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UŽITÍ AUTENTICKÝCH MATERIÁLŮ VE VÝUCE ANGLIČTINY NA II. STUPNI ZÁKLADNÍCH ŠKOL

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Thesis

USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN SECONDARY CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis deals with written authentic materials and their use in English teaching. It is divided into two main parts. The theoretical part provides essential information about authentic materials in general, their classification and both advantages and disadvantages of their use. It takes a closer look at teaching through the Communicative approach with the help of authentic materials. The research is described in practical part of the thesis. This part consists of the data found out through questionnaires given to English teachers. That is followed by a description of a lesson observation. The results of the questionnaires show the proportions of the questioned teachers who use authentic materials in teaching English. The observation illustrates the actual example of use of authentic materials in secondary classroom.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The title of the thesis is Using Authentic Materials in Teaching English in Secondary Classrooms. There are many types of authentic materials that can be used in teaching L2 or foreign language, therefore in the practical part of the thesis I didn't attempt to cover the use of all possible English authentic materials, but I decided to focus on the most common ones.

A significant amount of research has been carried out in order to ameliorate both the learning and the teaching processes. These researches attempted to find out new ways and approaches that would enable students make their L2 or foreign language acquisition easier and more interesting. Teachers themselves are always in need of new methods and approaches that would be suitable for classroom purposes and which would enrich the teaching process. As a result, authentic materials came to the fore.

Many researchers in the field of linguistics started to urge a change in the teaching process and recommend use of authentic materials as a source of real language. How the authentic materials may enrich and facilitate the L2 acquisition or whether they prove to be rather difficult and too challenging, is the topic of this thesis.

In the first part of the Theoretical background chapter the thesis deals with a brief introduction into the authentic materials, followed by a description of what the authentic materials are. Definitions and explanations of several well-known and respected linguists are presented. The next sections concentrate on the description of the main terms necessary when introducing authentic materials, such as CTL and CLT, or the difference betweens the terms authentic and genuine. For further understanding what can be considered as authentic is one section focused on the authenticity of a classroom. Then the classification of authentic materials in general follows. Further on, the possible advantages and disadvantages of using such materials are presented. Next, some of the main reasons why to use authentic materials in English lessons are explained. Another important section is how to select the right and suitable authentic materials and what factors teachers should consider when choosing the appropriate ones. This is followed by the possible ways of applying the authentic materials into the lesson and whether it is

realistic to rely solely on them and teaching without the textbook. Finally, the first part is concluded by commenting on the question of motivation of pupils and under what conditions the authentic materials can be motivational for them.

In the research methodology chapter the selected methods are explained and the conditions occurring during the research are described. This chapter is followed by the results and commentaries chapter. In this part, the outcomes of the research are presented using graphs for better understanding. The chapter is followed by the implications for English teachers in terms of considerations if and how to choose authentic materials for their classes and what criteria should be taken into consideration. Finally, in the conclusion chapter the main ideas of the entire thesis are reviewed.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The main purpose of the theoretical chapter is to introduce the authentic materials and provide information about them. There is briefly explained what the authentic materials are based on, explanations and definitions of several professionals in the field of linguistics follow. Then, the authentic materials are classified according to their origin and style. Further on, the focus is on the reason of using the authentic materials and on the possible criteria for choosing the right ones. Next the possible difficulties in English learning while using authentic materials are introduced and defined, followed by several tips and ideas how to overcome them.

Some of the principal questions of this thesis are listed below. Do Czech teachers of English work with authentic materials while teaching English? Do they find using authentic materials easy and useful for their pupils? Do Czech pupils at elementary schools like activities based on using authentic materials? What authentic materials are popular with Czech teachers and pupils? What authentic materials are suitable for secondary classrooms? These questions will be dealt with in the practical part. Authentic materials are often seen as overcoming the gap between school artificial environment and real world situations. I would like to compare the theory with the reality of various Czech elementary schools, based on the data assembled within the research.

Introduction into Authentic Materials

In language teaching, there are many approaches and methods leading to students' foreign language acquisition. These approaches are meant to prepare students to be able to use a foreign or second language accurately and properly. For this purpose a variety of sources of the target language is used. Among the other sources, it is recommended to use the authentic materials in order to provide students with the benefits they can get from being exposed to the language in such materials (Oura, 2012).

There are many references to authentic materials and their definitions in the ELT literature. Sometimes, these definitions differ from each other in the very basis but mostly they correspond each other. For better understanding of the term "authentic material"

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several definitions and their authors are to be mentioned. First is one of the most common definitions of authentic materials coming from Harmer (1991) who defines authentic texts as "materials which are designed for native speakers; they are real texts; designed not for language students, but for the speakers of the language". Jordan (1997) agrees with him when he refers to authentic texts as "texts that are not written for language teaching purposes". Peacock (1997) adds his opinion when he describes authentic materials as materials that have been produced to fulfill some social purpose in the language community. They can then be used in the classroom without being changed in any way for EFL students (Sanderson, 1999). Rogers (1988) defines authentic materials as "appropriate" and "quality" in terms of goals, objectives, learner needs and interest and "natural" in terms of real life and meaningful communication.

What we understand that is common in these definitions is "exposure to real language and its use in its own community" (Widdowson, 1990). We can sum it up by saying that using authentic materials simply means using examples of language produced by native speakers for some real purpose of their own rather than using language produced and designed solely for the classroom. Anybody who takes into the classroom a newspaper article, an advertisement, a pop song, a strip cartoon, or even a bus ticket, is using authentic materials. Teachers have always introduced such realia into their classrooms, and always will. The question really is whether it is helpful to their students (Cook, 1981).

Nunan (1989) thinks that a rule of thumb for authenticity here is any material, which has not been specifically produced for the purposes of language teaching. Based on these definitions, we can find the real meaning of authentic materials: they are real language; produced for the native speakers; designed without the teaching purposes. In this sense, there is a large amount of authentic materials in our life such as newspaper and magazine articles, TV and radio broadcast, daily conversations, meetings, documents, speech, and films. One of the most useful is the Internet. Whereas newspapers and other materials date very quickly, the Internet is continuously updated, more visually stimulating as well as interactive.

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Contextualized Teaching and Learning

An approach, which relies mostly on authentic materials, is called Contextualized Teaching and Learning (CTL). It is a "conception of teaching and learning that helps teachers relate subject matter content to real world situations" (Berns & Erickson, 2001). CTL helps students make connections between the content they are learning and the real-life contexts where the content can be applied. Students then find meaning in the learning of the content. Instead of teaching skills and knowledge separate from real-life situations and hoping the learners will be able to transfer what they have learned in real life, instructors can help students learn skills more rapidly through CTL (Dirkx & Prenger, 1997). When students acquire knowledge and skills by integrating content with real-life situations in appropriate contexts, they are likely to apply the content knowledge in real life (Berns & Erickson, 2001).

Communicative Language Teaching

CTL is closely connected to one of the most common teaching approaches of the last thirty years, which is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). It has been advocated as an accepted paradigm for language teaching. In CLT, "language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes" (Brown, 2007). These techniques may include, but are not limited to, information gap, role-play, and games, all using authentic materials. These techniques and materials are presumed to help learners be prepared for "real-world" communication outside the classroom.

Harmer (2007) claims that one of the things that CLT embraces is the notion of how language is used. Instead of concentrating solely on grammar, pioneers such as David Wilkins in the 1970s looked at what notions language expressed and what communicative functions people performed with language (Wilkins, 1976). The concern was with spoken functions as much as with written grammar, and notions of when and how it was appropriate to say certain things were of primary importance. Thus

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communicative language teachers taught people to invite and apologize, to agree and disagree, alongside making sure they could use the past perfect or the second conditional. A major strand of CLT centres around the essential belief that if students are involved in meaning-focused communicative tasks, then 'language learning will take care of itself', and that plentiful exposure to language in use and plenty opportunities to use it are vitally important for a student's development of knowledge and skill (Harmer, 2007).

Activities in CLT typically involve students in real or realistic communication, where the successful achievement of the communicative task they are performing is at least as important as the accuracy of their language use. Thus role-play and simulation have become very popular in CLT. As examples, Harmer (2007) names activities in which students might simulate a television programme or a scene at the airport – or they might put together the simulated front page of a newspaper. In order for activities to be truly communicative, the idea was that from the very beginning, students should be eager to communicate something. They should have a purpose for communicating (e.g. to make a point, to buy an airline ticket or to write a letter to a newspaper). They should concentrate on the content of what they are saying or writing rather than on a particular language form.

Harmer (2007) believes that the key to the enhancement of communicative purpose and the desire to communicate is the information gap. A traditional classroom exchange in which one student asks *Where's the library?* And another student answers *It's on Green Street, opposite the bank* when they can both see it and both know the answer doesn't duplicate real communication. If however, the first student has a map, which does not have the library shown on it, while the other student has a different map, with library written on the correct building – but which the first student cannot see – then there is a gap between the knowledge, which the two participants have. In order for the first student to locate the library on the map, that information gap needs to be closed and the communicative purpose shall be fulfilled.

CLT, therefore, with its different strands of what to teach (utterances as well as sentences, functions as well as grammar) and how to teach it (meaning-focused communicative tasks as well as more traditional study techniques), has become a

generalized "umbrella" term to describe learning sequences which aim to improve the students' ability to communicate. This is in total contrast to teaching which is aimed more at learning bits of language just because they exist – without focusing on their use in communication (Harmer, 2007).

When we talk about CLT, we should have a quick look at the concept of communicative competence. It was first mentioned by Chomsky (1965), who distinguished competence as knowledge of the language and performance as language used in specific situations. Hymes (1976) renames Chomsky's performance as communicative competence and defines it as the type of competence that includes both grammatical rules and rules of language use, thus emphasizing the social, interactive and negotiating process that language involves. Ellis defines communicative competence as: "the knowledge that users of a language have internalized to enable them to understand and produce messages in the language" (Ellis, 2000, p. 58).

Howatt (1984) offers a slightly different point of view than Harmer, when he uses the following to distinguish between a strong and a weak version of Communicative Language Teaching:

> There is, in a sense, a strong version of the communicative approach and a weak version. The weak version, which has become more or less standard practice in the last ten years, stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching. The strong version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication, so that it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself. If the former could be described as 'learning to use English', the latter entails 'using English to learn it' (Howatt, 1984, p.39).

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However, CLT has come under attack for being prejudiced in favour of native-speaker teachers by demanding a relatively uncontrolled range of language use on the part of the student, and thus expecting the teacher to be able to respond to any language problem, which may come up (Medgyes, 1992). In promoting a methodology, which is based around group- and pairwork, with teacher intervention kept to a minimum during, say, a role-play, CLT may also offend against education traditions, which rely on a more teacher-centered approach. CLT has sometimes been seen as having eroded the explicit teaching of grammar with a consequent loss among students of accuracy in the pursuit of fluency. Perhaps there is a danger in 'a general over-emphasis on performance at the expense of progress' (Wicksteed, 1998). Finally, some commentators suggest that many so-called communicative activities are no more or less real than traditional exercises. Getting people to write a letter, buy an airline ticket, find out train times, or go and look something up, is just as contrived as many more traditional exercises, and does not, in fact, arise from any genuine communicative purpose.

Authentic or Genuine

Alejandro G. Martinez (2002), a publishing consultant and the coordinator of academic services for Cambridge University Press in the Spanish Speaking America and an author of many articles concerning language teaching, mentions the point of view of Henry G. Widdowson, an authority in the field of applied linguistics and language teaching. Widdowson points out the difference between the terms «authentic» and «genuine material». He explains that authentic materials are those designed for native speakers of English that have not been changed in any way, whereas the genuine materials are intended for foreign language learners and therefore adapted to meet the current specific needs when used in English language classes. Being aware of the difference, Widdowson considers the choice of materials used in class: "It has been traditionally supposed that the language presented to learners should be simplified in some way for easy access and acquisition. Nowadays there are recommendations that the language presented should be authentic" (Widdowson 1990, p.67).

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M.P. Breen, assistant to associate professor at Reed College, distinguishes four types of authenticity. First, he names authenticity of the texts, which we may use as input data for our learners. Second is the authenticity of the learners' own interpretation of such texts, as third he mentions authenticity of the tasks conducive to language learning and as fourth authenticity of the actual social situation of the language classroom (Breen, 1985).

On these four examples David Taylor from the University of Leeds bases a debate about authenticity. He reminds that complaints about inauthenticity or artificiality often seem to ignore all these different types of authenticity, assuming that there is some sort of global and absolute notion of authenticity which can only exist if all the above types of authenticity are simultaneously present. But authenticity is clearly a relative matter and different aspects of it can be present in different degrees. Taylor further questions the realness used in textbooks. For example the question *Who is this?* is very rarely used in a realistic situation. Moreover, wanting to know who a person is immediately after being told his name is also unnatural. Generally, the dialogues in textbooks are very artificial, because if the teacher and the pupils were in a real situation then the teacher would know the answers to his questions and would therefore not ask them. The questions that he asks are therefore not genuine questions (Taylor, 1994).

The descriptions, language and even the story in textbooks are generally not very authentic. As another example Taylor uses a description to a picture which says *What is John doing?* and claims that it is not a genuine question, since assuming the learners have eyes and they can see what John is doing without having to say *He is washing the car*. The second question adds to the artificiality because, having been told that John is washing the car we are then asked *Is he washing the bicycle?* The objection is that the language is artificial, or rather the use of language is artificial. It is not genuine. The complaint is that there is no genuine communication, there are no genuine questions, no real use of language. Widdowson (1978) tries to deal with this by making a distinction between authenticity and genuineness. Talking about reading passages used in language classrooms he says:

> To present someone with a set of extracts and to require him to read them not in
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> order to learn something interesting and relevant about the world but in order to

learn something about the language being used is to misrepresent normal language use to some degree. The extracts are, by definition, genuine instances of language use, but if the learner is required to deal with them in a way, which does not correspond to his normal communicative activities, then they cannot be said to be authentic instances of use. Genuineness is a characteristic of the passage itself and is an absolute quality. Authenticity is a characteristic of the relationship between the passage and the reader and it has to do with appropriate response. (Widdowson, 1978, p. 80)

Taylor thinks that Widdowson seems to be using genuineness to refer to Breen´s first type of authenticity and to authenticity in the sense defined by Harmer in the quotations presented above. Perhaps this is a helpful distinction to make, making clear that there is a difference between the instances of language (texts) and the uses to which they are put. Unfortunately the fact remains that many writers use the term authenticity to refer to the texts themselves. No doubt the failure to distinguish between genuineness and authenticity in this way has contributed to the confusion in the debate, but even if we are careful to draw this distinction, problems remain (Taylor, 1994).

Classroom's Authenticity

Taylor also evokes to take into consideration the great variety that characterizes language use, different contexts, purposes, topics, participants, and so forth, it is not at all clear how we might go about distinguishing real life from non-real life language use in any meaningful way, so these attempts to characterize authenticity in terms of real life performance are problematic.

But more than that the classroom creates its own authenticity. Classroom language is a real use of language, and we cannot just dismiss the classroom setting and all that takes place in it as being by definition artificial. Furthermore, Taylor (1994) also indicates that learners, in their capacity as knowers and users of language, are quite capable of extrapolating from the classroom situation, and that consequently we need not be worried

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about the so-called artificiality of the classroom situation. He suggests that we need to remember that the language classroom is there to promote language learning. If we take activities where it is said that there is genuine communication, for example information gap type exercises, they are authentic in one sense, in that genuine communication takes place, but the whole thing is still contrived, in the sense that it is aimed at language learning. This does not matter because the learners have the sense to know what is going on and they are used to the classroom situation and to the kind of activities that go on there. They can distinguish between skill-getting and skill-using, as we have already noted (and even recognize that these can go on simultaneously), they can create their own authenticity in the classroom. Widdowson adds to this by making the point about the essential artificiality of pedagogy itself:

> For the whole point of pedagogy is that it is a way of short-circuiting the slow process of natural discovery and can make arrangements for learning to happen more easily and more efficiently than it does in natural surroundings. That is what schools are for, whatever subject we are dealing with. Pedagogy is bound to be a contrivance: that is precisely its purpose. If what went on in classrooms exactly replicated the conditions of the world outside, there would be no point in pedagogy at all. (Widdowson, 1990, p.163)

Kramsch, professor at University of Berkeley, concludes that all pedagogy is an artifact of educational discourse and that we need to measure what goes on in the language classroom, not against some problematically defined criterion of authenticity, but against whatever communicative and cognitive goals are accepted as appropriate in a particular educational context (Kramsch, 1993).

Classification of Authentic Materials

If authentic materials are to be introduced in language teaching, they need to be classified first in order to meet objectives of the lesson. The teachers should be aware of the different types of such materials since some of them are suitable for the

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teaching of reading or listening which are receptive skills whereas some of them are more suitable and effective for the teaching of speaking or writing, means the productive skills.

Some of them are suitable for teaching and developing grammatical structures or vocabulary. The authentic materials can be classified as follows (Lingzhu, J. And Yuanyuan, Z., 2010):

1. Authentic Listening/ Viewing Materials – such as TV commercials, quiz shows, cartoons, movies, professionally audio-taped short stories and songs, documentaries, or sales pitches.

2. Authentic Visual Materials – such as slides, photographs, paintings, wordless street signs, pictures from magazines, postcard pictures, or wordless picture books.

3. Authentic Printed Materials – such as newspaper articles, movie advertisements, astrology columns, sports reports, advice columns, lyrics to songs, restaurant menus, street signs, cereal boxes, tourist information brochures, university catalogues, telephone books, TVguides, comic books, pins with messages, or bus schedules.

4. Realia ("Real world" objects) Used in EFL/ ESL Classrooms – such as coins and currency, folded paper, wall clocks, phones, Halloween masks, dolls, and puppets, to name a few. (Realia are often used to illustrate points very visually or for role-play situations.)

A different classification comes from Vaiciuniene and Uzpaliene (2010) who distinguish three broad categories of authentic materials: daily objects such as business cards, bank leaflets, photographs, receipts, catalogues, currency, reports, financial statements, instructions, bank accounts, application forms, pictures, registration forms, letters/emails, diagrams, agreements, etc; broadcast texts such as newspapers, journals, TV and radio programmes, films, documentaries, general or special literature, etc; and websites. The Internet is a wonderful and very much up to date source of authentic materials for EFL learners, "providing EFL practitioners with a diversity of ´take- away formats' (video, audio, pictures and texts)" (Bocanegra-Valle 2010, p.150) all of which are relevant to the students' field of study. Whereas newspapers and other materials date very quickly, the Internet is continuously updated, more visually stimulating as well as interactive.

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Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Authentic Materials

Advantages of using authentic materials

As mentioned before, using authentic materials, if exploited appropriately, may provide students with several important benefits in different fields of study: linguistics (practice of grammatical structures, phonology helping with pronunciation) semantics (extension of the range of vocabulary, practicing of how meaning is inferred from words and concepts), pragmatics (practicing of how meaning is inferred from context) and cultural studies (life and culture in English speaking countries) (Oura, 2012). Students are exposed to real life situations with real life discourse. Those real life situations are unsolicited, spontaneous, natural and covering a wide spectrum of levels of formality and genres. Such materials can be used several times under different circumstances, each time practicing various aspects of language. Using such materials may positively motivate students in further studying. And last but not least, exposing students to real life language can shorten the distance between the learners and the target language used in reality (Oura, 2012).

Flowerdew and Peacock (2001:182) present another three arguments in favour of authentic materials. They claim that non-authentic texts cannot represent real-world language use, that simplified materials often lose some meaning and the real-world situations the learners will face are best prepared for with authentic texts.

David Heitler, author of exhaustive article *Teaching with Authentic Materials*, names as an advantage the fact, that authentic materials bring learners into direct contact with the reality and with real English, that is, English as it is used by people to communicate with other people and it can be a great motivator. Secondly, he adds that authentic materials drawn from periodicals are always up-to-date and constantly being updated. They not only practice English, they also update our learners so that, at the end of their English lessons, they are better informed. Also, the English language itself is constantly developing and changing, so working with up-to-date materials not only means

that the content of the material is up-to-date, it also means the language itself is up-to-date. The publishing English teacher Daniela Tamo agrees with Heitler by saying:

> "Authentic materials keep students informed about what is happening in the world, so they have an intrinsic educational value. As teachers, we are educators working within the school system, so education and general development are part of our responsibilities" (Tamo, 2009).

As another benefit Tamo includes that authentic materials can produce a sense of achievement, e.g., a brochure on England given to students to plan a visit. Martinez offers another advantage when he states that "reading texts are ideal to teach/practice mini-skills such as scanning, e.g. students are given a news article and asked to look for specific information (amounts, percentages, etc.), basic students listen to news reports and they are asked to identify the names of countries, famous people, etc. (ability to detect key words)" (Martinez, 2002, p.165).

Another point of view on the advantages of using authentic materials is to divide them into three main groups: exposing students to real language, stimulating and increasing students motivation and accumulating students` knowledge (Lingzhu, J. And Yuanyuan, Z., 2010).

The most important aspect of choosing those materials is to provide students with a natural language. Authentic materials include a wide variety of text types and language styles, from a very formal style, such as legal documents, to less formal, such as newspaper articles, to colloquial language, such as comic books. Such styles are sometimes very difficult to find in traditional teaching materials. Concerning the grammatical structures, the sentences in written authentic materials are very well-formed with few if any mistakes, which gives the students a possibility of acquiring language structures in a natural way. Furthermore, appropriate materials can always be found for all levels. Authentic materials can be used for practicing a large variety of skills.

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Disadvantages of using authentic materials

To present the authentic materials also from the opposite point of view, we should name the disadvantages as well. Obviously, using authentic materials can be risky if the methodology is not carefully chosen because it is not always easy to use journals, magazines, documents from companies and other real sources, on a daily basis, especially with beginners. This may be due, amongst other things, to the difficulties presented by the language. In fact, such material will often have to be edited (and sometimes even discarded), in order for there to be a suitable match between learner and material learned (Mishan, 2005). Any one authentic text may not be authentic for a specific class, just because a text is authentic does not mean it is relevant, and authentic texts are often too difficult linguistically. Preparing authentic materials for use in the classroom can be very time consuming.

Tamo (2009) is concerned about the fact that some authentic materials may be too culturally biased and therefore unnecessarily difficult to be understood outside the language community. Also there are many headlines, adverts, signs, and so on that can require good knowledge of the cultural background. Same might be applied to the vocabulary in general, which might not be relevant to the student's immediate needs. While working with the written materials, too many structures are mixed and so lower levels might have a hard time decoding the texts. Some confusion could be also caused by too many different accents while working with authentic audio materials.

Another reason for avoiding such materials may be the teachers' uncertainty about finding appropriate authentic materials that will fit the needs of the lesson (Martinez, 2002, Berardo, 2006).

Osborne (2005) suggests that unless one has a clear purpose in mind as well as a personal approach that permits the adaptation of most authentic materials, using them in the classroom might prove not to be effective. Likewise, the EFL instructor must always incorporate authentic texts that are locally meaningful.

Why to Use Authentic Materials

Authenticity has been pointed to by various authors as a relevant feature in EFL methodology (Safont and Esteve, 2004) and thus, authentic materials constitute an aspect traditionally emphasized in the ELT literature. As we learnt earlier, the authentic materials should be taken from the real world and not primarily created for pedagogical reasons. Such materials are particularly important for communicative purposes since they reproduce an immersion environment and provide a realistic context for tasks that relate to learner's needs. Authentic materials can greatly benefit problem-solving, project-based learning, case-based learning, role-play, and simulation and gaming methodology. Students and teachers can use authentic materials as a means to "link the formal, and to some extent artificial, environment of the classroom with the real world in which we hope our students will eventually be using the language they are learning" (Safont and Esteve, 2004: 53-70).

The extra time involved for teachers in planing for the use of authentic materials to supplement lessons is well worth it. According to Brinton (1991), authentic materials and media can reinforce for students the direct relationship between the language classroom and the outside world. Gebhard (1996) sees authentic materials as a way to "contextualize" language learning. When lessons are centered on comprehending a menu or a TV weather report, students tend to focus more on content and meaning rather than the language itself. This offers students a valuable source of language input, so that they are not being exposed only to the language presented by the text and the teacher.

Brosnan et al. (1984) justify the importance of the use of auth. Language in the classroom in this way: 1. Language is natural. By simplifying the L or altering it for teaching purposes (limiting structures, controlling vocabulary, etc.) we risk making the task more difficult. We may, in fact, be removing clues to meaning. 2. Authentic language offers students the chance to deal with a small amount of material, which, at the same time, contains complete and meaningful message. 3. Authentic printed materials provide students with the opportunity to make use of non-linguistic clues (layout, pictures, colors, symbols…) to help to discover the meaning more easily.

While Nunan (1999, p. 27) realizes that it is not realistic for teachers to use only the authentic materials in the classroom, he makes a point that "learners should be fed as

rich a diet of authentic data as possible, because, ultimately, if they only encounter contrived dialogues and listening texts, their learning task would be made more difficult". He also goes on to say that it is important that learners listen and read authentic materials of as many different kinds as possible. This will help to motivate the students by bringing the content and the subject matter to life for them, and enable them make important connections between the classroom world and the world beyond it.

As teachers can readily understand, authentic texts/materials are produced for the target community, not for language teaching. But, by using them in class, teachers welcome the target culture into their classrooms, making their classes a more natural environment for language learning (Erkaya, 2005).

A Particular Example of Using Authentic Materials

While explaining authentic materials, which are used in ELT, Widdowson (1990) emphasizes that those materials are designed to reflect the spoken language to learners. In this context newspaper articles are among the most suitable materials to be used in speaking activities as they include daily spoken and vivid language while conveying news across the cultures and countries. Though having many advantages, newspaper articles have some restrictions, which are needed to be considered by teacher before using them in the classroom.

Ezay (2011) classifies these restrictions as:

- Headlines are generally infinitive to refer to the future ('PM to visit Australia' - PM is gong to visit Australia).

- Auxiliary is omitted in passive expressions ('Seven Killed in explosion'- Seven people have been killed)

- Most headlines are not full sentences and most headlines are used without verbs ('Exeter man's double marriage bid'- There is a bid on Exeter man's double marriage)

- A question mark is used to imply that the information is not certain ('Crisis over in September?')

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As all other authentic materials, newspaper articles may have the handicap of being ´too original to be understood´ by elementary learners. In this case the best way is to review the material before using it in the classroom. Akdemir (2011) suggests simplifying the materials but he also emphasizes the necessity of 'keeping the authenticity' of the material. Efe et al (2011) also remarks that written materials should be revised and simplified if needed before using in the classroom.

The benefits of using newspaper articles are among others learning about cultural and everyday usage of language patterns, understanding daily news better as they see the same news in their native language and also asking/answering basic expressions about news they use in the course. The teacher can also benefit from using newspaper articles to teach speaking. The obvious one is a direct access to materials, as well as time and money saving, and last but not least using up to date materials.

How to Select Appropriate Authentic Materials

Harmer (2007) devotes a whole chapter to the topic of selecting the right authentic materials. Among other things he emphasizes that authentic material which has been chosen carelessly can be extremely demotivating for students since they will not understand it. Instead of encouraging failure, he thinks we should let students read and listen to things they can understand. For beginners this may mean roughly-tuned language from the teacher, and specially designed reading and listening texts from materials writers. However, Harmer continues that it is essential that such listening texts approximate to authentic language use. The language may be simplified, but it must not be unnatural. As Ronald Carter and his colleagues suggest, "concocted, made-up language can be perfectly viable but it should be modeled on naturalistic samples" (Carter et al 1998, p. 86, quoted in Harmer).

Authentic material can be used by students at fairly low levels, however, if the tasks that go with it are well-designed and help students understand it better, rather than showing them how little they know. A gently paced sequence of activities with small tasks leading to bigger ones, for example, can enable students to watch television soap

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operas in English and help them understand far more than they might have thought possible (Farrell, 1998).

It is worth pointing out that deciding what is or is not authentic is not easy. A stage play written for native speakers is a playwright's representation of spontaneous speech rather than the real thing, so it is, in a sense, both authentic and inauthentic. A father talking to his baby daughter may be employing "baby talk" – rough-tuning the language so that it is comprehensible – but there is nothing inauthentic about it. The language which students are exposed to has just as strong a way as to make it unrecognizable in style and construction from the language which competent speakers encounter in many walks of life (Harmer, 2007).

Factors to consider when selecting authentic written materials

Heitler suggests that for selecting the right written materials we should set up the criteria for choosing the most appropriate ones by asking oneself the following questions. Firstly, is this the kind of real English that my student(s) need? Will we get additional value out of a marriage between the real English in these materials and my learners' real general knowledge? Is it up-to-date? Is it topical? Will my students learn something new? Will they be able to combine their knowledge of the world with the knowledge they gain from this material? Further on, by asking whether I am limiting the area of language sufficiently for my students to feel that they are making genuine progress and lastly, is this material directly relevant to my students' requirements? (Heitler, 2005).

To state further about the topicality of the materials is also important to take into consideration that much authentic writing is essentially temporary; it is highly relevant to the moment when it is written, but perishes a moment after. So either the teacher has to use things, which are as up-to-date as possible or which have a timeless quality about them (Cook, 1981). It is better to keep in mind that some materials are more easily dated than others. For example, last season's catalog does not have the same impact as a current one which is filled with items which the student could actually order. A menu, on the other hand, can be used as long as the prices remain contemporary. Students

are generally uninterested in special events, for example an Expo, which have already passed (Kelly et al, 2002).

Furthermore, they have to be organized in some way. The obvious way to make this link is through themes; whether functional, such as 'shopping', 'banking', 'getting a job', 'eating out', or general discussion, 'is transport degenerating?', should smoking be banned in public places?', or in some other way. The authentic materials are not the point of the course, but a way of achieving that point (Cook, 1981).

Finally, Cook warns that the materials have to be selected in terms of their language and content. This may seem like a contradiction, since anything a native speaker says is by definition authentic, so why it should be censored, but there are many things a native speaker says that don't belong into the classroom.

Factors to consider when selecting authentic listening materials

Lingzhu and Yuanyuan, English teachers at Taiyuan Normal University, put together following factors to reflect on while choosing listening materials. Firstly, whether is the critical vocabulary in the recording likely to be familiar to the listener? Secondly, to what extent does the task rely upon the ability to decode the linguistic content? And finally, to what extent can the task be achieved without a full understanding of the linguistic content?

Naturally, learner level is an important factor in selecting authentic listening materials. According to Driven (1981), spontaneously spoken language is too complex to be introduced in the classroom in the first stage of foreign language learning, but in the second or intermediate stage of foreign language learning, all the factors of the spontaneously spoken language come into action. So for the lower level learners, we should provide easier materials such as the short headline type reports, audio and radio advertising, or short news broadcasts or children's songs.

To conclude what is an appropriate challenge, Harmer proposes that when asking students to read and listen teachers should avoid texts and tasks that are either far too easy or far too difficult. As with many other language tasks, we want to get the level of challenge right, to make the tasks difficult but, nevertheless achievable. Getting the level

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right depends on the right match between text and task. Thus, where a text is difficult, we may still be able to use it, but only if the task is appropriate. We could theoreticaly, for example, have beginners listen to the famous conversation between Ophelia and the prince in Shakespeare´s Hamlet ("get thee to a nunnery…") and ask them how many people are speaking. We could ask students to read a few pages of Ulysses by James Joyce and ask them how many full stops they can find. Despite the difficulty of the texts, both of these tasks are achievable. Yet we might feel that neither is appropriate or useful. On the other hand, having students listen to a news broadcast where the language level is very challenging may be entirely appropriate if the task asks them – at first – to try to identify the five main topics in the broadcast (Harmer, 2007).

How Can One Teach With Authentic Materials

One important issue in teaching authentic materials is whether the activities one uses are natural or not. Cook suggests that natural materials are those that the native speakers themselves use for dealing with the materials. For instance, it is perfectly natural to look at a train timetable to discover the next train to London, but this activity becomes unnatural in the classroom to the extent that the students do not really want this information here and now (1981). Cook further explains that many of the types of authentic text that teachers use are not in fact used by the majority of native speakers productively. She reports: "I have never myself written a newspaper headline or designed a railway ticket. So it seems to me that one has to be very cautious with many types of authentic material in expecting the student to do more than understand the material, use it for information, and recognize what kind of language style is involved" (Cook, 1981).

According to the findings of the survey carried out by Chavez (1998), learners enjoy dealing with authentic materials since they enable them to interact with the real language and its use. Also they do not consider authentic situations or materials innately difficult. However, learners state that they need pedagogical support especially in listening situations and when reading literary texts such as the provision of a full range of cues (auditory and visual including written language). We may conclude that learners

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feel better with authentic materials helping them get involved in the "real" language as long as we, as teachers, provide them with pedagogical support. In order to achieve this, we have a wide range of choices. Martinez (2002) suggests that teachers may use authentic materials for the learners to listen for the gist of the information presented and also he adds that by using authentic materials teachers will have the opportunity to encourage students to read for pleasure especially certain topics of their interest. He further claims that using audio-visual materials aiding students' comprehension is beneficial since it will prevent students especially beginning ones from being frustrated about authentic materials. Materials such as popular and traditional songs will help us to create a non-threatening environment.

Nevertheless, Heitler recommends also preparing oneself while preparing the usage of authentic materials in the classroom. Teachers must make sure they understand everything within the material. If that is not the case then they must look up all the needed words or expressions in the dictionary or, for neologisms, use Google (2005).

No Textbook Option

The choice between using textbooks or authentic materials to help students to communicate in a natural way seems to be a clear one: Classes using only textbooks appear to be question-and-answer sessions while classes using authentic materials with or without textbooks seem more natural and communicative (Erkaya, 2005). Karpova affirms: "Many textbooks create a climate for socially isolated learning [...] Teachers need more materials that help students to become thoughtful participants in a socially rich environment for learning and that feature everyday uses of English" (1999, p. 18).

However, Harmer lists many advantages of textbooks, which one must agree with. To start with he reminds that good coursebooks are carefully prepared to offer a coherent syllabus, satisfactory language control, motivating texts, audio cassettes/CDs, and other accessories such as video/DVD material, CD-ROMs and extra resource material. They are often attractively presented. They provide teachers under pressure with the reassurance that, even when they are forced to plan at the last moment, they will be using

material which they can have confidence in. Also they usually come with detailed teacher's guides, which not only provide procedures for the lesson in the student's book, but also offer suggestions and alternatives, extra activities and resources. The adoption of a new coursebook provides a powerful stimulus for methodological development (Hutchinson and Torres 1994, as cited in Harmer 2007). Students like coursebooks, too, since they stimulate the perception of progress as units and then books are completed. Coursebooks also provide material which students can look back at for revision and, at their best, their visual and topic appeal can have a powerfully engaging effect (Harmer, 2007).

On the other hand, coursebooks, used inappropriately, impose learning styles and content on classes and teachers alike, appearing to be "fait accompli" over which they can have little control. Many of them rely on Presentation, Practice and Production as their main methodological procedure, despite recent enthusiasm for other teaching sequences. Units and lessons often follow an unrelenting format so that students and teachers eventually become demotivated by the sameness of it all. And in their choice of topics, coursebooks can be sometimes bland or culturally inappropriate (Harmer, 2007).

One solution to the perceived disadvantages of coursebooks is to do without them altogeher, to use a "do-it-yourself" (DIY) approach (Block 1991, Maley 1998, Thornbury and Meddings 2001, as cited in Harmer, 2007). Such an approach is extremely attractive and it can offer students a dynamic and varied programme. If they can see its relevance to their own needs, it will greatly enhance their motivation and their trust in what they are being asked to do. It allows teachers to respond in a lesson-by-lesson basis to what is happening in the class. Finally, for the teachers, it means an exciting and creative involvement with texts and tasks (Harmer, 2007).

Yet, in order for the DIY approach to be successful, Harmer warns that teachers would need access to (and knowledge of) a wide range of materials, from coursebooks and videos to magazines, novels, encyclopedias, publicity brochures and the Internet. They will have to make (and make use of) a variety of home-grown materials. They will also need the confidence to know when and what to choose to become syllabus designers in their own right. He also notifies that this not only makes preparing lessons a very time-

consuming business, but also runs the risk that students will end up with incoherent collections of bits and pieces of material. However, where there is time for proper planning and organization of DIY teaching, students may well get exceptional programmes of study, which are responsive to their needs and varied in a way that does not abandon coherence (Harmer, 2007).

The Question of Motivation Within Using the Authentic Materials

Perhaps the most important reason for using the authentic materials is the students' motivation and interest. One of the powerful arguments for learning a new language is to get closer to its speakers, to understand them better and take part in their lives, in other words the integrative motivation. Authentic materials utilize this motivation very strongly "by their ordinariness and flavour of everyday life; they seem exotic and exciting, the very stuff of strange foreign life" (Cook, 1981). For students who have this motivation, authentic materials are a highly effective way of bringing the target culture closer; this is as near to participation as they will get without actually living in the country. The content of the materials may not matter very much and it may not even worry them whether they understand it or not, provided it keeps their interest in the foreign culture alive (Cook, 1981).

Therefore, learner's interest should always be taken into consideration when selecting authentic materials. As Lingzhu, J. And Yuanyuan, Z. put it: "An applied linguist once said that it's no good trying to get your students fascinated by a text on the latest art movies if they are all fans of action films. You might as well save your time and energy and just use the textbook. So it's necessary for teachers to know students' likes and dislikes on listening materials and it's wise for them to make a survey among students before the selection" (2010).

Finally, in accordance with learning for global understanding, the topics taught at school should always relate to the real world outside the class. The objective of each subject should be the accumulation of students' knowledge, their connection between

each other and the connection between the school and the real world. Using authentic materials can extend the students' knowledge in different fields of human life, such as culture, politics or fashion. It provides useful information concerning communication and understanding across cultures, it may help to facilitate cultural adaptation or it may help them to true up their world knowledge as a whole. In general, it keeps students informed about what is happening in the world (Lingzhu, J. And Yuanyuan, Z., 2010).

To sum it up, bringing authentic materials into the classroom can be motivating for the students, as it adds "a real-life element to the student's learning experience" (Tamo, 2009). Authentic materials are significant since they may increase students' motivation for learning and make the learners be exposed to the "real" language. However, teachers should always remember to bear in mind the task, not the material. This means that, for example, instead of asking a beginner student to read a full-page article that's over their heads, we should ask them to read the headline and guess what the article will be about (Tamo, 2009).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research chapter consists of two parts of the research. The goal of the first part of the research is to assemble data and elaborate an overview concerning the use of authentic materials at English lessons in secondary classrooms. A questionnaire was chosen as the first method of this research. The aim of the second part of the research is to describe a sample lesson for which I created a lesson plan based on the use of authentic materials and which I attended as an observer. That was made in order to find out if pupils at elementary schools are interested in working with authentic materials. Therefore, a classroom observation was placed as the second method of this research.

Part I. Questionnaire

A questionnaire for teachers

Place of research. The first part of the research, represented by the questionnaire for teachers, was placed at eleven basic schools in the cities of Pilsen and of Prague.
The research was performed during March 2014.

Subjects. This part of the research focuses on secondary English teachers at elementary schools. They were asked to answer questions concerning the usage of authentic materials in their classes of English.

Procedure of collecting data. I prepared a questionnaire with 10 questions. The questionnaire for teachers can be found in appendices (See Appendix XY).
35 English teachers at eleven basic schools were asked to answer the questions. The questionnaire was anonymous with multiple choice questions. The questionnaire was in English. I visited 8 of the elementary schools personally where I distributed the questionnaires to the teachers. They were asked to leave the questionnaires in a box in the teachers' room once they filled them in. The teachers from the other 3 schools were contacted via e-mail. I got back 30 questionnaires with answers. From that follows that 30 English teachers participated in my research.

Part II. Observation

Place of research**.** As another part of my research was an observation of a lesson in which authentic materials were being used. For this research I chose ZŠ Pošepného náměstí in Prague because that is where I spent a month during my teaching practice and where I know all the English teachers as well as the pupils.

Subjects. In order to prepare materials and procedure, I first contacted Mgr. Knechtová at ZŠ Pošepného náměstí and consulted with her the learners' background information concerning the use of authentic materials, the particular choice of materials and the most appropriate strategy of the observation. She agreed that I will be the one who will entirely prepare the lesson plan, we will consult it together and eventually, she will be the one in charge of the lesson while I will be observing the class. The observed teacher, Mgr. Helena Knechtová is an experienced competent teacher with 20 years practice and I chose her because I cooperated with her before and I am aware that she uses modern methods and is ready to try new things in her teaching. The observed class was a composed class of 9th graders made of 16 pupils.

Procedure of collecting data. The second step was to create all the materials for the observation and for the lesson itself. For the observation I created a simple observation form in which I decided to focus on monitoring mainly the pupils' response and action, but also the teacher's verbal output during the lesson. While creating the lesson plan I decided to center the sample lesson on the use of newspaper articles, particularly magazine interviews. The observation form can be found in appendices (See Apendix E).

RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

In this part the results of the two components of this research are presented. Firstly, the results of questionnaires filled in by 30 elementary school teachers about the use of authentic materials at the English lessons in secondary classrooms are introduced. These results will be presented in graphs. Every each graph represents a corresponding question followed by the explanation of the graph. The commentaries can be found in the conclusion of this part. Secondly, an observation summary of a lesson based on the use of authentic materials is provided.

Results – Questionnaire

The Results section provides both graphic and verbal description of the outcomes of the questionnaires. Further The Comments passage offers my personal opinions and interpretations of the results.
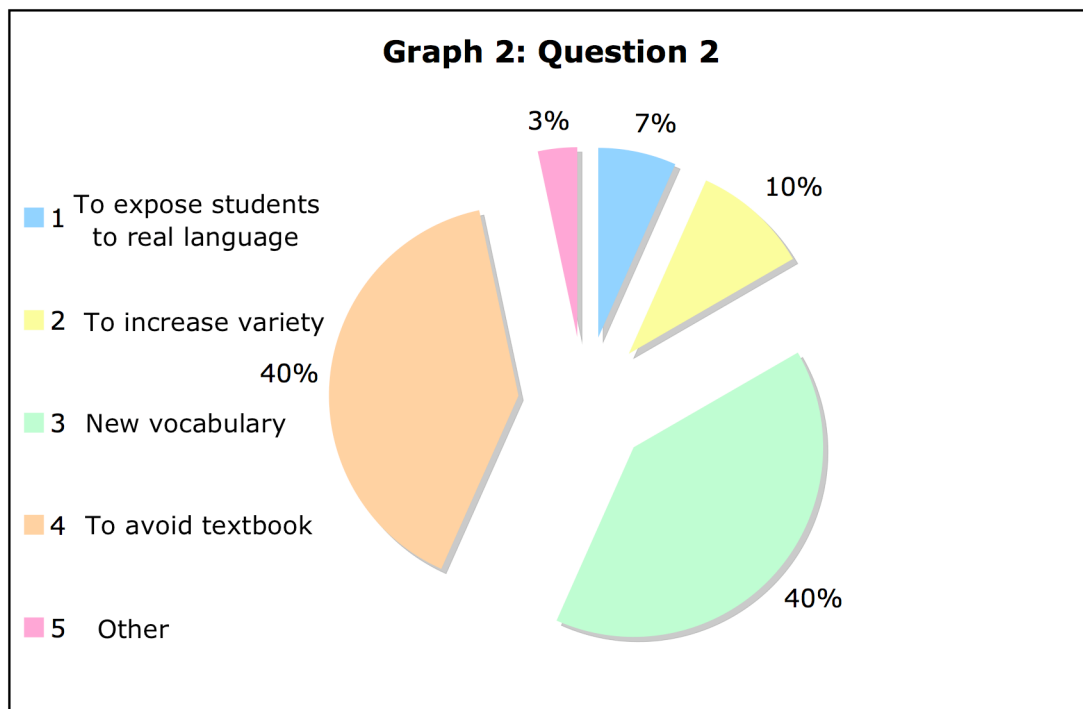
In this part of the research 35 teachers were asked to participate, 32 females and three males. However, the number of questionnaires I received back was 30, therefore 30 elementary teachers participated in this survey, from the number of 30, 27 were women and three were men. The following ten graphs display the various opinions of these respondents.

Question 1. Do you enjoy working with authentic materials at your English lessons?

Graph 1:Question 1

20%

40%

33%

7%

1 Do enjoy it

2 Don't enjoy it

3 Don't really enjoy it
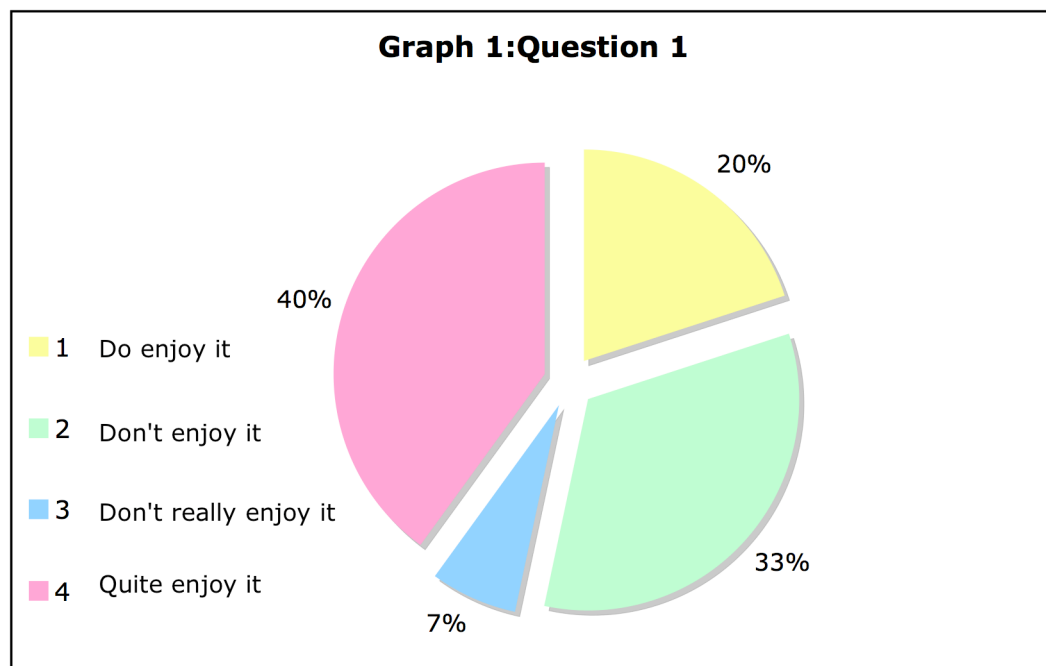
4 Quite enjoy it

To the first question "Do you enjoy working with authentic materials at your English lessons?" 12 respondents answered that they quite enjoy it, 10 respondents admitted they don't enjoy it, only 6 teachers said that they do enjoy working with authentic materials and the last 2 chose the option of not really enjoying it.

Question 2. For what purpose do you use them? (Choose one purpose, which is the most important)
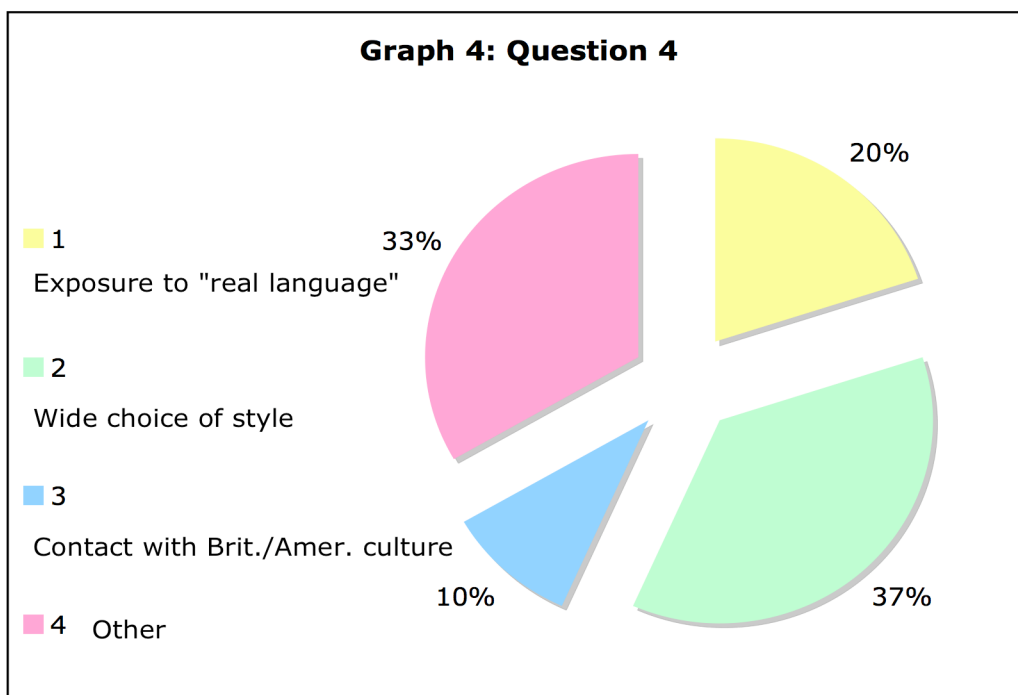
Graph 2: Question 2

- 1 To expose students to real language
- 2 To increase variety
- 3 New vocabulary
- 4 To avoid textbook
- 5 Other

3%
7%
10%
40%
40%

In the second question, "For what purpose do you use them? (Choose one purpose which is the most important)" respondents were supposed to choose one option which is the most appropriate for them. The same number of 12 respondents said that they use the authentic materials to expose students to new vocabulary and grammatical structures and to avoid working with textbook. Three teachers answered that they use them when they want to increase variety and spontaneity in class, only two teachers use them when they want to expose their students to "real language" and one teacher said he prefers another purpose, without specification. None of the 30 respondents answered with the option of authentic materials being inspirational and motivational.

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Question 3. Do you find the authentic materials effective?

Graph 3: Question 3

13%

44%

43%

1   Definitely

2   Quite effective

3   Not really
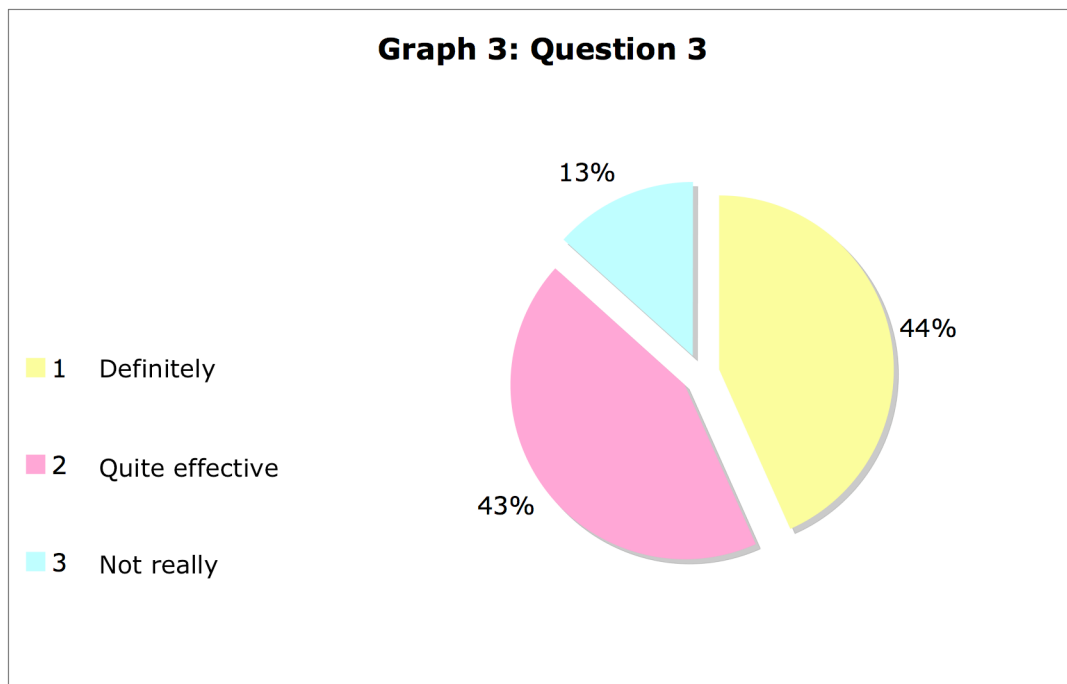
To the third question " Do you find them effective?" 13 of the asked teachers replied that they definitely find them effective, same amount find them quite effective and only four do not find them really effective. None of the respondents would choose the option of not finding them effective at all.

Question 4. What is the greatest benefit of using authentic materials in your opinion?

Graph 4: Question 4

20%

33%

37%

10%

1
Exposure to "real language"

2
Wide choice of style

3
Contact with Brit./Amer. culture

4   Other

To the question "What is the greatest benefit of using authentic materials in your opinion?" majority of respondents, 11 people, replied that the greatest benefit to them is the wide choice of authentic materials. Six teachers find beneficial the exposure of their pupils to the "real language", three think that the contact with Anglophone culture brings the greatest benefit and finally whole ten respondents think there is another great benefit of using the authentic materials. None of the asked teachers find their motivational potential as beneficial.

Question 5. Which authentic material from the following list do you find the most suitable for secondary classrooms?
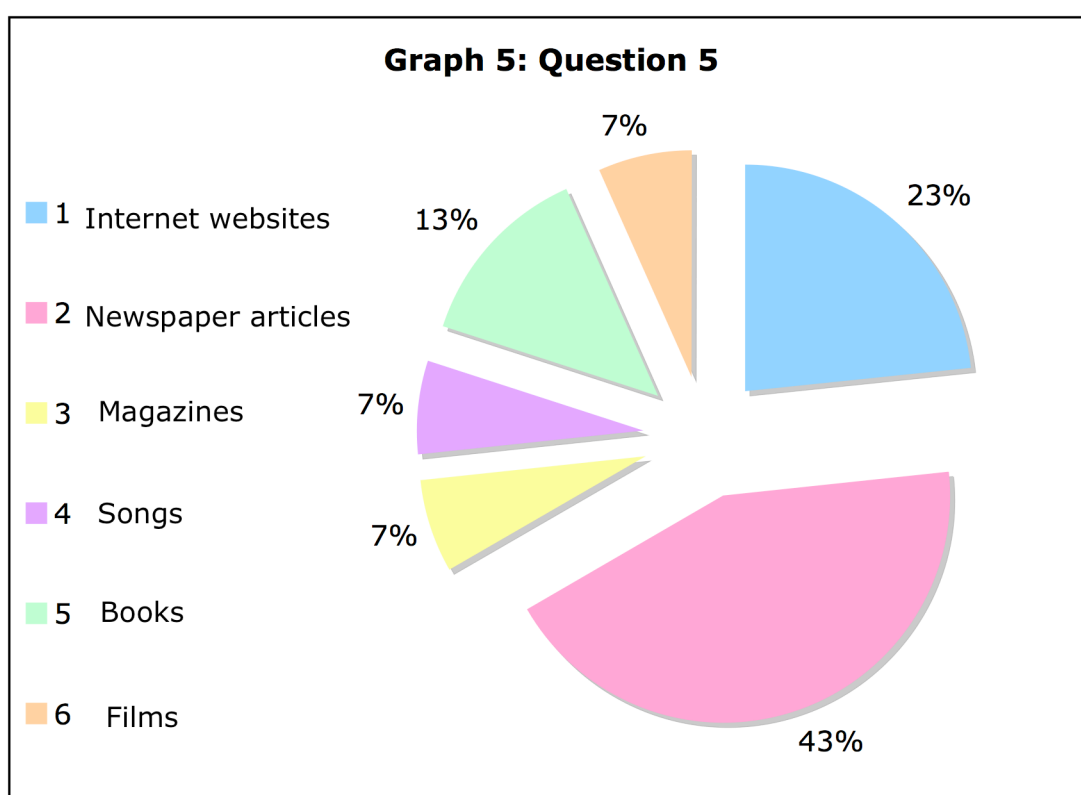
In the question "Which authentic material from the following list do you find the most suitable for secondary classrooms?" the respondents were supposed to choose one material from the offered variety, which they personally find the most appropriate. Majority of the asked teachers picked the newspaper articles, specifically 13 of them. The second highest number of respondents said that the Internet websites are the most suitable to them. Four teachers think books are suitable, two think magazines are more suitable,

another two chose films as most suitable and finally, songs were chosen by two teachers as the most suitable authentic material.

Question 6. Do you find working with authentic materials difficult for pupils?
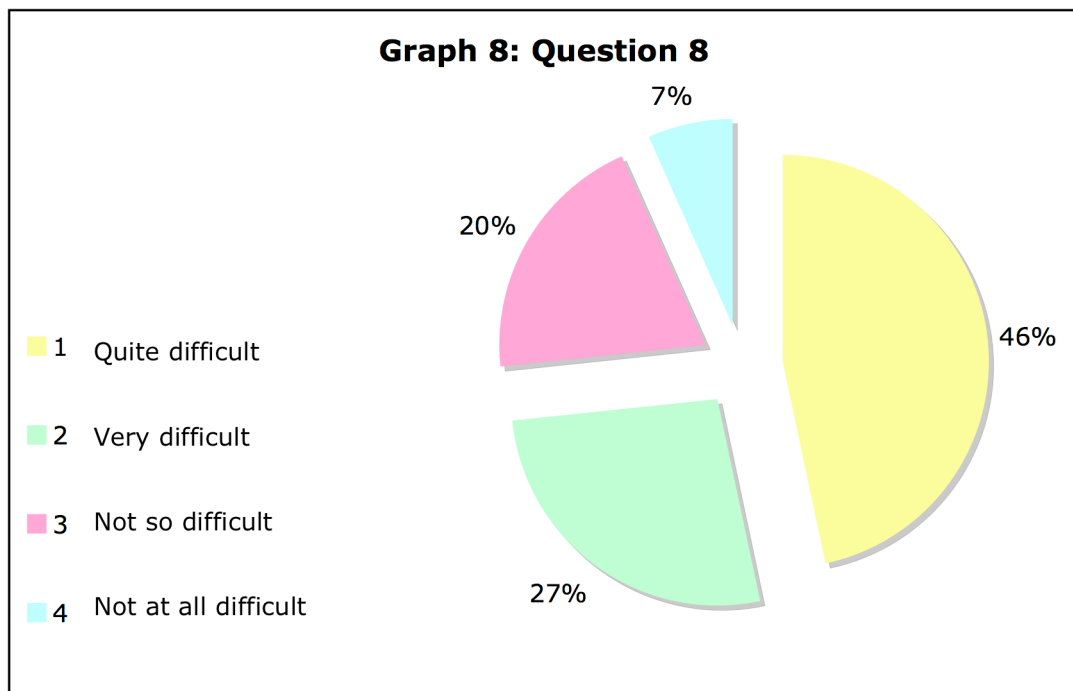
Graph 6: Question 6

- 1 — Very difficult — 60%
- 2 — Quite difficult — 33%
- 3 — Not so difficult — 7%
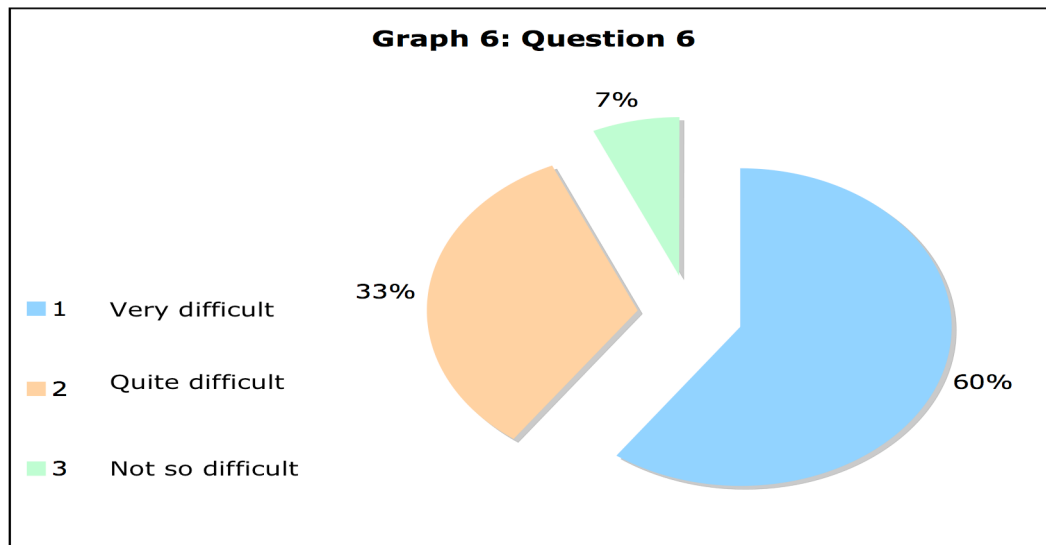
In the question "Do you find working with authentic materials difficult for pupils?" high number of 18 respondents believe that authentic materials are very difficult for pupils to work with. One third of the respondents think that it is quite difficult for pupils. Only two teachers find authentic materials not so difficult for pupils. Nobody chose the option "not at all difficult" as none of teachers think that authentic materials are easy for pupils to work with.

Question 7. From the list, pick the most challenging one: Magazines, Internet websites, songs, films, travel brochures, radio recordings, newspaper articles, books, other.

Graph 7: Question 7

- 1 — Radio recordings — 50%
- 2 — Songs — 17%
- 3 — Films — 33%
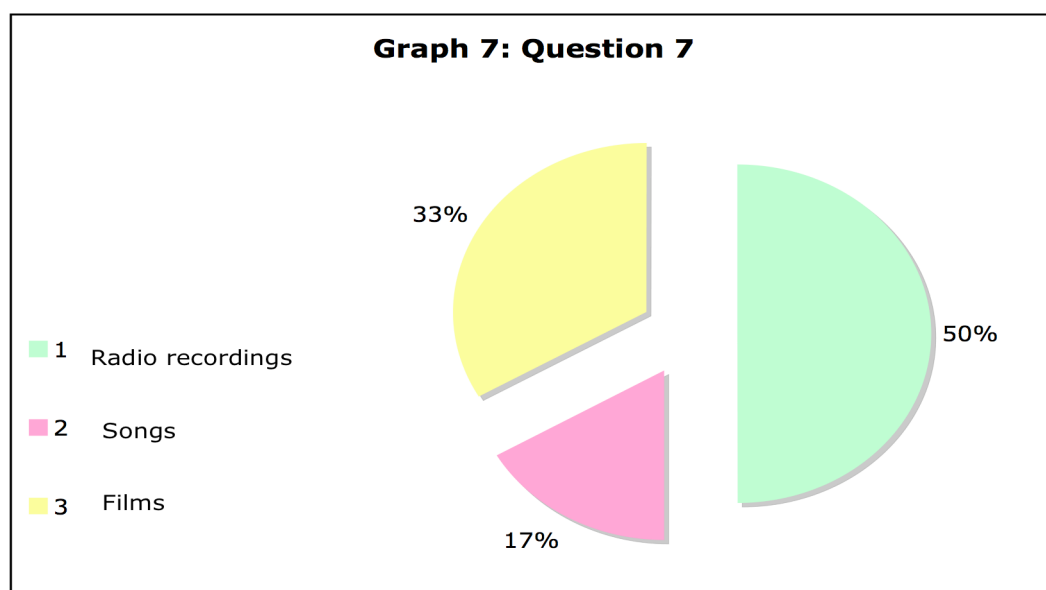
In the question 7. the teachers were asked to pick the most challenging authentic material from a variety of resources. The highest number of teachers, specifically 15 people, thinks that radio recordings are the most challenging ones. Films are being seen as the most challenging authentic material by ten respondents. The last option, which was chosen by five teachers, is songs. None of the respondents chose any other authentic material from the presented selection.

Question 8. Do you find preparing the lessons with the use of authentic materials difficult for teachers?

Graph 8: Question 8

1 Quite difficult

2 Very difficult

3 Not so difficult

4 Not at all difficult

46%

7%

20%

27%

Question 8 asked the respondents whether they find preparing the lessons with the use of authentic materials difficult. From those who do find it difficult, 14 teachers said that they find it only quite difficult and eight teachers find it very difficult. The rest of the respondents don't find it difficult, from those six teachers don't find it so difficult and two teachers even don't find it difficult at all.

Question 9. Do you think your students enjoy working with authentic materials?

Graph 9: Question 9
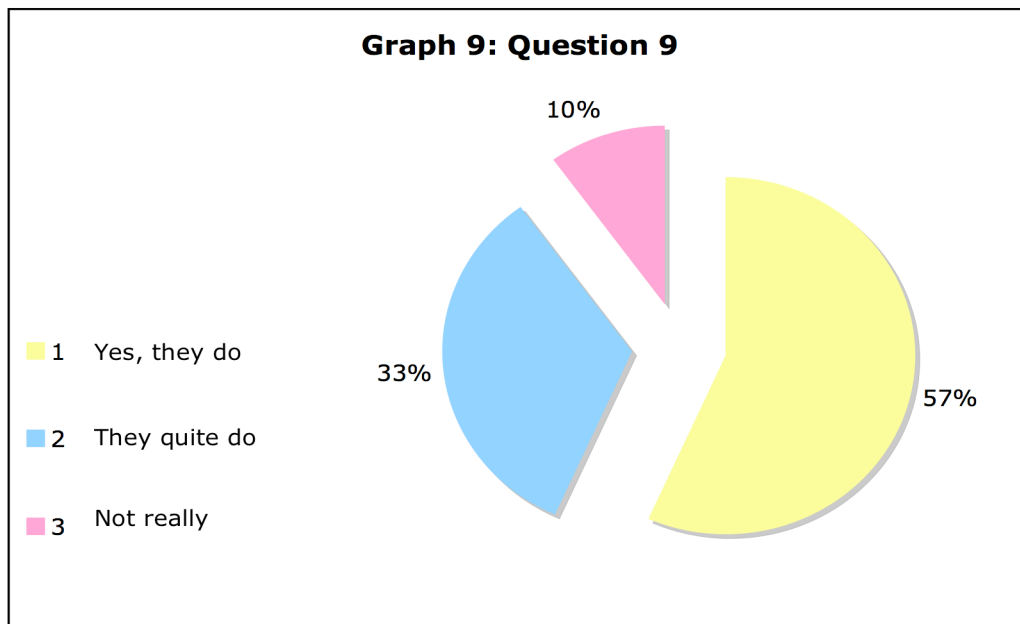
Question 9 "Do you think your students enjoy working with authentic materials?" tried to reveal if the teachers think that their pupils like to work with such materials. From the number of 30 respondents, 17 think that their students enjoy working with authentic materials and ten think that their students quite enjoy it. Three teachers believe that their students don't especially enjoy it. Nobody answered "they don't enjoy it" so none of the respondents think that their students don't like working with authentic materials at all.

Question 10. What authentic materials from the following do you think they enjoy working with the most: Magazines, Internet websites, songs, films, travel brochures, radio recordings, newspapers, books, other.

Graph 10: Question 10

Legend:
- 1 Internet websites
- 2 Books
- 3 Songs
- 4 Films

Values: 27%, 53%, 17%, 3%
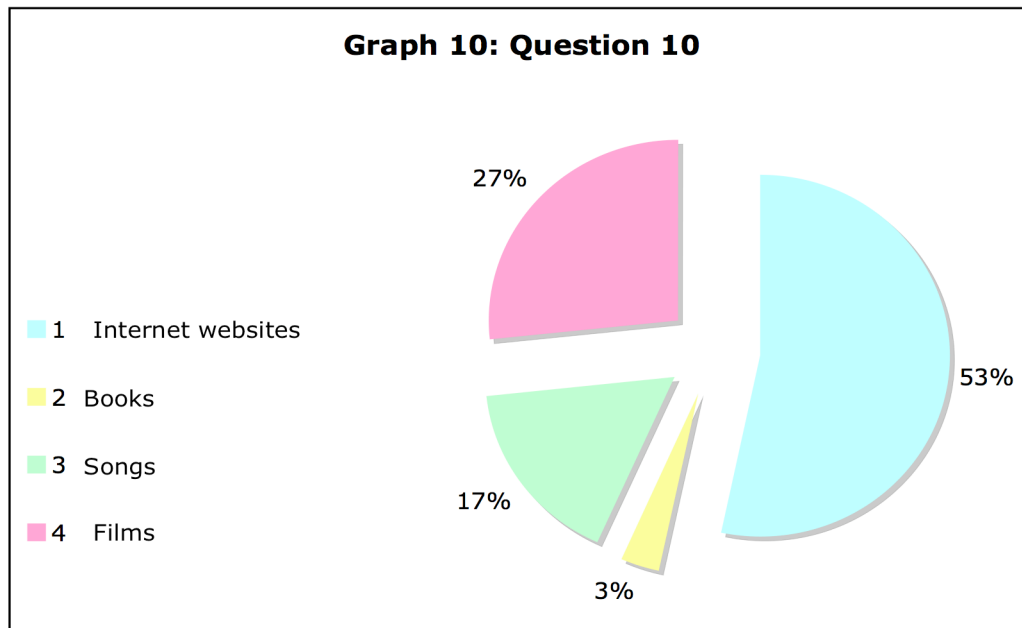
In the final question, teachers were asked to pick the authentic material which they think their students enjoy working with the most. Most of the respondents, 16 people, chose the option "Internet websites". Eight teachers think that their students enjoy working with films the most. Songs are preferred by students according to five teachers and books according to one teacher. None of the teachers chose other option as a favorite authentic material of their students.

Commentary – Questionnaire for teachers

The results of the research answered the following questions: Do Czech teachers of English work with authentic materials? Do they find using authentic materials easy and effective for their pupils? Do Czech pupils at elementary schools like activities based on using authentic materials? What authentic materials are popular with Czech teachers and pupils? The results of the survey show that over half of the questioned English teachers like or quite like working with authentic materials in their classes. This fact met with my expectations, as I supposed teachers like working with authentic materials for their diversity. Despite that the high number of strictly not enjoying working with them is surprising the overall result is quite positive since majority does use them and likes using them.

The answers to the question about difficulties connected with using authentic materials in teaching are not surprising. Some of the asked teachers wrote a note under the questionnaire explaining their attitude towards authentic materials, especially when their approach was a rather negative one. They mostly wrote the same reasons for not liking them, as they are being too challenging for students, therefore they must be simplified or that preparing a lesson based on anything authentic is very time-consuming.

22 of the questioned teachers find preparing the lessons with authentic materials difficult but despite that vast majority of respondents, specifically 26 find them effective or quite effective. I expected them to say so because I also experienced a positive feedback on lessons where authentic materials were used. The answers to the questions in which teachers were asked to choose one authentic material quite surprised me. The one about the most difficult authentic material to work with I expected books and newspaper articles to be among the highly ranked ones, but they in fact didn't receive any single vote and as the most difficult one were chosen radio recordings. The question in which teachers were supposed to choose the material, which they think is the most popular among pupils, the most of the teachers went for Internet websites, but I expected it to be books.

Observation

As another part of my research I chose to attend a lesson of English at an elementary school, within which the authentic material would be used. To gather the necessary information on which I could base some outcome I decided to take part in the lesson only as an observer. Once I contacted the teacher who was willing to participate in my research, we agreed that I will prepare the lesson plan and she will then conduct the lesson. The main objective was to find out if selected authentic materials are suitable for secondary classroom as well as if the pupils are interested in working with them.

Commentary to the Observation

Since I knew all the pupils personally from my own teaching practice I had positive expectations about the lesson and they were fulfilled. At first Mgr. Knechtová explained that the lesson is going to be based on one authentic material. That started a short discussion about the term authentic. Although the pupils were debating in Czech, once they found the right terms to describe the expression "authentic", they found the right English synonyms as well and switched into English. The next question was what could be considered as authentic and if they know any authentic materials. They correctly named the whole variety of materials, which can be considered as authentic and the teacher wrote some of the most common ones on the blackboard. She especially stressed the newspapers and magazines as they were about to be used.

The teacher then handed them copies of an interview column from a newspaper (Appendix C). I chose this particular column with an American actor from a popular TV sitcom because I assumed the pupils will all know him well and could find him interesting enough to initiate the further activity. Naturally, tot everyone was keen on learning about the private life of the actor, but everyone started reading the interview immediately.

The teacher then went over the interview with the class. Several students rephrased the interviewer's incomplete sentences as complete questions, and the interviewee's replies as complete sentences. This was intended as an oral exercise and that is how it was carried out. Few pupils expressed their opinions that the actor's answers are amusing and

unpredictable. Then the students were asked whether there are some expressions they aren't familiar with. To my surprise, they mostly understood all the important words and didn't know only a few, which then the teacher wrote down on the blackboard and explained with synonyms.

Students are further encouraged to come up with their own questions which would work in a similar "fast-track" interview and they actually do create some very good ones, as "I'd do anything to meet...", "the best time of my life was when...", "the one thing I can't stand:..." or "nobody knows about me that...". They made up those half-sentences within two minutes, which really impressed me. Later, the teacher handed out the worksheet based on this authentic interview (work sheet in Appendix D). Students immediately started to answer the questions on their own, individually and seemed fairly enthusiastic about filling in the questionnaire. After a few minutes of working on their own, the teacher asked students to get into pairs. After a while of arguing who will be with whom and asking unnecessary questions, everyone seemed ready to become the interviewer and the interviewee. Once they started this activity, the teacher notified them that she will later pick one pair, which will perform the interview in front of the class.

After a while of loud pair-work, the teacher asked one pair, to perform the interview for the whole class, one as the interviewer and one as the interviewee. This performance became quickly the center of everyone's attention as the boy from the pair pretended to be another famous American celebrity and so he was answering as he imagined the star would answer. The whole interview was purely in English, but of course, the rest of the class started to interfere in Czech until the teacher reminded them. As their homework I asked Mgr. Knechtova to explain them what can be done further with the interview worksheet and that they will be expected to bring it to the next lesson. At first, they didn't like the idea of continuing working with this material even at home, but at the moment when they were told they can put photos next to it, they didn't protest anymore and even started planning how to make the interview look better right after the lesson.

In general, the pupils cooperated, they seemed engaged and they produced a range of questions and answers. However, it is hard to decide whether the lesson was "successful" due to the authentic material based activity or due to the novelty of the lesson. The observation sheet in which the observed lesson is noted can be found in the

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appendices (See Appendix E).

V. IMPLICATIONS

As the results of the research show us, lessons with the use of authentic materials seem to be popular with pupils in secondary classrooms, however not to such degree with the teachers at elementary schools. As indicated in the results, using authentic materials in teaching English is regarded as demanding for the preparation and even as very difficult for the students. Therefore not all the teachers enjoy working with the authentic materials. In the following part the implications and limitations of the research with possible suggestions for further research are described.

Pedagogical Implications

As the research shows authentic materials are used by the majority of the teachers in the secondary classrooms of elementary schools in teaching English.
Based on the part of my research where I attended a lesson of English where the authentic materials where used I assumed that pupils tend to appreciate working with authentic materials. As emphasized by most of the quoted linguists, the primary concern is the choice of the activity rather than the choice of the material. Therefore the teachers who admitted that preparing lessons with the use of authentic materials is difficult for them, should consider fabricating a variety of different activities suitable for authentic materials and apply those whenever needed. This would work with the topical materials, which are quickly outdated, as newspaper articles. Some authentic materials, as literature, have timeless quality so the activities can be reused more times. Once the teachers get used to working with authentic materials, when they find the right procedure for it and create their own routine of handling them, then it shouldn't be as difficult as it is regarded nowadays.

The same would be applicable to listening activities based on authentic materials, since radio recordings have been voted as the most difficult resource. Pupils should be exposed to listening more often, since listening is one of the main competences according to the Communicative approach.
This research could be instrumental for teachers or students who would like to incorporate authentic materials in their lessons as it suggests that pupils are eager to work with these materials, if the activities are designed to their likings.

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Limitation of the Research

Neither of the two parts of the research can be generalized as the research through questionnaires was carried out only at 11 elementary schools in only two cities, therefore its results are rather limited and don't reveal the actual situation of the use of authentic materials in the Czech elementary schools. Also the questionnaire didn't include all possible authentic materials, which is proved in the question number 5 where one third of the respondents replied that the authentic material, which they find the most suitable for secondary classrooms isn't listed in the offered variety. Naturally, it also doesn't include all possible questions, which would help to reveal the current situation in the Czech republic.

The same goes for the observation since only one class was observed working with the authentic material and only one lesson was attended. We can consider the numbers only as sample results and we cannot generalize them.

Suggestions for Further Research

As admitted above, the research wasn't carried out on a greater sample than at 11 elementary schools and so the results are based on 30 teachers' opinions only. Further research could explore more significant amount of schools.
Besides, more than one lesson based on the use of authentic materials should be observed to obtain a clearer and more specific idea of the situation in the Czech secondary classrooms. Also, the only authentic material, which was tested was a newspaper column, hence further research could examine other authentic material within an English lesson.

VI. Conclusion

The thesis tries to define the use of authentic materials in the Czech secondary classroom. Beside the theory behind this educational component, it consists of a practical part based on two types of research. The obtained results cannot be considered as factual information about the English teaching techniques in Czech elementary schools, but it can foreshadow an idea about the actual situation in classes and attitudes of teachers.

The theoretical background chapter indicates that there are many types of authentic materials from which teachers can choose the most suitable ones. Nowadays, the media as the Internet offer an infinite range of resources for foreign language teaching. The points of view towards using authentic materials in English teaching differ though, as can be seen in the possible disadvantages section.

The research revealed that Czech teachers are willing to work with authentic materials but they find their preparation rather difficult. Surprisingly high number of teachers doesn't choose to use these materials to expose students to real language but rather to introduce them to new vocabulary and grammatical structures, or to avoid working with textbook. Whatever the reasons, according to the results of the research they do use the authentic materials and unless they use it ineffectively, it can be only beneficial to their students.

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APPENDIX A. Questionnaire for teachers

1. **Do you enjoy working with authentic materials at your English lessons**?
a. I do enjoy it   b. I don't enjoy it   c. I don't really enjoy it   d. I quite enjoy it

2. **For what purpose do you use them**? (Choose one purpose which is the most important)
a. to expose students to real language
b. to increase variety and spontaneity in class
c. to expose students to new vocabulary and grammatical structures
d. to avoid working with textbook
e. authentic materials may be inspirational and motivational
f. other

3. **Do you find them effective?**
a. definitely   b. quite effective   c. not really   d. not at all

4. **What is the greatest benefit of using authentic materials in your opinion?**
a. exposure of students to real language
b. authentic materials are motivational for students
c. there is a wide choice of them
d. they present contact with British or American culture
e. other

5. **Which authentic material from the following list do you find the most suitable for secondary classrooms**? (choose one)
Magazines, Internet websites, songs, films, travel brochures, radio recordings, newspaper articles, books, other.

6. **Do you find working with authentic materials difficult for pupils?**
a. very difficult   b. quite difficult   c. not so difficult   d. not at all difficult

7. **From the following list**, **pick the most challenging one**: Magazines, Internet websites, songs, films, travel brochures, radio recordings, newspaper articles, books, other.

8. **Do you find preparing the lessons with the use of authentic materials difficult for teachers?**
a. very difficult   b. quite difficult   c. not so difficult   d. not at all difficult

9. **Do you think your students enjoy working with authentic materials?**
a. they do enjoy it   b. they don't enjoy it   c. they don't especially enjoy it
 d. they quite enjoy it

10.**What authentic materials from the following do you think they enjoy working with the most**: Magazines, Internet websites, songs, films, travel brochures, radio recordings, newspapers, books, other.

APPENDIX B

The sample lesson plan

Class: 9th grade

Level: lower intermediate

Aims: Learn basic types of questions needed to make an interesting report on a person. Practice asking and answering. Learn how to conduct an interview and form personal questions and responses.

Class time: 1 hour

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Procedures (opening, activities/techniques, closure): whole class activities; speaking activity; filling in gaps activity, individual activity

Resources: Copies of an interview column from a magazine, blackboard/projector, copies of work sheet

- Organizational part (2 min)
- Introductory questions - Teacher explains that today's lesson is going to be based on one authentic material. *What does it mean – authentic?* What could be considered as authentic? Brainstorming – pupils name what they think are authentic materials. Once they name newspapers and magazines, teacher emphasizes them as today's material (2 min)
- Introducing the Main Activity. Students are handed copies of an interview column from a newspaper (Appendix C). Teacher goes over the interview with the class. Several students rephrase the interviewer's incomplete sentences as complete question, and the interviewee's replies as complete sentences. – as an oral exercise. (10 min)
- Once the interview is read, the class is to discuss unknown words and phrases (3 minutes)
- Students are to inquire about other questions that could be included in such an interview. Teacher lists them on the board – also reminds that there are questions people do not like to answer, such as those concerning age or money (3 min)

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- Teacher distributes a worksheet, she has students write their own responses to the interview questions (work sheet in Appendix D). Students answer the questions on their own, individually. (7 min)

- Teacher gets pairs of students to interview each other, filling in the blank form (another copy of the work sheet Appendix C). She tells them that one pair will perform the interview 'live'. (10 min)

- Teacher chooses a pair, which will perform the interview for the whole class, one as the interviewer and one as the interviewee. This involves the students in combining questions and answers in more complicated sentences. (5 min)

- For closure, students are asked to rewrite the personal interview about themselves at home on the computer (1 page long) and create a real-like magazine interview with a celebrity, they may add photos, pictures, etc. and bring it to the next lesson. (3 min)

APPENDIX D

Interview with a celebrity

My name is	
My birthday is on	
My birthplace is	
My current home is	
My occupation is	
My marital status is	
The last good movie I saw:	
The last good book I read:	
My favorite actor/actress:	
My favorite musician/band:	
My favorite thing I own:	
My favorite place on Earth:	
I wish I could stop /doing/:	
My friends like me because:	
A thing I am good at:	
A thing I wish I was better at:	
I hope I never have to:	
Three words that best describe me:	

APPENDIX E

Timing	Procedure	Teacher's verbal output	Pupils' response	Pupils' action	Level of "success"
1min	T stands in front of the class and introduces the lesson	Explains that today's lesson won't be as usual since she hasn't prepared the activites	One pupil claims that „anything is better than the usual"	They respond enthusiastically	
3 min	T writes on the blackboard the word *authentic*	T asks students what does it mean – in Czech, *autentický*	S shout in Czech what they think, one pupil says it is something real and genuine, another one says that is the opposite of fake. The words *real* and *fake* are then said in English	Some pupils try to wait before the teacher allows them to speak but in the end everyone shouts the answers	Pupils cooperated, they were engaged in defining the term authentic and after a while they tried to find the right terms in English
12 min	T hands copies of a newspaper interview with the current TV star Jim Parsons	T asks if everyone knows the interviewee and asks a pupil to start reading	Everyone knows who is the interviewee, some react „cool, it's Sheldon", some „ew, this guy...".	They explain to the T who it is and what he is famous for. They each read one question and response	Not everyone was keen on learning about the private life of the American actor, but everyone started reading the interview immediately
3 min	T writes on blackboard unknown words	T asks what words are not clear and then explains then in English	S ask about the words *career, dedicate, performance, committed*	S guess the meaning of the words, based on T's explanations and the context from the article	The pupils have overall understanding of the interview, only very few words are unknown
10 min	T distributes a worksheet based on the interview	T explains that now it is them who are being interviewed	S don't ask any questions to this task	S immediately start filling in the worksheet, individually	The pupils really enthused about filling in the questionnaire
8 min	T distributes the same worksheet again, he sets pupils into pairs	T makes clear that this time it is for the purpose of interviewing each other, then she warns them that she will ask one pair to carry out the interview "Live"	Pupils ask if they must respond as Jim Parsons or if they can answer as themselves	Pupils argue about being put in pair with the wrong person, eventually they set the roles and start interviewing each other	Beside arguing and asking necessary questions, everyone seemed eager to become the interviewer and the interviewee

Timing	Procedure	Teacher's verbal output	Pupils' response	Pupils' action	Level of "success"
6 min	T chooses a pair, a boy and girl, to perform the interview, asks them to come to the front of the class	T asks them who had the role of the interviewee and if they managed to go through all the questions, asks the rest of the class to listen to the performance	The chosen pair admits they didn't go through all of them, the boy states that was the interviewee and that he was responding as if he were Justin Bieber	The whole class laughs when they learn the boy was answering as another American celebrity, everyone listens to his answers	This activity became even more amusing than intended, everyone was curious to hear "Bieber's" answers, pupils were laughing a lot, but speaking mostly in English (as the teacher reminded them to every now and then)
1 min	Since there is one minute left till the end of the lesson, T asks the pair to stop and sit down, so she can explain their task for home	T asks the pupils to take the worksheet and rewrite it on the computer to make it look like an actual interview, with photos, pictures, font style, headlines, quotations taken out of the text and highlighted, etc.	Pupils' first reaction is that they already filled it in and that it will be only overdoing it again, but once they learn about the extra features, they stop complaining	Even though the lesson is over, pupils ask the performing boy to continue telling his answers as the teenage celebrity, the boy continues to make up his own sentences in English (not based on the interview), everyone is laughing	The students didn't like the idea of continuing working with this material even at home, but when they heard about putting photos with it, they didn't protest anymore and even started planning how to make the interview look better right after the lesson

Summary in Czech

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá použitím autentických materiálů při výuce angličtiny na základních školách na druhém stupni v České republice. V práci jsou popsány jak autentické materiály, tak jejich využití a přínos pro výuku anglického jazyka. Jsou zde zmíněny i možné nevýhody spojené s výukou pomocí autentických materiálů.. V práci je také věnován prostor komunikativní metodě, která se opírá o využití autentických materiálů. Praktická část se skládá ze dvou výzkumů prostřednictvím dotazníků a metodou pozorování.

První výzkum poskytuje informace týkající se obtížnosti a oblíbenosti používání autentických materiálů u žáků a učitelů. Výsledky tohoto výzkumu jsou doplněny o grafy a jejich popis. Druhý výzkum byl proveden prostřednictvím pozorování vyučovací jednotky, která byla založena na použití autentického materiálu. Výsledky ukazují, že většina dotazovaných učitelů používá autentické materiály při své výuce ráda, dále že všichni dotazovaní učitelé pokládají autentické materiály za užitečné, ale zároveň pokládají zejména přípravu hodin s využitím autentických materiálů za náročnou.