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**EFFECTIVE USE OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN  
ENGLISH LESSONS**

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**[https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/TA\\_Guidance\\_Report\\_Interactive.pdf](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/TA_Guidance_Report_Interactive.pdf)**

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## ABSTRACT

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This thesis deals with the role of teaching assistants in supporting pupils with special needs during English lessons. The conceptual framework was devised to inform and support the useful work not only of teaching assistants but also to support teachers with integrated pupils. The research part consists of interviews and observations, focusing on two teaching assistants, their work and mutual collaboration with all the participants and the aim exploring the teaching assistants' implementation. Findings revealed that there was considerable evidence that barriers to the teaching assistants' effective performance persisted in parts of the contexts. The implications from this study have relevance for the school systems, their employers and employees. The findings raise questions that the school policy has not sufficiently clarified the ways in which teaching assistants should be deployed or supported.

*Keywords:* inclusion, integration, teaching assistant, special education need

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The term integration is a very hot issue nowadays in our schools. Furthermore, teachers' attitudes towards inclusion have been on the increase in the last few years. To achieve a full social integration of individuals with special care, no matter how disabled, it is understood that besides the available social and health services, including cultural, sports and recreational activities, there is a need to enable them to receive appropriate education. The intention is not to separate all these children, pupils and students in special schools which make up an extensive system of Czech education but to integrate most of them into normally educated society in mainstream schools and to promote the cohesion of our society. Integration of students with special education needs (SEN) is not a new phenomenon; it has been occurring gradually for many years. That is why the implementation plan *Action plan for inclusive education* was formatted. It contributes to the priority to reduce the inequality in education based on the Strategy of education policy until the year 2020 (MŠMT, 2015). It is understandable that the education of pupils with disabilities or SEN is more difficult to preparation and conduct of training. But with the supportive measures, responds to pupils' health and life conditions, such children could have the same right to be enrolled in mainstream schools if there was more investment in the development of their language skills and more sensitivity to cultural differences (MŠMT, 2015, p.5).

For that reason there contributes the chance to use the educational assistance help. That is why the title teaching assistant (TA) is often interpreted in a variety of ways as well as the inclusion. The assistances for pupils with physical, mental and sensory disabilities in special schools have been well proven and their existence is not in doubt. But the question stays, is the society ready to integrate the individuals in mainstream schools in appropriate ways? Are Czech teaching assistants really prepared to help them at the professional level?

However, while much is known about the ways teachers interact with pupils, little is known about the quality of the support that teacher assistants provide to these pupils in the classroom. This study explores the effectiveness of such help and interaction the teacher assistant has with students, teachers or parents and it investigates what TAs actually do to support the learning of pupils with SEN in basic school.

This thesis investigates the main role of TA in the English lesson, what TA actually can do to support the learning of students with SEN, analyses the impact of TA and shows potential problems the teacher assistant can meet with in an ordinary basic school. Furthermore it looks at the pedagogical educational strategies of the classroom management and classroom cooperation. It identifies the conditions promoting teaching and learning effectiveness and forms the approaches chosen for the integrated pupils.

The chapter called Theoretical Background provides theoretical basis for the research. The beginning of the first part clarifies the aims and purpose of the study, sets the context and rationale for it, and indicates the structure of the study as a whole.

The first chapter deals with education policies in elementary schools, explains the general educational system teaching and learning in Czech and points to concept of integration and inclusion. The second chapter deals with theoretical knowledge about the teaching assistants (TAs) as the significant factors of integration process and his/her role in it. I focused on attitudes to English language support from three different perspectives: the teaching assistant, the teacher and the pupil. From this research, I alighted on the issues raised by teaching assistants in relation to TAs' role and deployment. Third chapter concerns the issue of effective lesson and classroom management, gains further insight into the assistants' role and needs.

The Methodology chapter, the second part of the study, deals with the methodology of the research project and its hypothesis. It describes the research (its background, place, time, and participants), planning processes (cooperation, objectives, unit framework and structure of the lesson, skills, classroom organization, or assessment), and additional data collecting methods. I seek to establish the value of case study by setting it within a broader discussion surrounding the relative challenges of qualitative research as I understand them.

The chapter called Results presents facts collected during the research. It evaluates the hypothesis and the conclusion to their agreement or disagreement of the research unit. The last chapter called Conclusion summarizes the whole research project and findings revealed through the research.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

As said in the introduction section, there has been written a lot about the planned changes. Inclusion of children with specific learning needs. Academic year 2016/2017 is for many mainstream primary schools challenging; they face great changes caused by the inclusive efforts of the Czech Government related to the adjustment of the Education Act. It is a hot issue concerning education, implementation and effective use of TAs potential in Czech schools that are the core of attention. That is why my motivation for this research work is the desire to understand the tasks and new challenges that primary schools are facing. I have been teaching in the mainstream primary school for several years and the position of TAs is a new challenge for the whole education staff.

### **Education policy related to students with SEN**

Despite commitments to promote inclusive education, the European Commission report says that the pupils with SEN or disabled pupils are still getting a raw deal from education (European Commission, 2012). It also declares that many of them are placed in special segregated institutions and those in mainstream educational settings often receive inadequate support. Furthermore the report (p. 2) claims that pupils with SEN frequently leave school with few or no qualifications, they are much more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive, and even those who are relatively successful in the job often earn less than their non-disabled colleagues. Based on the interest of that situation, the Czech state representatives promised in May, 2014 in Brussel to repeal the annexe of children with light mental disabilities (LMD) and modify the framework education program. It was a condition of European Commission to assess positive shift in a non-discriminatory educational system in the Czech Republic and pledged the help of grants from the ESF (Štech, 2016).

The National Education Program and Framework education programs (FEP) are the core curricular documents in the Czech Republic. National Education Program defines the initial education as a whole. FEP defines a binding framework for education in its different stages - preschool, elementary and secondary education. It also includes the education of pupils with special needs in part D (RVP ZV, p. 145). In the last year the final view came up to revision of the Framework Education Programme for Basic Education. It consists mainly in

removal of Appendix 2 of FEP for education of children with LMP and minor editings in other chapters (Valachová, 2016).

Ministry of Education approved the amendment to the Education Act and has intensively introduced inclusive education and equal access to education for all pupils in the Czech Republic. This amendment describes the supportive measures for pupils with SEN. Following this amendment and support of the educational centres, schools adjust the document to the needs of particular pupils. The development in education of such pupils is conducted and evaluated in the plan of educational support or Individual Education Plan (IEP). IEP is a binding document that helps pupils with special needs and teachers to find the way in well education. Every school establishes conditions for the education of pupils with SEN according to school curriculum.

Educating pupils with special needs requires trained teaching staff, stimulating and welcoming school environment which allows pupils to develop their inner potential, directs them for lifelong learning and a corresponding career success, and thus facilitates their social integration.

### **Teaching assistants in Czech legislation**

Compared to the experience of Western Europe, especially Denmark, the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, etc., the term teaching assistant (TA) is relatively new in the Czech Republic. The Czech representation in the European Agency<sup>1</sup> has been there since May 1, 2004 (Teplá, 2010). The main priority of this agency is to accept European and World trends in education for students with SEN. After this entrance, the first legislation recognizing the position of teaching assistants was established on January 1, 2005. It provides conditions for an integrated and inclusive education<sup>2</sup> in the Czech country and the qualification requirements for the performance of this professional position<sup>3</sup> (Morávková Vejrochová et al., 2015).

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<sup>1</sup> The full name of the organization is *European Agency for Development in Special Need Education*

<sup>2</sup> Law No. 561/2005 Coll. on pre-school, primary, secondary, higher vocational and other training schools

<sup>3</sup> Act No. 561/2004 Coll., about the pedagogical workers, as amended

For nearly a decade, the performances of TAs have shown their irreplaceable role in the Czech educational system. There are more than nine thousand teacher assistants in the Czech schools<sup>4</sup> and their number is still increasing (Statistická ročenka školství, 2015). These TAs are assigned to pupils with SEN who represent a considerable part of the population of 8.6% (ČSÚ, 2016).

In comparison with other European countries, this percentage is quite high. (European Commission, 2012). Despite the fact, the experiences with TAs in schools show a variety of challenges. There is a lack of united rules. The system is also short of a cohesive and coherent methodological guidance or generally accepted standards of the TAs activities (Švancar, 2015). Morávková Vejrochová et al. (2015) add, “fragmentation of TA’s activities has its impact on the pupils in the classrooms”. The government's tendency to implement inclusive education in the Czech education field is connected with doubts, teachers’ contradictory comments in professional magazines<sup>5</sup>, on websites and blocks. The Czech School Inspection deals with schools’ worries about inclusions. The surveys have revealed that “Czech schools are ready for inclusion, but what they miss is the confidence of Czech teachers “ (Česká školní inspekce k inkluzi, 2016). In 2015, according to the Czech school education inspection (2016), the Czech schools provably showed the evidence of 24 percent of pupils with SEN, it is six percent more than four years ago. The increasing percentage is also one of the proofs of the running inclusion.

Despite the lack of relevant unit materials, there are many supporting rules for the TAs work that address the basic questions of this professional teaching staff existence. It gives the necessary legislative and administrative framework of their training (skills acquisition) and proposes the necessary framework of further TAs’ education and needs.

### **Function specification and work description of teaching assistant**

The role of the TAs has evolved significantly over recent years. With appropriate professional development opportunities, TAs can give invaluable support to individuals and groups of pupils, teaching staff, parents and schools. In the process of inclusion and education

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<sup>4</sup> The exact number of TAs in the Czech Republic according to statistic was 9.532 in 2015, in 2013 the number shows 7.445 and in 2010, there were 5.314 teaching assistants.

<sup>5</sup> Teacher magazines (Učitelské noviny) č. 45/2015, 21/2015,19/2015, 14/2015, 6/2015

of students with SEN, the whole school team of teachers and other workers play an important role. Teaching assistants come into the profession with a wide diversity of background skills, knowledge and experience: both professional and personal. Inclusion places great demands on professional conduct and behaviour of teachers and TAs, their communication skills, positive atmosphere in the classroom, teaching management and teaching methodology. The establishment of the TAs' post has got its criteria and is based on the expert assessment and recommendation of the school counselling facilities. This educational assistance needs the teachers mentoring. Teachers are still those who are responsible for the conduct and education outcomes.

The school statute, regulation no. 73/2005 Sb., about education of children, pupils and students with SEN and exceptionally gifted ones, describes the TAs principal activities. Teplá summarizes (2010) these activities in five points:

- individual help to pupils with SEN in integrating and adapting to the school environment
- individual help to pupils with SEN during the learning process
- help class teachers with educational activities
- assistance in communication between teacher and pupils and pupils to each other
- assistance in cooperation with the pupil's legal representatives

The methodological recommendations of the Ministry of Education-7502/2015 state that TAs help teachers with organizing and implementation of the educational process in the classroom. Furthermore, TAs promote independence and active involvement of pupils in all activities carried out in school throughout the educational process.

The headmaster of the school employing TAs specifies duties, extend and schedule of the individual activities. This specific work description is based on the documents and recommendations of Speciální Pedagogické Centrum (SPC) or Psychologicko Pedagogická Poradna<sup>6</sup> (PPP) based on the actual needs of pupil with SEN and based on the conditions at school. The headmaster also clearly determines the respective competences of all teachers,

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<sup>6</sup> Special Pedagogical Center; Psychological Pedagogical Counselling

who simultaneously provide educational activities in the classroom or educational group as well as the individuals and specifies goals to the pupil with SEN that TAs must follow.

### **Preconditions for the TA's work**

TAs' job is defined as a pedagogical employee in the Education Act. This position is described there as follows: *TA provides help to pupils with special needs, adapts them into the school environment, helps teachers with educational activities, assists in communicating with other pupils, assists in collaboration with pupil's legal representative (family) and community the pupil comes.* TA's position thus is governed by the law of the Ministry of Education.

Teacher assistant (MŠMT, 2005):

- must be 18 years old or older
- must have at least completed primary education
- must be criminally blameless
- must *successfully complete a course of pedagogical minimum training* with accredited program

**Qualification of TA.** The Act no. 563/2004 Coll., § 20 - Teaching Assistant, acquires some of the professional qualifications<sup>7</sup>. The educational accredited program is aimed to gain some knowledge and skills that will enable broaden the professional TAs' view (Teplá, Šmejkalová 2010).

**Other criteria.** The extensive criteria for TAs, Vrbová et al. (2015) quote in Methodology of TAs work. Teacher assistants:

- should have basic knowledge of pedagogy and special education
- should be familiar with the theory of various kinds of disabilities
- use appropriate verbal or non-verbal communication language
- keep contact with the family (or legal representative)
- interact with the class teacher and with a whole team of experts if it is needed
- know and can apply the basics for mental disability help
- can recognize and partly cope with their mental stress and its surroundings

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<sup>7</sup> Detailed criteria is shown in Standard práce (2015).



- manage the technical and practical use of assistive devices
- should have empathy, organizational skills and a general social overview
- should be creative, patient and willing to learn new things

According to Augustin (2016) teacher assistants often skate on thin ice. They can not only build a strong relationship with the child and get his/her confidence, but also they get along well and cooperate well with the parents and of course most importantly with the teacher in the classroom. Augustin adds that the process does not work if the mutual cooperation between all actors creaks.

### **School cooperation concerning inclusion**

The classroom environment is not an isolated area, the teacher works in a school with policies, practices, management structures and systems. Even in circumstances of high autonomy, the school must conform to certain national and local requirements, and seeks support from various agencies for the pupils with special needs and professional development for the staff (Teplá et al., 2010). School co-ordinators think carefully about the role TAs play in their school and rigorously define the best way to work with pupils and teachers. The Blatchford et al. (2015) suggest good school teamwork takes into account the current arrangements, students' needs and the school's goals. TAs are part of a whole school team creating educational environment and a class climate. There are many stockholders cooperating together. And AT as a pedagogical worker is an essential part of this supportive team.

Morávková Vejrochová et al. (2015) define the general applicable principles of teamwork:

- mutual inspiration through different experiences and knowledge,
- different approach to the work of bringing new insight to deal with the situation,
- responsibility towards employees in team,
- motivation for higher (better) performance.

A well-working team aims towards creating conditions for effective education that meets the needs of the pupils and also helps to create a positive social climate in the school environment.

## **Inclusion participants during the educational process**

With the ongoing inclusion in schools, responsibilities are accumulated for many participants. New roles and competences are confronted by headmasters, teachers, school special teachers, guidance counsellor and a whole school educational management associated with deploying support measures, drawing up individual education plans and, finally, with the guidance and methodological support of teachers and TAs. The cooperation of all the participants helps in teaching pupils with SEN and contributes as most effective achievements as possible.

The teacher and TA's cooperation, generally described by the Ministry of Education, ensure the education of children, pupils and students with SEN with support of assistance, č. j. 14453/2005-4 (Věstník MŠMT č. 10/2005):

*“It is recommended for the class teacher to take the lead in classroom management, to coordinate the educational activities and activities of other employees so the education of entrusted pupils, including pupils with SEN was carried out as efficiently as possible.”*

## **Deployment of TAs in schools**

Although the statistics shows (ČSÚ, 2016) that TAs now comprise nearly a quarter of the school workforce in Czech, and the number is still increasing, there remains much debate about their appropriate role. Blatchford et al. (2009a) focus on ambiguity of TA's work and inconsistency in how the role is established and developed. In one sense, TAs can help pupils only *indirectly* in order to enhance teaching by doing teachers' clerical tasks. However, many TAs have a *direct* role supporting pupils by leading aimed interventions. Blatchford et al. (p. 9) study also presents detail findings about the effects of TAs' deployment (more information in chapter below). As a result, significant gaps in knowledge exist surrounding the deployment and impact of TAs which as Blatchford et al. (2009b) say, needed to be addressed. On the other hand, in the contrast of this statement, Kořak (2014) points in his article out the advantage of the English long lasting experiences with TAs and states that “thanks to clearly defined competences of all participants, the English schools have pleasant working environment”.

The new regulation 27/2016 in § 5 adjusts TAs' deployment, how they work with pupils following teacher instructions and supervision. In connection with TAs educational

attainment their work competences may be changed when enhancing higher qualification and appropriate pay-grade.

### **TAs and parents relationship**

TAs have an irreplaceable role of mediator between the teachers and the legal representatives/ parents of the pupil with SEN. TAs spend a lot of time with that pupils and know them often better than class teachers do. That is why TAs provide parents with continuous information on parenting, discussing curriculum, scholastic performance and behaviour of the pupil and proposes various individual steps that need to be addressed. Parents are involved in planning strategies, learning programmes, effective teaching methods and forms. They share the views about levels of efficient support it might be valued (Vrbová, 2015)<sup>8</sup>.

### **The teacher and the teacher assistant interaction**

The integration makes great demands on professional conduct and behaviour of teachers, their communication skills, creating positive atmosphere in the classroom, teaching management, teaching methodology and many other things. To all of these requirements are moreover, connected the abilities to work in tandem with TA, to be a good superior and to have methodological leadership skills. In other words, teachers in generally, are exposed to increasing demand for teaching process quality. Therefore, their work with pupils with special needs and TAs in common schools should be strongly appreciate and highlight not only for their professional, but also human, attitude (Horáčková, 2015).

*Integration rules for teachers.* But, however, the educational integration cannot be developed by teachers' using only the positive human feature. To be truly enhanced on a professional basis, it is necessary to adjust a variety of conditions and rules. According to Morávková Vejchorová (p. 56) there are rules the teachers should follow to achieve the effectiveness of the lesson. The teachers:

- prepare and coordinate and lead the educational process in the classroom,
- create IEP for pupils with SEN and have the full responsibility for its implementation, evaluation and treatment,

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<sup>8</sup> Broaden information also available in Methodic work, Habr, J. 2015 (recommendations p. 91).

- plan the TA work in the context of lessons and breaks,
- identify involvement ways of pupils with SEN into teaching process and the rate of school claims due to the abilities of the integrated pupils and level of support,
- coordinate own work with the work of TA, reflect his/her insights,
- evaluate TA's educational processes.

*Teachers' achievement.* Effective teaching role is generally referred to in terms of a focus on the pupils' outcomes and the teacher behaviours and classroom processes. For better understanding of the main research goals in this study, according to Richards and Bohlke (2011), there are suggested some teachers' attitudes. Teachers:

- are clear about instructional goals
- are knowledgeable about curriculum content and the strategies for teaching it
- communicate to their pupils what is expected of them, and why
- use the existing instructional materials in order to devote more time to practices that enrich and clarify the content
- are knowledgeable about their pupils, adapting instruction to their needs and anticipating misconceptions in their existing knowledge
- teach meta-cognitive strategies and give pupils opportunities to master them
- address higher- as well as lower-level cognitive objectives
- monitor pupils' understanding by offering regular appropriate feedback
- integrate their instruction and knowledge in other subject areas
- accept responsibility for student outcomes.

Although there is clear evidence about the role of *class teacher* work content, it is not possible to define the role of TAs simply. They are pedagogical support of teachers and therefore should be prepared to accept teachers' views and decisions. TAs' position is neither inferior nor subordinate and has the opportunity to see what is happening in the classroom during lessons and breaks from a different point of view. They work with pupils throughout the phases of education, of all abilities, as well as the teachers do.

Webster et al. (p. 10) reveal a striking difference between teachers' and TAs' interactions in which they mainly operate. Teachers' interactions with pupils are weighted toward the whole class. They relay instructions to class to teach, and usually infrequently

work with pupils individually or separately with groups. In contrast, TAs' interactions with pupils with SEN both inside and away from the classroom tend to be with individual pupils or groups (typically, small groups of up to five pupils). As the Webster study shows there is also a difference between how TAs work in primary and secondary schools: primary TAs mainly support groups, whilst TAs in secondary schools work more with individuals.

Responsibility for school education of all pupils in the class (not only with special needs) carries the teacher. TAs work on the ground of instructions receiving from teachers in order to support pupil learning. Morávková Vejrochová (p. 58) recommends the importance to define main competences for TAs as well as regular meetings for good cooperation. In these meetings, usually before lessons, the information is exchanged about the integrated pupils' work and TA gets instructions for other work in the class. It is only up to the teachers how they enter and check homework assignments, assess school work, or do positive and negative behaviour assessment. They also manage, organise and monitor the work of TAs. During the teaching and learning process, teachers find the most effective way of cooperation and the interaction TA-to-pupil can be subsequently modified where appropriate (Sharples et al., 2015). They both should find time for joint planning and feedback. All these actions require sensitivity and professional management skills. Many researches ( e.g. Sharples et al., 2015, Rubie–Davies, 2010, Lašek, 2007 etc.) confirm the importance of teachers and TAs work in partnership, the results bring higher level of effectiveness of teaching and learning work in positive social, class climate.<sup>9</sup> They complement each other's work, find time to meet, discuss and prepare for lessons. Sharples et al. (2015) also suggest a number of strategies it can be done such as using assembly time to get sorted, joining teachers during their planning, preparing and assessment time or ensuring TAs have detailed lesson plans in advance.

*Dangers.* The presence of another adult in the classroom is still untypical for common lessons in mainstream Czech schools and takes risk that it sheds dark on class climate. Based on Blatchford et al. (2007) research, following examples could be seen as a threat of effective instructions. The teachers can get under the pressure or influence of more powerful personality, e.g. higher TA's expertise or just TA's presence can teachers perceive as a source of potential danger to their position and they can resign from their leadership role in the classroom. It is consequently difficult for the pupils to know who is leading their class.

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<sup>9</sup> The details in communication content in relation the teacher and TA are found in the study *Standard of TA work (2015)*.

Another danger is coming from teachers' communication. Teachers let the pupils with SEN take completely care of TAs and devote only training the rest of the class. It means that TA with SEN pupil becomes a separate, independent unit, partially segregated, whose primary task is to cause the least disturbance teaching teachers in the rest of the class. In contrast to this case, there can be teachers refusing TA in the classroom. They communicate as least as they can and repeatedly demonstrate the uselessness element in the classroom. This creates a tension that affects the social climate in the class.

### **Effects of TAs proximity on pupils with SEN**

TAs acquire closer relationship with the pupils with SEN during their work. It is also due to the current system where the described TAs' job is not tied to class, respectively the school, but on the particular pupil. TAs enter into a clearly defined relationship with a specific child, though their help is used by a whole class. This relationship can be gradually changed depending on how the process of education of pupils with SEN develops (Morávková Vejchorová, 2015, p. 58).

Ideally, pupils with SEN will still need a smaller degree of support and TAs will be able to devote to other pupils in the class or TA's help in the class will not be needed at all in the context of the successful inclusion.

At the beginning of the TAs' work with SEN pupils there are described basic rules (see competence of TAs), which determine their relationship.

Inclusive ideal accents such style of work with the individual pupils and class, in which all pupils are active from the beginning of the educational process. It must be preceded by careful preparation of the content, methods and forms for the future teaching situations. There is thus thesis that what is primary, essential in such work, is the preparatory process. The lesson itself is then a "mere" realization of a thorough, elaborate preparation.

It is clear that TAs have a direct pedagogical role supporting and interacting with pupils (in one-to-one or group contexts) usually with pupils with SEN. There are rules that TA employment and deployment has become linked to the inclusion of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools (according to the article "*Deployment of TAs in schools*").

*Difficulties related to TA's role.* The effect of current model of TAs proximity can be up-side-down. Based on the extensive observations and analyses of the data, Giangreco at al.

(1997) highlighted major findings of educational problems related to TAs' relation to pupils with SEN. These findings see the pupils with SEN separated from the teacher and the curriculum. The pupils miss out on everyday teacher-to-pupil interactions. (They also miss out on peer-to-peer interactions). There is evident the SEN pupils close dependence on TAs. Sharples et al. (2015) study points out that if TAs are given the responsibility for leading pupil tasks and interventions, moreover if they even plan or assess these tasks, greater distance is put between pupils with SEN and the class teacher. The study (p. 330) also states that the pupils supported by TAs can make less academic progress.

Furthermore, Blatchford et al. (2009a) reveal that a key difference between teacher-to-pupil talk and TA-to-pupil talk is that teachers generally 'open up' the pupils mind whereas the TAs 'close down' the talk, both linguistically and cognitively. As pupils with SEN receive more support from TAs, the less quality interactions the pupils can achieve on progress. It reinforces the need to have more class teacher time for such pupils.

Another study shows (Horáčkocá, 2015) that the interaction TAs with SEN pupils, compared with class teachers, is lacking in professionalism. TAs prompt pupils with SEN often inappropriately and their answers provided pupils confusing or incorrect interpretations of the curriculum. Interaction between TAs and pupils were also often aimed at performing the tasks themselves without verifying whether the pupil understands the substance and whether it is sufficiently mastered.

As Farrell et al. (2010, p. 447) said that TAs can have a crucial impact in raising the academic achievement of specific groups of pupils with learning difficulties provided they are trained and supported in this process.

### **Effective teaching process**

Generally the pupils with SEN should have more of teachers' time and not to be routinely supported by TAs for whole the learning time during lesson. Blatchford et al. (2009a, p. 109) study suggests that TAs should supplement, rather than replace teachers.

In particular, TAs should not be used to make up for a lack of teacher attention on pupils with SEN, but rather their support should allow teachers to spend more time with these pupils.

Sharples et al. (2015) study offers few recommendations on the base of the effective use of TAs in everyday classroom contexts:

- TAs should not be used as an informal teaching resource for low attaining pupils,
- use TAs to add value to what teachers do, not replace them,
- use TAs to help pupils develop independent learning skills and manage the own learning,
- ensure TAs are fully prepared for their role in the classroom,
- use TAs to deliver high quality one-to-one and small group support using structured interventions,
- adopt evidence-based interventions to support TAs in their small group and one-to-one instruction
- ensure explicit connections between learning from everyday classroom teaching and structured interventions.

In general teachers are responsible for planning lessons for a whole heterogeneous class and TAs only implemented them. More intellectually challenging part of helping pupils with SEN is in assessment and programme planning together with motivation. This requires the expertise of an experienced teacher who can advise and support TA in the implementation of the programme. Horáčková (2015) considers that much of the actual teaching of pupils with SEN is repetitive and routine and does not require the expertise of a teacher to do successfully. The class teachers are still responsible for planning according to IEPs for pupils with SEN and for curriculum development work. The teachers are also responsible for the pupils' progress and are the ones to be held to account if there is problem.

There's plenty of evidence to prove TAs can make a real difference. Classroom teachers report lot of positive effects, saying that TAs help to reduce stress, workload and disruption in class.

### **Effective practice of TA in English lesson**

This chapter is focused on classroom management, the basic teaching methods and forms that are used in elementary schools to achieve the effectiveness in English lessons. With the TAs help the lesson can be changed in certain ways, using effective techniques and



strategies. The aim of this part is not to insight much in details but only marginally. Overview helps in the research part to find the key for set hypothesis.

### **Classroom management**

An important aspect of a successful English lesson is the climate to which the class teacher is able to create a positive environment for teaching and learning. Every such a lesson is created by a good classroom management, the process of ensuring that classroom lesson runs smoothly despite disruptive behaviour of some pupils or pupil with special needs. Evertson et al. (2006) emphasize the importance to establish such environment in which instruction and learning can occur and is closely linked to issues of motivation, discipline and respect. Many teachers establish rules and procedures and have to lead many organization aspects. Good classroom management is a precondition to an effective lesson. Effective teaching requires considerable skills in managing a lot of tasks and situations that occur in the classroom each day. This skill requires common sense, consistency, and courage. Achieving a positive atmosphere depends on how the teacher and the pupils build up a sense of rapport and mutual trust. According to Richards and Bohlke (2011), an important aspect of classroom management involves the procedures that a teacher can employ to organize student behaviour, movement, and interaction in order to avoid disruptions to the flow of the lesson (p. 13). Teachers deal with management issues differently, depending on the kind of class they are teaching, their relationships with their students or teaching assistance, and their own individual teaching style.

Kizlik (1987) summarizes all the techniques and approaches following the effective classroom management, and put them together into four points:

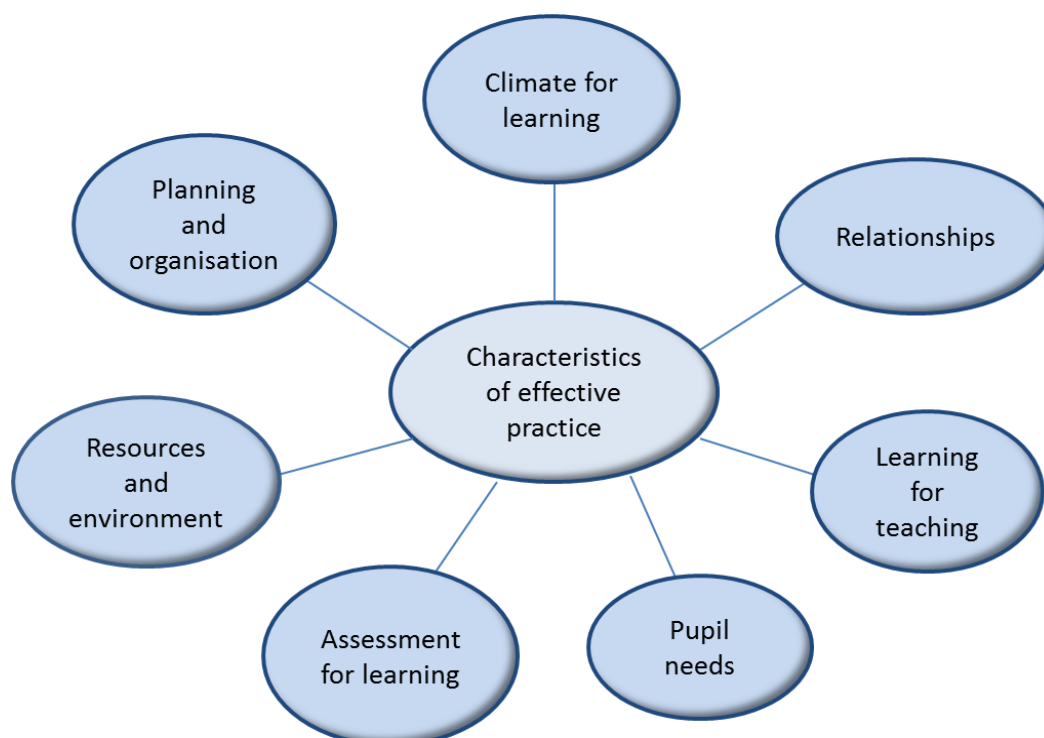
- 1. Know what you want and what you don't want.*
- 2. Show and tell your students what you want.*
- 3. When you get what you want, acknowledge (not praise) it.*
- 4. When you get something else, act quickly and appropriately.*

Sammons and Ko (2008) report identifies a number of general teaching features (see Figure 1) associated with high standards of achievement that are important in creating effective classroom practice. These features, outlined in figure 1, go beyond the specifics of

teaching behaviours to cover other important aspects including planning and organisation, understanding of pupils and pupil with special needs, assessment and teacher-pupil relationships in school to support the *effective classroom conditions*. These conditions have to be also respected by TAs when working with pupils with SEN.

*Effective teaching aspects* created by Sammons and Ko suggest:

- Good subject knowledge
- Good questioning skills
- An emphasis upon instruction
- A balance of grouping strategies
- Clear objectives
- Good time management
- Appropriate range of teacher assessment techniques
- Well-established classroom routines
- Effective planning
- Good classroom organisation
- *Effective use of other adults (TAs) in the classroom*



*Figure 1:* Characteristics of effective classroom practice with TAs in the classroom (Sammons and Ko (2008))

The effective teaching approach of teacher must be equipped with more than the knowledge of English but also with multiple teaching strategies, evaluation techniques, patience, and classroom management skill. Siraj-Blatchford et al. (2011) add that a well-managed classroom does not only ensure learning, but build a teacher- student relationship that is grounded on respect, trust and partnership. When it is needed, teacher uses the supplementary help of TA and knows all the aspects, rules and recommendations how to use such help effectively. Effective practice in this area involves TAs being fully informed about the aims and objectives of the lesson and about the learning needs of the SEN pupils. They need to have access to any additional materials, to specialist equipment that may be required and to ensure that the pupils use this appropriately. They also need to follow the teacher’s lead in order to ensure that they attend to whole class instructions. Of course there is important for TAs and teachers to trust each other’s judgement and to have sufficient time for planning.

Following table 1, based on Richards and Bohlke (2011) study, there are distinguished some basic techniques and approaches that focus on the organizational aspects of teaching English successfully. This could be target on teachers as well as for TAs.

<b>Basic techniques and approaches</b>	<b>Effective organizational aspects of teaching English</b>
Know yourself	Be confident of the English language and aware of the special talents; maximize the use of your specialist knowledge on facts and ideas in some other field such as literature, geography, history, etc.; interesting contents in language lessons ensure a communicative purpose to pupils language learning experience; bring to life the environment of English, pupils enjoyment of the language can be heightened by showing them real objects to stimulate their understanding of English; improve teaching performance in any area you feel you are weak.
Know pupils	Make all pupils busy and lead them to believe that what they are doing is worthwhile, a well- organized class is less likely to have problems with misbehaving pupils; allow yourself of the great opportunities for self- development.

Develop an Encouraging Class Atmosphere	<p>Give a sense of purpose, make sure that everything done in class is worthwhile for the pupils;</p> <p>ensure that English is spoken, the teacher own confident use of the language has a very great influence on the pupils willingness to speak in English;</p> <p>provide opportunities for all the pupils to use the language freely to express their own ideas;</p> <p>give encouragement - nothing beats a positive push upward</p> <p>involve all pupils.</p>
Build an Ideal Classroom	<p>Make sure the room has the appropriate lighting and ventilation;</p> <p>arrange audio- visual aids in a manner audible and visible to everybody;</p> <p>arrange classroom set-up in accordance to the learning activities for the day.</p>
Be prepared	<p>Plan your lesson and teaching materials ahead;</p> <p>never waste time, have additional activities for fast pupils and adjust them for pupils with SEN.</p>
Plan Lesson Routines	<p>Draw your pupils attention on the days lesson before getting started;</p> <p>motivate pupils to learn;</p> <p>use a variety of teaching materials to enhance teaching;</p> <p>plan a variety of learning activities to stimulate pupils interest and attention.</p>

*Table 1: Effective teaching techniques and approaches, Richards and Bohlke (2011)*

TAs play a vital role in implementing the teaching strategies, techniques and approaches where pupils with SEN are present and there is no doubt that class teachers value their contribution. Blatchford et al. (2009) report states that “Teachers value the support teaching assistants provide and appreciate the benefits of having another adult in the classroom to assist them”.

A well created language lesson consists of a sequence of activities that lead toward teachers’ goals and objectives. A useful way of stating lesson is in the form of the “can-do” statements found in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Richards and Bohlke, 2011). These describe what pupils are able to do at different points along their learning path. The TAs should be informed in advance about them. The structure of a lesson is divided into three essential stages: openings, sequencing, and closings. It is

useful to make all pupils aware of the sequence or structure of the lesson and what they are expected to do during the lesson even those pupils with special needs. It gives a sense that the lesson has been well planned and organized. It also motivates pupils to learn and provides opportunities for success. TAs support helps leading lesson towards this success.

Expectations for pupils success can be achieved through praising pupils’ performance, by giving help to weaker pupils or SEN pupils when needed, and by demonstrating the belief that, “Every pupil in this class is a winner!”. Establishing and exhibiting a warm, caring attitude toward pupils also contributes to building a positive class atmosphere.

Moreover, as Richards and Bohlke (2011) advance, the pupils should be treated as people and not just as numbers by class teacher. They are generally more successful than those in classes where children feel anonymous. It is important for teachers ( also for TAs ) to learn pupils’ names and show interest in them as individuals. Teacher cooperates with assistant and together they support those pupils who have difficulty with a task. In addition, teacher can build in opportunities for success rather than failure by ensuring that tasks are at an appropriate level of difficulty and that every lesson contains some “take-away” value, something that helps pupils leave the class knowing that they have moved forward in learning.

The content of an effective lesson can also have an influence on classroom climate. If the lesson is too difficult, pupils may become bored and distracted, particularly those with special needs. If the lesson is too easy, on the other hand, pupils may feel insufficiently challenged. In both situations, the results can be an unmotivated class.

In the table 2 there is shown a summary of sample descriptions of effective/ineffective practice in lessons evaluating by qualitative analyses of observation field noted in Siraj-Blatchford (2010) research.

<b>Teaching aspects</b>	Sample descriptions of <b>more effective practice in the classrooms</b>
<b>Organisation</b>	<p><i>Effective:</i> A well-going structure. Confident pupils move easily from one activity to the next, SEN pupils with TA’s help</p> <p><i>Ineffective:</i> Pupils take a long time to respond and often leave their sets, not only SEN pupils. Teacher does not seem to mind this.</p>

<b>Shared goals</b>	<i>Effective:</i> Teacher and all pupils are absolutely clear about what should be happening at all the time combined with a commitment on both parts to ensure that goals are achieved <i>Ineffective:</i> Teacher is slow to check – and correct where necessary (SEN pupils) - pupils’ understanding of key concepts and ideas.
<b>Classroom climate</b>	<i>Effective:</i> Very positive feeling. A quiet buzz of work. All respect each other, pupils with SEN included.
<b>Behaviour management</b>	<i>Effective:</i> The whole class and all pupils (also SEN) are on task, control is established by involving pupils in their learning.
<b>Collaborative learning</b>	<i>Effective:</i> Worked closely with peers, discussing work and approach to the problem. TA helps and pupils are not worried to ask.
<b>Personalised teaching and learning</b>	<i>Effective:</i> Pupils are involved in their learning and enjoying the experience, indicating teacher sensitivity and understanding of pupils with needs.
<b>Making links explicit</b>	<i>Effective:</i> Using specialist knowledge touching different field, investigating, experimenting. This absorbed all pupils.
<b>Dialogic teaching and learning</b>	<i>Effective:</i> The teacher discusses choice of English books in a friendly manner – respects the pupil’s opinion, choice or pace.
<b>Assessment for learning</b>	<i>Effective:</i> Feedback at the individual level and also at class level.
<b>Homework</b>	<i>Ineffective:</i> Homework is rarely mentioned in any of the observations. TA checks.

Table 2: Effective practice teaching, Siraj-Blatchford (2010)

According to the model above the table shows class arrangement promoting effective or ineffective learning process. While lesson plans represent a map of the route how to achieve effective goals and objects, a successful lesson also depends on the kinds of interaction – teacher, TA, pupils provide for during the lesson where pupils become more independent learners. There are several possible ways to arrange a class, using different teaching methods and forms with each offering different learning potentials.

### **Didactic means for teaching**

Didactic means can be seen as objects and phenomena used to achieve educational goals (Maňák, Švec, 2003). This includes all means, both material (maps, tables, books, games, visual aids etc.) and intangible (organizational teaching forms and methods).

Choosing variety of teaching methods and forms is important for effective teaching, for better and easier understanding of school curriculum. Multi-sensory approach facilitates pupils with SEN better mastery of the curriculum. Suitably chosen methods, styles and teaching goals play in educating pupils with an increased level of support crucial role as well as mutual cooperation and communication of teaching staff (teachers and TAs). According to Doubrava (2015) the essential part of effective lesson is suitably chosen teaching methods (traditional or alternative) to promote inclusion in schools. He also states that properly selected types of didactic means and their combinations teachers motivate all pupils, stimulate, manage and monitor the teaching process towards achieving the goals and objectives.

### ***Teaching methods***

The word “*method*” is derived from the Greek word *methodos*, which means the “*path*”. Teaching method is one of the basic didactic categories that can be understood as a specific way - path for teachers, pupils and TAs cooperation. Their work leads to defined goals. Červenková (2013) defines the teaching method as a tool in the hands of teachers, that connects and helps with interaction between pupils and teachers or TAs.

In the literature there are the various classifications such as classification according to Mojžíšek<sup>10</sup>, Lehner<sup>11</sup>. The most common classification, as Skalková (2007) and Zormanová (2014) state, is used by Maňák. It is one of the most comprehensive classifications realized from various perspectives (Červenková, 2013). They are not used separately in the teaching process, but parallel, often alternating. Their selection shouldn't be random, but thoughtful. The choice of teaching methods is influenced by the type of school, type of teaching subject, environment, organizational forms and the abilities of pupils (Vališová, Kasíková, 2011). Organizational forms and abilities of pupils may also be affected by the presence of TAs in the classroom. Class teachers in the compilation of teaching and selecting appropriate methods, take into account all these factors, which affect not only teachers, but also the pupils and the whole teaching process.

*Lexical methods.* Verbal or written method is one of the most important methods stimulating telling the stories, explaining, lecturing, working with text, discussing. Pupils appreciate variability of learning with interesting contents, using magazines (e.g. Bridge, Hello Friendship). Teachers using verbal techniques try to explain the substance, but also monitor the pronunciation of pupils, help them to express and understand the context of the topic. TA is able to communicate in English, knows the pronunciation of language and its proper use.

*Visually-demonstrational methods.* These include demonstrations and observations methods, working with pictures or mentoring. These methods act on sensory organs of pupils and are based on direct contact with the pupils and observed factors. Teachers use a variety of teaching aids. There are many photo-copiable textbooks providing a series of "thought-provoking" groups of materials in English teaching. TA usually has got own visual materials such as flashcards, vocabulary words and other pictures for visual memory fixing in their individual work.

*Skill-practice methods.* Presenting, experimenting, manipulating, forming new skills. These kind of practical methods have also been termed as a skill-practice methods or methods of practical activities of pupils (Skalková, 2007). These methods are often associated with

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<sup>10</sup> L. Mojžíšek in publication „*Vyučovací metody*“ (1988) divided methods into four basic categories: incentive methods, exploration, fixation and diagnostic methods.

<sup>11</sup> I. J. Lehner divided methods according to the pupil's cognitive activities: informational - receptive, reproductive, troubled, heuristic and research.



verbal methods, because in this kind of teaching is very important mentoring pupils. During the teaching process there is very crucial alternation of theoretical knowledge with practical activities, which leads to better understanding of the substance, independent thinking, cooperation of pupils in a group, developing communication, etc.

*Activating teaching methods.* Discussion, heuristic problem solving, situation, staging methods, didactic games belong to activating group. Zormanová (2014) calls these methods “innovative teaching”, and characterizes them as the exchange of roles between pupils and teacher. The pupils are active in learning, find information, actively cooperate each with others, develop communication skills. This active learning is also very important and useful for pupils with SEN. Bilanová (2009) presents many didactic games such as crossword puzzles, dominoes, memory games, word football, bingo, scrabble, songs and many others.

Complex of teaching methods, according to Maňák, points at frontal teaching, cooperative education, individual and individualized instruction, independent work of pupils, critical thinking, brainstorming, project teaching, teaching drama, open task learning, learning in everyday situation and teaching supported by computer.

### ***Effective learning forms teaching***

The organizational structure of successful lesson, Zomanová (2014) defines as the process of different instructions. When choosing the teaching forms, the teachers have to think about the goal, class size, activities or presence of TA. It is interconnected and closely depends on the choice of teaching methods. The teacher can use different forms of teaching - from frontal through pair work or group work to individual work during the lesson. These forms include opportunities for interactions between teacher and the class as well as interactions among the pupils themselves or with TAs.

*Frontal teaching.* Or also a whole class teaching, belongs among the most common teaching forms, particularly in the Czech Republic (Kašpárková, 2014). The teacher involves teaching all the pupils together, especially in the form of interpretation or controlled discussions. Teacher-fronted teaching can serve to focus students’ attention quickly on a learning task. Richards and Bohlke (2011) say when the lesson is carried out carefully, it can lead to the quick and effective achievement of lesson objectives, since time management is maximally under the teacher’s control. On the other hand, Čapek (2015) sees the frontal teaching as a disadvantage, because in this form of teaching, the pupils sit passively and listen

to interpretation, which may lead to the fact that the weaker pupils or pupils with SEN are lost in attention and talented are bored. According Doubrava (2015), nowadays the frontal teaching is often criticized, but despite that in some cases it is the most effective form of learning (p. 20 – 21). TAs help to formulate the steps, what and how to do and verify SEN pupil's understanding. Furthermore, they explain and translate words and terms that the pupil needs to teach. In this case, TAs and pupils with SEN handle the situation / task at the same time and space as other classmates (Vrbová et al., 2015).

However, when planning the lesson, teachers need to consider when whole-class teaching is appropriate and when they make the transition to other types of teaching forms in order to promote pupil-to-pupil interaction and allow pupils to work on tasks at their own pace. A lesson may begin with a whole-class activity and then move to pair, group, or individual work. In any case, TA is always ready to help.

*Individual work.* This kind of teaching form is ranked among the one of intensive as the teachers work with the individuals within the group or small groups. It is very often used for teaching foreign languages, when pupils read or listen to a text, or complete written exercises in a textbook or workbook. Individual work allows pupils to work at their own pace and to work on activities suited to their level or interests relied on their own knowledge and skills (Maňák, Švec, 2003). Pupils can perform the same or completely different tasks. During the individual work the cooperation, communication, social relationships cannot be developed at the same time. It is opportunity for teacher and TA to provide pupils with individual support. They arrange what extent the SEN pupils should master during this time. The extent of the work is usually smaller because the time is dedicated commenting and talking about the problem (Vrbová et al., 2015). In planning individual work, Richards and Bohlke (2014) advise the teachers to consider how well pupils understand what is expected of them and whether the task provides adequate challenge, support, and motivation to sustain their interest.

*Pair work.* This form of teaching provides opportunities for sustained interaction. It promotes accuracy and fluency in language use, so that it is highly recommended in a teaching process. (Richards and Bohlke, 2011). Grouping pupils in pairs can take into consideration ability level, language and cultural background, and other factors that will facilitate a positive approach to learning. TAs can be in pair with SEN pupils or help to peer to peer communication.

*Group teaching form.* It is widely used form that significantly changes the dynamics of the classroom. The groups consist of three to five students solving some problems together. In language classes, it increases students' talking time, helps promote self-confidence, and can increase student motivation by providing a risk-free environment for language practice (Richard and Bohlke, p. 18). Working together it engages more pupils to learn independently, to organize their work and communicate among themselves. Teachers hereby have the role of mentor and helper, where TAs can also be participated. Vrbová et al. (2015) point out that during the pupil with SEN integration into such a group, classmates are instructed not to do the whole work for slower pupils. TAs help not only in organizing and communication within the group with the SEN pupils, but also in challenges obtaining adequate resources. TAs are advisers for pupils with SEN, and inform them that the outcomes of the group also depend on the outcome of the particular pupil's work.

However, setting up group activities poses a number of challenges, too. Putting pupils into groups can be time-consuming, groups are noisy or low-level pupils like pupils with SEN remain silent, they may have difficulty following instructions. Some teachers may feel that they are no longer in control of the class. Furthermore, such a preparation of this teaching form can be quite difficult (Zormanová, 2014).

*Direct teaching and good interaction.* Evertson et al. (2006) say that teacher-directed approaches are as important in group work and paired work as in whole class work.

On the based on *Effective teaching* research (Sammons et al., 2008), a number of reviews provide evidence for the stronger positive effects of *teacher-directed* approaches (i.e. direct instruction) in promoting pupils language learning attainment (especially for younger ages and more disadvantaged groups or pupils with SEN). It brings the relative effectiveness of explicit instruction and *student-centred* constructivist approaches to teaching. It can be included into a whole language process of teaching; instruction, situated learning, discovery learning, task-based learning, scaffolding, problem-based learning, and issue-based learning.

Blatchford et al. (2004) note that the progress of pupils with SEN is more marked when TAs supported pupils in discrete well-defined areas of work or learning. Findings suggest that the support to individual pupils should be combined with supported group work that facilitates all pupils' participation in class activities. The importance of allocated time for teachers and TAs to plan programmes of work is apparent.

Data from the annual report 2014/2015 of the Czech School Inspectorate indicated that 80% of evaluated teachers favoured the frontal teaching form rather than the individual work (63%) or group activities (57%) (Výroční zpráva České školní inspekce, 2014/2015). When selecting the didactic education means, it should be taken into account the specifics of the pupils and the teaching process should be adapted to them as well as the extent of their individual, independent work and homework. If TA is present in the classroom, this fact should be reflected in the use of pair work, individualized form of work or group teaching form, etc. The research TALIS 2013 (Teaching and Learning International Survey) shows that Czech teachers use the group work teaching in less percentage than it is the international average (Kašpárková et al. (2014).

This chapter provides an insight in the education of pupils with special needs that requires trained teaching staff, welcoming school environment with many of the teaching rules and aspects. It shows the necessary legislative and administrative framework of their training and proposes the necessary framework of further TAs' education and needs. Furthermore, the Theoretical Background part describes some TAs principal activities, professional conduct, and behaviour of teachers and TAs, their communication skills, teaching management and teaching methodology. The aim is to found out the best way how to use TAs in the classroom facilitating the social integration in mainstream schools. This intention is investigated in the following research part of this thesis, where two samples of TAs' work are examined.

“All genuine knowledge is based on sense of experience and can only be advanced by means of observation and experiment” (Cohen et al., 2000, p.8).

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part of thesis describes the process of research that was planned on the basis of successive steps that reveals how TAs work with pupils with SEN in English lessons. Three important areas for the realization of the research are described there. First, there are outlined research aims and hypothesis. Then the methods used for the research are described and finally there are shortly introduced the TAs as the samples for the aim of the subject.

#### **Research aims and hypotheses**

In my research I explored collaboration of TAs and class teachers as well as their educational support for primary school pupils with special needs. From the theoretical part, it is clear that TAs already have an established and increasing role in offering sufficient support; it is also evident that the pedagogical value and nature of their role has been called into question (Blatchford et al., 2009a).

***Research aims.*** The aim of this research was to explore the work of two TAs in support of pupils with SEN in English learning. I explored all the participants' collaboration, the rules setting of mutual cooperation and classroom management in an English lesson. I also adopted three of Farrell et al. (1999) criteria for effective practice in relation to the work of TAs that I observed during the lesson (see Methods, Observation).

There was a need to cope with pedagogical aspects of such effectiveness: providing effective educational interventions within an appropriate teaching support. The role of TAs in relation to these goals suggests the research hypothesis.

***Research hypotheses.*** The key research hypotheses for this thesis were as follows:

1. The teaching assistant and the class teacher always choose appropriate strategies they plan in advance; they spend time engaging in shared planning to fine tune programmes and make necessary adjustments that significantly help pupils with SEN during an English lesson.
2. TA effectively assists the teacher and does not support pupils with SEN the whole English lesson; TA promotes independence and active involvement of pupils in the activities carried out in English.

3. When TA supporting pupils with SEN, the class teacher tends to have the equivalent interactions with all pupils and the extent of attention is the same with SEN pupils as well as the others.

Throughout the research it was important to:

- gain a clear picture of the TAs place in supporting English in classroom;
- establish whether support in English language and teaching recommendation have been used appropriately by TAs;
- establish TAs collaboration with teachers; their relationship with respect to the implementation of the inclusion.

## **Research Methods**

The research need to embrace complexity, clarity and usefulness providing a full picture of settings, fusing theory and practice. Cohen et al. (2000) speak of devising and using appropriate instruments that catch the complexity of issues. I employed a holistic multi-method approach, focusing on qualitative technique using interviews and observations as well as analysis of participants' context.

*Interviews.* I conducted interviews with the TAs and class teachers of integrated pupils. The questions were focused on participants' cooperation as well as on advantages and disadvantages of TAs. I also pointed out at TAs achieved education and knowledge of special pedagogy and whether to continue further educating or studying specialized literature or not.

The interview schedule was prepared during early school period of the year 2016/2017. I asked in advance two class teachers with TAs to monitor their English lessons and subsequently to interview them. The questions were derived from the findings of my theory study and interest. I conducted semi-structured questions which were recorded digitally or in the written form in the Czech language. Interviews of the TAs were done in February deliberately because there was time for TAs to cope with their role closely and the school reports have partly revealed the pupils with SEN success.

The first interview happened in the afternoon, just after the TA1 Štěpánka had accompanied a girl with SEN to the school lockers. The interview with TA2 Michal was done in the morning when we both had a free lesson. It took about half an hour each. We stayed in

the classroom not to be disturbed by the class teachers. The conversations were based on the prepared questions (see Appendix xx) in pleasant environment.

**Observations.** Observations formed a valuable part of this research. They contribute significantly to a 'holistic approach' providing a data set when combined with interviews. Each of the four observations conducted at a mutually convenient time, lasted 45 minutes. There were also observed the breaks. They were done in two different periods deliberately, twice in the first half of the school year and twice in the second semester. It was interesting to see the possible progresses and accustoming of all participants. The observations needed to be non-participatory, in order that I could focus on the interaction between the TAs and the pupils. I was also interested in what teaching methods and forms are used in the lesson.

During the observation time I watched pupils' responses to stimuli and communication with teachers, TAs and classmates, as well as I observed the whole concept of the English lesson. I recorded my observations in the classroom on the prepared sheets. The report was focused on the three parts: classroom management, TA's communication and collaboration with other participants (see Appendix xx). I also observed Farrell et al.'s (1999) criteria for effective practice in relation to the work of TAs that I observed during the lesson. These criteria of effectiveness suggest that TAs foster the participation of pupils with SEN in the various learning processes. It means for example that TAs should enable pupils with SEN to become more independent and furthermore TAs always help to enhance the achievement of pupils they need support in the classroom.

## **Research context**

The research was carried out at a basic school in Hořovice. I gained the headmaster's permission at first. Then I made the sample survey. The appropriate samples of TAs for observation included a TA supporting a pupil with SEN at the primary school level and a TA at the lower-secondary level. The amount of all pupils attending this school was 558 for the academic year 2016/17. There were 6 teaching assistants (one of them works only at the lower-secondary level). The total number of identified pupils with IVP support was 31, 8 of them were pupils with special education and teaching assistants support. It means that two of the six TAs support two pupils with SEN at once.

## *TA1 - Štěpánka*

*Background.* Štěpánka graduated from the secondary pedagogical school in Beroun and afterwards worked part time as an after school activity centre teacher. Consequently, she took the chance to extend her working opportunity and started working as a TA. She has been completing her placement qualification for assistance at Vyšší odborná škola pedagogická se zaměřením na speciální pedagogiku. She will graduate at the end of the school year 2017. She has English language as the subject in this school but doesn't need to sit an exam. At the time of the observation she had been a teaching assistant for one and half year and her contract with the school had been for a fixed period of time. Štěpánka has found a great value in being able to apply her knowledge in practice, as she says, "I found working as the TA a big benefit... it's all right in theory but it's just, you don't get it, you don't understand it as much, so when you are actually in school doing the job – it's a lot better...".

*Role in the classroom.* Štěpánka's role included supporting a 4<sup>th</sup> grade girl with Light Mental Disorder (LMD). She also supports another pupil with ADHD problems in the same class. Having been assisting for only a year and half, she has limited experience in her role as a TA. Despite this fact, she agreed to support two pupils at once alongside the teacher's help.

*Supported pupils with SEN.* She works with an 11 year old girl, Vanessa, ensuring attracting attention to the perception and independent thinking, helps her with the verbalization and stimulation of speech, corrects understanding of assignments providing enough encouragement, and involves the girl in class activities as much as possible.

The TA is recommended to:

- be with the girl for all the teaching time, including breaks;
- provide support with assigned tasks / teaching aids preparation;
- monitor the girl's work in the class and tasks' fulfilment;
- help in recording homework;
- make notes about the topics for study at home;
- enrich the studying time with the relaxation techniques;
- build confidence by praising, focusing on improvement;
- supporting trust in her abilities;
- provide girl with immediate, frequent, and task related feedback.

In English language classes, the individual support for the girl is to:



- prefer an oral verifying and assessment form;
- practice oral communicating abilities;
- take into account the written and oral discourse;
- practice a fine and gross motor activity /warm-up sheets/;
- practice visual perception /worksheets “Special education”/;
- help with partial reading and phonetic comprehension;
- engage in group work where it is possible and appropriate.

The second pupil who needs Štěpánka’s help is Marek. The boy with a behaviour disorder, is hardly concentrated, fidgety and restless in the lesson. Because he gets into conflicts very easily and his attention oscillates, TA’s effort is to calm him down, repeat the instructions and return to activity in the lesson. Marek cooperates with Štěpánka quite well despite the fact that she needs to be very patient to get over his behaviour swings. There must be rules clearly delineated.

The TA is recommended to:

- provide work assignment support within the lesson/ teaching aids preparation, monitoring the boy’s work in class and tasks’ fulfilment, checking correctness of homework notes or topics records for study at home;
- work with the point of behavior view: “What happened? How did I react? How could I handle the situation?”, a clear definition of boundaries and rules of behavior, behavioral monitoring, empathy developing, mutual seeking of other behavior alternatives;
- help in coping with boy’s affective explosions, delay the initiatives for affects, enrich the studying time with the relaxation techniques.

In English language classes, the individual support for the integrated boy is to:

- take into consideration the personal pace;
- prefer an oral verifying and assessment form;
- practice the oral, phonetic communicating abilities;

- reduce written text amount;
- evaluate the work activities approach positively;
- use interesting tools for keeping attention;
- check the exercise and vocabulary notes correctness regularly.

### ***TA 2 – Michal***

*Background.* Michal has started working in this school as a TA at the beginning of the school year 2015. It has been his first experience working with children. Michal had graduated at Pedagogical University in Pilsen in 2008 where he reached a bachelor's degree. He had studied English and PE. He had never worked at schooling since then. He took this occasion working as a teaching assistant with enthusiasm so that he could continue on the way where he had finished in his studying intension. He has been thinking about continuing studies at faculty of education to complete the master's degree. He is glad that got the chance to be employed in school and could observe the qualified teachers at their work.

*Role in the classroom.* Michal's role in school was varied at the beginning. He was temporarily supporting a few pupils at the lower secondary level with required help in language learning. His role involved supporting groups of English language and also Czech. Michal mentioned several target pupils for whom he was responsible and for whom he was expected to achieve progress separately in their extra learning time. Supporting these groups provided individual pace which impacted on the type of prompts Michal was able to give the pupils and what degree of support he was able to provide. Michal acknowledged that the particular challenges of his role mostly related to the occasions and needs. It had changed in one year later that he started to work as a TA supporting one to one pupil with SEN. He was also glad that the work and cooperation is with a boy whom he has closer relation to.

*Supported pupil with SEN.* Michal supports a 13 year old boy whose name is Standa and his diagnosis is AD/HD with dyslexia and disortography disorder. He attends the 7<sup>th</sup> grade of lower secondary school and requires individual approach according to actual needs in learning such as English language, Czech language and Physics.

The TA is recommended to:

- provide work assignment support within the lesson/ attach the boy's attention on tasks when the attention oscillates; in case of the onset of fatigue, the boy

will have opportunity to take a rest for a while and relax; TA stimulates to return him back to the work assignment;

- lead the boy to increase his working autonomy and independence;
- provide regular feedback so to enrich his self-motivation and confidence;
- prevent error rate and subsequent errors fixation;
- have individual guidance in the preparation of written assignments;
- TA helps the boy to work with the texts so as to avoid misunderstanding instructions or task assignment;
- provide calm and sympathetic approach to the boy that prevail positive motivation.

In English language classes, the individual support for the integrated boy is to:

- develop communication skills;
- strengthen confidence;
- focus on practical language use;
- restrict a loud reading;
- tolerate the common specific errors;
- include some other than language skills in the evaluation (e.g. realia/ life and institutions);
- tolerate individual pace;
- tolerate the diversion of attention.

## 4. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

This chapter presents the results of the research. There are three main parts included in this chapter. The first part presents experience describing the work of two TAs in two lessons for each in order to find the answers for three hypotheses relating to effective TAs use in practice. The first lesson was observed in the first half of the school year and the second lesson in the second semester of the year. I made interviews with TAs as well as class teachers to find out their views and opinions about TAs help and work. The third part “Findings and commentaries” deals with findings gained through the observations and questionnaires leading to outcomes of the research hypothesis.

### Observation and interview

As a first step it was essential to set out criteria involving contributions in describing effective use of TAs alongside the recommendation for TA from the school management (see Appendix observation and interview sheet).

### Observation findings TA1

#### *Lesson observation 1*

*Context.* The first observation was done with 4. B class. It was an English lesson and its goal was to learn Parts of a human body. It is the third lesson of the day with 15 pupils overall. The class included two pupils with SEN working with TA Štěpánka. The classroom was organized in three standardized rows with the carpet at the back of the room. There were also a few big pillows lying on the carpet.

*Starter.* My observation already started before the lesson. During the break pupils were supposed to prepare for the English lesson. I was introduced to the class as a teacher from the lower secondary grade of this school with no specific details and was set at the back of the classroom by the window, closer to the integrated pupils. I tried to be invisible, as less as possible to be seen with minimum of eye contact. I noted that the TA sat in the middle of the row by the window with Vannessa. Just behind them there sat a boy Marek. The TA was so responsible for supporting two pupils with SEN at once. I prepared the observation sheets for the lesson to support my observation.

*Plot.* The classroom is not so noisy during the break-time. The TA sits next to Vanessa who eats lunch. The TA turns back and checks Marek's desk if he is prepared for the next lesson. He is not so he is asked politely to change the books and exercise books for the English ones. Mark comments it loudly what a stupid subject it is, takes out the book from the school bag and leaves to toilet. The TA helps to prepare girl's books and goes to the teacher to tell her where Marek is.

*Ringin g for a lesson.* Marek is still not in the classroom. The teacher greets and starts the lesson with singing the song from the last time and waits a while whether Marek returns or not. He comes and looks at the singing children from the door. He sneers at them and when he sees nobody reacts, he returns to his place. The TA asks him if he remembers the song from the last lesson and opens his book where the song is. He closes the books, lays his head on the desk and listens to song. Vanessa tries to sing from the text the TA has listed for her. She more opens her mouth than sings. Then the teacher introduces the subject of the lesson and put a big poster of a clown on the board. Marek is interested and starts laughing that it looks as his peer Matěj. TA calms him down but with no big effect. The teacher calls him to come in front of the classroom to say what part of body the clown has. Marek agrees and goes to the board. He points at and names about three parts of the body but doesn't know the rest. The teacher shows all parts on Marek and the class repeats including Vanessa . Marek is asked to sit down and other pupils are called to stick labels with an English word on the clown. The TA repeats the word to the girl and wants her to repeat it. Than every pupil gets a sheet of paper with a picture of a clown and vocabulary sheet which is needed to cut in pieces and stick on their clown body. The teacher monitors all pupils work and helps. She stops at Marek and praises him for a nice cutting. Marek is not sure for correct matching the words and calls the TA to turn back and to help him doing the task. She comments first on Marek's successful attempts and challenges him to continue himself. He agrees with some comments. Than the TA helps Vanessa to cut her pieces and they stick them in the proper place together. Vanessa repeats the words again. It is an enjoyable activity for all pupils and everybody managed this work assignment. The fasters colour the pictures. Vanessa joins it for a while. Afterwards there was a reading activity from the book. The TA points fingers at the reading words but after a short while Vanessa is no longer interested. The TA tries to get attention back pointing at the clown's reading part of body and uses the grimaces and body language. Milan is partly concerned, sometimes looks at the TA and partly he plays with the pencil case. He stands and goes to the dustbin with no asking to throw something away. The TA shows the girl the

pictures of the body on flashcards; she says the words again and Vanessa repeats them while the others continue reading. When Marek comes back to his place he wants to repeat the words too and is happy he remembers some. Although the TA reproves Marek to calm the voice down, they still are clearly heard throughout the classroom. In the last part of the lesson the pupils are engaged in singing the song about the parts of body they have learned. Pupils smile and clap hands only Marek shouts that it will be an awful, stupid song and the TA tries to quieten him with a kind word again. He then leaves the desk for the carpet. Pupils learn the song which includes a body movement. It slowly takes Marek attention and at the end he even sings its part. The TA shows during the singing Vanessa's part of body. For the homework the pupils are supposed to fill the new learned words into the puzzle game in the work books. The TA controls both pupils whether they circle the exercise correctly and note down they will need to write new words in the vocabulary book. The teacher praises all pupils for their work.

### ***Lesson observation 2***

*Context.* The second observation was done in the same class 4B at the beginning of the second period of the school year. It was the first lesson of the day with the same class teacher as last time, TA and 15 pupils. This English lesson was focused on the verb to have got and adjectives describing people. The TA Štěpánka was still responsible for the same pupils with SEN.

*Starter.* Because it was the first lesson, I could come earlier to have time to settle down in the back of the classroom that the class teacher marked me out. It was again close to the TA and integrated pupils. Their seat places have changed from the last time to very end row because Marek disturbed the pupil behind him all the time. The TA was already there consulting the lesson plan with the class teacher. Then the teacher was preparing the materials for the English lesson.

*Plot.* As the pupils come into the classroom, the TA comes to her place next to Vanessa and front of Marek and controls whether they both have their English books and other things on their desks. She helps to find the girl's exercise book and vocabulary book. While Marek makes his things ready too. The TA asks them if they had a good sleep and looked forward seeing their friends in the class. Vanessa shrugs her shoulders and Marek screams out "Yeeeees" and runs around the classroom. When the TA stops him and explains that it is dangerous for him as well as for other classmates, he sticks his tongue out and turns to one boy who he discusses with afterwards.

*The lesson starts.* The class teacher asks Marek to sit at his place. He obeys and goes to sit down. The teacher greets the pupils; pupils greet the teacher by standing, only Marek sits with crossed hands. The TA explains him that it is polite to greet each other. There is no reaction. The teacher links up with the topic of lesson. Marek notes that it will be boring and starts to draw on the exercise book. At first the teacher revises the prior knowledge of the vocabulary of animals, she turns cards and pupils name the right word of the picture chorally. Vanessa mostly repeats after pupils; Marek stops drawing and calls the animals too. Then the teacher asks to write on the board all the possible words (adjectives) the animals can be describe with. Marek immediately shouts out “hnusný”. Teacher agrees that the animal can be really disgusting or ugly and writes the word “ugly” down. The other words are written by pupils. The TA repeats for Vanessa all the written words and encourages her to go to write the word “nice” but unsuccessfully. She shows the prepared pictures of the animals to her and asks for the appropriate word and colour. Marek calls at the TA how to say “zrzavý” but the TA doesn’t know and answers him to put the hand up and ask the teacher. He does not put the hand up and asks straight away. The teacher points out that he has to wait for his turn. It upsets him a bit but then hurries to note the word on the board, the teacher spells it in Czech for him. He returns proud and gets praised by the TA. The teacher wants to copy the new ideas, words into the grammar books. The TA passes Vanessa the right book. She opens it and waits. The TA dictates the words with the Czech spelling. Mark affirms that he knows all the words and doesn’t need to write anything. But the teacher stands up for it and helps him to find a few new words to note down while the TA still helps the girl. Another activity is introduced where teacher represents some animal by describing it and pupils guess what she is. The TA helps to comprehend the sentences and they guess together. She also encourages Marek with question, what animal the teacher can be. He looks enjoying the game and tries to guess. Then teacher explains grammar rules of the verb “have got” in question and writes notes on the board. Everybody writes in exercise books except Marek. He puts his head on the desk and pretends sleeping. The TA tells him if he writes the notes down he can go to the carpet there to relax, with no results. Marek goes on lying on the desk until the teacher approaches and asks him whether he would like to play another game with them. Marek agrees but the teacher has one condition to finish the task. He carries the assignment out very quickly while teacher explains the pair activity where pupils find out by asking questions what animal the other pupil represents. They use the adjectives from the board. Marek is joined by another odd pupil to make a pair. Surprisingly with agreement. The teacher

monitors and helps. The TA asks Vanessa who she wants to be, if investigator or animal. She prefers to be animal, but doesn't know which one. The TA spreads out the animals in front of her to choose one but she mustn't say it aloud. Then TA asks questions and points at the adjectives in book. She facilitates this activity by using the body or face language. The last exercise is the work assignment in the book. The pupils are asked in English to open their books on a certain page and listen to a text from a CD player. Marek refuses this activity and goes to the carpet. The TA helps the girl with instructions and opens the correct page. During the listening, the TA keeps her on task by pointing at the animals in the pictures. The pupils then have to search through the text to answer questions about some adjectives in the certain pictures. They do some writing activity. Marek disturbs others and the TA goes to him offer her help. Marek doesn't want to write but agrees with an oral fulfilment of the assignment. The teacher comes to the TA and whispers something. Subsequently the TA shows with hand gesture if Vanessa would like to join them on the carpet. They sit together and mime and express certain words. For the homework the pupils have to describe one animal they choose and draw a picture of it. The TA calls Marek to make a note about it and opens Vanessa's exercise book to note it down. The teacher asks pupils to evaluate the lesson by pointing their thumbs up or down. Marek points up; Vanessa does nothing.

## **Observation findings TA 2**

### ***Lesson observation 1***

*Context.* This observation was made with the class 7B during an English lesson. It was the third lesson that day. The number of pupils was lower (12) than it is usual in other classes because this class comprised pupils of lower educational ability. Alongside the class teacher, Mr Sumera who had been teaching them for two years there newly appeared another person in the classroom; the TA Michal whose aim was to help Standa with his difficulty in learning. There were other two pupils diagnosed with IVP for dyslexia. The goals of the teaching unit were a review of countable and uncountable nouns and text reading following the short sample of story playing. It took its place in a language classroom organized into the U seats position.

*Starter.* During the break there were pupils guttering in the language classroom. Opposite of the classroom we find the class teacher's office. He was sitting there with the TA talking about the lesson. He instructed me to sit somewhere considering the best place for me.



And because Standa with the TA sat at the beginning of one site the U placement, I seated myself on the opposite to face them. I didn't need to be introduced by name because I knew the pupils from my lessons of Art. I prepared the observation sheets for the lesson and waited for the start.

*Plot.* In the classroom we see the ordinary bustle, talking, eating, throwing things etc. Standa sits very quietly alone, next to him there are two empty places. Few pupils ask me what I am doing there. My answer doesn't want to touch any of my right aims and try to mislead them that I would like to see the teaching from outside as the different position of the teacher view. It seems the answer has satisfied them. Some pupils prepare things for the lesson, but Standa does not, not until the TA comes. When he points it out, Standa does what he is supposed to do. They talk a bit about something. Standa gives the impression of a calm, introvert boy.

*Lesson starts.* When the class teacher comes in, everybody stands up and lesson starts. Everybody has got their books on the desks as well as the TA has some papers. The teacher focuses on the subject matter from the last lesson. He shows pupils pictures of food, drink and others; he uses the visual learning style and calls pupils to translate and say whether it is countable or not. When it is Standa's turn, he is quiet. The TA asks the semi opened question, what he drinks in the morning. Standa needs translation and then answers tea. "Right", says the teacher and continues the discussion of countability. Standa says "nepočítateľný" in the Czech language with no hesitation. Teacher wants to know then where the tea is. There is no answer. The TA doesn't help. Another pupil puts his/her hand up and says "cup". They discuss the countability of this picture and others. Standa listens and the TA explains something. The next activity is group work. Pupils are divided into three groups of four and in limited time they write down as many nouns around them as they know. Two pupils in the group note down countable and the other two write uncountable. Standa doesn't write but helps to think the words up. The TA leaves him alone with the group and circles around to monitor others (he just observes but couldn't help himself once not to point out of the window) while teacher prepares computer and some listening exercise. After evaluating the results, they go on with the listening assignment. For the first attempt they are not supposed to have opened their books. Except Standa, his book is opened and the TA wants him to point at the text he can hear. Standa raises his eyebrows up and the TA smiles and encourages him that he will be fine. The TA checks pupil's finger and sometimes has to push forward. The teacher asks pupils what food they heard, they answers and also Standa says "pepper". The

TA takes the cards of food he has prepared and asks the boy what he can see. They do this activity individually while others talk about ingredients for their soup. Standa chooses the right ingredients from the pictures. There we can hear the second prompt of the listening. This time everybody listens to the story providing text in the book. The teacher floats around. The TA lets Standa do the activity alone. After that teacher asks pupils to close the books and write all ingredients they remember on the board. Standa looks at the pictures on the desk and the TA encourages him again to name ingredients what he remembers, choose them and put them in the middle of the classroom. He smiles. It is followed by exercise activity in the work book. The teacher says instructions in English. Standa is puzzled what book he shall open therefore the TA repeats the English word “work-book”, also the page is stressed again. When boy has found the right exercise, everybody already writes. They are supposed to fill the words in the erased gaps they guess or remember from the previous reading and listening. The TA helps Standa to translate it as well as to write the words correctly, while other pupils check it already in pairs. Then they read it aloud and control the answers altogether. Teacher walks around and checks few pupils’ correct spellings in the workbooks. When Standa finishes writing, he stares into space. The lesson is finished by explaining home work in Czech language. They become actors and will play the story themselves in pair. They are told that they can bring the ingredients with and take even the specific clothes from home to be authentic. However, they are allowed to make the theatre notes, hints which make it easier for them. They discuss the ideas and questions when school bell rings. Teacher thanks pupils for a good effort in their work assignments and leaves. The TA and Standa still sit and arrange the ideas for the home work. The TA underlines some sentences in the book and tells him to rewrite them on the pieces of paper for the next time.

### ***Lesson observation 2***

*Context.* I made time distance deliberately between the two observations. The second observation happened at the beginning of the second half of the school year when all the participants had had enough time to become accustomed to each other. This time the class 7.B stayed in their class room. It was the fifth lesson of the day. The main goals for the English lesson were to familiarize pupils with irregular verbs and revise forming questions in the past tense. The classroom was organized typically as in other classrooms in rows and Standa was seated with the TA Michal in the forth row near the door. The classroom has got a projector but the environment was very poor. The class consists of 13 pupils including Standa.

*Starter.* I spent the break with the teacher and the TA in their office and took part in their conversation about the lesson preparation. The teacher gave Michal some materials and cards with verbs and gave him some other instructions. He also told me where it would be convenient for me to sit. Me and the TA came to the classroom before the start of the lesson. The TA wanted to check whether Standa remembered to prepare books for the lesson. He forgot. Few other boys were running around the classroom, throwing some paper balls, and weren't ready either. The TA called attention to do this and took them the paper ball away. I found my place and prepared for the observation lesson, too.

*Plot.* The TA talks with a few pupils about the football match they played the day before; they are excited and eager to describe the match. Standa sits quietly listening to the conversation. Then the TA sits next to him and asks about his day. They talk a bit together.

*Ringin g for a lesson.* The teacher begins the lesson by informing the whole class about the aims and purpose of the lesson in the Czech language. Then he cooperates with the TA who helps him to rewrite some words on the board; he explains the first warm up activity "vyřazová k". It is obvious the pupils know the rules of this game and stand up. While they are playing it, the TA has finished the writing on the board where are English written verbs both regular and irregular past. Teacher explains some of the key concepts using the blackboard and calls the word in the Czech language; the pupils find them and add the correct endings of the past form, one by one. Standa is called on but doesn't know. The TA focuses quietly the subject matter about the grammar rule from the last lesson again and writes something on the paper; Standa is nodding his head. The TA prompts him to go to the board too, but unsuccessfully. The teacher identifies the rest of the verbs as irregular and asks pupils to work with the book and scan the text quickly to find the verbs of correct past form left on the board. The TA reads it for Standa quietly but anyway despite this effort they are still heard throughout the classroom. He always stops at the irregular verb word and asks the boy whether he sees it on the board or not. If he doesn't know, they continue. It seems that other pupils have got problems with this task, too. There is a slight noise and teacher finishes this activity. Most of the pupils are not able to scan the text not event to find the verbs. One boy from the back is throwing something and is told off. They go to read it together. Standa is pushed to follow the text with the finger. There is still murmur. The TA stands and circulates around the classroom, than he targets the two boys with dyslexia and asks them to follow the text with finger, too. He monitors while teacher reads. During the translation, the TA still monitors the class work. Standa has lost attention and is staring out of the window. TA returns

back to him and finds the reading words in the text. The next task is the same as previous, to find the irregular verbs and write it on the board next to the infinitive. Standa writes them in the exercise book with the TA's help. Then all pupils are supposed to do some written exercises alone; rewrite all words into two columns from the board. The TA explains it to Standa again and uses the visual cue cards with verbs helping Standa to fix it in memory. Teacher quietly moves from pupil to pupil, mainly checking that they have copied the words from the blackboard correctly. He focuses on the two pupils with disorder but on occasions he offers help to others. They check the task altogether. Standa has not managed to do it all. The TA writes the rest for him. The teacher with sigh finds out that they haven't done what they were supposed to do nevertheless at the end of the lesson they play the last game. Pupils are pleased; only Standa seems to be passive. The teacher uses the opportunity of the written verbs on the board and makes two rows of pupils. Standa participates. They contest who translates, finds and cross the word teacher calls, first. The TA just observes them from the side. They cheer each other. Despite the fact that Standa usually doesn't know the quick answer (the other fellows help him) he is sucked into game.

When the bell rings, the teacher finishes the lesson and tells them to memorise the irregular verbs for the next time and to do one exercise in the workbook. He writes it on the board and with wishing a good rest of the day leaves the room. The TA makes sure that Standa and the other two boys make a note.

### **Interview findings TA1**

*Role as a TA.* Štěpánka felt satisfied and thankful for the chance to work with the children. Her role included direct support of two pupils with SEN all at once. She agreed that it is responsible and sometimes under pressure work, especially because of the boy with behaviour problems. Her previous experience working with children in after school activity centre helped her a lot. She also added that great thanks belong to the school Vyšší odborná škola pedagogická, where she has been currently gaining essential knowledge and skills. Her job description was to support the pupils with SEN according to well defined practices and instructions in special education. Together with her competences in the work these were clearly noted in contract. She confessed that she did not mind working under the teacher supervision with her own instructions or different kind of help. They cleared up rules and a boundary of competences mutually. Besides this direct support, Štěpánka had the indirect role of TA, too. She had been writing the short reports every month about the progress of the two

pupils. And she sometimes helped with e.g. copying, cutting, decorating the classroom and so on when the teacher needed, that was beyond her competences. Besides supporting the SEN pupils in their ordinal class lessons, Štěpánka also supported Vanessa in Czech and Maths (or English and other when was needed) in withdrawal lessons for 5 hours a week. The boy Marek was not included in this extra individual plan support. Vanesa was taught the subjects according to IEP and it was always done under the teacher's supervision and instruction. The teacher and the TA were happy with this arrangement. Štěpánka saw the benefit of this individual assistance because the girl had not been disturbed by other classmates and vice versa; if working individually she was slightly more active than in ordinary lessons. Vanessa had a better connection to the discussed subject matter, more space for practice, explanation and re-explanation the curriculum. Štěpánka had the chance to get know the girl better during the time of individual teaching. It led them to better mutual communication. The possible disadvantage Štěpánka pointed at the time when Vanessa is singled out the class group for a certain number of hours. Moreover she complained that Marek would need his own individual support in the classroom of TA but there was a lack of such assistances in the system. As the most enjoyable aspect about being TA, Štěpánka emphasized the importance of help to these pupils; she confessed that she sometimes feels as an angel protecting the lost souls. The darker side of her work was the frustration when pupils with behavioural difficulties refused to work and when they used nasty words to other classmates who have to tolerate it. She also commented that there was a constant battle with time and that she had hardly time to go to the toilet herself. A great advantage she saw in starting her new career alongside a long experienced teacher who she got on well with.

*Liaison.* Liaising with the class teacher tended to be daily but informal, with whom she had a positive working relationship. Štěpánka commented that at the end of the week they would sometimes "sit down and have a chat Friday afternoons" with other two teachers from the staff. They had known each other cursorily before working together. She didn't see any professional neither personal barriers between them. However, when she had started to do this job, her only receiving support was from the class teacher and the knowledge gained from the current special school. She had also found discussions with other TAs about their work to be very reassuring but challenging. Her communication in school with teaching colleagues was generally formal, although there were occasions where teachers and TAs might meet after school for half an hour, every month. She stated that she attended pedagogical meetings which involve staying on beyond her contractual hours. She saw this as beneficial since,

“what the teachers need to know, we need to know anyway, because we support their teaching, we’d like to sort of know if things are changing”. On the other hand, she stressed the lack of time due to her extra-mural studies. There were meetings in the morning irregularly with the teacher and this allowed the only time for day planning. The feedback on the assistant work was also done randomly. She expressed dissatisfaction with this situation and felt that it could have an impact on the success of their teaching. She hoped it improves in the future. Another thing that bothered her was the unusual situation supporting two pupils in need. She had not thought before it would be so difficult to stand some situations such as behavioural disorder. She tried her best to act in a mild, gentle way with a calm voice because she became well aware about the pupils problems and her status. But she also confessed to difficulties to be in a positive mood for a whole of the time with endless patience. Štěpánka appreciated the good relationship with the class teacher very much. The most responsibilities were kept up to the teacher what Štěpánka was also glad for. She respected the teacher requirements and instructions she received. Her concentration was focused more on the girl with learning difficulties who she spent withdrawal time too. They got on well despite the fact that Vanessa’s behaviour was often quiet and not communicating. Štěpánka considered it was maybe because of the individual lessons and furthermore her enthusiasm to this work.

*Use in lesson.* The most effective part of the English support progress Štěpánka saw in the individual work with the girl and the more independent work of the boy in the classroom. According to her, the boy needed just to calm down his manner and encourage his appetite to studies. Thereafter he would be able to join most of the teaching activities. There was emphasised the awareness of the importance to change the teaching strategies, methods and forms promptly so that he could keep attention to the matter. As she added, “ it is fine in one lesson or in one particular subject but most of the time his manner disturbs teaching and learning process anyway and this is often for everybody very exhausting”.

Štěpánka was very pleased with the withdrawal support of Vanessa. She felt that she gained status in the school by this separate work that was guided by class teacher. The problem she solved was the approach facilitated independence to this girl. Despite of using different strategies in the classroom and much of an individual help, it did not succeed to deepen her interest. Vanessa had a great difficulty with Czech first language. The second language was much worse with only a slight progress. According to Štěpánka the girl was able to repeat the English words but could hardly remember them. She encouraged her to re-read sentences and to develop phonetic awareness a little bit. The only range of visual

materials and drawings sometimes caught her interest and attention. As the assistant, she was employed mostly in frontal, individual and a pair work support of teaching forms. There were extended her only competences she follows. The “distance” support to other pupils who need the help was let on the teacher’s responsibility. Furthermore, Štěpánka commented on the independence learning styles that she did not use the open questions so much and if any, it happened only in Czech language with explanation. And the teacher gave it up either. The girl was not call on so often by the teacher unlike the boy. The approach to these two pupils in need was very different.

Štěpánka considered that the assessment process was rather complicated too and required considerable explanation for both of the pupils, for example, when discussing a pupil’s assessment profile. She was writing a short report about their progress every month but the assessment profile was in teacher’s competences. In this respect, it would be helpful in providing an assessment summary sheet that would be transparent for everybody which Štěpánka found useful.

“Being a TA could be seen as an easy job”, she thought loudly with smile, “but the opposite is true. If we take into account the salary and the responsibility working often as a psychologist, the enthusiasm and love must win.”

## **Interview findings TA 2**

*Role as a TA.* Michal enjoyed his work and felt it was like a mission where he was making a genuine contribution towards helping pupils with special needs. He also felt that teachers, pupils as well as parents valued his work precisely. It had not been so at the beginning of his role. The role had changed in the two years of working as a TA in the same school but with a different teacher. As he stated, “nobody knew what to do”. The work alongside a female teacher in his first year as a TA, Michal felt that he had been rather passive, sitting and waiting to be told what to do. He remarked, “I remember not knowing, not daring to ask what should I do next. It is different now with Mr Šumera who I’ve been with from the beginning of the school year; we sort of know what each other’s thinking and where it is need to help, it is all about communication”. He continued that he was involved in much more useful way when necessary such as correcting exercise books of a whole class or preparing some exercises for the lesson according to teacher’s instructions that was far beyond his competences and he was enjoying it. His role also extended to facilitating a small group which he gave remedial English lessons in a withdrawal room to pupils who needed

additional support. Michal saw such support useful, pupils with need have their own space and an individual pace. He could feel the importance of his role and longed for continuing in studies to become a teacher. These challenges helped him to gain some experiences and appetite for reaching higher qualification in the future.

When Michal was asked about the contract and the competences he obtained, he was a bit disappointed. The fixed part-time job contract he got together with the conditions of performance and competences were very general and poor. Much of the information and knowledge had to be searched on the internet and in relevant literature, e.g. Metodika asistenta učitele.

Despite the fact that he knew nothing about the role of TAs two and half year ago, he had gained valuable experiences and skills since then alongside the English teacher who also gave him some positive feedback informally. The usual way of keeping up to date involved giving each other feedback after lessons, usually together with discussions over lunch in the school canteen. Michal agreed that it might not be a suitable place but the only suitable time for the teacher, usually being very busy.

When asked about the relation to the boy with SEN, he was a bit reserved. Although he knew that Standa was occupied with some difficulties in learning, he also provided the caveat that he saw his problems in his laziness, too. He acknowledged that Standa is used to the fact that his mother does everything for him. He was in contact with his mother regularly but things had not changed.

*Liaison.* Michal very appreciated the current good partnership with an English teacher who was also a man so it seemed to be easier to communicate on the same comprehensible level. But he also added, “Our relationship is still based on mutual professional respect with clear communication between us. Hardly any experiences and knowledge we both had at the beginning of the cooperation and we did not know what to expect. I was worried about his attitudes and sort of being careful not to step on his toes. Over time I learnt that he was nervous maybe more than I, because of my fluent English (Michal had been working abroad for a while, speaking English)”. However, Michal felt comfortable alongside the teacher and stated that his relationship with him was mutually supportive and with easy heart let the main responsibility and leadership role on the teacher. They liaised at break times but never after school. Although he was invited to particular staff meetings, he never attended because of, as he said a difficulty of commuting and particularly this would be in his own time in the



afternoons. Sharing valuable ideas he was opened to do in the staff room with other colleagues during the breaks or buzzy free hours. As was already said, Michal was used as a TA directly but also indirect way. He stated that he didn't mind doing this although it was beyond his competences. As he noted: "sometimes you feel as a servant for everything for minimum of the money but on the other hand you know your work is valued". He perceived it as a rewarding experience but desired for an equal role for the future.

Michal responded some difficulties in the supporting job he focused on the caveat. It depended upon each teacher variously whom he had to cooperate with during the other subjects, since every teacher worked differently. There typically was only the frontal teaching where Standa kept losing attention. His support was concentrated only on the boy individually and not on a group of pupils as in English lessons who surly would need his help too. Furthermore, the collaboration with other teachers was hardly any. This fact was picked as a great problem for a TA role.

*Use in lesson.* Providing support in English lesson was something Michal felt confident and comfortable to support even the older pupils on the second grade. On the other hand he felt less confident about how he might support the boy with SEN in other subjects in order to have different conditions in teaching strategies. However as Michal mentioned, supporting job in English classes in any kind of forms he considered as very challenging and useful work.

The pupils having generally major language or learning difficulties, Michal spent the time with them working on facilitating their skills, for example in writing, copying, reading or phonetics. As he confessed, he felt less confident about how he might support usefully at the beginning of his work with no advice but it changed with the running time. Supporting a particular pupil or others over the lesson in English impacted the type of prompts Michal was able to give the pupils who might require his help on occasions in the lesson. He preferred floating around the class rather than sitting with one. As he said he found such support working with the whole class more valuable than only with individuals. He recognised the importance of increasing all pupils independence. Unfortunately, he didn't know a lot about the impact of questioning that led him using the opened questions very seldom, with no aim. But as Michal added, Standa seemed to be interacting equally with other peers. He liked the nature of the teacher's intervention with paying attention to specific work and individual pace with various teaching methods and forms. Michal had the basic knowledge about the

importance of PPA (planning, preparation and assessment), as he stated, “not the strategies could work properly if we didn’t plan, prepare or organized the activities with class teacher in advance”. He considered that many of the approaches and strategies to use with pupils in developing their learning skills were quite helpful. Standa was assessed the same way as others by using oral assessment and marking but according to individual conditions. Michal suggested that it was very difficult to find the right motivation for the pupils, especially for Standa. Marking lost its point in this low-level class. The encouraging, oral prompting or another award came to better use. The variety of activities and easy interesting tasks were maybe helpful and enjoyable the most. As he said, “One thing might work with one child and it might not work with another so if you’ve got different ideas and things in your plan then you can try all sorts”. He felt equipped to implement the teaching activities and commented positively on how satisfying he found to see pupils in need make progress, knowing that he took some part in that.

In this chapter, the findings of observations and interviews have shown the TAs’ work and possible impact on the whole teaching process. They supported the integrated pupils alongside the class teachers and together they tried to achieve the full inclusion. In the following chapter, the implications of the research findings are evaluated and depending on that the hypotheses are confirmed or disproved.

## 5. IMPLICATIONS

As the basis of my research providing educational interventions with TAs support, I suggested three hypotheses. I analysed the result findings of each hypothesis in relation to the aim leading to the effective use of TA in the classroom.

**H 1** The teaching assistant and the class teacher choose appropriate strategies they plan in advance; they spend time engaging in shared planning to fine tune programmes and make necessary adjustments that significantly help pupils with SEN during an English lesson.

*TA1* managed to find a suitable approach supporting two pupils with SEN at once, despite the initial mistakes and groping. Together with the class teacher they planned some of the activities in advance, in the mornings or afternoons or sometimes at the end of the week informally. During the English lesson the teacher changed the teaching strategies, methods and forms when needed. The TA helped the teacher directly as well as in indirect forms preparing the activities. They chose such activities that the pupils with SEN could at least partially perform with other pupils. There were available different kinds of pictures, visual materials such as flashcards, vocabulary words and other pictures for visual memory fixing in the individual work. The two pupils with SEN were part of the teaching process, with its organizational teaching forms and methods. In spite of the boy's behaviour difficulties they all found the way of collaborating with each other. The boy was integrated into the grouping activities much more sufficiently than the girl. That means that the supporting work with the girl was led often in an individual tune. The girl required very direct, individual support. However, the TA communicated with the class teacher very actively during the lesson so the pupils with SEN could join most, not every of the teaching activities. The lesson unit was emphasised the awareness of the importance to change the teaching styles promptly so that the pupils could be stimulated into keeping attention to the matter. I also found quite useful thing among other didactic materials, the playing carpet where the pupils could relax, especially the boy with SEN who used it very often.

Part of the teaching strategies in English lessons was the withdrawal teaching of the girl with learning difficulties also supported by the TA. The TA had a positive influence on her, particularly psychologically (she was not stressed, she was praised, she was not in

pressure). They plan the lesson carefully with the teacher and they both found this kind of teaching very useful. The TA and the class teacher had a good mutual liaison.

Thanks to the teacher's professional approach and the TA's patient, conscientious support, the pupils could be integrated with the classroom all at once just with slight problems.

TA2 was sharing the time with the class teacher during the breaks before or after the lesson due to the planning, evaluating teaching or solving problems. The TA put emphasis on the repeated explanations of the curriculum, respecting the individual pace of the supported pupil. The extent of the boy's work was also smaller than others. He was better focused on activity, paying attention on tasks with better results. The teacher and the TA consulted the work before each lesson. The teacher kept coordinating the teaching process as well as the TA and used the benefits of tandem teaching and learning. On the base of this consultation, the TA prepared the appropriate didactic materials for the activities that helped the boy in better memorizing the vocabulary or phrases and motivated him in other work.

Working in partnership helped the lessons to be much more effective. It involved the procedures smoothly. The teacher together with the TA incorporated the various teaching forms, the teaching strategies, movement, and interaction in order to avoid disruptions of the lessons. The teaching forms were changed continuously from frontal, individual to group work teaching with the TA active support. Alongside the class teacher, the TA helped to stimulate and monitor the teaching process towards achieving the goals and objectives.

The cooperation of the TA and the teacher was an important condition for the education of integrated pupils. They consulted the assessment of the integrated pupil, selected appropriate activities, appropriate motivation, managed to incorporate pupils with SEN among mainstream pupils as much as possible. **This research thesis was confirmed positively in both cases, on the first (TA1) or secondary (TA2) grade.**

**H 2** The TA effectively assists the teacher and does not support pupils with SEN the whole English lesson; TA promotes independence and active involvement of pupils in the activities carried out in English.

TA1 gave the pupils constant support of individual help. Obviously the boy with behavioural disorder performed during the lesson more independently and received less learning support than the girl with learning difficulties. She was more dependent on the TA's

help. Interaction was also often aimed at over-prompting and spoon-feeding, with the TA's repetition what the teacher says. Also the TA's questioning was not much skilful using closed questions in Czech language. However, the concentration and sensitivity of the TA was impressive how to face and control the mild anger of the boy. It was respected the pupils pace and amount of completed tasks according to IEP.

*TA2* officially supporting only the boy with learning difficulties, was guided appropriately by the class teacher to assist and offer support to other pupils who needed. These pupils also received very good support during the English lesson from the TA alongside the teacher. He gave all pupils regular periods of individual help and on occasions also worked with groups if needed. He was not static. This good provision made a significant impact on the pupils' attainment despite the fact that the pupils in the classroom were on a very low English level. The TA often floated around the class so as to be available for all pupils who needed his support and not only for the pupil with SEN. The body language (physical contact, hand and eye movements) during this support of other pupils ensured the better pupils' attention, as it highlighted the class concentration on the task. The SEN boy was not fully dependent on the TA although there were situations when the TA had to sit back quickly and activate the boy's attention again. In doing so he enabled the pupil to complete a simple task with right amount of support at the right time. In such teaching and learning the TA helped to enable the pupil's independent thinking, having own space and response of time. The SEN pupil was not let to get away with not completing the task he was capable of.

Both TAs were actively working alongside the class teachers, supporting the pupils with SEN focused on activating pupils' attention but only one of them promoted independence and involvement carried out in English. **This research thesis was confirmed just partly, the first case of the TA1 didn't fully come up with the hypothesis.**

**H 3** When TA supporting pupils with SEN, the class teacher tends to have the equivalent interactions with all pupils and the extent of attention is the same with SEN pupils as well as the others.

*TA1*. Due to the TA's tandem support, there was evident that the class teacher very actively collaborated with the TA and mutually working with the SEN pupils. Nevertheless these interactions were not equal to each of the SEN pupil. The boy with behavioural disorder surely received much more the teacher's attention than the girl with learning difficulties. The

girl's contact with the teacher declined and due to the individual TA's direct support, was the interaction less active between the class teacher and the girl in need. Moreover performing the tasks the TA with the SEN pupils were working on, was not verified by the teacher straight away during the lesson. It was not clear whether the pupils understood the matter or were sufficiently mastered. The TA was employed with fully responsibilities to work individually with the pupil with special educational needs.

TA2 who worked with not only one pupil was given the general classroom responsibilities and opportunity for the pupil with learning difficulties to interact with the teacher more often. The class teacher having more pupils with IEP worked with all pupils equally with equivalent interactions.

However, not all pupils supported by the TAs had regular contact with the class teachers, even though it is central to the whole principle of inclusion and should be supported by the TA as well as the teacher equally. **Not the last research thesis was fully confirmed, there was only one case that fulfilled the hypothesis.**

### **Recommendations**

TA is a person whose performance can be influenced by various factors and moments. Pupils as well as teachers and TAs have their needs such as a sense of security, recognition, and self-realization.

Recommendations are made related to the results of examined teaching models and their effectiveness, which takes into account the role of TA in the classrooms and the role of teachers managing TAs.

The inclusion and effective use of TAs in English lessons must ensure that all pupils are involved as much as possible. The teacher must clear up the rules and TA must respect them. They should be in a good partnership to find the best way of involving the SEN pupils. They cooperate mutually, organize the lesson preparation, discuss the common practices and complement each other during the lesson. It is necessary to prepare the lesson in such a way that the assigned tasks and the curriculum correspond to the teaching aims and IEP of the SEN pupils. Working with the whole class should always have a priority over individual (separate) work. The teacher should have equal contact with the whole class with integrated pupils. Also verification of pupils' knowledge (vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar etc.), either written or oral, should take place with the whole class commonly and no matter

whether TA is present. TA promotes the SEN pupils their independence and active involvement in learning according the class teacher's supervision.

There should be sufficiently clarified the ways in which TAs are deployed or supported in any of the subjects. Establishing a well-defined role for TA is highly important and it increases the efficiency of teaching (see Table 1). A clearly established role determines decisions about initial training, deployment within the school community and continuing professional development. If pupils and teachers are to be well supported, TAs need to understand what is required of them and how those requirements may be met.

Furthermore on the basis of the research results, I suggest the following recommendations that show the TA's effective deployment according to the school policy:

- teachers are responsible for the overall success of the teaching strategies and techniques as well as English teaching and learning progress of all pupils;
- TAs keep regular contact with those who may need help but they do not sit with a pupil throughout a lesson;
- withdrawing pupils from class for individual lessons, teachers and TAs adopt a flexible approach to this issue, they find the best way of the support and are responsive to pupils' wishes, they also create appropriate scaffolding for this process;
- have a time for day-to-day planning meetings when the TA could give feedback to and receive advice from the teacher
- teachers and other school staffs who are positive about the work of TAs in classrooms, provide TAs with a pleasant environment and professional behaviour;
- TAs do not substitute the teachers' s work, they just complement the teaching process;
- teacher attention is equal to all pupils (also to pupils with need) during the English lesson, those pupils in need should receive more of teachers' time rather than less.

## 6. CONCLUSION

As described in the theoretical background section of this thesis, teacher assistances have a crucial role in the inclusion. Development of their roles and the way in which intervention are implemented in the classroom is in relation to the quality of teaching and continuity of the support. The greater sense of responsibility TA has, the greater degree of sustainability is facilitated. Teachers are now faced with some new challenges associated with inclusive education. Together with the TAs they should be able to work with pupils with a variety of disabilities, present them in a suitable way, and at last but not least, they should be able to work in tandem and collaborate in the team. They all need to increase their knowledge about inclusion in generally, consult new methodological practices, strategies, methods or forms of appropriate teaching pupils with SEN.

Regarding the research results, only one hypothesis from three was fully confirmed. This statement clearly validates a good mutual partnership and collaborating in any cases. The problems arise in particular phases of the effective inclusive teaching. The research shows when TA is present and is static in a place, the amount of teaching process increases but the amount of interaction between teachers and individual pupils with SEN goes down. Some of the pupils in need missed out on interactions with the teacher (and also contact with the mainstream class) during the English lessons. The pupils are more depended on TA's support. I believe that this has a less than positive consequence and one that might hinder pupils' academic progress.

Obviously the TAs' supports depend on the kind of pupil's disorder or learning difficulties. There is no dispute that TAs have positive effects in terms of providing pupils with more individual attention and increasing participation in classroom activities, but the downside was that the amount of interaction pupils had with teachers tended to decline when TAs were present. Each of these pupils required a completely different approach from both the TA and the teacher. Therefore, solving individual situations cannot be generalized because every child is an individual personality and everyone has to come to an individual approach. It is important for teachers and TAs to have a positive relationship, patience and knowledge about strategies with appropriate selection of activities, perhaps these things the most important to work with.



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## APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

### Interview schedule for Teaching Assistant

Interview place:

Name(s):

Date:

Title:

**Roles and responsibilities:** clear what responsibilities there are/ any non-TAs responsibilities

**Contracts:** fixed-term/permanent; proportion of pupil contact time/ planning/training

**Job descriptions:** whether you have a job description/competences/specifics; group/1to1 placement; linked to subject curriculum development/individual plan

**Courses/qualifications:** what you have done; what you are doing now; what you will do/would like to do

**Management and support – relationships:** management (class teachers, TA, parents); monitoring and forms of assessment

**Classroom practice:** ways of working in the classroom strategies (e.g. - 1 to 1, small group, whole class, observation); teaching styles that support your work most effective ways of working from your point of view; encouraging independent learning - best ways to do it

**Collaboration with teachers/planning:** how often; who with; what about; where; are you told what to do/ do you choose; feeling about this

**Contributions and attitudes** etc.; eg meetings with others, mix in staffroom/socially outside school/spend break-times; sharing ideas and experiences; status

### Appendix: TA interview questions schedule, Hořovice, December 2016

#### A. Introduction/background

Name

Qualifications

Becoming a TA

How long a TA

Training in general

English knowledge in general

### *B. Role as a TA*

Is it current/direct/indirect role in the classroom?

What or who has helped you in your developing role?

Clearly defined competences/ deployment/ following instructions and supervision

What aspects of role are most enjoyable/ challenging?

How have you approached to pupil with SEN?

Any frustrations/tensions do you feel in relation to the position?

How do you see your role alongside teacher?

### *C. Liaison*

Formal x Informal

Opportunities to liaise: with other teaching staff/ with parents

Were you offered any professional help/recommendation/advice?

What do you particularly like?

Is there anything that you don't think works well?

How does the class teacher react to your presence?

How useful/helpful/ do you see working alongside the class teacher?

When and how often do you find time for joint planning and feedback?

Any dark falling on class climate/difficulties/leadership role?

### *D. Use in lesson*

What would constitute the most effective part of the English support progress?

In what ways/how are you involved in English support now? Strategies/ methods/ forms -one to one support, group support, combination/ withdrawal support/ planning/ instructions/ preparing and assessment time

Do you get some instructions about the teacher's organizational teaching forms and methods in advance? (lexical/ visual/skill-practice/activating teaching methods and frontal/ pair/group/individual work forms)

Do you follow up recommendations and rules on the base of the effective support of TAs in everyday classroom contexts?

What aspects of support in English lessons do you feel most challenging?

Who takes the responsibility for leading tasks, interventions/asses tasks?

Do you also give support from a distance? Help to others/floating around the class

Do you promote independent thinking? Open up/ close down questions/ in Czech/English language/stereo-teaching, spoon feeding?

## PŘÍLOHA 1: SCHÉMA ROZHOVORU

### Schéma rozhovoru pro Asistenta Pedagoga

Místo rozhovoru:

Jméno (y):

Datum:

Název:

**Role a odpovědnosti:** vysvětlíte, jaká je Vaše role spojená s odpovědností práce AP/ případně ty, které nespádají do odpovědnosti Vaší práce

**Smlouvy:** doba určitá/neurčitá; podíl času kontaktu se žákem/a bez, plánování / průprava

**Popis práce:** dostali jste popis práce / kompetence / specifika; skupinu / pouze jednoho žáka; popis související s výukou předmětu / individuálním plánem

**Kurzy / kvalifikace:** co jste dělal; co teď děláte; co budete / chtěli byste dělat

**Řízení a podpora - vztahy:** vedení (třídní učitelé, AP, rodiče); monitorování a formy hodnocení

**Práce ve třídě:** způsoby práce a strategie výuky (např. – pouze s jedním žákem, malá skupina, celá třída, pozorování); učební styly, které podporují Vaši práci/ neúčinnější způsoby práce z Vašeho pohledu; podpora nezávislého učení - nejlepší způsob, jak na to

**Spolupráce s učiteli / plánování:** jak často; kdo s kým; o čem; kde; je Vám řečeno co dělat / vybíráte si; jaké máte z toho pocity

**Přínosy a postoje** atd.; např. setkání s ostatními členy pedagogického sboru, scházení se ve sborovně / společensky mimo školu / čas strávený v práci; sdílení nápadů a zkušeností; postavení

### Příloha: Schéma otázek k pohovoru AP, Hořovice, prosinec 2016

#### A. Úvod

Jméno

Kvalifikace

Jak jste se stal AP

Jak dlouho vykonáváte AP

Obecná průprava

Znalost anglického jazyka

## B. *Role AP*

Je to Vaše běžná / přímá / nepřímá role ve třídě?

Co Vám nebo kdo Vám pomohl v rozvoji Vaší role AP?

Definujte Vaše kompetence/ zařazení / následné instrukce a dohled

Jaké stránky role AP jsou nejpříjemnější / náročné?

Jak jste se sblížil se žákem se SVP?

Cítíte nějaké frustrace / napětí vzhledem k této pozici?

Jak vidíte svou roli vedle učitele?

## C. *Spolupráce*

Formální x Neformální

Příležitosti spolupráce: s ostatními učiteli / s rodiči

Byla Vám nabídnuta nějaká odborná pomoc / doporučení / rady?

Co se Vám konkrétně líbí?

Je něco, co si myslíte, že nefunguje dobře?

Jak třídní učitel reaguje na Vaši přítomnost?

Jak prospěšnou/ užitečnou / práci vidíte vedle třídního učitele?

Kdy a jak často najdete čas pro společné plánování a zpětnou vazbu?

Nějaké stinné stránky / potíže / vedoucí role ve třídě?

## D. *Využití v hodinách*

Jaký postup by byl nejúčinnější jako pomoc podpory angličtiny?

Jakým způsobem se momentálně podílíte na podpoře angličtiny? Strategie / metody / formy - individuální, skupinová, podpora v kombinaci / mimo třídu / plánování / pokyny / příprava a hodnocení

Dostanete předem nějaké organizační instrukce o formě výuky a výukových metodách? (frontální výuka/párová / skupinová / individuální a výukové metody lexikální / vizuální / dovednostní / aktivizační)

Dodržujete doporučení a pravidla na základě dané podpory AP v kontextu každodenní práce se žákem se SVP?

Jaké aspekty podpory výuky angličtiny cítíte, že jsou nejnáročnější?

Kdo má odpovědnost za dané úkoly, zásahy / hodnocení?

Podporujete výuku také z povzdálí? Pomáháte i ostatním žákům, nejen žákovi se SVP/ pohybujete se volně po třídě?

Podporujete samostatné myšlení? Otevřené / zavřené otázky, v českém / anglickém jazyce, stereo-výuka, podsouvané/nesamostatné učení?

## APPENDIX 2: OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Sheet for observation during an English lesson		
<i>all the participants' collaboration</i>	<i>the rules setting of mutual cooperation</i>	<i>convenient classroom management</i>

Independent Learning			
√ X	ENCOURAGING IL	√ X	INHIBITING IL
	taking risks with pupils independent thinking, learning		not allow enough thinking
	right amount of support at right time		priority to complete task
	support the response of time		'Stereo-teaching' (repeating what the teacher says)
	responsibility for pupils learning		over-prompting and spoon-feeding
	use of open-ended questions		use of closed questions too much

TA's strategies that encourage and inhibit independent learning