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

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Abstract

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The diploma work is interested in criteria of effective vocabulary practice, specifically those preferred by Czech teachers of English language. The work is divided into two parts; the first part introduces the topic from the theoretical point of view and the second one is dealing with the practical research.

The theoretical part is divided into four parts. The first part is explaining what a word is and what we need to know about a word to use it properly. Next part is dealing with vocabulary, its definitions and difficulties when teaching it. Another part describes four language skills and their connection to vocabulary learning and practice. The last part contains descriptions of individual vocabulary teaching strategies. The last two parts also contains ideas and tips for teachers on how to practice and teach vocabulary.

The practical part in the form of the research is divided into three parts. The first one explains the form of the research, which is a questionnaire, reasons for choosing this form of the research and also describes researched subjects. The second part is dealing with interpretations of the results. The third part explains contributions of the research and its limitations.

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Introduction

When learning another language, one of the key components to be able to successfully communicate in the given language is vocabulary. The main issue with vocabulary and vocabulary teaching is how to help learners remember words for as long as possible and use them effectively. There are many approaches like teaching words in a context or out of it, teaching vocabulary implicitly or explicitly (i. e. spend some time in the lesson only with focus on vocabulary or let learners learn new words without deliberately pointing them out). The main task of this work is to determine which strategies and approaches are effective when dealing with vocabulary.

The theoretical background of the work deals with a description of a word, as it is the basic unit of vocabulary. All the individual components that are necessary to know the word are described. The next part is interested in the theory of vocabulary teaching and learning. Together with a definition of vocabulary it focuses on difficulties of vocabulary learning, which serves later for the analysis of the results of the research. It also comments on the topic of memory, as it is one of the main factors that influence vocabulary learning and several strategies used in the research work with mnemonic techniques. The following chapter deals with four language skills and their connection to vocabulary learning and practice. It emphasizes differences in approach when teaching vocabulary through different language skills together with implications how to adapt vocabulary learning strategies to individual needs of learners. The last part of the theoretical background is a description of vocabulary learning strategies. Strategies described in this chapter are used in the research. This part also provides ideas of how to use language learning strategies in a class.

To answer the research question, a questionnaire was used as a research tool. This questionnaire is described in the beginning of the practical part, mainly to explain the choice of it and to introduce its parts. It also comments on the choice of subjects of the research. Then the analysis of results follows, which provides material to answer the research question, and comments on these results together with possible explanations of outcomes of the questionnaire. The research was given to English language teachers trying to determine which of the strategies described are used by nowadays teachers and which of them they consider effective.

The topic of the work was chosen because nowadays many learners are reluctant to learn vocabulary deliberately. With an instant access to online dictionaries and translations on phones or tablets, it has become more difficult to motivate students to learn vocabulary.

Therefore the work tries to find a solution in establishing criteria for effective vocabulary learning and practice that could be used to motivate students more and also help them learn words faster and remember them for a longer time.

1 A Word

Before dealing with vocabulary and learning strategies, we have to take a look at the definition of a word. In this part we will deal with a question What is a word? It will be described from several points of view. We will take a look on all the components of a word, from receptive and productive point of view, trying to determine which of them are necessary to know to learn a word and remember it.

Definition of a word

As a basic unit of a language, the term word can be defined in several different ways based on a point of view. Lexicology as a branch of linguistics that deals with words defines the term word in three following ways (Lipka, 1992):

- phonological/orthographical point of view - every word is consisted of sounds, letters and syllables, it is a particular form of a word in a text (speech) = we talk about word-forms
- grammatical point of view - each word can be defined as a part of speech with different grammatical categories (e.g. with nouns we talk about case, number, countability and gender, with verbs we talk about person, tense, aspect, mood and voice)
- word as an abstract unit - in this case we talk about lexemes - a unit of lexical meaning which includes a set of word forms

For a better explanation we can take a word *man* and explain it from all three points of view. From phonological point of view it is a word consisted of three different letters m, a and n combined into one syllable. It is formed by three sounds - m, æ, n. From a grammatical point of view it is a common concrete countable noun in its singular form. Other words can be derived from the word *man* - for example the plural form *men*, which differs from its singular form from both phonological and orthographical point of view. As an abstract unit, there are several definitions for the word *man*. For example Cambridge online dictionary defines *man* as - an adult human being, a male employee, a male servant (old fashioned), a husband or male sexual partner (informal), etc (Cambridge dictionary). Even though the word has the same form from both phonological/orthographical and grammatical points of view, it can have different meaning as an abstract unit.

What is needed to know a word

When teaching individual words or set of words, teaching its semantic meaning is not enough. Students need to know how to spell the word, how to write and pronounce it correctly and also collocations are important, so the learners would use the word in appropriate situations. We distinguish two types of knowledge - receptive and productive (Nation, 1990). Receptive knowledge means that learners know the word when they see it written or when they hear it, it also means they know what grammatical pattern the word occur in (for example they know that the verb *give* is followed by an object). Productive knowledge extends receptive knowledge, learners knows how to spell the word, write it and pronounce it, how to use it in correct grammatical patterns (how to use the word in a sentence correctly). It also includes the knowledge of how frequent the word is and which other words can we use to substitute it. As far as the language skills are concerned, productive knowledge includes speaking and writing, receptive knowledge includes reading and listening. Based on all of the above, we can distinguish the knowledge of a word as follows (Nation, 1990, p.31):

Table 1

Aspects of the knowledge of a word

	Receptive knowledge	Productive knowledge
Form		
Spoken Form	How does the word sound like?	How is the word pronounced?
Written Form	What does the word look like?	How is the word written and spelled?
Position		
Grammatical patterns	In what patterns does the word occur?	In what patterns must we use the word?
Collocations	What words can be expected before or after the word?	What words must we use with this word?
Function		
Frequency	How common is the word?	How often should the word be used?

Appropriateness	Where could we expect to meet this word?	Where can this word be used?
Meaning		
Concept	What does the word mean?	What word should be used to express this meaning?
Associations	What other words does this word make us think of?	What other words could we use instead of this one?

When teaching vocabulary, we do not list all of the information about a given word and give them to learners. First of all they learn the form and meaning, and as the time progress and learners come across the word more often, they learn the collocations and frequency of the word. We develop vocabulary during our whole life. The language changes constantly, words get new meanings, their frequency changes (new words replace older ones), therefore it is important to keep our learners aware of all of the four areas listed above. The difficulty of learning a word is determined by three aspects (Nation, 1990) - the learner's previous experience of English and their mother tongue, the way in which the word is learned or taught, and intrinsic difficulty of a word (difficulties caused by the word itself, not by patterns or regularity). That applies to all of the areas of "knowing" the word. For example form of the word, we can come across the word that learners already know, but the stress is different with different meaning (e.g. verbs and nouns - *a present/to present*), or meaning of the word. There are some words which are identical/similar in form in both English and Czech language, but the meaning is different (e.g. sympatický – sympathetic, both of these words look the same so it can be supposed that the meaning is also identical, but in fact these words have different meanings).

2 Vocabulary learning

Now that we are familiar with definitions of a word, we can take a closer look on vocabulary as a whole. This section explains what vocabulary is, why it is important to learn it, but on the other hand why it is also difficult. The issue of how much vocabulary learners need to know is also discussed. The topic of memory is connected with difficulties in learning vocabulary; therefore it is also included in this section.

The importance of learning vocabulary

In language teaching, there are two important areas learners need to know to communicate effectively and properly: vocabulary and grammar. Alquahtani (2015) says, that "vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners, because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication" (p. 22). Even though there are approaches to language teaching, which say that acquiring vocabulary should be a natural process and therefore there is no need to teach it (Nation, 1990), intentional vocabulary teaching helps us to give learners the vocabulary they need, because "the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second language" (Nunan, 1991). Knowing the language and being able to use it is connected with knowing vocabulary. When we learn new words, we are able to use the language and vice versa, if we are able to use the language, we are able to learn new words. In Macaro (2003) proved by his survey, that "secondary language teachers view vocabulary as a topic they most need research to shed a light on to enhance the teaching and learning in their classroom", which only emphasizes its importance and need to be researched.

Definition of vocabulary

Before defining vocabulary, it is important to realize that vocabulary does not include only individual words and their meaning, but also chunks of language as set phrases and even the whole sentences (e.g. *It's nice to meet you.* - as a sentence that we consider as a formal phrase with one meaning). Another issue is that vocabulary does not deal only with the meaning of the words, but also with how vocabulary in a language is structured (Adger, 2002). Neuman & Dwyer (2009) defines vocabulary as "words we must know to communicate effectively - words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptive vocabulary)" (p. 385). Expressive vocabulary are the words we know and actively use, receptive vocabulary are the words we are familiar with, but we do not use them in our own speech or writing - therefore receptive vocabulary is typically larger then expressive vocabulary. We can notice that Nation uses the term *productive,*

whereas Neuman & Dwyer use the term *expressive*. For purposes of this work the term *productive* will be preferred and used. Padua and Hanson (2011) speaks about word recognition and word meaning, word recognition is "the reader's ability to pronounce or figure out the word by using word attack strategies" (p. 5), word meaning includes all the words learners are able to define.

That brings us to a question - what amount of vocabulary we need to teach students, so they would be able to communicate effectively. Counting the exact number is not possible. As mentioned in the previous section, for example the word *take* may have several meaning, e.g. in phrases *take a look, take a photo, take care* etc. Should we consider this as one meaning or more? The same could be applied to conversions, when we for example change the verb *run* into a noun *running*. Despite these difficulties with determining the amount of existing words, it is estimated that a native speaker knows between 12,000 and 20,000 word families, depending on their education (Goulden, Nation & Read, 1990). Word family "consists of a base word and all its derived and inflected forms that can be understood by a learner without having to learn each form separately" (Bauer & Nation, 1993, p. 253). According to this the example mentioned above (*run* and *running)* would be considered as one word family. Furthermore Nation (1993) suggests that young second language learners should learn about 1,000 words (not word families) per year, which means about 3 words per day.

Difficulties in learning vocabulary

Simply put, the difficulty of learning a word is how much effort we need to acquire it and remember it. Nation (1990) says, that it depends on three things, learner's previous experience in English and their mother tongue, the way in which the word is learned or taught and an intrinsic difficulty of the word. The second one will be discussed in next sections, therefore only the first and the last one will be dealt with for now.

Learner's previous experience can have both, positive and negative impact on vocabulary acquisition. A word that has the same form and meaning in both English and Czech is usually easy to learn and remember (e.g. tornado – tornádo), on the other hand words with the same form but different meaning may be confusing for learners (billion – miliarda x trillion – bilión). There are several areas where we can observe these difficulties. First of all in spoken forms, words including sounds which are the same or similar in English and Czech are easier to remember than words with sounds unfamiliar to a Czech speaker. A typical example would be the sound θ (as in "think") and ð (as in

"mo<u>the</u>r"). The easiest way to deal with this issue is to introduce difficult words in early stages of learning and as learners become more familiar with these sounds, they will make fewer problems for them. Another area is a written form, but as English and Czech use the same script, the only problem could be irregular spelling of a word, therefore it is important to always explain reasons for different spelling and eventually create analogies to already known words. Next issue could be a grammatical pattern of a word, for example words "talk" and "discuss". It is helpful for students to know that these words have similar meaning and moreover the word "discuss" is the same as the Czech word "diskutovat". The problem here is that both words have different grammatical patterns, "talk about something" and "discuss something" (whereas in Czech the preposition about is kept in both cases – "mluvit o něčem, diskutovat o něčem"). Appropriateness of a word could also cause some difficulties, as learners can use less appropriate or polite word. We can use a Czech word "toaleta" as an example. It is a word acceptable to use during social events, on the other hand in English the word "toilet" is substituted by the word "bathroom" as a more appropriate one. Learners who are not aware of this could get into some uncomfortable socially unacceptable situations. Looking at all the issues above confirms what we discussed in the previous chapters. It is important to teach not only meaning, but also spelling, pronunciation, collocations, use of a word etc.

Intrinsic difficulty comprises difficulties caused by the word itself, not by patterns or regularity. Rodgers (1969) researched that the difficulty of learning a word can be caused by a part of speech it belongs to. He claims that nouns and adjectives are easier to learn than verbs and adverbs. That could be caused by the fact that nouns are easier to guess from the context than for example adverbs. There is also a difference whether we want learners to recognize the word or to produce it, which is proved by the fact that receptive vocabulary of any speaker is larger than their productive vocabulary. Unlike other difficulties, the intrinsic one is more difficult to deal with in class and there is not much that teachers could do about it (dealing with difficult words is explained in section 4).

Laufer (1989) discusses another factor which may cause difficulties, called deceptive transparency. Transparency of a word, or its motivation, means that a word is phonologically, morphologically or semantically similar to another word. That includes not only similarities of the words of one language, but also similarities among words of different languages. Deceptive transparency means that learners may think that the word is motivated, but it actually is not. For example the word "outline" may seem

morphologically motivated as a combination of words "out of the line", which is not true. Another example of deceptive transparency are so called "false friends", words that seem to be semantically motivated and similar in two languages, but their meanings do not correspond (examples we already used – "sympathetic", "billion"). Synforms, similar lexical forms, could also cause problems to learners. That includes words like economic/economical, price/prize, conceal/cancel. There are two ways that synforms can confuse learners, first of them is when learners know one of the words, but not properly, and then the other one looks identical to him. The second one is when learners knows both of the forms, but again not properly, and then he may not be sure which form to associate with which meaning. Laufer researched that students make more errors when it comes to deceptively transparent words than when they deal with non-transparent words.

The role of memory

Unlike grammar, which is a system and can be learned by following its rules, learning vocabulary is mostly memorizing it. Therefore there is a huge influence of human's memory on how successfully we remember a word. Thornbury (2002) claims that researchers distinguish three different types of memory – short-term memory, long-term memory and working memory.

Short-term memory, also referred to as short-term store, is "the retention of small amounts of information over brief time intervals" (Baddeley, 2000, p.77). In vocabulary learning it means that learners are able to remember a word after a teacher says it and can repeat it. Learners are able to hold a word in thier memory for a short period of time without deeply processing it. Some learners are able to learn quite extensive amount of words right before a test, but they forget them as quickly as they learned them. For a successful vocabulary learning we need learners to process the word and store it into long-term memory.

Working memory is described as "focussing on a word long enough to perform operations on it" (Thornbury, 2002, p. 23). It is a link between a place where a word is stored when we hear it for the first time and a long-term memory. It includes processes like analysing, learning and understanding a word. It is based on a process of repetition, and as it transfers new words into long-term memory, it creates spaces in short-term memory for new words to be memorised.

Long-term memory is described by Baddeley (2000) as a type of memory with a huge capacity and its content lasts over a long period of time. To achieve a transfer of a

word from short-term memory to long-term memory Thornbury (2002) suggests several principles we should follow. First of them is a *repetition*, but mainly a repetition of a word in context, not only a word standing on its own. *Retrieval* is a kind of repetition, where we want learners to recall the word and when they successfully do that several times, they are more likely to recall the word again. *Spacing* means we should not teach large blocks of vocabulary at one time, but rather across a longer period of time. *Pacing* emphasizes different needs of each student and every one of them needs a different amount of time to remember a word, therefore a different pacing. *Use* means that for a successful remembering a word, we need learners to use it in authentic situations as many times as possible. *Cognitive depth* means how much learners know about a word and how much they think about it – what words it rhymes with, what part of speech it is, how to use it in a sentence etc. *Personal organizing* is how much learners use the word on their own – it is better when they read a word aloud then just silently, it is also better when they use a word in their own sentences then just use those in a book. *Imaging* help learners remember a word by visualizing a word in their minds, even if it is an abstract word. *Mnemonics* are helpful tools that help us remember a word when it is not recalled automatically (e. g. a word *enervate* – if you *never eat,* you are *enervated* – we recombine the letters and spell a different phrase to help learners remember it). One of the most important factors in remembering a word is *motivation* – more motivated learner spends more time remembering it (as he/she wants to remember the word for a long time, he/she deliberately spends more time learning it), and *attention* – you cannot remember a word by just listening to it without paying any attention. The last principle is *affective depth*. Unlike cognitive, which requires deep knowledge of a word, affective is more personal. Learners are more likely to remember a word when they like how it sounds or associate a word with pleasant or unpleasant feelings.

A factor of forgetting words is also connected with memory. Thornbury (2002) estimates that up to 80 percent of material is forgotten within 24 hours. Forgetting a word may be caused by several reasons. Learners did not have enough time to process a word in working memory, by learning new words they forget older ones and remembering a large amount of words in a short time may also have a negative impact. All of these factors can be minimalized by reviewing the learned material, ideally in a different way than when they met the word for the first time.

3 Vocabulary and language skills

Following section is interested in individual language skills and their relation to vocabulary. As it was mentioned before, there are four language skills. Two of them are receptive, reading and listening, and two of them are productive, speaking and writing. For learners it is important to develop all four of these skills, therefore we have to explain how to connect vocabulary with teaching language skills.

Vocabulary and reading

The advantage of using reading as a tool for practicing vocabulary is the possibility of simplifying texts to adapt their difficulty to the learners' level. We can start with a text that includes familiar words and short sentences and then advance into texts with words unknown to learners and also more complex sentences. Vocabulary is also considered as one of the most important components of reading, as Yap (1979) states there is a connection between vocabulary and reading comprehension as it being its predominant factor. Carter and McCarthy (1988) suggest that there are other sources of information that can be used, when learners have insufficient knowledge of vocabulary, and that is learning from the context. Nation (1990) supports this by describing learning from context as "undoubtedly the most important vocabulary learning strategy" (p.130). Therefore our goal while teaching and practicing vocabulary should also be developing this skill, as it helps learners to work with texts with unfamiliar words.

Another strategy is to ignore the unknown words – Freebody and Anderson (1983) found out that learners skip unfamiliar words when they know these words are not necessary to know to finish the given task. If we want to support this strategy, we can do some pre-reading tasks as giving students some questions about the text and then they skip unknown words for purpose, when they know these words are not part of the answer we wanted.

When we do not want to interrupt reading for vocabulary explanation, we can preteach these words in advance, but in this case Nation (1990) suggests not reading the text right after teaching new words, but to do some more activities with the words, so learners would have an opportunity to gain better access to the meaning of the word. He also considers this technique less meaningful then working with a word after reading it in a text, and it also takes away the opportunity to guess the word. On the other hand some advantages of learning words in isolation is the possibility of learning higher amount of words in shorter time by using lists of vocabulary. Instead of lists we can use cards with a

word written on one side and the translation on the other side. Carter and McCarthy (2013) also claim, that learning a word is more efficient when associated with a word in the mother tongue than with a foreign synonym.

Vocabulary and listening

Unlike reading, listening is not used very often to measure learner's knowledge of vocabulary. The previous sections mentioned how many words learners should know to understand a text, but how many words we should know to understand a spoken language? According to Kucera and Francis (1967), only about half of the words needed to understand written language are necessary to understand spoken language, but overall there were not many studies done in this area. When we want to test vocabulary through listening, we can use for example dictation, where we focus only on the words we want to test, and we ignore all the other mistakes, as we want to test the level of vocabulary, not the level of listening skills. Other tests could include for example drawing or a description.

Practicing vocabulary through listening may be done via using simplified texts as in reading, but in this case a teacher is reading the text to the students and every time an unknown word appears, a teacher writes it on the board, repeats the sentence and then goes on with reading. When the words appear again, he only points to the word on the board. The attention is kept by the story, which means we should pick a story that would be interesting for students, but also corresponding to their language level. As Nation (1990) suggests, not only reading, but also writing may serve as a support for a listening exercise. A teacher may write several letters on a board that when combined create a word, say the word several times and learners are supposed to spell the word with the help of the letters on the board. It is important for teachers to adapt the vocabulary used in classes to the learners' level when, for example, giving instructions. Using words students do not know without further explanation may demotivate some students, so it is important for teacher to simplify the language, especially at the early stages of learning. Helpful tools for this may be pauses, stressing, repetition, giving definitions, pictures or using real objects. Sometimes it is difficult for teachers to simplify their speech and then it is up to the learners to ask their teachers to speak more slowly or to explain some words. When the students are shy or afraid to do it, we can encourage them by writing phrases like "Speak more slowly, please" on the board and then speak fast on purpose, so learners would be forced to use the given phrases.

Vocabulary and writing

As writing is used the most as an assessment tool in schools, it is important for learners to be able to prove their knowledge through the use of vocabulary. Lack of vocabulary may result in very limited productive skills, as writing and speaking. From the point of view of vocabulary, unlike speaking, writing requires knowledge of spelling and use of the word in sentences. Spelling in English is quite predictable, so we can make learners guess the spelling when they learn a new word, and always explain exceptions when the spelling is irregular. For example words like *play*, *stay*, *way, say* end with the same sound and spelling, so concerning spelling it is not necessary to teach each word separately. Unlike *hope* and *hop*, which are similar in past tense, *hoped* and *hopped*. Here it is important to explain students the reason behind doubling the consonants. Another possible exercise is to write several words on the board at random positions, students than have to remember them and then rewrite them not only with correct spelling, but also at the correct position. Doing this they are forced to pay more attention to the words. A typical activity to practice vocabulary through writing is to combine it with reading, give learners a text and they are supposed to rewrite it, but using different vocabulary. When a new word occurs, learners can write it down to their own lists of new vocabulary and observe all of its features. When it is for example a noun, they can learn the countability, what kind of adjectives may precede the word, and they can write examples from the text, dictionary or their own. Paying attention to all these grammatical features, students are more likely to use the word appropriately in a written text. When writing a text on a certain topic, there are groups of words closely related to the topic, for example *hard drive, disks, programs* are words all related to the topic of *Computer, Modern Technologies.* Before writing such a text it is useful for students to list set of words related to the topic they may use in the text.

Vocabulary and speaking

Vocabulary plays an essential role in producing speech, on the other hand speaking as a productive skill requires more learning than listening and reading. Nation (1990, p. 94) says, that there are two main reasons why speaking may be problematic for learners from the point of view of vocabulary. The first reason is that learners do not have sufficient vocabulary to express themselves, which can be improved by using controlled activities. Controlled activities give speakers only limited things to say and include drills, repetitions and memorizations. The second reason is that learners know enough vocabulary, but are

not able to use it for producing a speech and their knowledge of the word is limited only to receptive usage. Byrne (1986. p. 53) claims, that during the transition from receptive to productive knowledge, teachers have to guide learners enough but also give them enough space without constant supervision. Activities useful for this transition are, for example, paraphrasing activities, which means that when learners are not able to recall a specific word, he can substitute it with another word or a whole sentence, which describes the item. Without the need to immediately search in a dictionary, a speaker keeps the fluency of a speech, which encourages him to speak even without the knowledge of the exact word. Teacher can also help students to recall the word, either by putting it in the context or by providing the first letter of the word. Maurice (1983) suggests a repetitive activity to improve learner's fluency, which means that a speaker gives a short talk to their partner, which lasts five minutes, and then he/she changes the partner and has only four minutes to say the same, then again with only three minutes and a different partner. By repeating the same ideas, a speaker has two more chances to say what he wanted in better way, but is also challenged by being given less time to produce the speech.

4 Learning strategies

For successful vocabulary teaching it is important for teachers to decide which methods and strategies suit not only them, but also their learners. By observing the atmosphere in class, teachers have to choose which of the strategies would be the most effective ones. Palmberg (1990) suggests two main learning strategies, where the first one is focused on exercises and activities and the second one on development of learners' own associations. As the second one is quite difficult to apply in lessons, because every student has a different associations and vocabulary learning style, combination of both principles is required. To support learners' learning individuality, teachers should bring certain flexibility into their classrooms.

Another two strategies are proposed by Seal (1991), who distinguishes planned and unplanned activities in the classroom. Unplanned activities are moments, when a word is learned accidentally. Those are occasions when students on their own require meaning of unknown words, or when teachers come across a word they feel needs to be explained in more details. When these situations occur, Seal suggests a three C's method. First teachers convey meaning by giving synonyms, anecdotes or using mime, then checks the meaning to be sure that students understood the meaning correctly and finally consolidate the meaning by letting students use it in context and practice it.

Another analysis of vocabulary teaching was made by Oxford and Crookall (1990), who divide teaching techniques into four categories. *De-contextualising*, which includes flashcards and dictionaries, *semi-contextualising* working with word groups, associations, keywords and semantic mapping, *fully contextualising* that is connected with language skills (reading, listening, writing, speaking) and *adaptable*, which works with planned and structured reviewing. During classes, learners can go through all four categories, starting completely without context and slowly implementing it into fully contextualised word. On the other hand when working with an authentic material, learners may find a new word, which is now already presented in a context. Therefore none of the methods should be completely separated and teachers should combine all of them.

2C Model

Oxford and Crookall's system of teaching methods mentioned above divides teaching dynamics into four groups, which could be divided into two categories: *contextual* and *consolidating* (de-contextual) dimension and dynamics. In the following paragraphs advantages and disadvantages of both methods are described.

It is believed that one of the advantages of contextual methods is that context helps students understand the meaning of a word, restore it in long-term memory and use it more appropriately in context. It is also claimed that with context, learners are able to use the word more effectively in the four language skills, especially when reading (Clarke and Nation, 1980). Contextual methods are valued for its authenticity and working with a native-like material. By letting learners guess the meaning form a context, we also activate their working memory, which enables easier transfer into long-term memory. On the other hand Laufer and Sim (1985) argue how much influence guessing from context has on retention of words, especially when a contextual learning is less familiar than consolidating. They suggest that contextual learning benefits from understanding unknown words from context, but not from expanding the vocabulary. Another disadvantage is wrong and inaccurate guessing, which may have negative impact on remembering new words.

Consolidating methods benefit from drawing direct attention to new words. (Laufer and Sim, 1985). Words may be presented completely without a context with only a simple translation, presented with simple explanation and a phrase or a sentence, or extracted from a text. We can also use word lists, which are believed to help learners acquire new words quickly (Nation, 1990), especially for a short-time purpose. Oxford and Crookall (1990) oppose that using dictionaries and word lists may lead to problems with transfer to long-term memory, and providing words without context with only simple translations does not help learners using words in a communicative way. On the other hand Oxford and Crookall agreed that consolidating methods are suitable for beginners, because word lists mean less distractions for learners. Memorisation is also discussed as being effective only when used in a creative way with mnemonics and associations, as linking sounds to L1, grouping words topically, creating a mental image, visualizing the word, connecting it with another word etc. It is believed that more combinations learners have, the deeper the learning process is.

Based on analysis of both methods, it is clear that one should not be used without the other, based on actual learners' needs. As each strategy focuses on a different aspect of vocabulary learning, combining them and applying them into all four language skills is desirable.

5R Model

In addition to 2C model, there is also 5R model created by Brown and Payne (1994). It is a five step model consisted of five processes – receiving, recognising, retaining, retrieving and recycling. The first step, receiving, is when students encounter a new word, incidentally or intentionally. After encountering the word, students usually try to recognize it, again consciously or subconsciously. They can use dictionaries or try to guess the word, for example by its morphological structure. The third step, retaining, means storing the new word into students' memory. These three steps happen on a receptive level. If a student is not willing to learn the word or he/she does not encounter the word frequently enough, the whole process may end and with the third step. Retrieving is a step that works as a transition, so the word can be used productively in one of language skills, which is the last step called recycling. However, this model should not be used as a linear model, but more as a circulating process, thus it is not necessary to follow all the steps. Some students are able to encounter a word as a step one and then move to step five immediately. And as mentioned above, it is possible that the process ends at step three without ever moving forward.

This whole model can be used together with 2C model, the progress of learning a new word may be based both on contextual or consolidating dimension. It may even be combined into one whole process; a new word may be encountered in a context, but then recognized and retained out of it.

Learner training

As mentioned previously, there are many different ways how to learn new vocabulary and how to practice it. In the following parts we will take a look at several specific methods and strategies. However, first of all we have to mention learner training, which means "training learners to learn effectively" (Thornburry, 2002, p. 144). A good learner is able to: pay attention to a form (spelling, pronunciation, stress), pay attention to a meaning (similarities, differences), be a good guesser (work out the meaning of new words from their form or context), take risks and not to be afraid to make mistakes and organise their own learning (keep a systematic record of learning new words). In the end learners should achieve a level of autonomy high enough that they do not need to be trained how to learn. To achieve this level we can show learners the following strategies that would help him/her in requiring new words.

Mnemonic techniques

Mnemonic technique is associating a word with something (e. g. another word, a sound, a story), so we can recall it easier later. Thornburry (2002) says that a good mnemonic technique has a visual element and is self-generated. That means we create it ourselves, we do not borrow it from another teacher or learner, because of we come up with the technique, it is easier to remember it and use it effectively. One of these techniques is called a keyword technique. It means we connect pronunciation of a second language word with meaning of a first language word. For example the word *borrow* is similar to Czech *bere,* which can be used to remember the difference between *borrow* and *lend,* which ends with d as in the Czech word *dává.* This technique is very unique and very individual, but when creating a mnemonic technique, it should not be too complicated, because then it will be harder to remember it. Pressley (1982) made several studies about mnemonic techniques. According to his conclusions, the keyword technique helps learners to obtain new words and it is a superior technique to others like repetition or using pictures or synonyms. He also claims that it is not restricted only to nouns; it can be used with adverbs, verbs and adjectives, too. For learners it is good to be shown some mnemonic techniques by their teacher before they start creating their own. This technique is great for receptive learning, but for productive learning, the association has to be very close to the form and the meaning of the word to be effective.

Word cards

Not all the students are imaginative enough to come up with many mnemonic techniques. Therefore it is good to use word cards. Thornburry (2002) says that: "Apart from the keyword technique, there is probably no vocabulary technique more rewarding than the use of word cards." The principle of this technique is to create a set of 20 – 50 cards, write a word in English on one side and a word in mother language on the other side. First learners use cards to learn the words by checking both sides, then they use it to practice by looking at one side and recalling the other one. Words that are more difficult to remember should be moved to the top of the pile and the package should be shuffled periodically, so learners do not remember the order of the words as it could interfere the learning process. Words that are learned may be discarded and replaced by new ones. We can introduce this technique with our cards and then let students create their own. It is a good idea to use these cards regularly, so students use them more as a habit. This may be

supported by letting students compare their card sets, they can each pick a card from their sets and let each other create sentences. When they become familiar with each other sets, they can pick a card and let the other guess the word by yes/no questions or write it down without vowels and let the other learner guess the word. We can also let them put words into different categories.

Guessing from context

As language is constantly evolving, coming across new words unknown for learners is inevitable. One of the most useful skills in the field of vocabulary learners can acquire is guessing from context. Both Thornburry (2002) and Nation (1990) agree that it is a skill easily learned, because it is actually something we already use in our mother tongue, therefore it is more of a transfer of the skill than its acquisition. Both of them also suggest similar steps of how to successfully guess from the context, the only difference is that Nation's strategy includes five steps and Thornburry's seven. The first step should be looking at the word and decide what part of the speech it is. Next, we should take a look at words surrounding the unknown word (e. g. articles, premodifications), then at sentences or even paragraphs surrounding the sentence in which the word is included. Special focus should be given to prepositions, which might provide a clue how the word is connected to the context. As a fourth step, Nation already suggests trying to guess the word; while Thornburry suggests looking at the form of the word (e. g. *earthquake* is a compound of *earth* and *quake*) and after that try to guess the word. Nation suggests replacing the word with our guess and if it fits, we are probably right. If it doesn't, the next step should be breaking the word into a prefix, a root and a suffix and guessing again. Thornburry on the other hand suggests two options. When the word is critical for understanding the text, try all the steps again and eventually check the dictionary. When it is not critical for understanding the text, skip the word and it is possible that the meaning will come up later in the text.

One strategy to teach learners how to guess words from context is giving them a text with nonsensical words and let them guess the meaning of these words. One of the mistakes teachers make when dealing with unknown words is immediately giving learners the meaning of the word. To support guessing from the context in a class, Bruton and Samuda (1981) give us several steps how to achieve that. First of all, we should let students focus on the unknown word and ask them to guess the meaning. If none of them is close, we give them some clues leading to the meaning or we give them the approximate

meaning. If they get the meaning right, we can let them explain how they figured the meaning out. Eventually, learners will be able to go through this process on their own automatically when they encounter an unknown word.

Dictionaries

So far we have mentioned using dictionaries only as the last stage of the process guessing from context. It is possible that some of the students will want to use a dictionary immediately when encountering an unknown word, especially when they are learning how to guess from the context and are not confident yet. One strategy how to reduce learners' dependence on dictionaries is suggested by Thornburry (2002). Give learners a text including a number of unknown words, where every learner can pick five unknown words they may look up in the dictionary. Before doing that, they check their words with their partners and if they are familiar with any of the words on their partner's list, they may explain the meaning and cross the word out of the list. Then they work the same way in larger groups and finally come up with five unknown words they want to find in a dictionary as the whole class. It will also help learners decide, which of the words are crucial for understanding the text and which ones they may skip.

On the other hand, dictionaries do not have to be always used only for translations. We can also work with pronunciation, multiple meanings, homophones and collocations. And even if we want to minimalize the usage of dictionaries in a class, it is necessary to teach learners how to work with a dictionary, with the way words are organized in it, with abbreviations, definitions, etc.

Vocabulary records

As it was already mentioned, to remember a word successfully, we have to encounter it and use it several times. Therefore it is useful for learners to create their own records of vocabulary they should acquire. Just as any other strategy mentioned before, even creating a notebook for keeping lists of vocabulary is something we have to teach learners, so they would do it effectively. As the time progresses, they will establish their own way of keeping vocabulary records. They can order new words alphabetically or chronologically, they can add pronunciation, synonyms or even their own mnemonic techniques. To help students create their vocabulary record, we can use one part of the board only for writing down new words the way learners should write them in their own notebooks. It is necessary to give students enough time to work on their vocabulary records and also check them from time to time. As Thornburry (2002) claims, disorganization of

vocabulary records is often caused by learners rushing to put down new words as fast as possible while they should be paying attention to correct spelling, pronunciation and other features.

Strategies for production of the language

Just as guessing from the context is a useful strategy to deal with unknown words during reading or listening, there are several strategies to use when we are speaking or writing and we are not certain how to express a certain word and we do not have enough time to deal with a dictionary. The following strategies are also very useful for learners who are afraid to talk, because they feel like they have insufficient vocabulary. First of all, it is good to teach abstract vocabulary like *stuff, gadget, sort of, like, etc.,* which learners can use to describe something (e.g. *stopwatch – It is a gadget, sort of like a watch, but it does not tell what time it is…)*. With these they can describe things and objects, or paraphrase them. They can also use synonyms or similar words, they can even guess the word based on their L1 language or try to figure out the word based on grammatical rules they are familiar with (e.g. adding suffix –er to a verb to express a person, like *sing* and *singer*, *work* and *worker*).

All of the above are great strategies for practicing vocabulary, especially for advanced students. Describing an object without explicitly using its name could be quite a challenge. We can also give learners a text with underlined words and let them replace these words with synonyms, so the meaning of the text would stay the same. Just like guessing from the context these strategies are something we usually apply in our native language, therefore it can make it easier for learners to learn how to apply them while dealing with a foreign language.

Burton's strategies

Based on sets of rules created by Richard Burton, Thornburry (2002) created several steps of an effective vocabulary acquisition. The first step is to focus on what is necessary for a minimum level of an effective communication. For teachers it means that before presenting new vocabulary, they have to decide which words they should include. After that it is good to start with memorisation rather than learning rules. This can be applied for beginner students. Instead of giving them additional information and rules they would have to remember, they can start with drilling the words and develop those rules later. It would also help them to get used to a drill, which is necessary for learning some phenomena in English language (e.g. past tenses of irregular verbs). Another step is a

constant reviewing; here he suggests reviewing in short bursts, because of time management and also learners' ability to be focused for shorter periods of time. After these steps, learners should acquire enough vocabulary to be able to work with texts. The best texts to use at this stage are those, which are familiar to learners in their own native language, so it would be easier for them to understand. Based on these texts, learners may decide on their own which new words from the text they will need and want to acquire. Next step is again constant reviewing, while also drilling the spoken features of the new words, memorizing sounds and using subvocalisation techniques. Subvocalisation is a "soundless mental speech that accompanies and carries our inner thoughts. During silent reading of text, we often perceive the sound of partial or complete words we encounter but make no perceivable movement of our lips or sound" (Parnin, 2011, p. 197).

Criteria for effective vocabulary teaching and practice

Based on all the information included in this section, we can set several criteria for strategies used for vocabulary practice. First of them is a systematic approach. A strategy we use for vocabulary practice should clearly state which vocabulary we want to practice, based on a fact that learners are able to remember only given number of words in one lesson, we should select these words carefully. If a strategy is systematic and has its own rules, it is easier for learners to learn to use the strategy by themselves, which gives them the opportunity for constant review. This review may not be always done in class because of the time limit every lesson has, therefore being able to teach learners a good vocabulary practice strategy makes them more independent. Therefore the strategy should also be easy to understand and not too complicated to use.

By making our learners more independent, they should be able to adapt learned strategies for their own needs. That would help them generate their own strategies and systems of vocabulary practice, e.g. they will come up with their own mnemonic techniques or keyword techniques. And these self-generated strategies are those most effective. Another criterion is connection to their mother tongue. If we use a strategy that could be applied to learners' mother tongue, it is easier for them to understand it and apply it. And again this may lead to leaners' higher self-independence.

Next criterion is using more than just one or two senses. Not only we want learners to listen to the word and say it, but they should write it down by using their own vocabulary records. For vocabulary records we have to establish a system leaners will use, which is connected to a systematic approach mentioned above. By giving learners a set of

rules they have to follow when creating a vocabulary record, they will get used to them and be able to work on their vocabulary records on their own. We can also use other visual elements, not only writing a word down. Pictures may be used or even videos. With all the possibilities modern technologies bring to us, we can use data projectors or whiteboards to illustrate meaning of unknown words. Adding physical activity is useful too. Using gestures when practicing vocabulary is effective for learners who are more focused on motor activities. On the other hand using pictures or videos is more effective for learners with better visual memory. Therefore a strategy that gives us possibility to adapt itself to individual needs of students and include others senses is more effective.

Another criterion is not giving students the meaning of an unknown word immediately, which is a mistake many teachers make. Even though we have to use drills and learners should get used to drilling, especially younger students, later on we should incorporate strategies that let students come up with the meaning on their own. Either by using context or prefixes and suffixes, or any other similar strategies, when learners come up with the meaning on their own, not only in motivates them, but again it gives them space for being more self-independent learners.

Every learning strategy mentioned above fulfil different criteria, but the question remains which of these strategies are actually used in English lessons and which of them are considered useful. Even though every student has his or her individual needs and preferences, teachers have to teach the whole classes and they cannot use one strategy preferred by only one student. Therefore they have to create a set of strategies they use in their lessons and which they consider useful. To find out which strategies are implemented into lessons the most, a research was done, which is described in the following part of the work. The main purpose of the research is to answer the question: Which vocabulary strategies are considered effective by Czech teachers of English language?

5 Methods

Before the analysis of results and answering the research question, I would like to describe the methods used during the research. As an instrument for the research, a questionnaire was chosen, therefore its description and reasons for using this particular instrument will be described and explained. Individual parts of the questionnaire will be analysed as I aim to demonstrate its relevance to the research question. Another part of the research that will be described are its subjects, Czech teachers of English language. Together with the description of the researched group, criteria for choosing this group will be explained too. Next step is the way the research was executed and how the data were collected.

A questionnaire

Based on the amount of vocabulary learning strategies and therefore several fields we have to research, a questionnaire was chosen as a tool for data collection. The main reason is that "by administering a questionnaire to a group of people, one can collect a huge amount of information in less than an hour and the personal investment required will be a fraction of what would have been needed for, say, interviewing the same number of people" (Dörnyei 2003, p. 9). The advantage is not only the relative simplicity of data collection, but also the analysis of the data. Based on its construction, amount of open-ended and close-ended questions, the data collected from the questionnaire may be analysed efficiently and easily, especially when using modern technologies and specified software for data collection and analysis. Another advantage is the anonymity for respondents, which may help them answer the questions more sincerely.

Therefore the most difficult part is usually constructing the questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this research is a modified questionnaire used by Yu-Ling Lai in his work *Teaching vocabulary learning strategies: Awareness, beliefs, and practices* (2005, University of Essex). Modifications of the questionnaire were made to adapt the questions and make them more relatable to my research question. I omitted open-ended questions considering dictionaries, as I did not want to put focus on one learning strategy. Modification were also made to personal part of the questionnaire. I moved this part to the beginning of the questionnaire, because they were partially open-ended and it is better to start with them, considering the amount of close-ended questions following them. The only open-ended questions left after evaluation of learning strategies is a follow-up question, where respondents could describe a strategy that was not included in the questionnaire.

Asking this question earlier would make no sense. Open-ended questions were included because of relative constraints given to respondents based on close-ended questions in the part, where they evaluated vocabulary learning strategies. This way the questionnaire could "provide a far greater richness than fully quantitative data" (Dörnyei 2003, p. 47). I kept the possibility for learners to leave their e-mail address to receive results, mainly to motivate them to answer the questionnaire and then compare their answers to general results.

The main part of the questionnaire consists of 30 descriptions of individual vocabulary learning strategies and respondents marked how much they agree with their effectiveness on a scale Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly disagree. These descriptions were adapted from taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies by Schmitt (1997). This taxonomy originally includes fifty-eight strategies, dividing them into social strategies, memory strategies, cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies and determination strategies. Social strategies were omitted, as they include strategies like "asking teacher for meaning in L1" or "asking classmates for meaning". As my main goal is to find effective strategies used by teachers, this interactions are not relevant to our research. Memory strategies include not only drilling, but using mnemonic techniques, Keyword method, using synonyms and antonyms etc. Keyword method was chosen not only because of Schmitt taxonomy, but also because it is suggested as one of the effective vocabulary learning methods by Nation (1990), together with guessing from the context. Cognitive and metacognitive strategies originally included strategies like "taking notes in class" and "using vocabulary sections in textbook", because these are again strategies used by students, not teachers, so they are irrelevant for our research. Strategies kept were those concerning skipping unknown words, as it is considered an important ability of an independent learner. Determination strategies include mainly guessing from the context. The questionnaire included several different ways of guessing from the context and I wanted to find out, which of them are considered the most effective. Looking at the structure of a questionnaire (see Appendix 1), we can see that memory strategies are included at the beginning, followed by cognitive and metacognitive strategies and all determination strategies are placed at the end of the questionnaire.

Originally, Lai's (2005) questionnaire consisted of two scales, one of them evaluating the usefulness of a strategy, the other one the frequency of usage by respondents. My questionnaire includes only the first one, as I suppose that teachers use strategies they consider effective and vice versa, they do not use strategies they do not think are effective.

After its completion, the questionnaire was distributed in two ways. The first one was creating an online survey through a website Survio.com, the second one was handing out a printed version of the questionnaire. The advantage of the first one was easy data analysis, as the website provided not only a space to create a questionnaire, but also summarise its results. The advantage of handing out printed versions was the physical contact with respondents, as they usually commented on the questionnaire and provided deeper insight into their opinions about effective vocabulary learning and practice strategies. For easier data analysis, printed questionnaires were additionally typed into a compute, so they could be added to those online.

Research subjects

The questionnaire was answered by 42 respondents, specifically 11 men and 31 women. All the respondents were Czech teachers of English language at primary schools. In the Czech Republic English is obligatory from the third grade of primary school, which means that pupils are usually about eight years old when they start learning English. It is given by the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic that there are forty-five minutes long lessons three times a week, but of course some language-oriented schools have more English lessons. Some of the primary schools start with teaching English from the first grade. In these first two grades pupils usually practice only listening and speaking, not writing and reading. Pupils finish primary school when they are about 15 years old. According to The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, their level of English should be A2 when they leave primary school. Therefore my research is focused on teaching beginners and students of elementary level. These levels include knowledge of vocabulary of basic topics, like family, school, housing, free time, food, weather, shopping etc. According to Štefanová (2011) and her research, the most used course book for teaching English in the Czech Republic is Project by Oxford University Press. This course book contains vocabulary exercises of many different kinds, including images, songs, contextual exercises, crosswords and filling in blanks. This course book is also accompanied by material for teachers in the form of flashcards, videos, recordings and materials for interactive boards, therefore teachers have many possibilities of choosing materials and also strategies for teaching vocabulary.

Based on the number of years of practice in English teaching, the research was divided into four categories, zero to five years, five to ten years, ten to fifteen years and fifteen years and more. Most of the respondents were teaching for more than fifteen years,

specifically 19 respondents. 11 respondents were teaching from zero to five years, 5 respondents from five to ten and 7 respondents from ten to fifteen years.

More than half of the respondents, twenty-five, stated that they received some kind of training on how to teach vocabulary, or went through some self-training. Unfortunately not all of them specified, what kind of training they went through and some of the younger teachers mentioned Methodology lessons at the university, which should not be taken into consideration as it is considered as part of pedagogical education. Those who specified their trainings wrote, for example workshops organized by different kinds of publishing houses like Cambridge, Macmillan and Oxford, courses that were part of A Lifelong Education of Teachers programme, conferences organized by universities and courses organized by NIDV (National Institute for Further Education). Several respondents also specified their self-trainings, stating that they learn from specialized resource books and two of them put down webinars.

Hypothesis

The main goal of the work and the research is to answer the question which vocabulary strategies are considered effective by Czech teachers of English language. Based on the knowledge from the theoretical part and also my own experience of learning English in the Czech Republic, I made the following hypotheses that may be confirmed or disproved. First of all I suppose that Czech teachers of English will prefer mostly memory strategies, especially since we take into consideration only primary schools teachers. I think that teachers use these strategies not only to help learners remember new words through images, songs and mnemonic techniques, but also to make them interested in English as a subject. I also think that drills and word repetitions as part of cognitive strategies are considered effective for vocabulary practice, together with keeping vocabulary notebooks, especially because most of the respondents were teaching for more than fifteen years and especially drills may be considered a bit old-fashioned, even though we can agree that it is still a necessary part of vocabulary learning. I suppose that determination strategies such as guessing from context may also be considered very effective, especially when taking accompanying words into consideration. On the other hand I do not expect Keyword method to be considered effective, especially because I never experienced a lesson that would include this method. Also some of the determination strategies may be considered less effective for primary schools learners as they could be

quite difficult for them, as they may include too much of metalanguage that might be too difficult for pupils to understand.

6 Results and commentaries

The following section presents the results of the research and analyses them. The purpose is to determine which of the vocabulary learning and practice strategies Czech teachers find effective. First of all the results of close-ended question are dealt with, as it is the most important part of the questionnaire. Together with answering the research question, results will be compared to criteria of effectiveness set in the theoretical part of the work. Then the analysis of open-ended questions follows, which means that vocabulary teaching training and its influence on respondents' answer is commented on together with strategies that were not mentioned in the questionnaire and teachers use them in their lessons. The last part will comment on influence of years of teaching on the choice of vocabulary learning and practice strategies.

Results of the research

For a better analysis all thirty questions from the quantitative part of the research are divided into four groups. This division is based on Schmitt's taxonomy, which was described in the previous section. The first group is called Memory strategies, which includes statements from number 1 to number 10 and then from number 13 to 16. These strategies are based on creating a link between the word and its meaning through for example pictures, mental images, storylines, examples, it uses all kinds of different mnemonic techniques. In the Graph 1, we can see the results of this part of the questionnaire.

Memory strategies were those teachers most often marked Strongly agree and Agree, and out of all the four groups, this group of strategies was considered the most effective. The most effective strategy for vocabulary learning and practice according to Czech teachers is number 4, placing the word in a group with other items based on topic, theme or function. Considering the criteria we set in the theoretical part, this strategy is mostly systematic. Grouping words together helps learners connect them and learn them in chunks, which is more helpful then learning words separately. This may be illustrated in the way English course books are made (especially Project mentioned as the most used one in the Czech Republic), where each chapter presents one topic and a list of new words is presented at the end of the Workbook based on the topic. Teachers also prefer using pictures and mental images to help learners remember new words. By that they are trying to incorporate visual element into vocabulary practice to enhance learners' memory. The support of learning words in groups in shown by strategy number 15, which is the one

marked Agree the most times in this group. This strategy uses chunks of words like phrases, idioms and proverbs. Therefore we can see that one of the most preferred type of strategy is not learning the individual word separately, but together with other words.

Graph 1.

*Results of the Memory strategies part of the research*
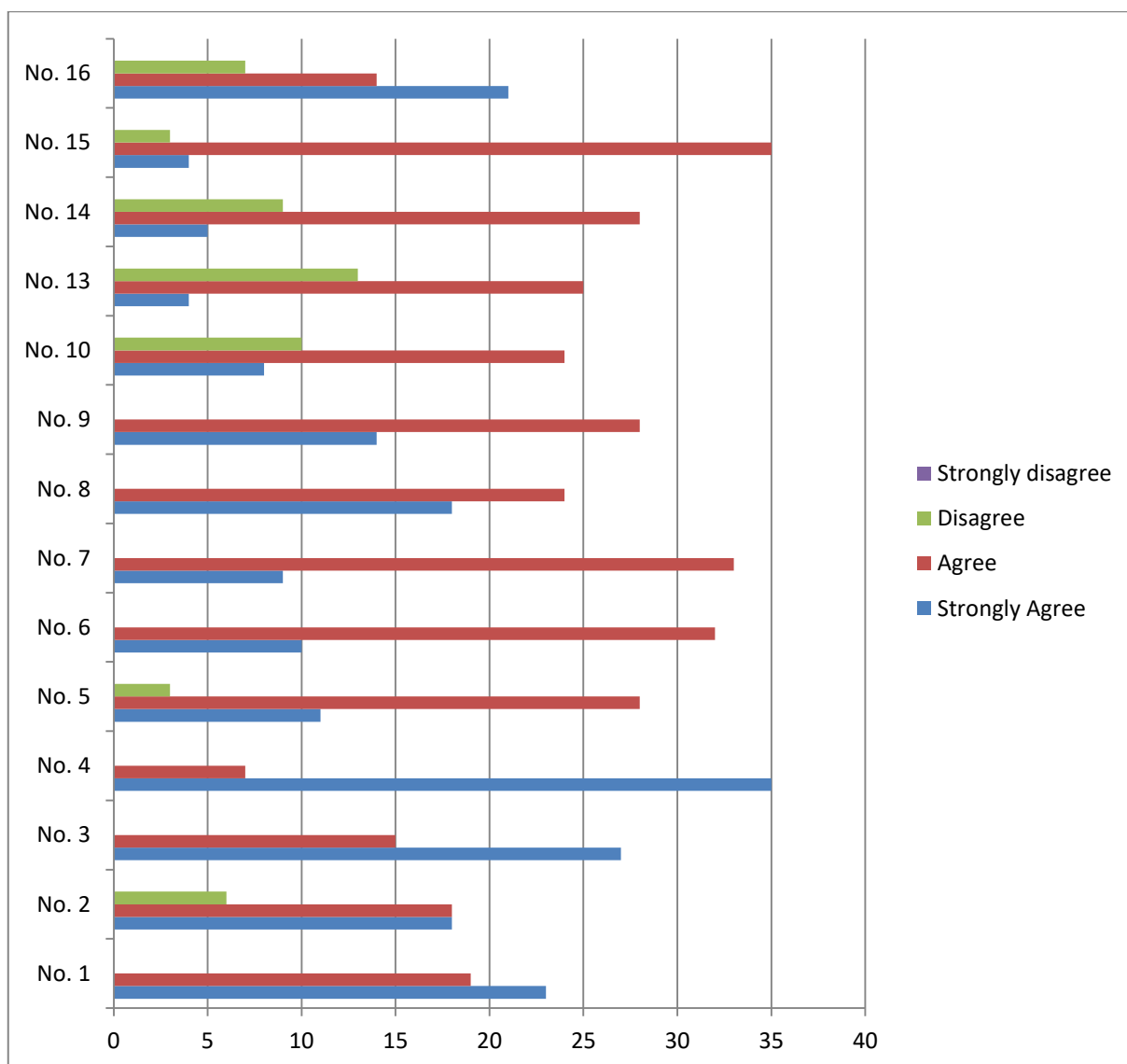
It is necessary to emphasize, that even though some strategies were marked Disagree, it was done only by several respondents and none of the strategies were marked Strongly disagree. Strategies that teachers disagreed the most with in this part of the research were number 10, 13 and 14. These strategies include Keyword method, imagining written form of the word and paraphrasing meaning. Imagining written form of the word is probably not considered effective because as it was proved by number 4; teachers prefer imagining pictures and mental images. That illustrates the support of using more senses when practicing vocabulary. Disagreement with paraphrasing meaning shows that teachers try to

use richer strategies then only giving students meaning and let them paraphrase it. They rather let student use words in sentences and stories. As paraphrasing may be considered as a kind of drill, teachers probably try to avoid that as constant drilling may demotivate students. Keyword method was the one teachers marked the least effective in this section. On one hand it could be caused by difficulty of creating associations through Keyword method between Czech and English, it could be also caused by the fact that teachers were not familiar with the method until answering the questionnaire and therefore marked it ineffective because they actually never used it before. It illustrates that rather than using phonetic similarity and therefore incorporation of deeper audio element to the vocabulary practice, they prefer visual tools.

Another group of strategies are so called Cognitive; numbers 11, 12, 17 and 18; and Metacognitive; numbers 19 and 20. Cognitive strategies include repeating words in both written and spoken forms, using tapes and CDs and creating vocabulary records. Metacognitive strategies use word tests and skipping unknown words which seem unessential for understanding a text. Results of Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies are illustrated in Graph 2.

Graph 2.

Results of the Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies part of the research
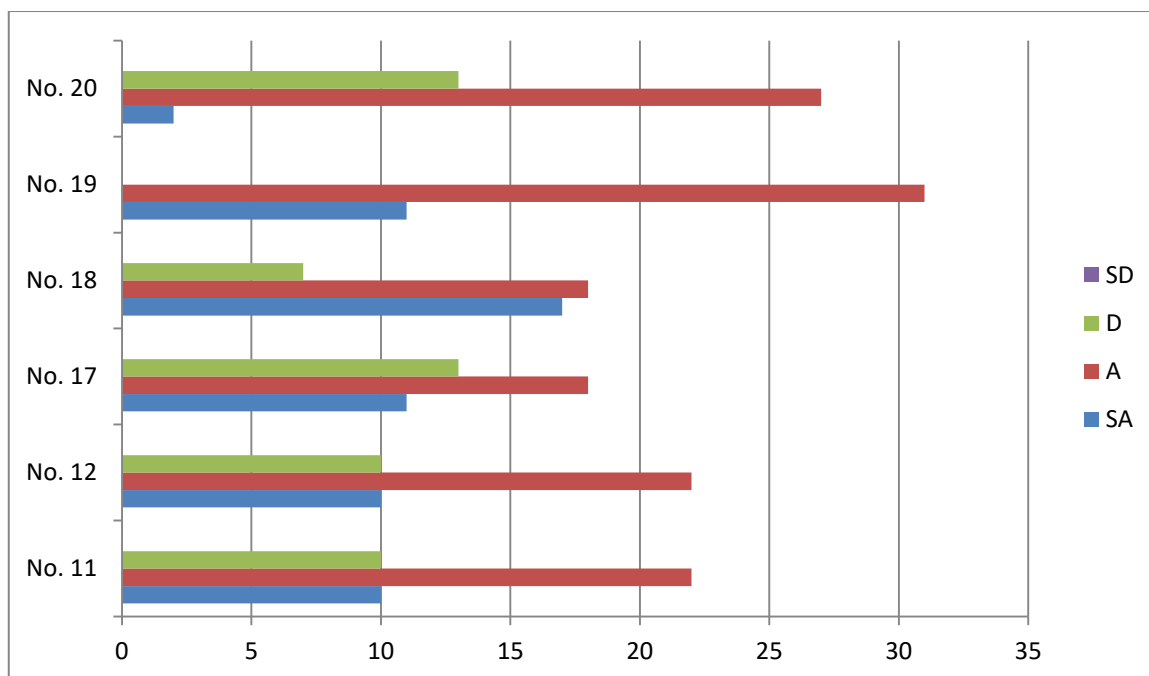
Even though all of these strategies were mostly marked Agree, none of them is considered as very effective and more teachers see these strategies less effective than Memory strategies. First of all we can see that only number 19 was not marked as

ineffective. This strategy uses word tests as a form of vocabulary practice. Even though tests are usually used to determine whether learners already know the word, they can be used as a tool for practicing new words. On the other hand it may show teachers' tendency to teach towards testing instead of real life usage of language and therefore using vocabulary tests to help students prepare for actual exams.

One tendency that is illustrated in the graph is avoiding drills. Number 11 and 12 use repetition of written and spoken form. Therefore we can see that teachers prefer using other methods, while agreeing that drills are necessary as both of these strategies were mostly considered effective. A surprising fact may be using tapes and CDs for vocabulary practice, number 17, as almost one third of respondents marked this strategy ineffective. This again supports teachers' tendency to prefer visual materials to audio tools. As video material was not included in the questionnaire, it is not possible to conclude whether those serve as a substitute for audio material only. The strategy that was marked very effective the most in this group is using vocabulary records. In the theoretical part the importance of vocabulary records was discussed and according to the research it is still considered an important part of language practice, while there is a tendency of not using them in lessons at all. This tendency may be caused by replacing vocabulary records by vocabulary lists in course books and therefore saving time, which would have to be spent on writing words into learners' own vocabulary records.

Another strategy marked as ineffective by almost one third of respondents is number 20, skipping words that seem inessential to understanding a text. Even though it may be good for learners to spend more time comprehending a passage by analysing all of the words, passing inessential words would lead to more independent learning, as it was discussed in the theoretical part. On the other hand we do not know whether teachers give meaning of these words or let learners find out meaning of these words by themselves by for example using context. To determine this we also have to analyse the last group of strategies.

The last group of strategies are so called Determination strategies, which use analyses of parts of the word, its prefixes and suffixes and also using context to determine the meaning of the word. Results of this part of questionnaire are illustrated in the Graph 3.

The first noticeable fact is that this is the only part of the questionnaire where some of the statements were marked Strongly disagree, which means that teachers do not use them at all and do not recommend them for vocabulary practice. Strategies that are considered the most effective in this group are number 21, 24 and 25. The first mentioned is a strategy using analysis of part of the speech of the word. By analysing part of the speech of the

word in a sentence, thanks to the fixed word order in English it is easier for learners to determine whether the word is a subject, an object etc., and then guess its meaning based on its role in a sentence. By that guessing from the context is implemented into vocabulary practice, which helps developing independent learning. Strategies number 24 uses common sense and knowledge of the world when guessing the meaning, while number 25 use knowledge of the topic. The first mentioned helps connecting meaning of the word to real life situations, as learners use common knowledge and apply it to vocabulary learning. The second one is connected to Memory strategy number 4, which uses grouping words into one topic and was considered as one of the most effective strategies by Czech teachers. This again illustrates tendency of Czech teachers to use systematic grouping of words when teaching them.

Graph 3.

Results of the Determination strategies part of the research
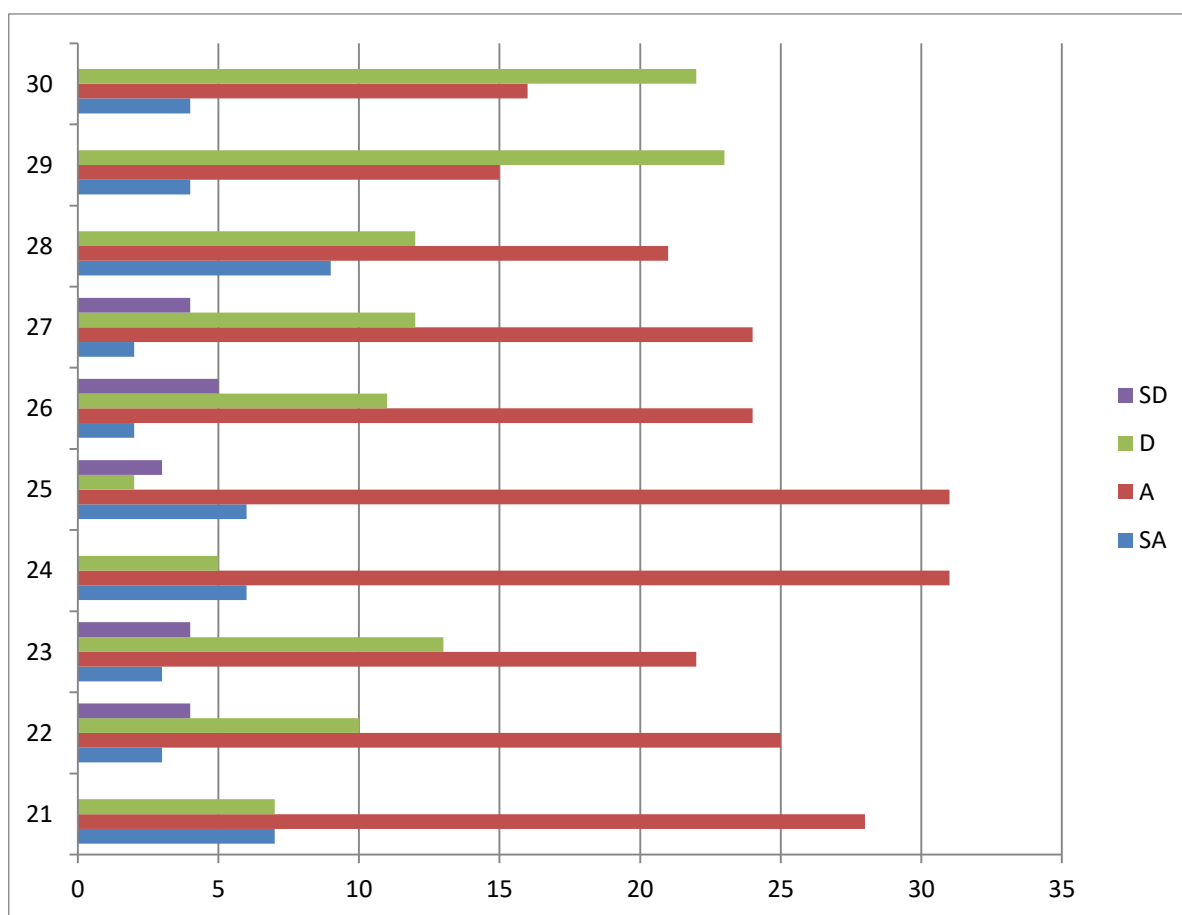
Contextual strategies, number 22 and 23, were mostly considered as effective, but those were also the first statements some of the respondents Strongly disagreed with. This may be caused by the fact that the research included only primary school teachers (who teach learners whose age is between 8 and 15 years), who may consider guessing words from the

context as too difficult for beginner and elementary learners. Based on results of the previous strategy groups, Czech teachers use wider context, like knowledge of the topic, rather than an immediate context the word is used in. Similar responses can be seen in strategies number 26 and 27. Both of them use checking the meaning of the word after it is guessed, number 26 use part of the speech and number 27 replacing the unknown word with guessed meaning. Therefore we can see, that even if teachers use context guessing, they just confirm the meaning guessed by learners rather than let them check the meaning. By that they skip last two steps of Nation's strategy for guessing from the context. But again this may be caused by an effort to save as much time as possible during lessons.

The last three strategies; 28, 29 and 30; use analysis of affixes when guessing the meaning of the word. Based on the Figure 3, we can see that these three strategies were one of the least effective according to Czech teachers. The only one that was still considered effective was number 28, which uses analysis of affixes before guessing the meaning. This may be connected to analysing part of the speech, as English language use prefixes and suffixes for conversion and creating new words. On the other hand half of the respondents do not use this analysis after guessing the meaning, which again shows that teachers do not want to spend time for checking the meaning in more analytic way, and half of the respondents do not deliberately teach meaning of the most common affixes. This could be again caused by the level of their learners, as memorizing individual prefixes and affixes may be too challenging for them.

Overall the research shows that almost all of the strategies were marked as effective, which means that teachers use them in their lessons or if they don't, they still think that these strategies would be effective. Based on all three figures, Memory strategies are those teachers prefer the most while Determination strategies the least. Using visual aids and grouping words into topics proved to be the most successful strategies, while guessing from the context and using affixes the least successful ones. On the other hand, even these strategies were considered effective by at least half of the respondents, which again shows that while Memory strategies are very useful for younger learners and beginners, using more complicated strategies is being avoided by teachers probably not because of their ineffectiveness, but because of their difficulty.

The last thing commented on is the influence of years spent teaching and vocabulary trainings the respondents' went through and the connection of these with the answers given. One of the main differences between teachers who teach for more than fifteen years and less experienced teachers is the variety answers. While less experienced teachers had a

tendency to mark most of the strategies effective, more experienced teachers were those who disagreed more. This may be based on a fact that more experienced teachers tried more strategies during their career and know that some of them do not work, while less experienced teachers did not have the opportunity to try more strategies and therefore marked them as effective because they think they are effective, not because they actually applied them in their lessons. More experienced teachers also put down more possibilities in the open-ended part of the questionnaire considering other strategies not mentioned. These other strategies included mostly vocabulary games like Chinese whispers, finding pairs of cards where one card contains meaning and the other one translation to L1 or a picture (which further proves support of visual aids), hangman (guessing word by guessing individual letters), word chain (a learner has to find a word that starts with the last letter of the word used by another learner), and word alphabet (putting down letters of the alphabet and then find a word from the given topic which starts with the given letter). As these methods connect vocabulary learning with games, it would probably be considered as highly effective by primary school teachers. Similarly to years of teaching, respondents who went through some kind of vocabulary training gave wider spectrum of responses than respondents who had no vocabulary training.

7 Implications

In the following part, strengths and weaknesses of the research are discussed. Possibilities of further research are described together with suggestions how to use findings in the research and apply them into teaching practice.

Limitations of the research

First of all it is necessary to emphasize that forty two respondents participated in the research, which is why the research cannot be generalized and all the results and commentaries are bound to a specific group of teachers. For more valid and broad results, a wider group of respondents would be necessary. Another weakness of the research was implied by respondents themselves, when they were completing the questionnaire. Some teachers had problems with marking some of the strategies effective or ineffective, because they actually never tried them. Therefore they usually marked Agree, as they thought that the strategy could work, but they had no experience trying it out. Yu-Ling Lai's questionnaire was originally divided into two scales. One scale was used to mark effectiveness of a strategy while the other one was used to show how often teachers use these strategies. As my questionnaire was limited to the first scale only, it is possible that it influenced the results of the questionnaire. The reason for choosing only one scale was the focus of the research, as I was interested in effectiveness more that in the frequency these strategies are used. Another reason was the amount of strategies respondents had to mark and another scale would seem as too much and some respondents may hesitate with completing the research considering how much time it might consume.

Another flaw that was implied by some of the respondents was the difficulty of the research. Even though teachers must have university education and therefore be able to work with English linguistic theory, some of the respondents did not understand some of the strategies and therefore marked Agree or Disagree to stay as neutral as possible. One of the possibilities to avoid this would be using more examples, which would illustrate strategies described and help respondents decide, whether the strategy is effective or not. On the other hand it would extent the amount of text in the questionnaire and again, it could discourage some of the respondents from completing the questionnaire. When respondents were completing the printed questionnaire, they could ask me in person and I would explain the strategy to them. When they were completing the questionnaire online, they could contact me via email or social media, even though none of them did as they probably did not want to spend too much time on the questionnaire. Even with these

limitations I am convinced that the research brought several contributions, which are explained in the next part.

Teaching Implications

One of the contributions of this work is extending the range of widely known vocabulary strategies. Many respondents were not familiar with all of the strategies and therefore may use this as an inspiration for their vocabulary practice. Furthermore they may see which of the strategies are considered effective and which have predispositions to work in their class. Not only the research may serve this way, but the theoretical part describes many strategies in theory with suggestions of how to use them in a class.

Another reason teachers may find this work useful is the description of pros and cons of individual strategies. Knowing these teachers can avoid mistakes that are commonly made when teaching vocabulary and improve themselves. Thanks to that teachers may also be able to adapt individual strategies more effectively, partially change them, so they would fit their needs and needs of their students more.

Suggestions for further research

Vocabulary, as one of the most crucial elements of language teaching, is a widely researched area. Based on the theoretical part we can see that a lot of research was done in the field of vocabulary, vocabulary strategies, components of vocabulary etc. As it was mentioned before, this research was inspired by research done by Yu-Ling Lai, which had a wider spectrum of open-ended questions and one more scale. Therefore another research in this area could be made adding another scale and then we could observe how the results change when respondents can choose how often they use individual strategies. This research was also limited to primary school teachers, which means the future research could be aimed at high school teachers. Then we could compare what are the main differences in the approach towards vocabulary of primary school teachers and high school teachers.

Another possibility of the research would be not using a questionnaire at all, but rather try these strategies in practice. The biggest flaw would be the amount of strategies and therefore the amount of time one would have to spend with a class to go through all of the strategies. To make the results valid, one class should go through all of the strategies, so we could compare the results of one group. On the other hand it would be a great research when used in one class from their first lesson of English at primary schools until their last one in the ninth grade. That would add more specific factor of age and level, as

we could see which strategies are more effective and which less based on the progress of students. From the comparative point of view two classes could be researched, each using a different set of strategies. The flaw of this method would be two different groups of students and therefore two different groups with their own individual needs. To make this research valid, both groups would have to be as similar as possible.

Now that weaknesses and flaws of the research were described, possible further research was discussed and implications for teacher practice were suggested, the following chapter concludes all the information and facts this work is dealing with.

8 Conclusion

In the following part the whole work is summarized. All the main ideas of both theoretical and practical part are provided.

The main target of the work was to answer the research question "Which vocabulary strategies are considered as effective by Czech teachers of English language?". To provide a good basis for the research, theoretical part describes all the components that are necessary to be familiar with to understand the practical part in the form of the research. That includes theoretical description of a word, vocabulary, its relation to language skills and description of individual vocabulary learning strategies. This part also provides strengths and weaknesses of these strategies while describing ideas how to use them in teachers' practice. Therefore this work's aim is not only the analysis of the research and comments on its results, but also introducing strategies that may be not widely known and giving ideas to teachers on how to teach vocabulary more effectively.

The purpose of the research resides in finding out which of the strategies described in the theoretical part are preferred by Czech teachers of English and which of them they find effective. Based on this information the research showed that the most preferred strategies are Memory strategies, which means above all using mnemonic techniques, using pictures and connecting words to personal experience. On the other hand there were no strategies that would be considered completely ineffective, which confirms the idea suggested in the theoretical part of the work. Even though some of the strategies proved to be more frequently used and therefore more effective, teacher cannot pick only one strategy and apply it in every class in every lesson. Based on the characteristics of these strategies, each of them is applicable to different groups of students and also different kind of vocabulary we teach. It is important for teachers to have a wide range of vocabulary strategies and choose the right one based on the needs of a class they are teaching.

Even though the research cannot be generalized because of the number of participants, there are still some contributions English teachers may find and apply to their teaching practice. Mainly paying more attention to vocabulary teaching, thinking about strategies they use, avoiding constant drills and mechanical transcriptions into vocabulary records and trying to implement strategies that may not only be more effective, but also more entertaining for student. That could make vocabulary learning more entertaining, which could motivate students to learn English and have a genuine interest in it. Nowadays the main problem is the reluctance of students to memorize new words as online

dictionaries and mobile apps are easily available together with online translators. It is part of the teachers' job to evoke interest in students and this work may give ideas to them on how to reach this through vocabulary learning. The respondents had a possibility to leave their e-mail address in the questionnaire, so they could receive results of the research and reflect on them. Based on the interest teachers showed in the questionnaire, the topic of vocabulary teaching is very current and teachers are interested in it and in the ways they can improve themselves. That proves the need of further researches in this field.

Appendices

Appendix 1

The questionnaire

Questionnaire - Effective vocabulary practice

Part I. Personal information

1. Please mark your gender:

☐ Male   ☐ Female

2. For how many years have you been teaching English?

☐ 0 -5   ☐ 5-10   ☐ 10-15   ☐ 15-more

3. Have you received any training on how to teach vocabulary effectively or have you yourself absolved any self-training in this area?

☐ Yes (Please specify what type of training: _____)

☐ No

Part II. Close ended question

There are 30 statements in the following chart, each of them describing a different strategy to practice and learn vocabulary. On scale I – IV please mark how much you agree with the statement. **I – strongly agree   II – agree   III – disagree   IV – strongly disagree**

No.	Strategy Description	I	II	III	IV
1	To study a word with a picture of its meaning instead of definition to remember it.				
2	To create oneself's own mental images of a word's meaning to remember it.				
3	To connect a word to a personal experience to remember it.				
4	To place the word in a group with other items based on topic, theme or function (e.g. items about food/art/family)				
5	To connect a word to its synonyms and antonyms to remember it.				
6	To create semantic networks of a word to remember it.				
7	To use 'scales' for gradable adjectives to remember them. (e.g. huge/big/medium – sized/small/tiny)				
8	To use new words in sentences to remember them.				
9	To group words together within a storyline to remember them.				
10	To use Keyword Method to remember words. *Keyword method* – a strategy, where you find a word in Czech that sounds like the English word we want to remember (e.g. the word *list* sounds like the Czech word *list*, which means a sheet of paper) and				

	then we create a mental image to connect these two words (a *list* of items on a sheet of paper).				
11	To repeat a word aloud to oneself to remember a word.				
12	To write a word repeatedly to remember a word.				
13	To imagine the written form of a word to remember it.				
14	To paraphrase the word's meaning to remember it.				
15	To learn individual words of chunks (e.g. phrases, idioms, proverbs) and then use the whole chunk as a memory aid for remembering the individual word meanings.				
16	To use physical action when learning a word to enhance memory.				
17	To listen to tapes/CDs of word lists.				
18	To keep a vocabulary notebook to facilitate vocabulary learning.				
19	To test oneself with word tests.				
20	To skip or pass unknown word which seems inessential for adequate comprehension of a passage.				
21	To analyze the part of speech (e.g. noun/verb) of an unknown word when guessing the meaning.				
22	To look at the clause or sentence containing the unknown word to find clues when guessing the meaning. (e.g. If the unknown word is a noun, pay attention to adjective(s) which describe the noun).				
23	To examine how the clause containing the unknown word relates to other clauses, sentences or paragraphs when guessing the meaning (e.g. To pay attention to conjunctions like *but, because, if, when*, or adverbs like *however, thus*.)				
24	To make use of common sense and knowledge of the world when guessing the meaning of an unknown word.				
25	To make use of knowledge of the topic when guessing the meaning of an unknown word.				
26	After guessing, check if the part of speech of the guessed meaning is the same as the part of speech of the unknown word.				
27	After guessing, replace the unknown word with guessed meaning to check if the sentence makes sense.				
28	To analyze affixes and roots of an unknown word in an **early** stage when guessing, i.e. making use of the meanings or affixes or roots to **offer clues** to help guess the meaning of the unknown word.)				
29	To analyze affixes and roots of an unknown word in a **later** stage of guessing, i.e. making use of the meanings or affixes or roots to **check** the guessed meaning.)				
30	To deliberately learn the meanings of the most common affixes.				

Part III. Follow-up question (optional)

After giving response to the above items, if you use any other strategy that you find effective in your classes and it is not included in the questionnaire, please feel free to present it here:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your answers. The questionnaire is anonymous; however, if you would like to receive results of the research, please put your e-mail address below:
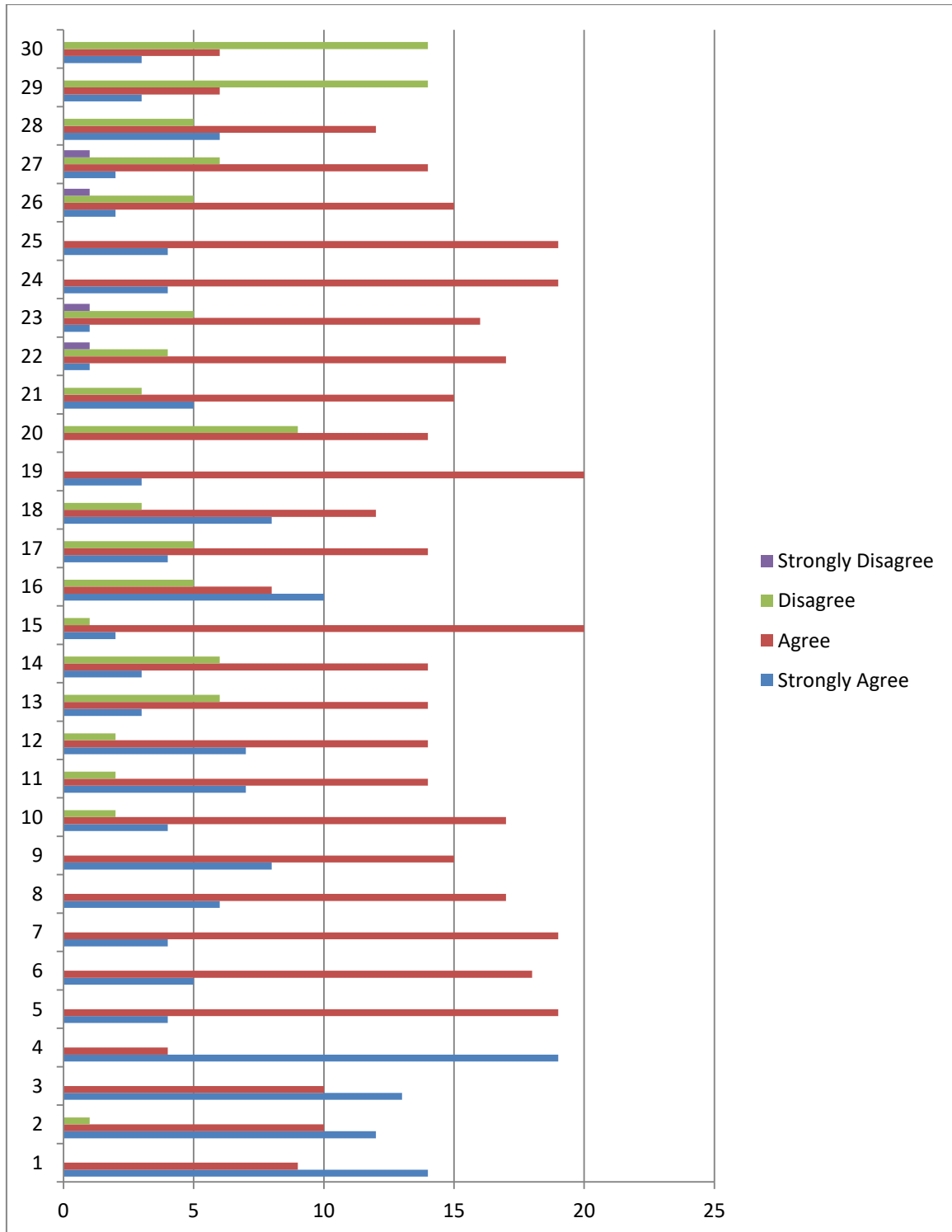
E-mail address: _____

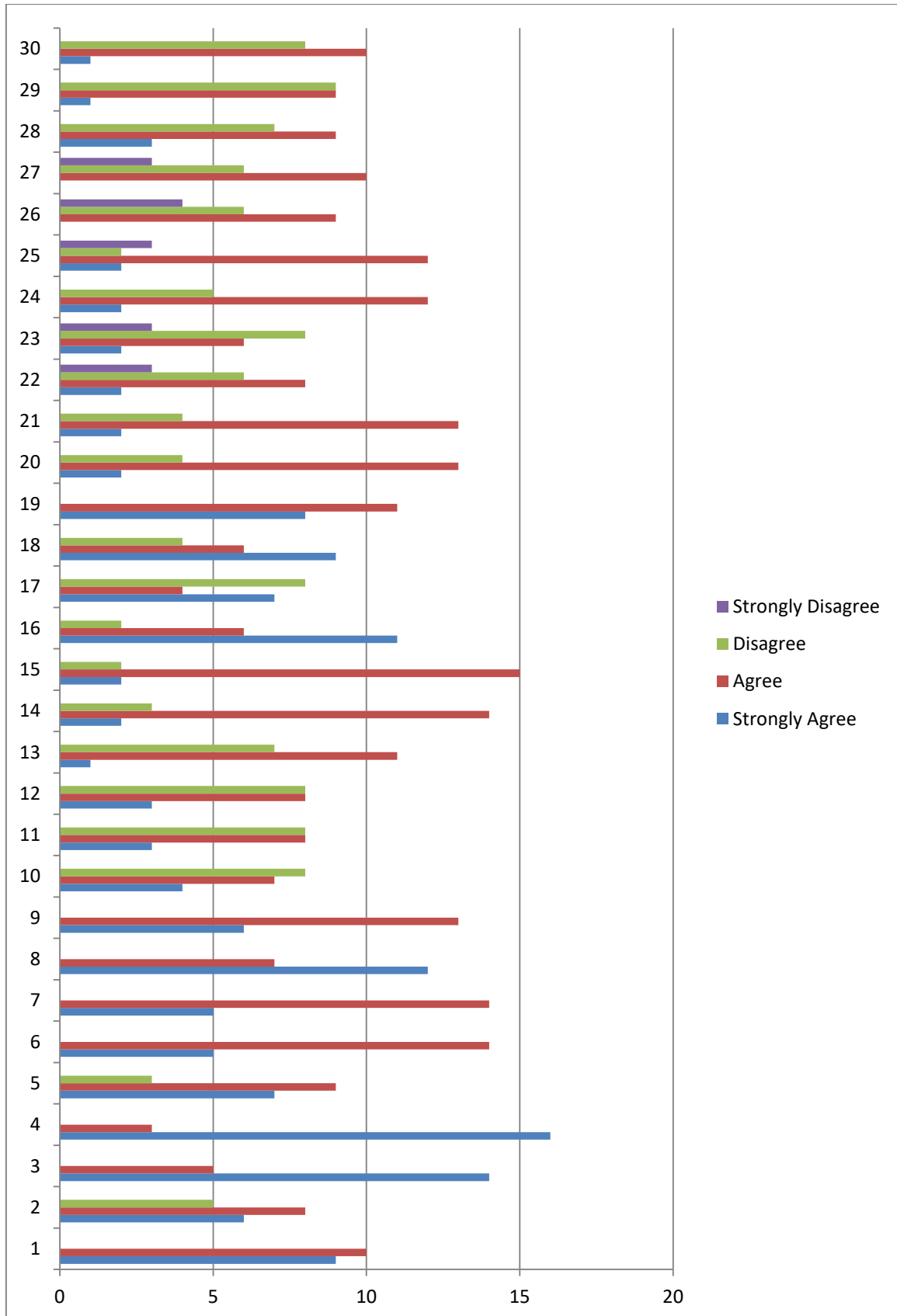*Additional results of the questionnaire*

Graph 4.

Answers of respondents who have been teaching for less than 15 years

Graph 5.

Answers of respondents who have been teaching for more than 15 years

Summary in Czech

Diplomová práce se zabývá kritérii efektivního procvičování slovní zásoby, konkrétně těmi, které upřednostňují čeští učitelé anglického jazyka. Práce je rozdělena do dvou částí. První popisuje téma z teoretického hlediska a druhá se zabývá praktickým výzkumem.

Teoretická část je rozdělena do čtyř kapitol. První vysvětluje, co je slovo a co všechno o slově musíme znát, abychom ho dokázali použít. Další kapitola se zabývá slovní zásobou, její definicí a překážkami, které mohou nastat při její výuce. Třetí kapitola popisuje čtyři jazykové dovednosti a jejich spojitost s výukou slovní zásoby. Poslední kapitola teoretické části definuje jednotlivé strategie výuky a procvičování slovní zásoby. Obě poslední kapitoly také obsahují tipy pro učitele, jak slovní zásobu učit a procvičovat.

Praktická část v podobě výzkumu je rozdělena do tří kapitol. První vysvětluje, jaká forma výzkumu byla zvolena a proč. Touto formou je dotazník, který je v této kapitole také popsán. Tato část se zabývá i popisem zkoumané skupiny respondentů. Další kapitola interpretuje výsledky výzkumu a komentuje je. Třetí kapitola teoretické části popisuje přínos výzkumu a jeho nedostatky.

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