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**VYUŽITÍ DRAMATICKÉ IMPROVIZACE VE VÝUCE  
ANGLICKÉHO JAZYKA**

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**USING IMPROVISATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
TEACHING**

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## PROHLÁŠENÍ

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

V Plzni dne 20. 6. 2019

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Bohumil Blecha

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## ABSTRACT

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This thesis deals with using improvisation in English language teaching (ELT). In the theoretical background part, there is general theoretical information about improvisation in drama, ELT and all the important issues connected with improvisation in ELT and its implementation in education at lower secondary schools. The research was conducted at a drama festival where 13 participants from four different drama groups attended a seminar of improvisation in English. The goal of the research was to find out what impact the workshop had on attitudes towards speaking in English, making a mistake and willingness to speak in front of other participants. To observe this impact, two questionnaires have been used. One consisted of the statements which the participants agreed or disagreed with and was filled out before and after the workshop. The other one was about participants' emotions before, during and after the seminar. The research showed that improvisation significantly minimized fear of making a mistake when speaking in English and of speaking in English in front of the other participants. It also raised positive attitude towards speaking in English outside of school and increased competence of communicating by using English, miming and gestures.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

I decided to write my thesis about improvisation in English, because I wanted to find an interesting way how to connect drama and English together. Subsequently, I also wanted to find a way how to create natural opportunities in which learners of English may apply their gained language knowledge and skills. Before I chose this topic, I had been a member of an improvisation group in Pilsen for three years and had lead a workshop of improvisation. These two experiences and the master studies at the Department of English at the Pedagogical Faculty in Pilsen resulted in an idea that improvisation in English could be a method that brings English knowledge and skills to life in a language classroom. I believed that this method can lead to pupils' greater engagement since it creates unexpected and unpredictable situations in which pupils apply language so naturally that they might even forget that they are using a foreign language.

In my opinion, one of the many problems of Czech learners of English is that they do not trust in themselves and that they do not have the courage to speak in English in front of other learners. It leads to learners' limited engagement and participation in conversations classes. Consequently, some teachers get demotivated and limit free speaking activities in lessons of English. Such insufficiency of speaking practice can lead to only one issue - learners of English will not be able to use English in interaction with speakers of other languages and it will take them long time before they will be able to communicate naturally and at appropriate level.

In my experience, improvisation helps people to lose their fear of speaking in front of others and to speak freely, with no preparation. Improvisation also helps people to communicate, cooperate and concentrate better. It is a powerful tool for creating better group dynamics of the class and it creates atmosphere in which everybody feels safe to speak and improvise in front of one another. That helps to create a team out of the class and it helps learners to make new connections and new friendships among themselves.

Improvisation in English has very similar effect plus many other. It creates safe atmosphere for pupils who are scared to use English in front of other classmates. It naturally



motivates stronger speakers to help the weaker ones. It provides the learners with situations in which they can use English naturally and in a real-life like way. It is very engaging and it might even motivate those learners who hate passive learning and misbehave in other classes of foreign language, since this method is something new and catchy for them.

Generally, there have been studies conducted which focused on improvisation in English. Those studies have been done only with students from secondary schools or universities. That is why I decided to work with learners from lower secondary schools, because I believe that these learners are able to do it as well and that they will appreciate this way of learning and applying language.

In the theoretical background I focus on improvisation in Drama in general, on English language teaching (ELT) in general, on improvisation in ELT, on teenager learners and other relevant topics for the research. In the following chapter I state my research questions and describe the research methodology. I also describe how I conducted the research. In my research I focus on the impact of improvisation in English on learners' attitude towards English in and outside of school, on abilities of learners to express their thoughts or ideas without some of the needed language items, on fear of making a mistake in English and on communication skills of learners. To identify such impact I created four research questions and verified their validity with the help of two questionnaires. In results and commentaries I present several tables with data gathered with the help of the questionnaires. I also interpret and comment on this data. In implications I suggest further research, describe limitations and pedagogical implications of the research. In conclusion I summarize the main ideas of my thesis, the results of the research and its implications.

## II THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In the theoretical part, background information on the topic of improvisation in drama is given as well as its definition. The following issues such as benefits, challenges, strategies and target group of this technique can be found in this part of the thesis as well. The following sections then focus on English language teaching (ELT), applying improvisation in ELT, teenage learners and use of native language when leading a workshop of improvisation in English. Subsequently, the data about improvisation in English and methodology how to implement this technique in ELT classes are described.

### Improvisation in Drama

#### Definition of Improvisation

There are many definitions of the improvisation and many of their central thoughts tend to be very similar. It is though hard to define the matter since those in the field approach improvisation in many different ways, have slightly different objectives and different strategies of applying this technique in education.

Firstly, I present Machalíková's<sup>1</sup> definition. Machalíková (2015) writes that the word *improvise* comes from Latin and means unexpected, suddenly or out of the blue and the Latin word *improvisus* has a very similar meaning. According to Machalíková (2015), "improvisation is considered to be acting without a predetermined pattern, acting that arises now and here" (p. 10).

Thanks to this definition it is quite evident that improvisation is an action, which is not scripted or planned and happens at the present moment. However, it is not very clear from this definition, how many people have to take part in it, if any props are needed and what other circumstances there are for improvisation to be called improvisation. Another possible definition of the improvisation was written by Vasquez (2008), according to whom:

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<sup>1</sup> Machalíková is one of the first educators who brought improvisation to the Czech Republic, the founder of the Czech improvisational league and one of the most experienced improvisers in the Czech Republic

If an open dramatic game becomes a basic staging method, we call it a dramatic improvisation. At the moment, when the actors/players decide to conduct the open dramatic game on the stage, whereas the stage is understood as any space in which there is the fundamental convention of the stage – auditorium; actor – spectator, the result of this action is called the dramatic improvisation (p. 37).

In Vasquez's definition the condition of the presence of the actors and spectators is stated. We can also observe that Vasquez called dramatization an open game which is an important aspect when defining something connected with drama. In drama the terms "game" and "activity" are very clearly distinguished. When talking about a game, the action has its own rules and the presence of the teacher or the supervisor is not needed, because the attendants of the action have their natural motivation to take part in the game. This motivation is usually caused by the rules of the game. In contrast with the term "activity", where there are no clearly given rules and motivations of the attendants. For activity the presence of the teacher is necessary and it cannot be conducted by the group itself. It has specific goals and it usually focuses on development of training of particular skills connected with drama, acting or cooperation.

Landy (1982) defines improvisation as an unscripted, unrehearsed, spontaneous set of actions in response to minimal directions from a teacher. Those directions usually instruct who one is, where one is and what one is doing there. The focus is thus on identifying with characters enacting roles and entering into their inner experience of imagination and fantasy.

Adelabu (2013) defines improvisation in a following way:

Improvisation is the practice of acting, singing, talking and reacting, of making and creating, in the moment and in response to the stimulus of one's immediate environment and inner feelings. This can result in the invention of new thought patterns, new practices, new structures or symbols, and/or new ways to act....The simple act of speaking requires a good deal of improvisation because the mind is addressing its own thought and creating its unrehearsed delivery in words, sounds and gestures, forming unpredictable statements that feed back into the thought process (the performer as

listener), creating an enriched process, that is not unlike instantaneous composition with a given set of repertoire of elements. (p. 12)

In this citation the important information is that improvisation is also singing, talking and reacting, not just acting as well as the information that a simple act of talking is yet improvisation, since it is usually not planned and many spontaneous actions arise in the present moment.

To summarize all four definitions the improvisation is a set of unscripted and unplanned actions (acting, speaking, reacting or singing), whereas there always has to be some audience as well. The only instructions given by the teacher are usually the topic, characters and place of the particular improvisation. Improvisation is mostly an open game on stage. Everything that is a part of the improvisation is created on the spot.

### **Benefits of Improvisation**

Vasquez (2008) writes that our brain tends to react to the same impulses in the same way. In our brain there are so called “attractor valleys”, which are the stereotypical behavioral patterns. Usually, our brain solves many life situations in a learned stereotypical way. This phenomenon is the reason for many stereotypes in our lives such as brushing the teeth, walking, washing the dishes or answering: “You are welcome!” when somebody says: “Thank you!” This leads to stereotypical living and non-creative solutions of problems. Improvisation helps us to find new solutions for these daily situations and helps us to escape attractor valleys and makes us get used to solving the problems in a completely new way. Improvisation leads to increasing creativity in our daily or student’s life, or in our job and it helps us to search consciously for new solutions, new reactions and new ways of dealing with certain situations.

According to Moshavi (2001), the experience with improvisation practices improves many managerial skills such as “interpersonal communications, problem solving, team building, developing trust, enhancing creativity and innovation, reducing risk/fear of failure, adaptability” (p. 441).

## **Skills Connected with Improvisation**

Machalíková (2015) states that there are four basic skills which are to be gained by an improviser in order to ensure the quality of the improvisation. These skills are concentration, cooperation, creativity and communication. These skills have to be trained and improved by each group that begins with improvisation and there are many games and activities, which serve the teacher or leader of the group to teach these skills. Some of these activities have been used during the research and are listed in Appendix IV.

Concentration is crucial for improvisation because it helps everyone in the group to be “in tune” and to feel the energy of the group. The group concentration is in this case much more important than the concentration of individuals. Thanks to that the improvisers are able to react to each other and they are able to be so called “here and now” (Machalíková, 2015).

According to Machalíková (2015), cooperation in improvisation involves responsibility to work in a team, understanding, respect for other people’s opinions, experiences and attitudes, mutual help and following the rules of their group. When learning how to cooperate, students have often problems with denials of their ideas, unhealthy competition, conflict solutions or isolating some members of their group. The skill of cooperation developed by pupils brings many advantages to the group such as more solutions to a problem, range of opinions of others, distribution of jobs and prevention of applying stereotypical behavior in normal life, job or in improvisation as such.

Creativity is a key skill for improvisation because this element makes the improvisation entertaining not just for the improviser but for the audience as well. Machalíková (2015) defines creativity within improvisation:

Creativity is searching for something new (new solution, technical invention, work procedure etc.). It might be an unusual solution which is unexpected by the society. The arising of these “news” is accompanied by phantasy, inspiration, intuition and need of self-realization. As “new” can be labelled even student’s ideas, that have already been created by someone else, but the particular student did not know about its

existence. Although such idea is not helpful for the society, it is evidence of student's creativity. (p. 69)

Communication is according to Machalíková (2015) any connection between two entities. Once the information can be objectively sent and received and remains unchanged, we can call it a skill of social communication. Other communication skills are active listening, intelligible speaking, leading a dialog (verbal and nonverbal) and giving feedback. There are many other skills connected with both communication and improvisation such as talking in front of the audience, giving information to the audience, perceiving of other improvisers and acting with them, communicating with the spectator and eliciting the theme of the improvisation from the audience.

## **Principles of Improvisation**

### ***Principle of linearity***

Everything that happens on the scene within one improvisation has to be taken as a non-negotiable, irrevocable and undeniable fact. That leads to linearity of the improvisation. Improvisers have to make future decisions based on decisions that have been already made. Not all the "facts" need to be taken in consideration, but some definitely have to be. Once some actions, decisions or "facts" of the particular improvisation are negated, denied or revoked, this principle is violated and the improvisation either ends, or is separated into two incompatible improvisations. In normal drama this principle is ensured by the script of the play and thanks to that the concentration of the audience is maintained (Vasquez, 2008).

### ***Accepting the ideas of others***

The idea or offer of one improviser needs to be accepted by the other one in order to maintain the linearity and so called "flow" of the improvisation. If all the offers or ideas presented on the stage are accepted, the improvisation looks as if it was prepared, which is a goal of the improvisation as such. Accepting unusual offers and their development brings the aspect of contingency. Accepting the offer leads to such special and unique actions, that the

audience as well as the “actors” are entertained and they enjoy performing or observing the situation. On the other hand, if all ideas are rejected and remain undeveloped, the improvisation becomes boring and endless. This principle is violated very often by people who begin with improvisation, because it is natural for us to reject ideas or offers that do not feel natural to us. In improvisation many offers are unreal, unusual and people tend to decline these offers. Therefore it is very important to perform some activities or games that reinforce the habit of accepting any offer that comes (Machalíková, 2015).

Machalíková (2015) writes that the offer should not just be accepted, it has to be developed to bring new impulses and make the improvisation even more effective and moving-forward. Skills like cooperation, concentration and creativity are crucial to maintain this principle. Machalíková also writes that no matter what happens on the stage, all improvisers have to act as if it was prepared and they knew it was going to happen. This helps the audience to forget that they are watching improvisation and makes the improvisation entertaining.

### ***Open offer***

The offer that is given in improvisation should be ideally open enough to provide some space for further completion by the other improviser, though it should not be too open, so that it would not provide any new impact on the improvisation that is being performed. To explain this Vasquez (2008) presents an example. If one improviser asks the other improviser following question: “What did your brother do in the cinema yesterday?” The other improviser is very limited by this question. Not only he has to accept the “fact” of having brother, but he also has to accept that his brother was in the cinema yesterday. The “offer” was too close. In order to provide some space for the other improviser, the first one should ask in a different manner, for example: “I think I saw your brother in the cinema yesterday.” In this case the other improviser can be creative a lot and has a range of possible reactions. Such offer is effective and pushes the plot of the improvisation forward.

### ***Show, don't tell!***

It is generally very important that the improvisers are focusing more on action than on talking. Once the improvisers are just talking about doing something and not actually doing it, the particular improvisation is losing pace and starts to look like a very boring conversation of two people in café. On the other hand, if the improvisers do things, whole improvisation can bring many new and unexpected experiences not just for the audience, but for the improvisers themselves.

Another important aspect is that the movement of our body opens our mind and makes us think of new things, new actions and new solutions of the problems.

### ***Who and where***

As soon as a new piece of improvisation starts, the audience as well as the actors should know very early after the beginning, where the improvisers are and who they are in the improvised story. This helps everyone to understand the improvisation and it opens many possibilities for all the improvisers. Once this principle is not fulfilled, the improvisation becomes vague and very complicated to watch as well as to play.

Generally, improvisation can be used in training for managers, leaders or teachers, in education or in workshops for public. In the following section, the English language teaching in general is discussed.

## **English Language Teaching**

English language teaching (ELT) is a process of guided acquisition of English language skills to speakers of any language except for English. According to Richards (2015) there have been discussions about the best approaches and methods of ELT for centuries. Methods such as grammar-translation, the direct method, audiolingualism or situational language teaching have been introduced and developed throughout the history. In the second half of the twentieth century there has been a demand for an approach that would support



communicative skills and help learners to be able to use the foreign language actively in spoken and in written. This resulted in communicative language teaching approach.

### **Communicative language teaching**

Richards (2015) writes that the focus of this approach is the communicative competence, which is described as ability to use the knowledge of the language as a communicative resource. This approach was meant to connect classroom activities and the real world in order to teach students only those language items and skills that would be needed in their professional life. One of the important aspects of communicative language teaching (CLT) is authenticity, which results in movement from controlled to automatic processing, authentic learning materials and creating real-life like situations.

Richards (2015) writes that the goal of CLT is in contrast with the previous approaches to make sure that the learners do not just acquire certain grammar and vocabulary, but also learn to deal with particular topics, functions and situations. To create a communicative syllabus, such functions and situations need to be defined for each level. To do so, the Council of Europe has created a series of such frameworks covering topics, functions, situations, vocabulary and grammar for basic, intermediate and advanced proficiency levels. Many types of activities have been developed for CLT such as information-gap, jigsaw, information-gathering, task-completion, opinion-sharing, information-transfer, reasoning-gap and role play activities.

### **Improvisation in English Language Teaching**

Improvisation in English Language Teaching (ELT) is using the techniques, activities and games connected with drama improvisation within language classes for students, who learn English as a foreign or second language. Machalíková (2015) writes, that it is teachers' choice, in which subject they use improvisation. The author suggests classes such as first language learning, civics or literature, but as follows improvisation can be used in any class; though Machalíková warns that the skills connected with improvisation cannot be learned in

one hour and that improvisation should be introduced slowly and then used regularly more and more. The introduction is not easy and requires teacher's patience.

### **Benefits of Improvisation in ELT**

Wilson (2008) writes that improvisation in ELT is especially useful for the teachers, who want to:

...enliven their classes and refresh students who may be tired or subdued by the way they are asked to learn. The classroom activities are short, easy to do, and success-oriented; in other words, it is easy for the students to get them right. They are designed so as not to make students feel inadequate or frustrated even if their communicative ability is limited. They are also designed to access the creative talents of students, and to give them chance to say or write simple but unique things. They also offer more responsibility to the students themselves to make things happen in the classroom because the teacher does not have to be the only one giving instructions or leading and developing classroom activities. (p. 6)

The acquired and mentioned skills such as concentration, cooperation, creativity and communication are very useful aspects of improvisation in terms of ELT. Especially cooperation and communication are very important, since it helps all the students to work with each other, it helps the weaker students and it makes everyone used to communicate in foreign language, without much thinking about it. Improvisation as such opens mind and helps the student not to be scared and shy when using the mother language. The same applies to the foreign language. Another aspect mentioned in the citation is that improvisation offers very different style of education which provides different possibilities to succeed for students who might not get such a chance during other lessons.

Another advantage of the improvisation is that language is not the only means of communication and there are other ways how to express yourself such as pantomime, movement, facial expression, sounds or even an invented language.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In some improvisation games it is even possible to invent your own words or language. As long as it is at least partially understood by other improvisers and the audience, it is fine to do so.

According to Adelabu (2013) improvisation is an ideal tool to improve students' fluency and their ability to be understood when expressing themselves. It also supports cooperation, self-control, collaboration, goal-oriented learning as well as skills connected with emotions. It also puts the used language in context and it helps to give students the opportunity to succeed in real-life alike situations. Improvisation encourages the adaptability and the competence to communicate. Most importantly, it encourages and increases students' confidence to speak in a foreign language, but also their confidence to speak in general.

Adelabu (2013) also writes:

Improvisation enables the students to flex their emotional, mental as well as physical muscles on a safe and controlled setting. The students will develop an increasing facility to meet changing and unknown stimuli with immediate responses. Improvisation activities give the student several avenues to self-awareness. (p. 12)

This citation states that improvisation is very useful for all the students, especially the shy ones, because it provides safe environment to practise real-life situations. Though it is very important that the teacher creates such environment and ensures its remaining throughout and after the class where the improvisation was used. Richards writes (1974) that the students will be hesitant and shy at the beginning, but if the activities will be done for a longer period of time, linked together and managed well, the students will be more and more enthusiastic and there will be a remarkable improvement in their confidence level.

## **Strategies of Using Improvisation in ELT**

### ***Goals***

Same as for any lesson, activity or game done in ELT, the goals are crucial for the effective use of improvisation in ELT. The teacher has to know why he or she uses improvisation, what the objectives are and how he or she can evaluate the outcomes of the performed class. Machalíková (2015) writes that “the goal of education is imagination about how we want our students to be like after the process of education in comparison with the current status” (p. 13). Machalíková continues that the common goal of improvisation is the

development of personality. In terms of this development she states concentration, creativity, cooperation and communication as the main goals of improvisation in education.

However, these goals are used by Machalíková only in terms of improvisation in L1. For improvisation in ELT following goals are possible to be stated:

- Students are able to express their idea in L2.
- Students can receive the idea of other students and develop them in L2.
- Students are able to create a story on a spot in L2.
- Students have positive attitude toward speaking in L2.
- Students are not scared of making a mistake.

### ***From concentration to communication***

Machalíková (2015) suggests in a lesson of improvisation to start with activities and games focused on concentration, to continue with activities and games focused on cooperation and creativity and to finish with games and activities focused on communication. Machalíková compares improvisation to a tree. The roots are equivalent to the concentration, because it is the basis for everything in improvisation. The stem is compared to the cooperation. It holds the crown of the tree and it holds all the improvisers and aspects in improvisation together. Creativity is a crown. It comes from the stem and just as oxygen is created in the leaves of the tree, the ideas are created in the brains of improvisers. Communication is the blossom of everything. It is the most precious thing on the tree. Although when blossoms are alone, on a pile on the ground, they are nothing. That is why it is so important to follow the order of these skills, when using improvisation in ELT. If you start straight with the communication activities in improvisation, the students are likely to produce very bad improvisations that will not be fun for them or their classmates and the whole point of using improvisation in your lessons will be lost.

### ***From non-verbal to speech-based communication***

When beginning with improvisation in English classes it is important to start with the activities that are non-verbal. This means such activities and games, in which other means are

used for communication such as miming, facial expressions, movement or body-language. This phenomenon is called physicalization, states Spolin (1999). Matthias (2007) writes, that:

...such an emphasis on purely physical expression may be perceived as counter-productive to language learning if we think of language learning as a setup in which students receive structured input in order to generate structured linguistic output. (p. 55)

Matthias (2007) continues that there are other “silent” techniques used at the beginning of the whole learning process such as total physical response (TPR) or “silent way”. It is though important to mention, that physicalization in improvisation is more than a simple movement done on a command given by teacher. It is personal, strong and constant collaboration with other students within L2 context in an improvised situation, which encourages the students to become creative in their future communication and to lose fears of communication. If they can communicate without words, the communication in L2 will be much easier challenge, than it seemed to be.

The next step is according to Matthias (2007) allowing the students experience such activities and improvisations in which they can use one word replicas, fixed phrases or a limited set of expressions. This will help the students to keep up the active use of their physical communication, but it will be already partially in a complete L2 atmosphere and the students will get used to improvisation in L2.

Gibberish<sup>3</sup> is according to Matthias (2007) the next step for students, since it provides a non-existing language created on a spot. It does not have any rules, vocabulary or grammar. It is a set of sounds that students create and use it as they like. In this way the students are pushed to communicate with each other still using the body, but they are already using a language completely and may seem that they actually understand what the other person is saying. Again, after communicating in gibberish, the principle of improvisation “Show, don’t tell!” is interiorised by the students and they are one step closer to improvisation in L2.

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<sup>3</sup> Gibberish is a fake language that does not exist and uses mixture of many languages together. It does not have any grammar, any vocabulary and it does not provide any communication based on words. It only sounds like a language. The point of the improvisation in Gibberish is to use the language in a way so it looks as if all the improvisers understood one another.

After all these procedural steps, the students are ready to improvise in L2, though it is very important to stress, that it should still be more about “doing” than “talking”. Action makes improvisation fun. On the contrary, too much talking makes improvisation boring.

### ***Focus on communication and fluency***

The focus within the improvisation should be on communication among improvisers. If the improvisers are able to communicate with one another in L2, the very important goal of using improvisation is fulfilled. It does not matter, if the communication is grammatically incorrect or other criteria of accuracy are not met, since accuracy is not the goal when using improvisation. If we use improvisation in our L2 class, we should use it to encourage fluency. The students should be positively reinforced if they communicate successfully, no matter how many mistakes they have produced.

## **Teenage Learners**

Generally, improvisation can be used with any age group but this thesis focuses on the use of improvisation in English language teaching of the learners who are between 13 and 16 years old. According to Legutke (2012) this age group is vulnerable and insecure and these learners are searching for a way to express themselves. They also have a great amount of creativity in themselves and it is crucial how it is used by both the teacher and the learner since it can inspire or slow down the learning process.

Richards (2015) states the following characteristics of teenage learners: They prefer to interact with their classmates during the activities and they might quite often deal with something personal, which might make their learning harder and might decrease their level of concentration. These learners also need to be accepted by their peers and seek both their and the teacher’s approval, but can be very easily discouraged. Physical activities or activities including movement are crucial for this group because of different or increased levels of energy. They also like to question the authorities and may respond very sensitively towards embarrassing or ridiculous situations.

Richards (2015) also mentions that the prior-learning experience of teenage learners may quite heavily affect how they learn and there might be many different levels within one class such as students who have lived abroad for many years or learners who still struggle with basic sentences in the foreign language. Another important thing to mention is that this age group enjoys to learn through any activities that include social interaction, since it increases the independence of them, mutual learning and the quality of interpersonal relations within the class. It is also crucial for them to be actively involved in the lesson and to work on skills they consider important for themselves.

### **Improvisation and Teenage Learners**

For teenage learners improvisation is relevant for many reasons. Improvisation is closely connected with cooperation and it is not possible to improvise and not to cooperate at the same time. If it is well guided, it leads to improving interpersonal relationships in the class and it helps participants to learn how to cooperate and communicate better and more effectively. Another positive aspect is the natural differentiation of improvisation for the students, since the one with a lower level of their language can use other means of communication and still improvise very well or even better than the ones with high level. In improvisation participants are also creating their own situations, their own plots and their own solutions, which supports their enthusiasm for it, since the teenage learners appreciate when they can create something independently from the teacher. Key aspect of improvisation is learning to accept and develop the ideas of the other improvisers, since this age group appreciates when their ideas are accepted and developed no matter what quality the idea has. This can create a receiving and welcoming atmosphere in the class and make everyone feel accepted and safe, which is in this age crucial not just for relationships in the class but for the whole learning process, because when there are not many social problems to deal with, the learners focus much better on learning.

For students between 12 and 17 years of age is also very useful to leave their comfort zone and try things they would not normally do, since this enlarges their comfort zone and helps them to know themselves better. Thanks to that, they are able to decide about their future more easily because they already know their passions, talents and limits. Zafeiriadou

(2009) writes that the learners from this age group might also feel inhibition or embarrassment when improvising or performing any drama activities.

### **Use of L1**

Cole (1998) writes that the use of L1 has not been discussed very thoroughly in terms of CLT since the general use of L2 is supported by this approach. In spite of that, there are situations in which L1 helps learners and teachers succeed more easily. That is why the use of L1 is in some cases quite important during the lessons of improvisation in English.

According to Cole (1998), one of the situations to use L1 in CLT is when learners are beginners and the teacher wants to explain a more complex activity. In that case, rather than to lose time by explaining the activity in L2, it is better to just say it quickly in L1 and conduct the activity straight afterwards. In case of improvisation in English it is very similar. The instructions for the beginners about the games and activities should be given in L1, especially, if the games and activities are done for the first time. Most of these activities are quite demanding for explanation and therefore it is from the point of view of effectivity much better to use L1. If the same activities are instructed for the second time, it is already possible to use L2 for that; if there are some new aspects, then these aspects should be explained again in L1. Also the general principles of improvisation should be explained in L1 since in this case the goal is better improvisation skills of the students and more fun while improvising. It is possible that L1 might be needed also with the intermediate groups, because the language to describe and explain improvisation is at a quite high level, which could prevent the students from understanding the activity and consequently from participating in improvisation classes in general.

Another case in which it is helpful to use L1 in CLT class is, according to Cole (1998), when explaining a new word to beginners, especially in case of abstract words or expressions that are difficult to explain. The same principle can be applied in improvisation in English. It is quite likely to happen that the levels of learners' English are different. When one of the improvisers who are more advanced in English uses a word that is hard to understand for the beginners and it is not clear from the context of the improvisation what this word



means, it is helpful to let the improvisers deal with this misunderstanding for a little while. If they do not succeed to help the beginner deduce the meaning and one improviser still does not understand the other, this word should be quickly translated into L1, so the improvisation can continue and the beginner does not feel lost.

The following suggestion from Cole (1998) is for improvisation in English questionable. Cole writes that the learners should use almost only L2 in terms of conducting the speaking activities. On one hand, the same principle can be applied in improvisation, but on the other, it is more important, that the improvisation is not stopped because of a missing word in improviser's vocabulary bank. That is why especially at the beginning, the use of L1 words within the improvisation should not be forbidden or suppressed. The motivation of the learners to use L2 when improvising is natural. There are cases though, when the fluency of the improvisation is saved by using a single word, which can be later translated by the other improvisers and it is immediately learned by the original user of the L1 word.

### **Improvisation in ELT in Data**

Several studies have been conducted that deal with improvisation in ELT. One of them was conducted in Indonesia. Fauzan (2014) performed research with the students of the third semester at the English department of Widyagama Mahakam University. The author identified many problems of the students with English. The students lacked vocabulary and were not happy with their speaking. They were also afraid to speak or to be laughed at by the other students. Another issue was that the students felt nervous while speaking and some of them would not speak English at all. The researcher had two goals for implementing the improvisation: to improve students' speaking score in a speaking test and to increase the quality of the classroom atmosphere. The first factor was tested with the help of a speaking test which was conducted before the implementation, after the first cycle and after the second cycle. Each cycle consisted of four stages: planning, action, observation and reflection and each cycle included 5 meetings with the students.

According to Fauzan (2014), the results of the speaking tests improved from 2,72 to 3,09 after the first cycle and to 3,76 after the second cycle. The improving classroom

atmosphere was indicated by raising participation, which was 64% in the first cycle and 73,79% in the second cycle. It was also visible from the increasing motivation of the students to join the particular improvisations.

According to Adelabu (2013), research has shown that the improvisation in ELT has very significant advantages for certain type of learning. It supports the cooperation of the teacher and the students since it leads to mutual creation of the topic and the process of the class by both teacher and learners. It is a unique teaching tool because of its unpredictability caused by cooperation of multiple competing voices taking part in one improvisation.

Another research study performed by Hadelı (2017) showed higher proficiency of speaking in a class that had experienced improvisation techniques in their ELT classes than in a class where there hadn't been used. This research has been conducted in class XI at Senior High School 12 Padang and has also shown a significant improvement in teaching interpersonal and transactional conversation texts. The results of the class using the technique were 7% higher than in the other class.

Subsequently, another research by Berk (2009) has shown that improvisation supports spontaneity, learner-centered teaching, intuition, interaction, active listening and nonverbal communication. This study also confirms and summarizes the results of other studies. They have proven that improvisation promotes deep learning which is defined as naturally motivated desire to learn which resolves in well-structured knowledge of learners. Berk also motivates teachers and other researchers to perform research about improvisation in specific subject, e.g. in ELT.

To conclude, it has been proven that improvisation can be very helpful for students at universities and high schools all around the world. It creates natural learning atmosphere, decreases the level of nervousity and shyness of the students when speaking in L2 and it provides learning that is between the real life learning and textbook learning. Unfortunately, no research has been found that would deal with improvisation in ELT with lower secondary students. This fact actually makes the following parts of this thesis a little more significant, since the method has not been used that much with learners of this age.

## **Methodology of Implementing Improvisation in ELT**

Matthias (2007) has planned and led a workshop which was offered to students who had studied German for three months. This workshop was voluntary and it consisted of five meetings that were 75 to 90 minutes long. The author emphasizes the importance of having a goal for each meeting and of sequencing activities from those which do not use any language to those that use gibberish as a communication tool followed by exercises that use a one word expression repeated in different ways to express different emotions. The last phase of each session has improvisation exercises which involve normal unlimited use of language, although it is still important to emphasize the very important aspect of movement in improvisation (see the section “Show, don’t tell!”).

Matthias (2007) also emphasizes the importance of considering the level of the students and of considering whether the students need to receive some of the needed language items before the particular improvisation or not. Some of the researchers who have used improvisation worked only with roleplay cards and given settings. The students’ task was then to perform a meeting of the two given characters in the given place. This way is just a partial improvisation because the where and the who are already given. In that case, certain scaffolding can be provided. If the where and the who are not given by the teacher, then it is unknown what the improvisation would be about and therefore the scaffolding be given. That causes a challenge which can be solved by allowing learners to use unknown language items in L1 or to express the words by other means of communication. Usually the other improvisers know that language item and say it in L2 right after it was expressed in L1.

Matthias (2007) used a short story as a connection between the particular meetings. It was worked on and developed always at the end of the session. The author claims that with her experience, she would not have been able to perform the workshops without this but she is aware that it is possible. She used this short story as a central goal of the whole process. The goal was to make students to be able to perform the short story themselves without learning any script, only by improvising it step by step, until the whole play was created. This might have been a safer way for the author since she works as a leader of a drama group where such approach is used.

Generally, the research suggests that it is important to perform improvisation only with students who want to do it. Therefore it is important to work only with students who had voluntarily decided to take part in such workshop or seminar. According to Matthias (2007), it is very important to include such activities and exercises that are not too hard neither too easy at the same time. These exercises have to be a challenge for the learners but they have to have a chance to complete these challenges. Improvisation in ELT can be introduced in a regular class in school but it is important to discuss it with the students beforehand and to make sure that learners know what it is about and why it is done.

### III. METHODS

In this chapter, I outline my research project. Specifically, the research questions are specified as well as the research itself. I describe place, time and participants of my study. I also describe the research tool that was used to gather data and the way the research was carried out.

Before the research was carried out, the following research questions had been stated:

1. Does improvisation in English help to improve the participants' positive attitude towards speaking in English in school and outside of it?
2. Does improvisation in English help the participants express their ideas without some of the needed language items?
3. Does improvisation in English decrease the fear of making a mistake in English?
4. Does improvisation in English improve the communication skills in L2?

Research was conducted at a drama festival in Dobřany in Pilsner region from 26<sup>th</sup> till 28<sup>th</sup> of April in 2019. This festival is organised by the incorporated association “Johan, z. s.”; it takes place every year and it is a cultural event, where drama groups from the whole region come and perform their plays. To be able to perform there, these groups had to be nominated in one of the district rounds. The festival is called “Tartas” and it consists of three main types of activities: performances of drama groups, reflections of performances with teachers or leaders of drama groups and workshops for members of drama groups who are at the same time the actors of performances. Workshops and reflections take place in the same time, so the teachers do not have to take care of their participants during the reflections. Workshops are usually led by students of drama education of the Faculty of Education in Pilsen. Festival is designated for participants who attend primary or lower secondary schools but some of the members of the drama groups may study at secondary schools.

The workshop of improvisation in English was one of the workshops that were offered to participants of the festival and participants could voluntarily sign up for this workshop. There has been one participant who was assigned to this workshop by his teacher, because the rest of his drama group took part in it and the teacher wanted his whole group to be together

in the same workshop. In total, thirteen participants took part in the workshop from the beginning till the end and four more either started later or finished sooner because of organisational reasons connected with the festival. The participants came from four different drama groups which had not known each other before the workshop and they were from 13 to 16 years old. The possibility to choose this workshop was limited by the age of 13. There were 7 male and 6 female participants out of the thirteen who took part in the whole workshop. Some of them had had experience with drama improvisation but none of them had had experience with improvisation in English. Four of the participants had started to learn English in nursery school; three in the first class and six in the third class. Four participants had never spoken in English anywhere else but in school; four had used English outside of school very little and five had rich experience with using English outside of school. All of the participants had been actively involved in their drama groups for more than two years.

The workshop was prepared by the author of the thesis based on the knowledge gained from the resources included in references and on the experience of the author with improvisation in drama. The plan for the whole workshop including goals for each particular session is in Appendix IV. The workshop consisted of three sessions whereas each session was from 80 to 110 minutes long. The length of the sessions was stated by the manager of the festival. To conduct the seminar I asked a student of mine to join me and to help to lead the seminar more effectively and to supervise the other group in case of dividing the whole group into two. We led the workshop in L1 of the participants. All the instructions for the games and activities as well as organisational instructions were given in L1 and all the activities and games were done in L2.

To gather the data from the participants, two different tools were used. The first tool was a questionnaire in which the participants evaluated statements connected with their attitude towards speaking in English, expressing their ideas in English and other topics relevant for the hypothesis questions. The statements were evaluated with a reaction from the scale. In this scale there was always total disagreement, disagreement, neutral reaction, agreement and total agreement. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix I and III. These questionnaires were filled out electronically via Google sheets before the beginning and after

the end of the workshop. In the questionnaire after the workshop there were the same questions, but there were three extra questions. These questions were supposed to find out whether the participants liked the workshop, whether they would recommend improvisation in English to be used in normal ELT classes and why or why not. This tool was chosen to observe the attitudes of the participants towards the relevant topics included in hypothesis questions and changes of the attitudes after the workshop.

The other tool that has been used was a questionnaire of emotions of the participants towards workshop. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix II. There were three parts of the questionnaire. One that was filled out before the workshop, one in the middle and the last after the workshop. In each part there was a list of suggested emotions and the participants were to circle the emotions that were connected with improvisation in English and that they felt at the moment they were filling it out. This tool was chosen to help the participants to express how they felt and it showed the development of their mindset which was connected with improvisation in English. This tool was filled out in paper form. Both of the tools were filled out anonymously; to be able to observe the development of attitudes or emotions, the participants were supposed to write the last four numbers of their phone number to make it possible to match all parts of the questionnaire to one participant. Both of the tools were filled out in L1 to make sure that the participants understood all the questions and tasks clearly.

In this chapter the place, time and participants of the research have been specified. Also the tools to gather the data have been described and the reasons for their use have been given. In the next chapter the results of the research are presented, evaluated and commented on.

#### IV. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

In this chapter I will present the results of the research and comment on them. I summarized the data from the questionnaires that were filled out by the respondents before, during and after the workshop and I organised it in six tables. One of the tables presents the data gathered from the questionnaire connected with emotions of the participants towards the workshop and the rest of them deals with the data gathered from the questionnaire with statements about improvisation, improvisation in English and attitudes towards English.

In Table 1 there are five columns. The first one lists all the emotions that the participants of the seminar could choose from before, during and after the workshop. The positive emotions are marked with green colour and the negative with red colour. The following three columns show the number of participants who ticked the emotion before, during or after the seminar. The last column lists the total numbers for each emotion. The last two lines show the total number of positive and negative emotions. In Table 1 we can see that in total there were 135 positive emotions in contrast with only 14 negative ticked. Out of the 14 negative emotions were 9 before, 5 during and 0 after the workshop. We can find an interesting tendency of the emotion: "I am nervous." which starts at the number of 6 participants at the beginning, goes down to 2 and ends at 0. Similar tendency can be found in case of: "I am worried." Very few participants felt tension before or during the seminar. There is a significant number of: "I am looking forward/happy about what happened." The second most chosen emotion was: "I am alright." None of the participants wrote that they were scared, disconcerted or off balance. 10 out of 13 participants felt inspired at the end of the workshop. 9 participants were curious about the workshop. The number of positive emotions increased from 31 before the workshop to 55 after the workshop.

From the numbers we can tell that the general mood in the seminar was positive and that the emotions connected with the seminar were getting better throughout the workshop. The positive emotions were ticked the most after the end, which might mean that the participants were satisfied about what happened but it can also mean, that they were happy, because the workshop ended. Since the number of positive emotions during the seminar is



almost as high as of those after, it is more probable that the participants liked the workshop as such and that they felt good about it.

**Table 1**

*Questionnaire of Emotions connected with the workshop*

Emotions	Before the seminar	During the seminar	After the seminar	In total
I am looking forward/happy about what happened.	8	11	10	29
I am curious.	9	8	0	17
I feel calm.	4	4	8	16
I feel alright.	5	5	9	19
I feel great.	2	6	7	15
I feel relaxed.	3	5	9	17
I feel safe.	0	5	2	7
I feel inspired.	0	5	10	15
I am nervous.	6	2	0	8
I am scared.	0	0	0	0
I feel tension.	1	2	0	3
I feel disconcerted.	0	0	0	0
I am worried.	2	0	0	2
I am off balance.	0	0	0	0
I feel terrible.	0	1	0	1
Positive emotions in total	31	49	55	135
Negative emotions in total	9	5	0	14

The decreasing level of nervousity signifies that some participants did not trust in themselves at the beginning but they lost this tension and fear connected with improvisation in English. None of the participants felt a negative emotion at the end which supports the previously mentioned satisfaction of the participants. High level of inspiration at the end might mean that

the participants felt something new and that they wanted to continue in learning English differently or that they would like to continue with improvisation, no matter if in Czech or in English. The high number of the happy and relaxed emotions shows safe and chilled atmosphere throughout the seminar which I want to support by my own feeling from the workshop. The atmosphere was very relaxed for me and there was no tension, fear or stress that I would feel from the participants.

What surprised me is that one of the participants felt terrible during the workshop and I would be interested in what the reason for this emotion was. It might mean that the participant did not like the activity that was done before filling out this questionnaire or that generally, this participant did not feel well in the seminar. None of the participants felt terrible before or after the workshop which might mean that the participant had good expectations before and that he was happy when the workshop was over. It could also be the participant that was assigned to the workshop by his teacher in order to be with the rest of his drama group.

Table 2 shows results of the questionnaire that the participants filled out before and after the workshop. The first column lists the statements that the participants were supposed to evaluate on the scale from “Strongly disagree”; “Disagree”; “I don’t know”; “Agree” and “Strongly agree”. The following columns show the numbers of participants who felt a particular way about a particular statement. Each column for each way of agreement or disagreement is divided into before and after part to show the difference of the participants’ opinion about the issue after the seminar. In this chart it is only visible how the opinion of all the participants changed.

There were four participants who were scared to imagine to speak English in front of the other participants of the seminar and they were not scared to do so after the seminar. None of the participants thought that they are not able to improvise in English after the seminar, even though before the seminar there were 3 who thought they could not and two who did not know. There were seven participants who felt unpleasant to make a mistake when speaking in English before the seminar and two who actually felt unpleasant to make such mistake during the seminar. Zero participants felt completely fine with making a mistake when speaking in

English before the seminar and after the seminar there were five such participants. Three participants showed improvement since they changed their answer from “agree” to “strongly agree” concerning the statement: “I can communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics.”

Two participants did not feel they would be able to express their thoughts without words before the seminar and 4 did not know. After the seminar all participants wrote that they can do it. There were two participants who did not like to speak English in school and zero participants who did not like to speak English outside of school before the seminar. After the workshop there was one participant who did not like to speak English in school. None of the answers have changed in a negative way, which means that the number of participants agreeing with positive statements increased after the seminar and the number of participants agreeing with negative statements decreased after the seminar. The only two negative statements in the chart were those beginning with: “I am scared...” and “To make a mistake”.

From the previously presented numbers I can tell that the relationship with English and improvisation in English of all the participants became better thanks to the workshop. It is also quite visible that the fear of making mistake decreased; that could mean that the participants will speak in a more relaxed way in the future and they will be able to express themselves somehow, either with the language or with other means of communication. The results also tell us that the fear of speaking in front of other participants completely disappeared which is a significant success, since it may take very long for some learners of English to lose fear of speaking. It is also interesting that only four sessions were sufficient to make all the participants feel confident about improvisation in English. This could also be visible at the end of the seminar, when the participants expressed desire to show improvisation in English to all the participants of the festival and other leaders of other drama group. Eleven out of thirteen participants were eventually performing few of the improvisational activities or games in English in front of more than one hundred people.

What surprised me is the way how positively participants felt about English in and outside of school. I had expected a much bigger number of respondents expressing their negative attitude towards English. Nevertheless, it is even more unexpected that even though

the participants liked to speak English in and outside of school, they were scared to speak in front of others and to make a mistake when speaking before the workshop.

**Table 2**

*Results of the Questionnaire with Statements about Improvisation and English*

Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		I don't know		Agree		Strongly agree	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
I like to speak English at school.	0	0	2	1	0	0	6	6	5	6
I like to speak English outside of school.	0	0	0	0	1	1	7	6	5	6
I am scared when I imagine to speak English in front of other participants of workshop.	3	5	3	8	3	0	2	0	2	0
I can express my thought or idea without using words.	1	0	1	0	4	0	4	9	3	4
I can improvise in English.	2	0	1	0	2	0	6	7	2	6
I can help myself somehow, when I speak English and cannot express my idea by using word.	0	0	1	0	1	0	8	7	3	6
To make a mistake when speaking in English is unpleasant for me.	0	5	6	6	0	0	3	1	4	1
I can accept and develop idea of my partner, even though I have my own.	0	0	1	1	0	0	6	4	6	8
I like to find new ways how to deal with daily situations.	0	0	1	0	2	0	6	7	4	6
I can communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics.	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	4	6	9

Tables 3, 4 and 5 all show the results of the same questionnaire as Table 2, but they show all the answers of the participants separately. Thanks to that it is visible how each participant reacted to particular statements. Tables 3 and 4 show five participants and all their answers and Table 5 shows three participants. The third line though is new and it shows how many names of others the participants knew at the beginning and at the end of the workshop.

Most of the participants knew less than ten names of others at the beginning and all of the participants knew 16 or 17 names at the end except for three, who knew 4, 9 or 11 names.

Participant 1802 knew 5 people before and 9 after the workshop by name and the workshop changed his answers about only two statements. Quite surprisingly, this person felt at the end of the seminar less confident about expressing his or her thoughts or ideas without words and about communicating by using English, miming etc. Generally, this respondent felt good about most of the statements except for making mistake when speaking in English, which was quite unpleasant for him or her before and after the workshop as well. A quite similar development can be observed in case of participant 3111.

**Table 3**

*Reactions on Statements of Respondents 1802, 2257, 3111, 6298 and 6680*

Number of the participant	1802		2257		3111		6298		6680	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
How many participants of this workshop do you know by their names?	5	9	7	16	9	16	2	17	10	16
I like to speak English at school.	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
I like to speak English outside of school.	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	I don't know	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am scared when I imagine to speak English in front of other participants of workshop.	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	I don't know	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I can express my thought or idea without using words.	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	I don't know	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
I can improvise in English.	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I can help myself somehow, when I speak English and cannot express my idea by using word.	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
To make a mistake when speaking in English is unpleasant for me.	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly disagree
I can accept and develop idea of my partner, even though I have my own.	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
I like to find new ways how to deal with daily situations.	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	I don't know	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I can communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics.	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree

**Table 4***Reactions on Statements of Respondents 7187, 7400, 7958, 8367 and 8938*

Number of the participant	7187		7400		7958		8367		8938	
Statement	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
How many participants of this workshop do you know by their names?	10	16	10	16	12	17	2	17	1	4
I like to speak English at school.	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
I like to speak English outside of school.	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
I am scared when I imagine to speak English in front of other participants of workshop.	I don't know	Disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Agree	Disagree
I can express my thought or idea without using words.	I don't know	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	I don't know	Agree	Disagree	Agree
I can improvise in English.	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Agree	I don't know	Agree	I don't know	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
I can help myself somehow, when I speak English and cannot express my idea by using word.	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	I don't know	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree
To make a mistake when speaking in English is unpleasant for me.	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
I can accept and develop idea of my partner, even though I have my own.	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I like to find new ways how to deal with daily situations.	I don't know	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree
I can communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics.	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree

**Table 5***Reactions on Statements of Respondents 9145, 9854 and 0373*

Number of the participant	9145		9854		0373	
Statement	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
How many participants of this workshop do you know by their names?	10	15	11	11	10	16
I like to speak English at school.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I like to speak English outside of school.	Agree	I don't know	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
I am scared when I imagine to speak English in front of other participants of workshop.	Disagree	Disagree	I don't know	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I can express my thought or idea without using words.	Agree	Agree	I don't know	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I can improvise in English.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I can help myself somehow, when I speak English and cannot express my idea by using word.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
To make a mistake when speaking in English is unpleasant for me.	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly agree	Disagree
I can accept and develop idea of my partner, even though I have my own.	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
I like to find new ways how to deal with daily situations.	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
I can communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics.	Agree	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree

We can observe very different developments in the column of the participant 2257. This respondent got to know 9 new people by names and some of his answers changed completely. For example in case of the statement: "I can express my ideas without words."

The participant lost the fear to speak in English and learned how to improvise in English. Even though many things have changed, the attitude towards speaking English in school did not. Nevertheless, the participant does like to speak English outside of school. The development of this respondent shows a positive effect on most of the participant's skills and attitudes that were in the questionnaire, which proves that the workshop was for this person useful. We can see very similar tendency in case of 7400 and 7958, who both completely lost fear, learned how to improvise and who completely stopped feeling unpleasantly when making a mistake. Quite similar case is 0373, who now feels alright with making a mistake and has no fear at all of speaking on front of others.

Respondent 6298 got to know 15 people but has not changed any opinions strongly, since there was not any problem with confidence about improvisation in English or with drama performance. The only two answers that did change were those connected with fear and finding new ways of solving situations. In both cases there was a slight change from a neutral answer to a slight positive one. Respondents 7187, 8367 and 9854 show similar tendency, only with few more positive developments of attitudes in other answers.

The last group of respondents with a similar tendency are 6680, 8938 and 9145, who experienced deepening most of the positive attitudes and feelings and changed significantly from one to three statements towards more positive relationship with English and improvisation in English. All these three participants changed their attitude either towards mistakes when speaking or towards having fear to speak in front of others.

These results show us, that 11 out of 13 participants profited from the workshop significantly and two did not profit, but did not experience any strong change of attitudes in neither positive nor negative way. This can be interpreted as follows: improvisation helps participants to lose fear of speaking; it supports interpersonal relationships and it helps learners to feel safe when making a mistake when speaking. The workshop also helped most of the participants to learn how to improvise and it could have built positive feelings about improvising in front of others.

Table 6 shows us how the participants liked or disliked the whole workshop, whether they would recommend it and why. It is divided in four columns. In the first one there are



numbers of respondents. In the second and third there is their reaction to statements and in the fourth there is why they would or would not recommend improvisation in English to be used to teach English at lower secondary school. According to the answers, nine participants really liked the workshop and 4 liked it. This means there was no single participant who did not like it. If we connect this with the data from the previous charts, we find out, that even though the two participants did not experience any major shift in their attitudes or skills connected with improvisation or with improvisation in English, the workshop was enjoyable for these two participants. I consider quite important that even the few pupils who did not learn much did not suffer from boredom.

11 out of 13 participants would definitely recommend improvisation in English to be used to teach English at lower secondary school and the other 2 would recommend it too. This means that the participants consider this method a good way of teaching English and that they themselves might have learned something. It might also mean that they want their classmates to be able to experience this as well as other pupils who attend lower secondary schools in Pilsen region. For me, this piece of data is very important, because if the pupils themselves like the method that is used to teach them, the chance for them to learn something grows bigger and the cooperation with them gets much easier. That causes more natural motivation, than when the pupils want to learn the matter but do not like the way they are taught. To justify their recommendations four of the participants mentioned the word fun. Some others have mentioned the importance of combination of fun and learning. Another participant mentioned he or she would consider this method one of the best methods to use principle “School by play” by Komenský. Many other respondents mentioned that improvisation helps them communicate better during and after it, especially in real life. Some other respondents considered it interesting and original way of teaching English. One participant wrote that it increases self-confidence and courage. Another participant mentioned the importance of learning how to communicate by other means but language. Another point was that it diversifies the lesson and that the participant feels more relaxed when using improvisation to learn English. From all these justifications we can tell that participants felt quite sure that the improvisation in English would be good to enrich lessons of English at lower secondary

school and that they knew why they recommended it. Also it shows that the participants did not just take part in the seminar but they were also thinking about its value for pupils in schools.

**Table 6**

*Recommendations of the Participants about Improvisation in English*

Statement			
Number of the participant	I liked the workshop.	It would be good to use improvisation in English to teach English at lower secondary school.	Why? Why not?
1802	Agree	Strongly agree	I would consider it one of the best methods that use the principle "School by play".
2257	Strongly agree	Agree	Because I will feel more relaxed.
3111	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	It is fun.
6298	Agree	Strongly agree	I can learn how to communicate much better in this way.
6680	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	It is a great combination of fun and learning at the same time.
7187	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	I diversifies the lesson and it will be more funny for pupils.
7400	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Because it helps me communicate better in real life.
7958	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Improvisation increases courage and self-confidence and to be able to speak English is not bad at all.
8367	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	It is an interesting and original way of teaching.
8938	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	It is fun.
9145	Agree	Strongly agree	Yes, because when we cannot express ourselves by using words, we can communicate using body language.
9854	Agree	Agree	We can learn the pronunciation better.
0373	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	We practice English and it is funny.

Concerning the research question: “Does improvisation in English help to improve the participants’ positive attitude towards speaking in English in school and outside of it?” it can be concluded that this question was confirmed, though not completely. On the one hand, five participants changed their attitudes towards speaking in English in and outside of school positively. On the other hand, two participants changed their attitudes negatively. Nevertheless, the data from Table 1 and Table 6 rather support the positive answer for the first research question, since the positive emotions towards the seminar itself increased throughout the workshop; all of the participants liked the workshop and would recommend it for education of English at lower secondary schools.

In contrast with the previous question, the next research question: “Does improvisation in English help the participants express their ideas without some of the needed language items?” was confirmed completely, since almost all of the participants changed the statements connected with this question in a positive manner. Those statements were: “I can express my thought or idea without using words.”; “I can help myself somehow, when I speak English and cannot express my idea by using word.” and “I can communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics.”

The next question: “Does improvisation in English decrease the fear of making a mistake in English?” can be answered positively too, since at the beginning there were 7 participants who wrote that it is unpleasant for them to make a mistake when speaking English and at the end there were only two. This is quite crucial, because the fear of speaking English is an issue that is in my opinion quite often dealt with and it is not easy to change that.

In case of the last question: “Does improvisation in English improve the communication skills in L2?” it is impossible to say whether the answer is positive or negative, since only two participants changed their reaction to the statement: “I can communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics.” from “I agree” to “I strongly agree”. Also, the participants had not taken any tests to find out how their level actually changed. Nevertheless, throughout the seminar I observed that some participants used some vocabulary at the beginning of the particular improvisation in Czech and later in English,

because they heard it from other participants. It is only my personal observation, but it supports the positive answer for this research question.

In this chapter I presented six tables summarizing all the gathered data from the two questionnaires. I also presented the data from the tables and commented on them. Then, the research questions were mentioned again and it was discussed whether they were confirmed or not. In the next chapter I write about implications of the results to use improvisation in English to teach English.

## **V. IMPLICATIONS**

In this chapter I will discuss pedagogical implications of this thesis, limitations of the research and suggestions for further research. Within pedagogical implications there will be advice for teachers who want to apply improvisation in English successfully and effectively. Limitations of the research will cover flaws my research had. To conclude this chapter I will suggest few possible ways of researching improvisation in English more deeply or specifically.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

According to the research I would like to list few things to bear in mind when applying improvisation in English. Before using this method the teacher should know, why it is good for their pupils to learn by improvising in English. It can serve to help learners lose fear of speaking, to make conversations in class more natural, to teach learners how to communicate and cooperate with each other, to learn how to communicate without needed words or to simply make one or two lessons more fun.

The next step is to decide whether we want to try improvisation in English with the whole class or if we just want to offer it as an after-school activity for volunteers. Both versions are possible, nevertheless, nobody should be forced to improvise; it should always be voluntary. The learners can be positively motivated, but never forced. Pupils learn already by observing others when improvising and there are activities or games in which everyone takes part and no one is in the center of attention. Such kind of games and activities can help shy learners to take part in the lessons.

When applying and leading the lesson or workshop of improvisation in English, it is crucial to bear in mind all the principles and strategies mentioned in the theoretical background of this thesis. Without these principles and strategies, improvisation does not work and it is not fun for both learners and teachers.

Concerning the instructions, it is not necessary to use English when instructing the activities but learners should use English to conduct the activities. Nevertheless, Czech words

should not be banned, especially with beginners, because the possibility of using Czech makes learners to feel more relaxed and reduces fear of speaking. Improvisation is a powerful tool and it can change attitudes of learners towards speaking in English significantly. After all, it is important to bear in mind how this powerful tool is used, so it does not make anyone feel excluded or not good enough to make it.

### **Limitations of the Research**

One of the greatest limitations of the research is that all the participants had been members of drama groups for more than two years before the workshop, which influenced the way I could work with them. These participants would not have been shy to improvise in Czech so it was in my opinion not such a problem for them to improvise in English, since they were used to many drama games and activities. On the other hand, this fact does not mean that it is impossible to do few normal drama activities before an actual workshop just to help the learners get used to such type of instruction.

Another issue is that five of the participants were quite skillful in English before the workshop already. That made many games and activities easier to conduct, since these five participants could help any time with the missing vocabulary. It might be harder and more complicated to conduct the workshop without such participants. Nevertheless, without these participants this help would have been provided by me. All in all, almost in every class there are some proficient learners of English. That means that the situation in my workshop did not differ that much from situations at lower secondary schools.

It is important to mention that eventually the activities with gibberish were not conducted and consequently tested out, since when leading the seminar, it felt unnatural for me to make the participants speak gibberish, when most of them already felt like speaking English. Since there were no shy ones, who would need gibberish to get used to speak a different language when improvising, I changed the original plan and skipped the activities that were introducing gibberish. Instead of that, I and participants came up with an idea that it would help if the participants could sometimes use a Czech word with an English accent. Than the other improvisers would either translate this word and use it next time in English or

keep the word the way it was used. This proved to be a good way of helping the beginners to take part in all the games and activities with no fear of lacking a piece of vocabulary.

Another limitation could be that the questionnaires were completely filled out only by 13 participants out of 17, since only those 13 were in the seminar from the beginning till the end. Another issue was that some participants had to rehearse their play and could not take part in one of the seminars, which might have influenced their experience.

It is also very important to mention that the participants evaluated themselves and that there were not any tests taken before or after the seminar to prove the actual improvement of the speaking abilities of the learners. That means that the questionnaires rather tested the change of attitudes than improvement of skills.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

In my opinion a good way of extending this research would be to conduct the very same seminar with different groups of participants. One possibility would be to do it with a regular class at a lower secondary school as a part of their lessons of English. Another way would be to offer it as an after-school activity for learners that would be interested in it. It could be also done as a part of conversation classes.

Subsequently, there is a possibility to prove the real impact on the learners' language by testing the speaking ability of the learners before and after workshop of improvisation, especially if the workshop would take more than just four sessions. For that purpose, it would be useful to conduct the improvisation in English classes as an after school club for one semester. Speaking test would be used to find out what happened with the level of the learners' speaking skills and the results would be compared to a group who has not had the experience.

It would also be interesting to conduct the seminar with a group that is bigger than 15 participants to find out, how it works for the bigger groups, how effective the method is and what can be done to keep the effectivity at the same level in spite of the bigger number of participants. The method could also be used to teach other languages. For example those that Czech pupils learn as their second foreign language.

Another way to research improvisation in English would be to offer a workshop for teachers of English in order to provide an actual experience for the teachers. Consequently, another workshop could be offered; it would be focused on implementing the method in teaching at lower secondary schools. Thanks to that, teachers would have the possibility to try it themselves and there would be possibility to consult any issues with the researcher. After that, the data from the teachers as well as the learners would be gathered and the researcher would find out how implementation works and what it looks like when the workshop is led by teachers who experienced it themselves before.



## VI. CONCLUSION

Improvisation in English is a method which can help learners of English reduce their fear of speaking English and increases their ability to communicate by using body language, mimics or other means. It also reduces unpleasant emotions of learners connected with making a mistake. Improvisation in English helps to create natural opportunities for speaking in which learners interact with each other, learn from each other and cooperate with each other. Improvisation helps to make more relaxed atmosphere when learning English and it makes learning more fun. It helps the learners to learn more, since we remember more when the process of learning is fun and engaging.

The research participants enjoyed the workshop and all of them would recommend improvisation to be used as a tool for teaching English at lower secondary schools. To support their recommendations, they wrote that improvisation is useful, because it is a more natural, fun and practical method which helps them speak with no fear. They perceived it as a method belonging to the “School by play” philosophy. The participants of the seminar are still in contact with each other, even though the seminar took place more than one year ago. This and also the answers in the questionnaire show improvisation to be helpful also in terms of the class atmosphere and group dynamics within it. If it is used wisely, well and all the principles are taken into account, it helps to improve cooperation, communication and creativity within learners and when used regularly, it creates safe atmosphere among learners.

Improvisation can be used as a part of English classes or as an after-school club. Both possibilities have their advantages and disadvantages but it is very important that learners are never forced to take part in it. I would definitely recommend using improvisation in English to support learners’ creativity, spontaneity and courage to speak. It is unconventional tool that can change the attitudes of learners towards speaking English. It also supports mutual help of learners and teaches learners not to be shy to ask for help and to provide it in a way that is comfortable for those who need it.

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## APPENDIX I

### Dotazník před dílnou Impra v Aj

\*Povinné pole

1. Poslední čtyři čísla Tvého telefonního čísla (kvůli srovnání s dotazníkem po dílně) \*
2. Věk
3. Pohlaví  
Muž / Žena
4. Kdy jsi začal/a s Angličtinou \*  
Ve školce / V první třídě / Ve třetí třídě / V sedmé třídě
5. Jak dlouho se věnuješ divadlu?
6. Zkušenosti s improvizací
7. Mimoškolní/zahraniční zkušenosti s používáním angličtiny
8. Kolik ostatních účastníků z dílny znáš jménem? (piš číslem) \*
9. Odpovídej podle sebe. Ve škole rád/a mluvím anglicky. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
10. Mimo školu rád/a mluvím anglicky. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
11. Představa mluvit anglicky před ostatními účastníky dílny mi nahání strach. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
12. Dokážu sdělit svou myšlenku či nápad beze slov. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
13. Umím improvizovat za použití angličtiny. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
14. Při mluvení anglicky si umím pomoci v případě, kdy svou myšlenku nedokážu sdělit slovy. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
15. Udělat chybu při mluvení anglicky je mi nepříjemné. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
16. Dokážu přijmout a rozvinout nápad svého partáka, přesto že mám nápad vlastní. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
17. Rád/a hledám nové cesty řešení každodenních situací. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
18. Za pomoci angličtiny, mimiky, gestiky a pantomimy se dokážu dorozumět. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.

## Questionnaire before Workshop of Improvisation in English

\*obligatory questions

1. Last 4 digits of your phone number (to compare particular questionnaires)\*
2. Age
3. Gender  
Male / Female
4. When did you start to learn English \*  
In the nursery school. / In the first class. / In the third class. / In the seventh class.
5. How long have you been involved in your drama group?
6. Experience with improvisation
7. Outside of school / Abroad experience with using English
8. How many participants of this workshop do you know by their names? (write number) \*
9. Answer according to yourself. I like to speak English at school. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
10. I like to speak English outside of school.  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
11. I am scared when I imagine to speak English in front of other participants of workshop.\*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
12. I can express my thought or idea without using words. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
13. I can improvise in English. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
14. I can help myself somehow, when I speak English and cannot express my idea by using words. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
15. To make a mistake when speaking in English is unpleasant for me. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
16. I can accept and develop idea of my partner, even though I have my own. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
17. I like to find new ways how to deal with daily situations. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
18. I can communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.

## APPENDIX II

### Pocitový dotazník

\*Povinné pole

1. Poslední čtyři čísla Tvého telefonního čísla (kvůli srovnání s dotazníkem po dílně) \*
2. Které z těchto odpovědí vystihují tvůj pocit před dílnou? (týkající se dílny) \*

Zaškrtněte všechny platné možnosti.

- Těším se.
- Jsem nervózní.
- Jsem zvědavý/ á.
- Bojím se.
- Cítím se klidně
- Cítím se napnutě.
- Cítím se v pohodě.
- Jsem rozrušený/ rozrušená.
- Mám obavy.
- Jsem vyveden/ a z rovnováhy.
- Cítím se hrozně.
- Cítím se skvěle.
- Cítím se uvolněně.
- Cítím se bezpečně.
- Cítím se inspirovaný/ á.

3. Které z těchto odpovědí vystihují tvůj pocit během dílny? (týkající se dílny) \*

Zaškrtněte všechny platné možnosti.

- Těším se, co bude dál.
- Jsem nervózní.
- Jsem zvědavý/ á.
- Bojím se.
- Cítím se klidně
- Cítím se napnutě.
- Cítím se v pohodě.
- Jsem rozrušený/ rozrušená.
- Mám obavy.
- Jsem vyveden/ a z rovnováhy.
- Cítím se hrozně.
- Cítím se skvěle.

Cítím se uvolněně.  
Cítím se bezpečně.  
Cítím se inspirovaný/ á.

4. Které z těchto odpovědí vystihují tvůj pocit po dílně? (týkající se dílny) \*

Zaškrtněte všechny platné možnosti.

Těším se z toho, co jsem zažil/ a.  
Jsem nervózní.  
Jsem zvědavý/ á.  
Bojím se.  
Cítím se klidně  
Cítím se napnutě.  
Cítím se v pohodě.  
Jsem rozrušený/ rozrušená.  
Mám obavy.  
Jsem vyveden/ a z rovnováhy.  
Cítím se hrozně.  
Cítím se skvěle.  
Cítím se uvolněně.  
Cítím se bezpečně.  
Cítím se inspirovaný/ á.

## Questionnaire of Emotions

\*Obligatory question

1. Last 4 digits of your phone number (to compare particular questionnaires)\*
2. Which of these answers express your emotions before workshop (connected with the workshop)\*

Tick all possibilities that are true for you.

I am looking forward.

I am nervous.

I am curious.

I am scared.

I feel calm.

I feel tension.

I feel alright.

I feel disconcerted.

I am worried.

I am off balance.

I feel terrible.

I feel great. .

I feel relaxed.

I feel safe.

I feel inspired.

3. Which of these answers express your emotions during workshop (connected with the workshop)\*

Tick all possibilities that are true for you.

I am looking forward.

I am nervous.

I am curious.

I am scared.

I feel calm.

I feel tension.

I feel alright.

I feel disconcerted.

I am worried.

I am off balance.

I feel terrible.

I feel great. .

I feel relaxed.

I feel safe.

I feel inspired.



4. Which of these answers express your emotions after the workshop (connected with the workshop)\*

Tick all possibilities that are true for you.

I am happy about what happened.

I am nervous.

I am curious.

I am scared.

I feel calm.

I feel tension.

I feel alright.

I feel disconcerted.

I am worried.

I am off balance.

I feel terrible.

I feel great. .

I feel relaxed.

I feel safe.

I feel inspired.

## APPENDIX III

### Dotazník po dílně Impra v Aj

\*Povinné pole

1. Poslední čtyři čísla Tvého telefonního čísla (kvůli srovnání s dotazníkem před dílnou) \*
2. Dílna se mi líbila. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
3. Improvizaci v angličtině by bylo dobré používat pro výuku Aj na Základní škole. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
4. Pro ano? Proč ne? \*
5. Kolik ostatních účastníků z dílny už znáš jménem? (piš číslem) \*
6. Odpovídej podle sebe. Po této dílně budu ve škole rád/a mluvit anglicky. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
7. Po této dílně budu mimo školu rád/a mluvit anglicky. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
8. Mluvit anglicky před ostatními účastníky dílny mi na jejím konci nahánělo strach. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
9. Na konci dílny jsem dokázal/a sdělit svou myšlenku či nápad beze slov. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
10. Po této dílně umím improvizovat za použití angličtiny. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
11. Po této dílně si budu umět pomoci, když budu mluvit anglicky a nebudu svou myšlenku schopna/schopen sdělit slovy. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
12. Udělat chybu při mluvení anglicky je mi po této dílně nepřijemné. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
13. Na konci dílny jsem dokázal/a přijmout a rozvinout nápad svého partáka, přesto že jsem měl/a nápad vlastní. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
14. Po této dílně budu rád/a hledat nové cesty řešení každodenních situací. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.
15. Po této dílně se za pomoci angličtiny, mimiky, gestiky a pantomimy budu schopen/schopna dorozumět. \*  
Úplně souhlasím. / Souhlasím. / Nesouhlasím. / Úplně nesouhlasím. / Nevím.

## Questionnaire after the Workshop

\*Obligatory questions

1. Last 4 digits of your phone number (to compare particular questionnaires). \*
2. I liked the workshop. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
3. It would be good to improvisation in English to teach English at lower secondary school.\*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
4. Why yes? / Why not? \*
5. How many participants of this workshop do you know now by their names? (write number) \*
6. Answer according to yourself. After this workshop I will be fine with speaking English at school. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
- 7.. After this workshop I will be fine with speaking English outside of school.  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
- 8.. I was scared to speak English in front of other participants of workshop at the end of the it..\*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
9. At the end of workshop I could express my thought or idea without using words. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
10. After this workshop I can improvise in English. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
11. After this workshop I will be able to help myself somehow, when I speak English and cannot express my idea by using words. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
12. To make a mistake when speaking in English is after the workshop alright for me \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
13. At the end of the workshop I could accept and develop idea of my partner, even though I had my own. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
14. After this workshop I will enjoy to find new ways how to deal with daily situations. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
15. After this workshop I will be able to communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.
15. After this workshop I will be able to communicate by using English, miming, gestures and mimics. \*  
I completely agree. / I agree. / I disagree. / I completely disagree / I do not know.

## APPENDIX IV

### Workshop of Improvisation in English

#### Goals:

The participants:

- know names of other participants in the group
- create rules, that they are themselves able to follow
- treat each other with respect
- accept mistake done by themselves or others as a positive phenomenon when speaking in L2
- can create a simple improvised situation without using any speech, and it is clear where they are and who they are
- can interact in an improvised situation using one word expressions or fixed phrases in L2 and it is clear where they are and who they are
- can create an improvised situation using Gibberish and it is clear where they are and who they are
- can create an improvised story using L2 and it is clear where they are and who they are
- can focus as a group on a common activity, in which everyone is in tune and the concentration is full
- can cooperate together
- can receive and develop the idea of another improviser even if their original idea was different
- can provide an open offer to their partner in improvisation
- can perform improvisation in L2 in front of other participants of the seminar
- have positive attitude toward speaking in L2
- understands the value of miming, body-language when communicating in L2
- can express their ideas rather with showing than talking
- can solve a daily situation in an unusual and new way
- can communicate with other participants in L2 within improvisation

Filling out the questionnaire before the workshop

## **1<sup>st</sup> Session (100 min)**

Goals for the first session:

- know names of other participants in the group
- create rules, that they are themselves able to follow
- treat each other with respect
- set expectations for the workshop

Plan:

1. Pairs – in pairs tell the other person your name, one information about you and your expectations from the seminar (you can choose the form – L1, L2, miming, sounds, drawing) (10 min)
2. Circle: - prepare a 1 minute presentation about the name, one information and the expectations (L1, L2, miming, sounds, drawing or combination) (30 min)
3. Writing all the acquired information on two big papers (names + information; expectation) (10 min)
4. Rules for our group – T for translation, hand up or harmonica for silence, then groups of four, think about one rule for our group, think of the written form and prepare the mimed form for the others – you show it, the others try to make a written form (in teams), after presentation of all the rules, we vote for each rule, participants think of the way to vote, then they vote (35 min)
5. How do we make sure, that we stick to the rules, what do we do, when we break them? (5 min)
6. Superpowers with our Names –at first adjectives connected with our names plus a movement, presenting them in a circle, then I start with my superpower and movement and then send it to someone using his superpower and movement, when someone is doing his movement and saying his superpower name, everyone does it with this person (15 min)

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Session (80 min)**

Goal:

- can focus as a group on a common activity, in which everyone is in tune and the concentration is full
- can create a simple improvised situation without using any speech, and it is clear where they are and who they are

*“Following games are for concentration of our group”*

1. Heya Hayi – heya, hot down, bang, strawberry => cheers, clap jump, jump clap, penguin party, if you feel like you have not played for a long time- become an alarm (beep, beep)...My body is so itchy! Fleas! Break – crrrrrrrr, volume of x volume on (25 min)
2. Filling the space –
  - a. walk in the space so it's equally filled in all the room, the pace should be the same, Attention – circle, attention – speed,
  - b. stop all together, but no one can recognise who was the first person to stop the group
  - c. when I clap, stop and jump just as you did it in Heya Hayi (25 min)

*“Following activity is for accepting ideas of someone else!*

3. Great Idea
  - a. Fill the space as you did it previously (*accepting an Idea*)
  - b. When someone says: “Let’s play on horses!” – it is an awesome idea( jakoby jste všichni chtěli neskutečně moc hrát na koníky, ale nikoho z vás to nenapadlo, naštěstí jednoho z vás ale ano) => when the creator of idea feels like it’s enough, he says: “Ok let’s move on!” (10 min)

*“This activity is to improve the accepting idea of the of the other person, to improve cooperation, to communicate without words”*

4. Goalkeeper
  - a. Two players not facing each other
  - b. Each one of them starts doing an activity – he can only mime it
5.
  - a. When they both know what they are doing, someone claps and the players turn around
  - b. Now both of the players join their activities together and when they feel like they came to an end of the improvisation they look at each other and then in the audience, without any talking (20 min)

Filling the questionnaire in the middle of the workshop

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Session (110 min)**

Goals:

- accept mistake done by themselves or others as a positive phenomenon when speaking in L2
- can interact in an improvised situation using one word expressions or fixed phrases in L2 and it is clear where they are and who they are
- can create an improvised situation using Gibberish and it is clear where they are and who they are
- can cooperate together
- can receive and develop the idea of another improviser even if their original idea was different

- can provide an open offer to their partner in improvisation
1. Circle with numbers – You say a number and you step in the circle, at first in groups of eight, than in a big group, when two people do it at the same (20 min)
  2. Mirrors – in pairs=> one leads, then the other one leads, then the leadership can be passed on the other person without any words, => dance in the mirror hall =>mirroring in groups, one group leads , the other follows, there should be cooperation of all members in the group, show the dance of penguins on the north pole, respect each other and cooperate, then the groups switch (25 min)
  3. I will give you something!
    - a. One person takes something in his hand and he goes to the other person, he says: “ *I will give you something!*” and gives the imaginary thing in a way as he thinks it should be given
    - b. The other person says: “*Thank you, I always wanted a rabbit!*”
    - c. The first person says: “*Yeah, I.....reason why he chose this present*” (the other peers help with the vocabulary) (20 min)
  4. Twisting goalkeeper in gibberish
    - a. Half circle – one player is in the middle and is turning around, when someone claps, the person stops in the middle, one other player comes to the first and starts acting in gibberish ( it may be similar to English), once it is clear where they are and who they are, someone claps and it starts over, the first person leaves and the second person stays (25 min)
  5. I am and I take
    - a. The first person moves and when someone claps, the person stops
    - b. The first person says who he or she is
    - c. The next person comes and adds something to the first person
    - d. The last person does the same
    - e. The first person chooses who she or he wants to take
    - f. (If you do not know the word, say it in Czech with English accent) (15 min)
  6. I am and I take ( neutral, negative, positive/ neutral positive negative) (15 min)

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Session

- can create an improvised story using L2 and it is clear where they are and who they are
  - have positive attitude toward speaking in L2
  - understands the value of miming, body-language when communicating in L2
  - can communicate with other participants in L2 within improvisation
1. Filling the space
    - a. Stop at the same time
    - b. 5 speeds plus clap and jump

- c. 4 actions (A: kitten, B: Hallo, is that you?, C: formula 1, D: Hands up!) (10 min)
2. Fight with associations in pairs (5 min)
3. The pyramid – in L2, but they can use either Gibberish, or Czech words with English accent (30 min)
4. Half time (polovina času)

Filling the questionnaire after the workshop



## SUMMARY IN CZECH

Tato práce se zabývá využitím improvizace ve výuce anglického jazyka. V teoretické části jsou uvedeny obecné informace o dramatické improvizaci, o výuce angličtiny a o všech důležitých otázkách spojených s improvizací ve výuce angličtiny a implementací této techniky do vzdělávání na druhém stupni základních škol. Výzkum byl proveden na dramatickém festivalu, kde se 13 účastníků ze čtyř různých dramatických skupin zúčastnilo semináře improvizace v angličtině. Cílem výzkumu bylo zjistit, jaký dopad měl workshop na postoje účastníků k mluvení v angličtině, k chybám a k mluvení před ostatními účastníky. K pozorování tohoto dopadu byly použity dva dotazníky. Jeden se skládal z tvrzení, se kterými účastníci souhlasili nebo nesouhlasili. Tento dotazník byl vyplněn před a po semináři. Druhý se týkal emocí účastníků před, během a po semináři. Výzkum ukázal, že improvizace výrazně minimalizovala strach z chyby při mluvení v angličtině a z mluvení v angličtině před ostatními účastníky. To také zvýšilo pozitivní postoj k mluvení v angličtině mimo školu a zvýšilo kompetence v komunikaci pomocí angličtiny, mimiky a gest.