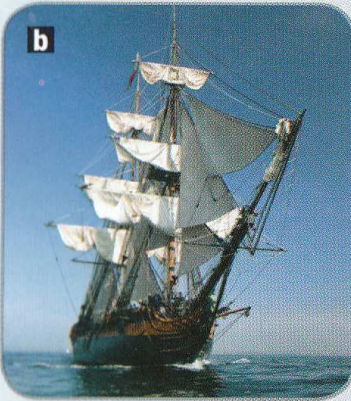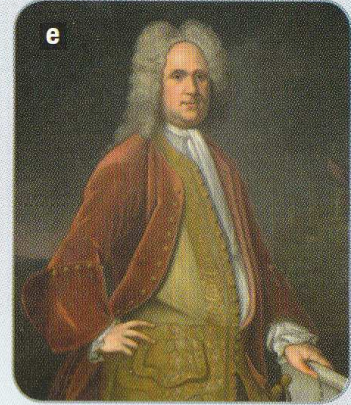
2 Complete the sentences with the things from 1 in the correct form.

a Blackbeard is a Caribbean ....

b He takes more than forty................. from different countries in the Caribbean Sea.

c The................. of North Carolina is Blackbeard's friend; the .... of Virginia wants to kill Blackbeard.

d Blackbeard dies when he is under forty with a .... and .... in his hands.

e He doesn't leave lots of .... behind him when he dies.

Appendix 8: Role play (taken from Blackbead, pp. 4-5)

'Speak, man, or you die!' Teach says. He hits the French captain across the mouth. 'Never!' says the captain. 'Do your worst!'

Teach walks across to a young French boy. 'You, boy!' he says to him. 'What's your name?' '**Louis Arot, sir**,' the boy answers. 'Where's the gold, boy?' Teach asks. 'Take me to it!'
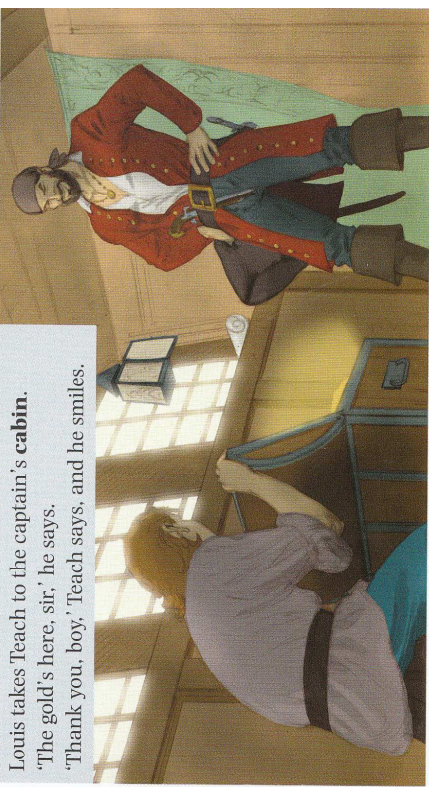
Louis takes Teach to the captain's **cabin**. 'The gold's here, sir,' he says. 'Thank you, boy,' Teach says, and he smiles.

Louis Arot /ˈluːwi ˈærəʊ/   **sir** you say this when you talk to an important man   **cabin** a room on a ship

Hornigold's three ships attack the French ship with their guns. Suddenly one of *La Concorde*'s masts comes down noisily. Some of the French crew die.

'Make ready to go aboard!' Teach tells his men.

Teach and his men go aboard the French ship and the **fight** begins. Pirates and Frenchmen die, but Teach's men take the ship. The captain and crew of *La Concorde* cannot stop them.

All the *La Concorde* crew feel very afraid. Their captain – **Pierre Dosset** – asks Teach, 'Do you want to kill us?' 'No, I don't,' Teach says. 'But tell me something. Where's all your **gold**?' The captain does not answer.

fight when you hit someone many times   **Pierre Dosset** /pjeə ˈdɒseɪ/   **gold** an expensive yellow metal

Appendix 9: Vocabulary matching – interactive activity (from *Blackbeard* audio CD)

Drag the words to the correct pictures.

cabin	wife	governor	ship
sailor	island	beard	mast

Appendix 10: True/false statements – interactive activity (from *Blackbeard* audio CD)

Look at the picture and choose the correct answers. True or false?

1   His name's Edward Teach.

2   His children call him 'Blackbeard'.

3   He lives in Jamaica.

4   He's the most frightening pirate of all.

5   His ship's name is the 'Queen Anne's Revenge'.

6   His ship is big and slow.

7   All the sailors in the Caribbean know his name.

8   He wants to stop being a pirate.

9   He's got four wives, people say.

10 He loves gold and exciting adventures.

Score: _____

Check answers   Try again   See answers

Appendix 11: Paper stripes

Blackbeard captures the ship *The Adventure* near Honduras.

Blackbeard captures a Spanish ship near the Cayman Islands.

Blackbeard kills the Spanish captain and his crew.

Blackbeard puts the Spanish captain and his crew ashore on a small island.

Some people of the Blackbeard´s crew are ill.

Blackbeard´s pirates can easily go into Charleston for help.

Blackbeard tells the captain David Herriot: „You must die“.

Blackbeard and his pirates have a lot of medicine.

Appendix 12: Anagrams (exercise taken from *Blackbeard*, pp. 24-25)

WORD WORK

Complete the sentences with the words in the pirate swords.

a A town _councillor_ works to make things better for the people in a town.

clonocirlu

b Stop your fight with us, and _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _. My crew is bigger than your crew.

rurneserd

c In the captain's cabin there's a big _ _ _ _ _ with gold in it.

shect

d There's an old car by the road with no one in it. It's an _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ car.

debondana

e Do you want some _ _ _ _ _ in your hot milk?

argus

f We're _ _ _ _ _ _ _ you some money. You can get something nice with it.

gindens

g The king is giving you a _ _ _ _ _ _. No one can capture you and kill you in his name now. So you can stop being a pirate and be a good man.

danpro

h I'm writing a _ _ _ _ _ _ to my aunt to say 'thank you' for the book.
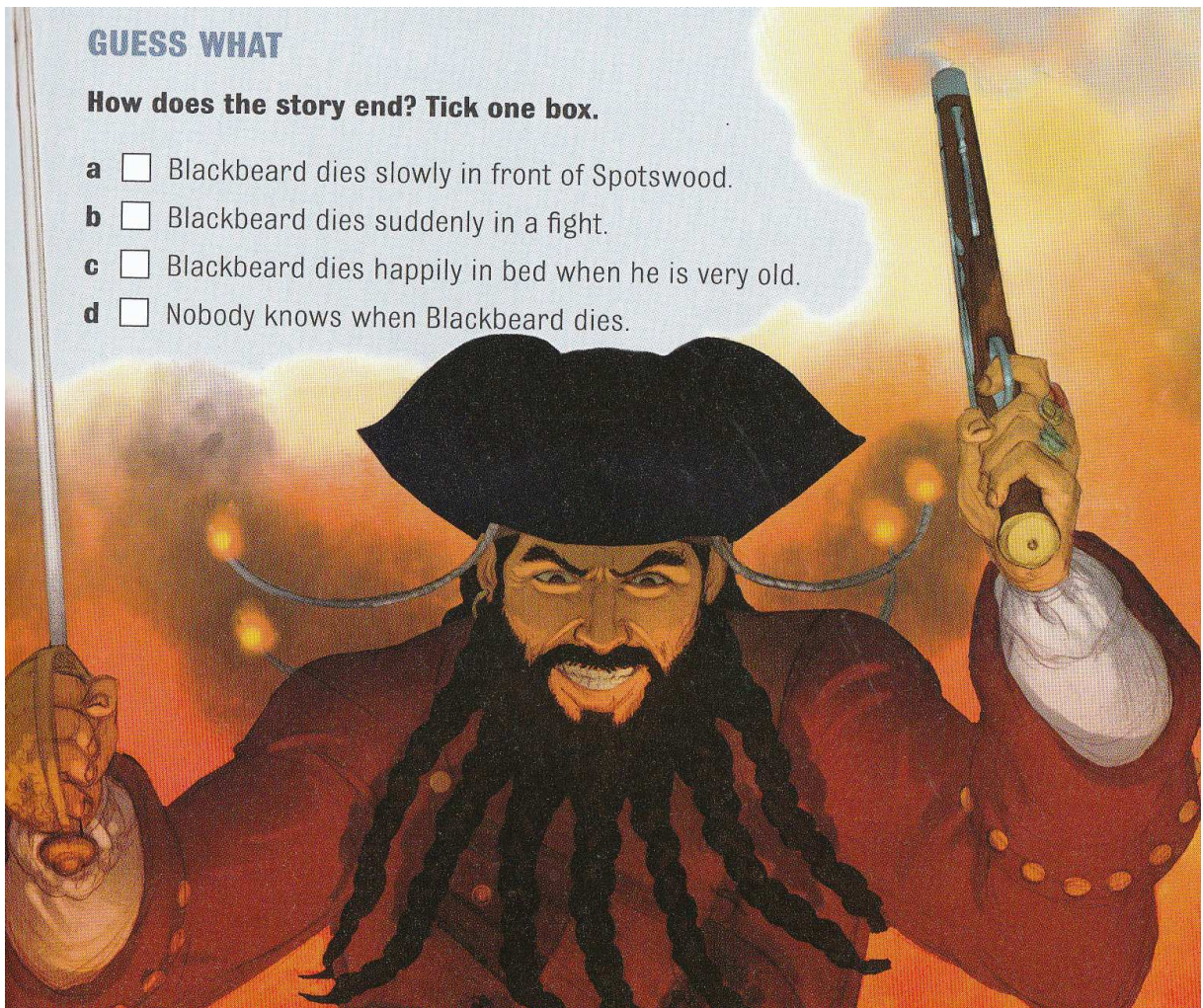
terelt

Appendix 13: Guess what (exercise taken from *Blackbeard*, p. 31)

GUESS WHAT

How does the story end? Tick one box.

a ☐ Blackbeard dies slowly in front of Spotswood.
b ☐ Blackbeard dies suddenly in a fight.
c ☐ Blackbeard dies happily in bed when he is very old.
d ☐ Nobody knows when Blackbeard dies.

Shrnutí

Diplomová práce se zabývá problematikou využití zjednodušené četby se žáky ve věku od 11 do 15 let. Práce je rozdělena do dvou částí – teoretické a praktické. V první části jsou uvedeny teoretické poznatky o čtení a výuce čtení obecně. Dále je práce zaměřena na extenzivní čtení a na využití zjednodušené četby ve výuce anglického jazyka. Diplomová práce také nabízí praktické rady pro začlenění zjednodušené četby do jazykové výuky. Cílem praktické části je nalezení odpovědi na výzkumnou otázku, zda využití zjednodušené četby v hodinách angličtiny má vliv na zájem o další čtení v tomto jazyce. K tomu slouží dotazníkové šetření a experiment. Výsledky výzkumu potvrzují, že využití zjednodušené četby má pozitivní vliv na zájem žáků o další čtení. Výsledky výzkumu jsou dále v práci podrobněji prezentovány. V poslední části práce jsou představeny závěry vyplývající z výzkumné části.