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## ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

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### Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Diplomandka se ve své práci bude zabývat problematikou aktivizace žáků ve výuce anglického jazyka. V teoretické části nejprve představí pojetí žáka jako aktivního subjektu vyučování a bude diskutovat různé prostředky aktivizace žáků, tj. rozvíjení aktivního myšlení i podněcování aktivní činnosti, ve výuce anglického jazyka.

Vlastní empirické šetření provede diplomandka na 2. stupni vybrané základní školy a jeho cílem bude za využití pozorování a strukturovaného rozhovoru zjistit, jaké způsoby aktivizace žáků učitelé angličtiny ve vyučovacích hodinách reálně využívají.

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## **Abstract**

This thesis concerns the issue of activating learners in English language teaching. The focus is put on “un-students”, meaning the un-motivated, unreachable, unengaged and passive learners of the age between thirteen and fifteen. In the theoretical part, the conception of a learner, as an active or a passive element of the teaching process, is introduced. Then, follows analysis of the negative and positive aspects that influence the learners’ attitude to learning English and suggestions of methods and other didactic means contributing to students’ activeness are listed. In the practical part the theoretical data are compared with the research results that are based on discussions with teachers, pupils’ feedback and observations in the actual classes.

**KEY WORDS:** “Un-student”, “un-student’s” reasons, activating learners, motivation, “learner’s voice”.

## **Abstrakt**

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá problematikou aktivizace žáků ve vyučování anglického jazyka. Zaměřuje se na „un-studenty“, ve smyslu pasivních žáků ve věku třinácti až patnácti let, které je těžké motivovat a zaujmout. V teoretické části je nejprve uvedeno pojetí žáka jako aktivního či pasivního elementu vyučovacího procesu. Dále následuje analýza negativních a pozitivních aspektů, které ovlivňují postoj žáků k učení anglického jazyka. Tato studie zahrnuje také návrh metod a jiných didaktických prostředků, které napomáhají aktivizaci žáků. V praktické části jsou konfrontovány tyto teoretické data s výzkumnými výsledky získané na základě diskuse s učiteli, zpětné vazby žáků a pozorování v konkrétní třídě.

**KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA:** „un-student“, důvody „un-studenta“, aktivizace žáků, motivace, „hlas žáků“.

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## INTRODUCTION

The reason leading to writing this thesis is the supposition that it is much more difficult to motivate students in the ninth grade for the active engagement and cooperation than in any other grades of basic school. These students' values are usually changing in this period mainly due to the development of the perspective orientation in motivation and the development of their own identity. Therefore, school results are usually less important to them than before. The fact that they are going to leave school soon contributes even to their frequent indifference to the educational process. Next to that, it is difficult for the teacher to rival the wide range of sources of information and entertainment provided in the modern world around them.

The intention of this work is to answer the basic questions: how teachers at basic schools increase learner's activity, how they maintain the activeness of their students; and what makes lower secondary learners become "unstudents" in the process of learning English and, again, how to activate them.

Throughout the theoretical section of this thesis, the terminology that is used is defined and explanations of relevant issues, dealt with in this thesis, are provided. That appears to be fundamental for understanding the overall issue properly. It provides characteristic features and problems of a learner in the period of pubescence. Subsequently, it focuses on the definition of the term "un-student" and concludes hypothetical negative factors during English lessons and reasons for their passive and uninterested approach to learning. The issue "un-student" permeates the whole work.

Moreover, as there are various ways of teaching and approaches to the educational process, the thesis supports such a conception that drives the actual process with respect to the learners. In this supported approach, teachers explore and listen to learners' "voice" that stands for learners' needs, interests, their personalities and, especially, their way of thinking. Furthermore, the main teaching principles and general requirements of the teaching process are stated in relation to the question of activating the learners in English language teaching. Finally, possible didactic means as, for instance, project, situational and problem methods; game; "businesslike classroom" strategy and other proven effective ways of teaching are described.



The practical part, developed from the theoretical background, is based on the research that took place in a certain basic school in a small town. It includes 6 observations during English lessons, 33 students and 2 English female teachers. This research reveals several negative factors that are seen to be the reasons and causes for the passive or negative attitude of “un-student” to learning English or participating actively in a lesson. Many of the presumptive reasons in the theoretical part were confirmed as such, for example, lack of differentiation in the teaching process; less productive environment, lack of variety of didactic aids and methods; setting inappropriate goals and mainly failure caused mostly by incomprehension of the subject matter.

On the other hand, many positive factors are identified in the research, too. It confirms the positive influences of friendly atmosphere on learners’ activeness. Next to that, the effectiveness of “businesslike classroom” strategy, which consists of setting up the rules, well-planned and careful preparation of a lesson, shortening the transition time between activities to the minimum and clear demands and expectations was confirmed. Other factors that have positive impact on students’ activeness and active engagement in English lessons are stated in this section. As well as, the practical part provides some recommendations based on the theory and the pupils’ responses that might have been effective in a particular situation that was observed in this research

However, it should be noted that each individual teacher exploration and their own experience are necessary, as the findings provided in my thesis about the issue of activating learners in English language teaching cannot be generalized to every educational process as the sample is small and it needs further investigation.

# **1. THEORETICAL PART**

## **1.1. BASIC AGE FACTORS**

It is essential to introduce the fundamental features of the age period the ninth graders go through before exploring the reasons of some students' lack of interest and engagement in the learning process at schools and focusing on the issue of activating learners in English language teaching.

### **1.1.1. CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF PUBESCENCE**

To begin with, in the Czech Republic educational system, students in the ninth grade of elementary schools are at the age of thirteen to fifteen, which is a period called *pubescence*. As Vašutová (2005:57-58) points out, it is difficult to demarcate when pubescence begins and ends. However, pubescence can be divided into prepuberty that is usually from the age of eleven to thirteen, and *puberty* that appears approximately between the age of thirteenth and fifteenth. In regard to this division and the age of 9<sup>th</sup> graders, the prime interest of this study is given to children in puberty.

Concerning the basic characteristic of pubescence, the already mentioned author focuses on this issue in the book under the title *Pedagogické a psychologické problémy dětství a dospívání*, (Vašutová, 2005:58) and she sees this period as one of the most critical in the life of children, when teenagers begin to mature biologically, psychologically, socially and cognitively. She describes it as a turning point between childhood and adulthood, dependency and independency, carelessness and responsibility. In addition to that, the balance of all psychosomatic functions is destroyed and the personality problems, connected with the physic and mental transition of a child to a young adult, causes conflicts with parents, teachers, adults and authorities in general. However, Müllerova, S. (2002:26) claims that it is not always so dramatic period full of conflicts for all children as it depends on personality and situational factors. Some children may begin earlier than normal, a condition called *precocious puberty*, other may have delayed puberty.

The differences among learners in puberty show also the gender divergence, where the main causes are: different disposition and tempo of the development; and different social requirements and expectations (Vágnerová, 2001:245).

### **1.1.2. CHANGES AND PROBLEMS RELATED TO PUBESCENCE**

#### **Physical growth**

Before exploring more deeply the psychological changes and related problems, the physical growth, with the focus on puberty, is described very briefly by Šimíčková-Čížková (2004: 41). In contrast to prepuberty, that is usually full of dramatic changes, the growth in the second phase of pubescence slows down; the physique gets on balance; and the coordination improves. The tiredness and passive state of mind called “day dreaming” begin to wane and the physical ability improves and stabilizes.

Moreover, the body changes into the shape of an adult body capable of reproduction and the sexual instinct starts to show up, which sometimes might be hard to deal with for the teenagers. The obvious change of a body makes the value of appearance important. They care about their look more than before so that it becomes a part of the teenager’s identity. However, the identity and other psychological and social features are explained further in the next section of this chapter (Šimíčková-Čížková, 2004:44; Vašutová, 2005:57).

#### **Psychological, social and cognitive development of children in pubescence**

Hand in hand with the physical changes there are changes also in the mental state. The emotional lability is evident in affective responses to situations that seems to be ordinary and not worthy to these intensive reactions of the pubescent children. Momentary and changing feelings of sympathy or antipathy are connected also to the unstable mood. Children in pubescence perceive sensitively also emotions and behaviour of others that they might interpret and evaluate easily as unfriendly. They cannot “read” their own feelings; they are confused and lose their stability. Therefore, they usually do not want to talk to others about what they feel and becomes introverts

because they are afraid of lack of understanding and of lying themselves open to ridicule (Müllerová, S., 2002:27).

In addition to that, this period is time of thinking about themselves and finding their own identity. Within the context of identity, Šimičková-Čížková (2004:45) talk about taking different roles that helps them to form their own identity. Teenagers at this age resist the role of child and want more formal conduct of adults and call for equality and respect. Self-acceptance, that also depends on the acceptance of others – mainly the peers, is an important element in the self-respect. Vašutová (2005:64) argues that dubiety and dissatisfaction with their own identity is often the epiphenomenon of pubescence that is also the period of the self-knowledge. The group identity plays a crucial role, too. They do not identify themselves with their family but with their peers. Very often, it manifests itself in their own rules, fashion, clothes, language or patterns of behaviour that usually irritate the adults. It offers them protection and support.

The changes of identity are related to the development of cognitive processes and hypothetic thinking that might be, according to Müllerová, S. (2002:28) and Šimečková-Čížková (2004:42-44), the source of teenagers' doubts. They claim that children in pubescence see and perceive the scheme of things in their subjective personal way. Hence, sometimes they believe they can manage problems on their own as they think they are competent enough to do it.

Referring to the cognitive processes, formal logic operations and logical memory develops. That is why the very important factor, in connection with understanding and long-term memory, is the matter of meaning. Furthermore, there is abstract thinking development that influences the pubescent effort for self-improvement, and the interest in some subject area (Müllerová, S., 2002:28). Beside that, he/she begins to search for the meaning of life, to take in the values from their surrounding and to probe the depth, durability and purpose of the values in life. This period of time is also typical for vivid imagination that also reflects in already mentioned "day dreaming". Nevertheless, because of the originality of thinking and imagination, they can do some activities and work out tasks in a creative and extraordinary ways.

Regarding perception, it gets more precise; especially boys' auditory perception gets better after the impairment that was caused by the change of voice (Šimičková-Čížková, 2004:42-43).

Concerning the social factor, teenagers in puberty need to test and find their competences in the relation to the authority. They go against supremacy and therefore they are often critical to teachers at schools. They test the teacher's ability to lead them and to confront the difficulties but still they do not want to "liquidate" him/her; they want to be their own authority. As Müllerová, S. recommends:

"Parents and teachers should be aware of the "testing" and do not get caught in the laid trap as they would put their authority at risk. Moreover, if they start to act from the position of power, they change the interrelationship radically."

(Müllerová, S., 2002:28, my translation)

Furthermore, according to Vašutová (2005:64) the role of a pupil is not so important for this age group any more. The school results lose the prime importance and they even see them as the requirement of adults. If the amount of work and its demands are too high, they resist it as it is something that gives them uncertainty. Vágnerová (2001:244) adds that the requirements of a teacher are often fulfilled just because it is a kind of formality that is needed to be done. Consequently, they often come to a compromise rather than having problems.

One of the solutions how to cope with such problems mentioned above is to settle rules that the teenagers stick and adhere to but then, it is essential to remember, they do not accept any manipulation with the set of rules and again want equality. Vašutová says:

"The older pupils appreciate such behaviour of teachers where the role asymmetry in the relationship of a teacher – pupil is not so obvious, for they try hard to be emancipated."

(Vašutová, 2005:64, my translation)

Next to that, teachers and parents cannot expect spontaneous and unquestioning obedience and submissiveness as a pubescent child needs to express doubts about the commands and things he/she is supposed to do (Müllerová, S. 2002:28-29).

### 1.1.3. COMMUNICATION AND THE LANGUAGE OF “TEENAGERS”

Communication with teenagers has its own specifics that sometimes lead to conflicts and misunderstanding. Therefore, it is necessary, especially for teachers, to know and respect the characteristic features of communication in pubescence to be able to react appropriately.

Müllerová, S. (2002:29-30) focuses on the way of pubescent communication in her book *Komunikace ve škole*, and clarifies that those children in this particular age:

- express themselves by specific phrases, the preference of some words and histrionics, that are supposed to gain the attention and prove their uniqueness;
- are sometimes rude and vociferous but usually the only reason why they do so is to shock and stagger people in the surrounding as they want to distance themselves from the adults and the authority;
- have their own kind of speech that is often snippy and curt and therefore it is difficult for the adults to understand;
- often contradict themselves in what they say or do and frequently, they are not aware of the content and consequences of it.

Apart from the verbal way of communication, there is also the non-verbal “language” that is not less important. Clothes, hairstyle, music, movements, gestures, mimics, proxemics, acts etc. give certain information to both the adults as well as the children. Müllerová emphasizes that the non-verbal “message” of the adults should be in accordance with the information given verbally, otherwise it might be misunderstood and provide doubts.

To sum up, puberty is the process of physical changes and changes of the teenagers’ mind. Judith E. Gallatin characterizes this period by phrases like “rebellion”, “generation gap” and “domination of the peer group”. She says:

“With the onset of puberty, the youngster is supposed to begin experiencing (in addition to all the unaccustomed sexual feelings) a growing sense of alienation

from all adult authority, in fact. If his previous relationship with his parents was harmonious, now, abruptly, all is supposed to be altered.”

(Gallatin, 1975:146)

From my point of view, it is hard for the youngsters to cope with all of the above mentioned aspects, so adults, especially teachers and parents, should try to help them to deal with it and find their own identity. I believe that in many cases, through the rude and negative behaviour, teenagers call for help that would not lower their position but give them some stable and supporting pylons to fight their lability. Because of the development of the logic, abstract and hypothetical thinking they need to see meaningful reasons for doing things; and understand logically the given facts. As concerns the “language” of teenagers, it is essential to take notice of information beyond the bare content of a given message as their speech and acts are full of emotions and feelings that might help the adults to understand young people in this age better.

## **1.2. UN-STUDENT AS A COMPLEX ISSUE**

### **1.2.1. UN-STUDENT**

To start with, the definition of an un-student is a difficult issue. The characteristic features of an “un-student” can be described mainly on the basis of comparison to the active and motivated learner because there is not much literature that would include such a term. First of all, personality of a learner in general is briefly described and the term “activity” is specified, since they are important elements that impact on the various display of the pupils’ activeness.

#### **1.2.1.1. Learner’s personality**

In my opinion, it is essential for a teacher to know the personality of a pupil for better understanding of his/her behaviour, for being familiar with his/her potential and also for being able to activate him/her in the educational process. The argument is supported by Čáp (1980:57) who claims that the knowledge of a learner personality is one of the most important psychological information that can be given to a teacher or any other educators to understand better the development of a personality and for the overall development of the individual. He explains the term, which is a core area of psychology, as follows:

The term *personality* is used to stand for a human from the psychological point of view. It might denote individuality (e.g. a pupil Z. L. from classroom II.A) but also a group of people of particular characteristics, too (e.g. the personality of adolescent; personality of a pupil highly talented in languages; personality of juvenile delinquent) or a man in general (e.g. in statements “the personality can be determined by the analysis of behaviour...”, “personality is influenced by....”).

(Čáp, 1980:57, my translation)

It should be emphasize that, in psychology, the term is not used to stand for someone of a higher social status whose qualities are perceived as something special and the like, but it is a very complex system related to the interests, abilities, temperament, character,



strength of will, individual differences etc. (Čáp, 1980:60). To add, according to behaviourists, personality derives from the human behaviour (Drapela, 1997:14).

To simplify the complexity of personality as a unit, it can be divided into personality traits and abilities. Very briefly, *ability* is a psychological quality of a person that shows itself in the ability to learn how to work or do something, so it is clearly connected to skills. There are several abilities that can be distinguished, for example intellectual or sensorimotor abilities.

Whereas personality trait is a characteristic feature that appears in someone's behaviour, in the way of living and thinking. Čáp (1980:62) points out some important examples of personal traits:

- positive or negative relationship to other people,
- introversion or extroversion,
- dominance or submission,
- self-confidence or self-depreciation,
- decisiveness or indecisiveness,
- perseverance or the lack of it,
- self-control or the lack of it
- stability or lability.

Furthermore, he divides the traits into groups and as the most important of them sees the temperament and character. If *character* is defined as a system of qualities (traits) with the moral base that regulate human behaviour, then the form of them is determined also by temperament. *Temperament* is a system of qualities that influence the whole dynamic of human behaviour; the emotional side of a human, the manner of reacting and behaving: the strength of feelings, adjustment, irritability, and excitability; and also the development of the individual's activity patterns and motivational mechanisms. Probably the most known typology concerning temperament is the one based on the Hippocratic definition that was further worked out by I. P. Pavlov. It distinguishes four types according the higher nervous activity (Čáp, 1980:63,324-325; Řehulka, 1995:11):

- 1) **SANGUINE** = someone who is strong even-tempered, lively,

- cheerful.
- 2) **CHOLERIC** = someone who is strong, unbalanced, irritable, quick-tempered but also quickly calmed.
  - 3) **PHLEGMATIC** = someone who is strong even-tempered, inert, slow, quiet.
  - 4) **MELANCHOLIC** = someone who is weak, sensitive with tendency to sad mood.

As a result, personality consists of general, typological and individual aspects and if we overestimate or ignore one of them, it influences negatively the educational process. In case of underestimating the typological and especially the individual factors, the individual needs of a pupil are not satisfied and it is hard for pupils to learn easily. On the contrary, overlooking the general features of a personality and focusing only on the individual ones too much can lead to the loss of orientation in the plenty of different personalities and to the neglect of basic principals of learning and personality formation in the educational process (Čáp, 1980:60).

#### **1.2.1.2. Activity**

Concerning the ability to recognize the difference between a passive and active pupil, the second element, which influences the display of activeness, is defined, since it is closely related to the personality of each learner.

Even though many encyclopaedias have tried to define the exact meaning of *activity*, it is theoretically broad and therefore still complex and unclear. The term is not used just in pedagogy and didactics but it appears in many other scientific disciplines. Nevertheless, it is all seen in one context. For example, *activity* in pedagogy can have the basis in physiology because activity is characteristic of all living organisms, so a human is seen as naturally active (Skalková, 1971:13,68).

Maňák (1998:12) clarifies *activity* as a term that is synonymous with the words *working* or *doing* something. Skalková (1971:9-14) perceives activity as any actual theoretical or practical and eager activity. She adds that representatives of various movements use for activity terms, for example: creative work, independent work,

initiative work, child independency, one's effort, one's experience etc. Next to that, although very often pupils' *activity* is interpreted only in the intellectual perspective, Maňák describes the students' activity in the educational system as:

“...an increased and intensive activity of a pupil, partly on the basis of inner dispositions, spontaneous interests, emotional motives or living needs and partly on the basis of conscious efforts the aim of which is to acquire relevant knowledge, skills, habits, attitudes or behaviour.”

(Maňák, 1998:29, my translation)

In addition to that, he sees activity as the opposite to passivity and refers together with Skalková (1971:13) to Čáp who talks about activeness and passiveness according to the individual differences and dispositions and defines four groups of aspects that characterize the personality in relation to the activeness: 1) temperamental, 2) emotive, 3) operational and 4) cognitive. He adds that it is necessary to understand that the degree of activeness or passiveness is also influenced by the surrounding conditions (Maňák, 1998:30).

Moreover, Maňák (1998:29-30) and Hendrich (1988:307) distinguish also inner and outer activity of a pupil. *Outer activity* is without the inner involvement, whereas *inner activity* is developed mainly in the independent / self- activity when using the operational thinking, for instance: analysing, observing, comparing, classifying etc.

*Activity* within the teacher-pupil relationship is understood on one hand as learner's spontaneousness that is influenced by his/her needs and motivation, on the other hand as an activity determined by the role of teacher and the subject matter (Skalková, 1971:67).

In short, the activity appears as a concrete, unique feature of a person. To be more specific, it has the tendency to behave independently in accordance with the personal dispositions and differently from others (Maňák, 1998:12). Hence, I suggest that teachers should understand that activeness cannot be expressed by all pupils in exactly the same way and they have to respect the individual differences of each student. Furthermore, they should not be satisfied with just the outer activity, including also memorizing and interpreting bare facts without understanding, but they should try to develop the inner activity that comes from the “inside” of the pupil on the basis of their

needs, interests and motivation and that involves learner's thinking, self-activity and creativity.

### **1.2.1.3. Un-student in comparison with other students**

The expression, which has given me the idea for the specific focus of the study and my interest, is used on the back cover of the book *Let me learn*, written by Christiane A. Johnston who, from my point of view, smartly covered all the features related to the passive and hard-to-reach student under such a term.

However, as it is written in the beginning of this chapter, there is not much written specifically about this issue. Nevertheless, it has been a challenge to search for information related to this topic and summarize it with the support of the research included at the end of this investigation.

First of all, it is essential to say that there exists no solid and integrated conception of the definition of a pupil, too (Helus, 1982:14). However, before focusing on the active and the passive pupil, a learner in general conception is described by Hendrich as one of the main seven factors of the educational process in English classes (teacher; pupil; subject matter; organisation forms; didactic methods and techniques; aids, materials and equipment; the aim). He continues:

“A learner is an individual at any age, who is taught and has particular capabilities, qualities, knowledge, experience, needs and interests and other prerequisites for English language learning, including his/her state of physical and mental health and furthermore his/her relationship to his/her class fellows etc. His/her task in the educational process is to use all abilities and competences and to be persistent in his/her efforts to reach the given aim.”

(Hendrich, 1988:17, my translation)

There are learners in the classroom who tend to be active, interested and who like being busy and engaged in the teaching process. Analysing the reasons that motivate them to be so, together with the reasons for the opposite behaviour in the English classrooms are the subjects of my investigation that will be elaborated further in this study. In contrast to the active and motivated pupils, there are “un-students” who are called as such by Johnson in the sense of “...*uninterested, unmotivated, unengaged and*

*unreachable students*". Constructing the definition of this term and characterizing the typical features of an "un-student" behaviour are difficult, since this particular issue is not worked up in very details and covered in many sources. Besides, in my opinion, there are not always clear, exact and definite signs of pupils' activeness or passiveness. There is the question of already mentioned inner or outer activity.

In comparison to the active and motivated pupil, who is described by Maňák (1998:29) in accordance with the definition of Dvořák and International Bureau of Education – further only IBE (2005:51) as a learner who makes more intensive efforts to reach the given aim and is recognized for his perseverance, decisiveness and higher level of activity, the "unstudent" is a pupil who is not concerned with the set up goal very much, or who loses his/her interest easily. Such a learner does not put enough effort into reaching the goal and very often might become as Gatenby (1967:2) describes: "...a passive recipient of what is provided for them by the teachers". In accordance with what has been stated, Watkins says:

"S/he is active in constructing sense from the environment, not passively receiving it, and also active in that the particular sense made will reflect what s/he already knows and has experience, as well as future goals and views of self."

(Watkins, 2003:12)

In addition to that, Skalková (2004:126) talks about the common picture of "good and bad" pupil as follows: "A good pupil is the one who is willing to learn, is active, hardworking, attentive, disciplined etc. and the bad pupil has the opposite characteristics." Regarding the "bad student" definition that might be in accordance with the explanation of an "un-student", I agree with Skalková that it is so broad and simplified interpretation that it cannot be implemented in the educational process. It should be understood in deeper sociological, psychological context, together with developmental and pedagogical psychology. In my view, as regards to the "un-student", s/he can be, for example, disciplined but still s/he can be an "un-student" who is not interested in learning at all.

In addition to that, I think that an "un-student" is also Helus' pupil who works according the requirements of the teacher that are lower then his/her potential. As a result of that, so called "damping down disposition" of potential personality has been

developed, what means that the pupil has got used to the lower requirements and now, he works under his compass (Helus, 1982:149).

Furthermore, Monika Ginoira (2008), who is a former teacher interested in the particular topic, wrote an article called *Becoming an active rather than a passive student*. where she characterizes an active and a passive student as follows:

“An active student is the one who is willing to participate in all the classroom activities. He wants to seek attention from the teacher and the peers. He wants to perform to his best and be appreciated for that. He participates in competitions, discussions and other co-curricular activities. He is alert, quick, competitive, energetic, passionate, leader, creative and a performer.”

“A passive student is one who loves to be in his own world. He does not want to talk much and participate in the day to day activities of the classroom. He is not very social and hesitates to express his point of view in front of everyone. He is an introvert and needs a channel to vent out his feelings and thoughts. He wants to take a backseat in any kind of discussion or activities. At times he can be spotted out in the crowd as a lonely and a conscious being. In extreme he can be very dull and unwilling to learn.”

(Ginoira, 2008)

Concerning her conception of an active or a passive student, I must strongly disagree with many arguments she mentions. Even that, after these two definitions, she speaks about the importance of understanding the psychology of the passive learner of a particular age, I do not think that the children psychology is really reflected in her piece of work. Going back to Čap's explanation of an activity, it is unique to an individual and therefore the display of it and active involvement is always expressed in a different way from one pupil to another. Next to that, I suggest that not every pupil needs and likes to be a performer or a leader in order to be considered as to be active. Moreover, I do not agree that an introvert, whose characteristic is connected to a personality type and temperament, cannot be active. In my opinion, he can be active a lot but in his own way. In fact, it seems to me that she describes more the personality than the behaviour and the display of activeness. There is another question whether looking for attention from a teacher and being competitive is not just connected to the extrinsic motivation. Furthermore, the last sentence of the passive learner definition is reflecting the already mentioned theory of Skalková that very often the pupils' activity is seen just as an

intellectual activity. In my opinion, even “weaker” students are able to participate actively but they have to have the opportunity and conditions appropriate for them.

According to Erik Paulsen and Edvin Bru mentioned by Stangeland (2007), this is also the case of the pupils who are silent and shy in the classroom because usually, they have problems establishing a closer relationship to the teacher and are perceived as being less interested, motivated and participatory – even though they might be active “inside” of them and just do not have the right environment around, and the understanding and support of the teacher to *express* themselves actively. These students might be perceived by some teacher as the “*un-students*” as well.

### **1.2.2. REASONS FOR BEING PASSIVE AND UNINTERESTED**

Concerning the above arguments, an “un-student” is described as a pupil who does not want to be actively engaged in reaching the goal and does not want to put any effort in it for some reason. The reasons are the subject of this subchapter. As there are many factors that influence pupils’ activeness and engagement in English language teaching, for instance, family background, previous experience, physical conditions, state of health, problems that come from outside of the school, etc.(Helus, 1982:151). This study focuses just on the main impacts that might appear on the basis of the pupils’ current teacher teaching process.

#### **NO DIFFERENTIATION**

The great importance of differentiation in the teaching process is emphasised by many authors, for example, Hendrich (1988:309), Cangelosi (1994:26), Čáp (1980:61), Skalková (2004:126) and others. If teacher’s work does not include differential approach according to pupils’ previous experience, age, interests, level of attainment and the already mentioned psychological, sociological, developmental and pedagogical psychological factors, students can consequently meet with failure; lose their interest in the subject or learning English in general. It concerns the appropriate choice of aids, methods, strategies, techniques, exercises, activities, goals etc. (Skalková, 2004:126, Maňák, 1998:35, Dvořák and IBE, 2005:50).

Referring to the differentiation of the level of pupils' attainment and to teacher's evaluation, pupils might meet with neither failure nor great success as the teacher's requirements are lower than pupils' potential, capabilities, skills and knowledge. However, they adapt to these undemanding outer situations and get used to being passive. As a result of that, they get used to working under their compass (Helus, 1982:149, Hendrich, 1988:51).

I believe that no differentiation can make a pupil become an "un-student" who does not like participating in any activity because he might have not experienced any success so it is not worthy for him to participate in reaching the goal any more.

The problem of differentiation is going to be worked out in more details throughout the study as it permeates also the other pedagogical issues concerning the reasons, motivation, activating strategies, and generally the learning and teaching processes.

#### EVALUATION AND LACK OF SUCCESS

Evaluation is connected to the experience of success and consequently the satisfaction of learning, or experience of failure that might have large negative impact on pupils' motivation. Even that some small failure can raise pupils' activeness, on the other hand, it might have damaging influences, too (Čáp, 1980:163). Together with that, sharp critique, irony or jeering usually ends in the same result – pupils' negativism, non-engagement and passivity (Zelinková, 1997:78).

Concerning the evaluation of a pupil, the weaker students might be weak because they cannot manage and fulfil the requirements because of lack of intelligence etc. or, sometimes, as Helus points out:

“...because their teacher consider them to be incapable to manage learning the subject matter. The teacher's notion of a pupil is reflected in the learner's results and directs the teacher to such a behaviour that makes him to be a good or bad pupil in accordance to the with initial perception of the pupil.”

(Helus, 1982:11, my translation)

Consequently, Helus (1982:161-163) continues that there is often distrust, suspicion, upbraiding or blaming between a teacher and an *unsuccessful* student. Regarding that, it

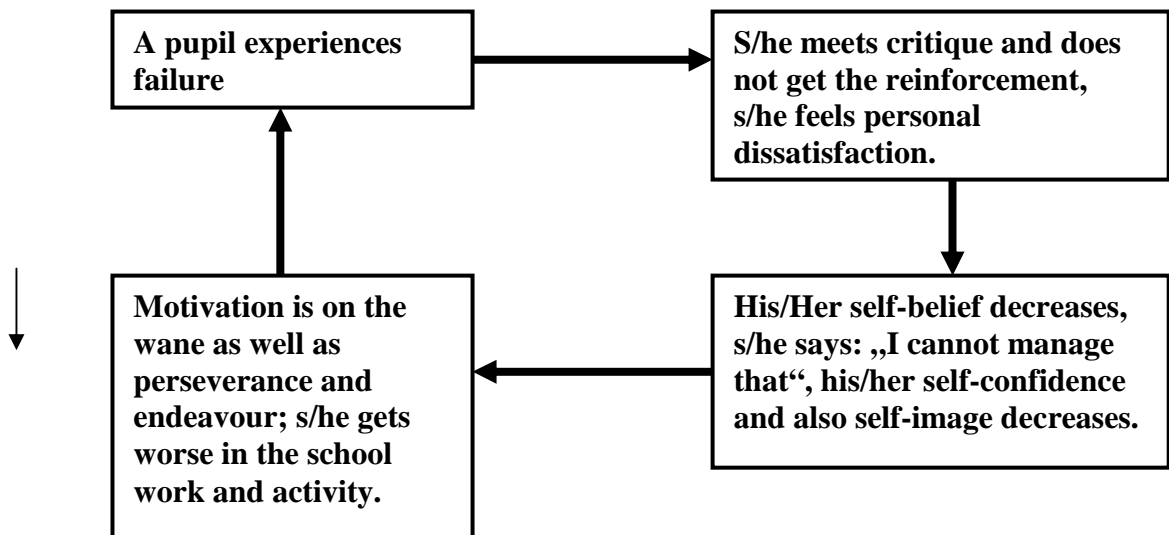


might raise the learner's impression that the teacher underestimates, disparages him/her and that s/he privileges the others. It can create the pupil's mechanism of defence not only in the verbal form but especially in resisting and rejecting the active involvement and co-operation. And this may be the reason for the unwillingness for co-operation and loss of interest in learning.

The IBE together with Dvořák (2005:59) agree that negative thoughts that become regular in the pupils perception of the teacher or himself could cause negative motivational beliefs that produce uncertainty and anxiety. Sometimes, frequent failure can make unsuccessfulness become a personal trait that later appears as a inner psychic factor (Helus, 1982:160). These feelings can be elicited also by pupils' impression that even though they are not examined they are still assessed and marked by the teacher (Cangelosi, 1994:111).

As Petty (2004:41) highlights: *"Success builds higher self-confidence"*. In contrast to that, learners who often do not feel self-confident in what they do in the class tend to stop working when they start to be uncertain, unconfident (Cangelosi, 1994:26).

In conclusion, there is a clear illustration of the impact of failure on the motivation and active engagement of a pupil made by Petty:



(Petty, 2004:44, my translation)

### NO SENSE OF LEARNING

Čáp (1980:165-166) argues that pupils are not motivated to be active because they do not see any sense in the activity or in learning some specific subject matter and it does not seem useful or meaningful to them. As the authors mentioned at the end of this paragraph agree that it may happen, for example, the subject matter or teaching conditions rarely authentic pupils' real lives or when learners do not know or cannot imagine when, how and where they might really use it in the present time or their future. Consequently, school, including learning and teaching processes and subject matter, can become separated from the contexts of the life "outside", which makes the subject matter hard to understand and difficult for the learners to become engaged and active. Moreover, learners usually do not participate actively because the school activities are not attractive to them for the same reason - they do not see any value in them (Dvořák a IBE, 2005:42-61; Stern,1974:87; Petty, 2004:43; Čáp, 1980:96, 165, Cangelosi, 1994:137).

Furthermore, making the sense of learning depends also on pupils' needs, interests and it is strongly related to goals that are necessary in the process of learning and teaching to set up. To emphasize, having no sense of learning has large demotivating impacts on pupils' activeness and their engagement (IBE and Dvořák, 2005:55 - 61, Čáp, 1980:165)

To conclude, Watkins (1994:22) debates that the meaning of learning something can be also achieved by making pupils feel useful so that they want to get involved and cooperate.

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To begin with, the important fact to be aware of is that the goals and objectives concern the learners' motivation, needs, interests, the already mention sense of learning and, generally speaking, their willingness to learn and co-operate (Čáp, 1980:165).

If a learner fails on the way of reaching the goal, it brings frustration and s/he may give up his/her efforts in attaining it and in learning in general. There are many reasons that can make a pupil uninterested in the goal. Concerning the teaching process, in most

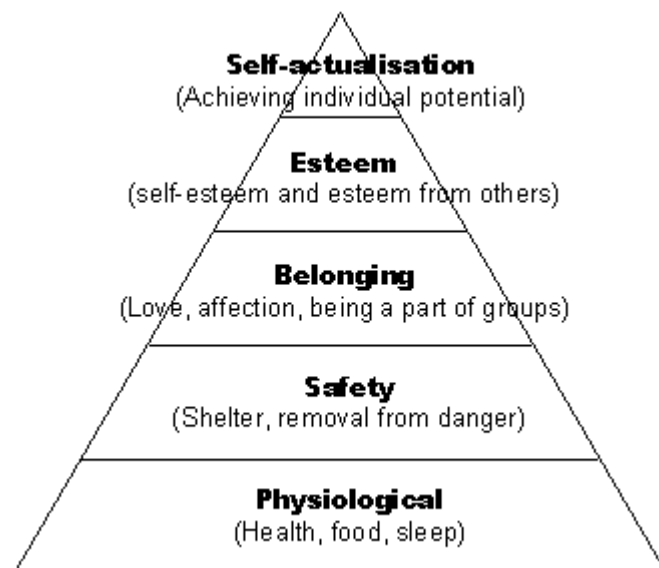
cases, the goal is not realistic, reachable or attractive for him/her as, for example, the level of difficulty is low or too high without gradation, or it is out of his/her interest, or it does not refer to his/her needs (Maňák, 1998:13, Čáp, 1980:353, Hendrich, 1988:99).

To summarize, a pupil might become passive and unengaged in regard to the goal if it does not suit him/her as much as s/he can identify with it (Maňák, 1998:13).

### NO CONSIDERATION AND RESPECT FOR PUPILS' NEEDS

Needs are highly associated with incentives, motives and finally motivation. Therefore, in my opinion, “un-student” might be the one, who is not active in English lessons because, as Hendrich agrees, his/her needs have not been met or, on the other hand, the teacher has not been giving him/her any incentives that would evoke especially the cognitive need (Hendrich, 1988:55-56).

Straker (2002-2007) provides a clear picture of *Maslow's hierarchy of needs* that clearly illustrates the range of human needs from the basic to the highest one:



(Straker, 2002-2007)

He talks about the well know theory based on that hierarchy that the lower needs must be met before the next higher needs. It means that thirst, tiredness, anxiety, stress,

no experience of success, no personal focus etc. make pupils' learning more difficult (Petty, 1996: 51, Skalková, 1999:159).

### LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPTION AND ENGAGEMENT

To begin with, for many authors of the studied literature this issue is one of the most important. For example, Watkins points out:

“In a view where learning is a passive process of knowledge acquisition, with predictable and measurable outcomes, perhaps the saddest aspect is its downplaying and discrediting the activity of the learner when describing learning and dishonoring their contribution to the process.”

(Watkins, 2003:11)

In this case, Watkins describes pupil as “a receptacle waiting to be filled” and the teacher as “a neutral conduit for the “stuff” being delivered”. In accordance with that, Skalková (1971:67) emphasizes that the role of a pupil, in the relationship between a teacher and his/her pupils, cannot be understood as being the object of teacher's activity because the pupils activeness can be manifested only in an activity of doing something. Maňák (1998:306) continues that the modern understanding of teaching calls for active participation of a pupil as it is important for learning and acquiring skills, knowledge etc. They both, Maňák and Skalková, together with other authors call the learner “*the subject of the educational process*”.

Zelinková (1997:78-79) explains this reason for becoming an “un-student” more specifically, while she points out that a learner gets bored when s/he just watches and listens to teacher's presentation of information even that it is performed in a creative way. She adds that a learner loses his/her interest when everything is done by the teacher and s/he stays passive.

As previously mentioned, students need to have the opportunity to participate, express themselves and be sometimes in the centre of attention, so that they feel useful. Cangelosi warns that if a learner does not get teacher or classmates' attention by the cooperative approach, he may try to get it by the uncooperative behaviour (Cangelosi, 1994:45, Watkins, 2003:22).

According to several surveys mentioned by Cangelosi (1994:29), students in a typical class take part in school activities only for a half time of the intended time. Other studies quote 75 percent. However, he argues that very often, activities for pupils take just 40 percent of the whole time they are present at school. So, in my opinion, in many cases, students do not have enough opportunities to participate actively and therefore they get used to being passive. Consequently, from my own experience, they do not expect themselves to be actively working most of the time of the lesson and because of that, they are usually uncomfortably surprised when it is so, and when a teacher wants them to work on something alone.

There is a question what is meant by pupils' participation and engagement because even when a teacher is able to activate his/her class effectively, the pupils' results might not comply with the learners' performance. According to Maňák (1998:40-42) it happens because it is only the students' outer activity is evoked but they still do not have the real opportunity to be active, in the sense of thinking and working independently without the constant help of their teacher.

#### *NO PRODUCTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT*

The productive and supportive learning environment is vital for pupils' engagement and active learning at school. It is a complex issue that includes all the already stated questions of differentiation, providing incentives and appropriate goals together with the sense of learning, opportunity for engagement and participation, success and evaluation (Skalková, 1999:157-159, Dvořák and IBE, 2005:40, 79, Čáp, 1993:260-261).

Besides, there are other elements that can turn a student into being the "un-student". One of the most important factors is the teacher him/herself and the way s/he teaches. Regarding that, it depends on the fact whether his/her relationship to the pupils is encouraging in general or based on distrust, suspicion, constant critique, too authoritative approach that causes anxiety, stress, fear, pupils' uncertainty and consequently no willingness to cooperate, no concentration and no inner interest and involvement of the pupils. When talking about the distrust and suspicion, it can appear on both the students' and the teacher's side. According to Zelenková, it is highly demotivating when a teacher does not trust his/her students, looks for mistakes all the

time - only those that a learner has made but also those s/he might make. Generally speaking, providing inappropriate motivational situations in the education process decreases positive relationship of the pupil to learning and creates lack of interest and causes indifference (Skalková, 1999:158-159, Zelenková, 1997:7, 73-74).

On the other hand, too democratic approach, lack of rules, order and organisation also do not provide supportive environment as it might evoke confusion, problems with discipline and as a result passiveness of pupils who have become bored with and consequently do not have respect for such a teacher (Dvořák and IBE, 2005:79, Lee, 1967:49-50, Zelenková, 1997:73)

Moreover, the choice of unsuitable didactic methods, aids, organisation forms, an inappropriate planning of a lesson, lesson plan that is not flexible enough to be adapted to the momentary situations in the class, slow transitions between activities or no variety, slow or too fast tempo may be conducive to the uncomfortable environment for learning, too (Lee, 1967:49-51, Cangelosi, 1994:76-77, Hendrich, 1988:290, collective of authors, 1996:104-105). Concerning that, Cangelosi says: "Such pupils who are waiting for having something to do will find their own ways how to shorten the long moments of doing nothing."(1994:77, my translation).

To conclude, according to Čáp (1993:177) school often provides such conditions that do not support the productive atmosphere but conversely tire pupils. He lists the causes of tiredness that, in my view, can be seen also as the reasons for pupils' passivity and no engagement:

- an inappropriate timetable;
- no opportunity for movement during the break;
- monotonous performance of some teachers or the opposite;
- long lecture of a teacher and no variety in organisation forms, lack of problem solving activities;
- the frightening way of teaching that evokes anxiety, feeling of inferiority and uncertainty;
- microclimate interrupting conditions that are stated also in Petty's book *Moderní vyučování* (2004:52). He warns that such conditions can drive their attention away from cooperation and learning and decrease their efforts for it, even though they have been strongly motivated.

To conclude with, the explanation of my understanding of the term “un-student”, on the basis of the given information, is provided. It is a learner who sees no importance and sense in learning and in reaching the set goals. Such a student puts not enough efforts in it for many possible reasons as, for example, lack of differentiation, no sense of learning, lack of respect to his/her needs, no productive and friendly environment etc. in teaching process. It is important to mention again, that it concerns the uniqueness of each pupil in expressing the activeness. Additionally, the inner activity, not the outer, is what makes a pupil really active. My argument is supported by Helus’ (1982:15) theory that a learner is, first of all, a developing human being that, even it is influenced by the impacts from the “outside”, it still develops itself in its own way, and the outer impacts can form it only if they start to be taken and accepted as the organic part of itself – the learner.

### **1.3. TEACHING HAND IN HAND WITH LEARNING**

This chapter gives arguments to the issue of whether to regulate educational process according to a teacher, subject matter or to the “learner’s voice”. Several approaches are stated with the focus on learner-oriented teaching. As far as I am concerned, the “learner’s voice” should be listened to and analysed. Therefore the most frequent methods for gaining important information about pupils are listed in this chapter, too. I believe that the results of such analyses can be used for revealing the core of possible “un-student’s” problems or in identifying each learner’s personality, interests. Consequently, they may show the way how to motivate students, especially the “un-students, of a particular class. Hence, motivation as an important factor in the overall issue “un-student” is worked out in the second subchapter.

#### **1.3.1. LISTENING TO THE “LEARNER’S VOICE”**

Initially, two main approaches to the relationship between a teacher and a learner are introduced. First of all, the conception of the *orientation to the teacher* covering also the content of subject matter is worked out in not so many details as the following one with the *orientation to a pupil* that listens to the “learner’s voice”.

##### **TEACHER – ORIENTATED APPROACH**

The first teaching theories, which concentrate their focus especially on the activity of a teacher together with a content of subject matter, is described by Skalková (1999:116-123, 1971:56-57). This approach sees a pupil as a passive object who only receives information. Unfortunately, the roots of this didactic conception are still noticeable in today’s schools mostly in the way of conservative practices and the role of a teacher that consists of setting up the goals as well as choosing the procedure s/he sticks to. However, while pupil’s activity is expected also in this approach, the actual activity is determined by the teacher and regulated by the outer control. In other words, pupils are active but the stimulus comes usually from the “outside” on the basis of the teacher’s didactic methods and means. Skalková (1971:57) talks about a deformation of the



pedagogical process caused by the absolute orientation towards the teacher and his/her didactic methods and means, when the factors of the educational process override the importance of the other one - the pupil. I agree with Skalková's argument against the teacher-oriented conception: "...this relationship between a teacher and a pupil, where the pupil is only the object, does not make sufficient opportunity for pupil's own activity" and that, from my point of view, might be also the cause to become the "un-student".

### LEARNER-ORIENTED APPROACH

Skalková (1999:116-123, 1971:56) focuses also on the second conception that is oriented to a learner and was developed mainly in the twentieth century. She explains that it sees the regulation of the didactic situation in a pupil's needs, interests and his/her inner spontaneity. The learner takes the dominate role and all the other relationships are subordinated to him/her. The aim of this approach is to make as many opportunities for the learner's activity as possible and evoke such an activity that is based on his/her own inner stimulus. In short, the "learner's voice" is the regulating element. In accordance with Skalková's characterization of the learner-oriented conception, Watkins (2003:30) talks about teaching for learning and claims that teachers should focus on what the learners are doing rather than what they, the teachers, are doing.

Watkins is a supporter of the learner-oriented teaching approach and he reacts to the opposite approach and complains that the whole teaching and learning policies are not made in the way to engage and motivate students, it is more about "teaching and teaching" than about "teaching and learning". It is related to the beliefs holding that teaching is telling and learning is listening, the same as in the image that the learner's mind is a container to be filled up. He continues that the teacher in learner-oriented approach has the role of instructor evaluating student's progress towards learning objectives and the responsibility for learning is laid on pupils (Watkins, 2003:8-10, 43).

## TEACHER AND PUPIL IN A MUTUAL COLLABORATION

### - NO POLE ORIENTATION

Simultaneously, other movements were developed during the twentieth century arguing that the learner-oriented teaching is a considerably simplified scheme. These movements have in common that they resist any overestimating of one pole in the teacher-student relationship (Skalková, 1999:117). Skalková is one of the authors who tend to this opinion that sees the educational process as a relationship between a teacher together with curriculum and a pupil, where the mutual collaboration is emphasized and developed in one unity with mutual impact on each other.

Nevertheless, I suppose that while the collaboration between the teacher and his/her students is very important, the collaboration still must be oriented not to the teacher's but more to the learners' needs, interests etc. and focuses on them. So, in my opinion, the teaching process should be still more oriented towards the learners and I see it as the solution of the issue of the "un-student". I agree with Petty (2004:52) that there should be given more responsibility to students for what they do.

It refers to the teacher's knowledge of his/her learners' real abilities, competences and compasses. It is discussed by Müllerová, L. (2002:44, 49-52) who points out that it is essential for teachers to diagnose pupils' competences and, consequently, to work with them. Petty (2004:52) agrees and recommends talking to unmotivated students to reveal the cause of the lack of their effort and find out how to motivate them. Therefore, besides the outer conditions of learning, a teacher should search also for the information concerning **the inner conditions of the learning process** that are worked out, according to Müllerová, L. (2002:44, 49-52), on the basis of:

- a) *The degree of the pupil's psychic development*
  - cognitive sphere (e.g. skills, knowledge, perception, mental concentration, memory, fantasy, thinking etc.)
  - noncognitive sphere (e.g. depresses, attitudes, needs, tolerance, empathy, character, temperament etc.)
- b) *Momentary physical state*

c) Genetic disposition.

In regards with that, Müllerová, L (2002:71) suggests several methods to diagnose these inner conditions in the educational process:

- observation
- pupils' utterance, statements
- interview
- questionnaire
- analysis of pupil's products

The methods for the diagnosis of inner conditions and pupil's personality are well described in Kohoutek's book *Úvod do Psychologie. Metody poznávání osobnosti a duševního zdraví žáka* (2006:30-62), I am not going to pursue that topic any more, since it is not the core of my study.

Finally, the phrase “**learner's voice**” has not been explained yet. Professor Jean Rudduck presents it as “the consultative wing” of pupil participation. She explains:

“Consultation is about talking with pupils about things that matter in school. It may involve: conversations about teaching and learning; seeking advice from pupils about new initiatives; inviting comment on ways of solving problems that are affecting the teacher's right to teach and the pupil's right to learn.”

(Rudduck, 2004)

From my point of view, “learner's voice” stands for everything what learners feel, say or do; what can give teachers information about their personality, competences, abilities, interests etc. – in short about their “world”. To finish with, in my opinion, it is essential to listen to the “voice” to reach the satisfactory process of learning as well as teaching.

### **1.3.2. MOTIVATION AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR**

Motivation is chosen to be one separate subchapter because I believe, as I have already mentioned, that it is the main factor of the “un-student” issue. My attitude is

supported by Hendrich (1988:52) who also sees motivation as the most effective form of psychic regulation and as the internal drive to learn. As it is a very complex topic, it is elaborated mainly in the relation to the learning process in this study.

To begin with, the terms that are closely related to motivation are worked out according to Hendrich (1988:52), Maňák (1998:34-35), Řehulka (1995:8) and Skalková (1999:157-159):

- **Motive**

Motive is a reason for learning that reflects interests, values and ideals of a person. It is a drive of human behaviour that leads to activity. Motive regulates the human activity to fulfil a need.

- **Needs and incentives**

Motivated behaviour is, on the basis of psychology, the outcome of the inner motivational disposition impact – needs and incentives that evoke needs.

*Incentive* is an outer incitement, spur, stimulus that turns a need into a motive. Incentive might be, for example, a praise, reproof, mark, school report etc.

*Need* is defined as lack or an excess of something what is important for the individual.

- **Motivation for learning** is the set of motives and it is further clarified by Stern:

“Motivation can be either *positive, neutral, or negative*. Either the child wants to learn a second language, is indifferent about it, or tends to resist learning. Further, there are both intrinsic and extrinsic factors in motivation. *Intrinsic motivation* has to do with the child’s own attitudes toward the learning of the language and the advantages or disadvantages he sees as inherent in the fact of learning the second language; *extrinsic motivation* has to do with the rewards or punishments which emanate from others (peers, parents, school authorities, etc.) for successful or unsuccessful learning. Intrinsic and extrinsic factors may vary independently. At least nine cases are possible, represented by the possible combinations of positive, neutral, and negative extrinsic motivation. For example, the American child who resists learning Spanish but will be positively rewarded if he does so has negative intrinsic motivation but positive extrinsic motivation.”

(Stern, 1974:97-98)

Helus (1982:152-153) argues that there are educational approaches that tend to motivate children mainly by material rewards or other immediate advantages (extrinsic motivation) that lead to a *short-term orientation*. Concerning that, it is not a valuable and quality motivational orientation in the sense of preparing a child for life, although it might be sometimes quite adequate and useful form of controlling and directing children's motivation. In contrast to that, the *perspective orientation* has long-term influences and the need to improve their skills, qualities etc. in relation to their own personality is the drive of the pupils' active behaviour. He points out evidences that a learner with developed perspective orientation works more effectively, actively, independently, can set up his own goals and get better school result. He continues that the development of the perspective orientation rises at the time of pubescence.

Concerning the development of motivational structures, also Skalková (1999:158-159) talks about influences of the age and situational factors in the system of motives. In addition to that, Čáp (1993:186, 242-243) emphasizes also the *individual differences* in pupils' motivation and on the basis of that, he recommends teachers to know well what makes children at this age happy, what brings them satisfaction, what is a reward for them, generally speaking, what motivates them. Each pupil reacts differently to the various forms of motivation for learning, for example, successful pupil who is used to praises and good result often does not react on positive assessment by increased activity. On the other side, pupil who is not very successful also socially raises his/her efforts after being positively evaluated.

In relation to pubescence, Taxova (1987:146) specifies three of the main significant **changes in motivational structures in this period:**

- a) *The attitude towards school sorts out, clears up and is more precise.*
- b) *The quantity of possible sources of information, entertainment, experiences and experience rises.* However, it can support but also counteract motivation for the school work.
- c) *The meaning of inner and interiorised motivation increases,* the individual motivational becomes a part of their personality in large extent and they are more aware of the motives and can control themselves better.

Referring to item b), I agree with the statement mentioned by the collective of authors who wrote the book *Tvořivost v práci učitele a žáka*, (1996:104) that it is much more difficult to motivate learners at this age and to maintain their attention and interest also because of this exact reason - the wide range of the sources and the influence of television, video etc. On the other hand, Skalková (1999:158) points out that motivation is not an outer phenomenon. It means that the outer incentives do not have motivational potency of their own but they gain it only when the particular person is in some inner relation with the object, activity or situation.

To summarize, according to the above given facts, motivation is the crucial factor concerning the issue of activating pupils for learning. Therefore, from my point of view, it is essential for a teacher to concentrate on that problem, too, next to the focus on what she is supposed to teach in what period of time. To increase the pupils' motivation for learning it is essential to be aware especially of the main significant changes in motivational structures in this period. It also requires the analysis of pupils' needs, interests, problems, personalities and other factors that can influence their attitude to learning and their motivation.

## **1.4. HOW TO ACTIVATE LEARNERS**

### **IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

At the beginning of every lesson there is an important task for a teacher to give pupils the stimulus to start the active process of learning. However, there is the question how to activate learners and how to bring them in such a relation to the subject matter that they start to be actively engaged in it (Skalková, 1971:90).

Most authors, whose theories have been used to clarify the issue, agree on the ***general requirements on the teaching process*** that makes pupils actively involved in the educational process. It is suggested to ***transform the subject matter*** into something that would be attractive for pupils because it would be ***connected to their lives***; to the way of their understanding of life and the world around them; and to the interests of children at their age. It is recommended to teachers ***not to be too authoritative*** and show the willingness to listen to their opinions, ideas and problems they might have. Next to that, it is said to be essential to use ***differentiation*** in the activities, exercises and the general teacher's approach according to pupils' needs, including also the primary needs; competences; interests; level of attainment; personality, age etc. Furthermore, the choice of ***appropriate didactic methods, aids and organisation forms*** play also an important role as well as ***clear explanation*** of what is going to be done during the lesson and ***what it is useful for; clear instructions***; and setting up the ***appropriate goal***. Everything should be directed to the teacher's aim to make the goal of a lesson or an activity the subject of the pupils' learning and efforts, on the basis of their inner conditions and dispositions. Besides, a teacher should try to ***evoke the pupils' inner motivation*** for learning. Moreover, the educational process should take place in a ***friendly atmosphere*** without stress but still, there must be ***an order, consistency and suitable demands*** on pupils work. In addition to that, ***success and evaluation*** of pupils and their work are other didactic means to encourage and motivate children at this age. (Skalková, 1971:90-99, 2004:126, Cangelosi, 1994:26-28, 31-45, 76-91, 137, Spencer and Jago, 1967:3, 48-51, Maňák, 1998:13, 35-42, Dvořák a IBE, 2005:14, 42-61,161-163, and others).

Finally, in accordance with the above mentioned general requirements and facts that have been given in this study, there are several ideas, including games, strategies,

methods etc. that might increase the activeness and engagement of pupils. Some of them, which, in my opinion, are the most effective, are provided in the following part:

### **“Businesslike classroom”**

It concerns the productive atmosphere in the classroom that is made mainly by five IMPORTANT FACTORS that are recommended by Cangelosi (1994:66-91). Some of them have already been mentioned and worked out, therefore they are not provided in many details:

1. Setting up the rules and conditions for better cooperation at the beginning of the year or term when pupils do not know what to expect from the teacher and the new position of being in the last grade. The opportunity of the first impression is given to a teacher just once and s/he should show confidence in what s/he does and insist on keeping the rules that has been set at the beginning.

2. Well-planned and careful preparation and organisation of a lesson that has a great impact on the smooth course of a lesson at all costs.

3. Shortening the transition time between activities to the minimum. The shorter is the transition time the more time is assigned for pupils' active work. Here are some **suggestions how to cope with problems causing pupils' passiveness when waiting** for the next activity:

- *when doing the administrative “duties”* the teacher should have some working sheets or other activity prepared for pupils who are not involved in it.

- *when giving instructions* for more difficult task that requires more complicated organisation and different tasks for each pupil or group of pupils the teacher can use cards with the written form of instructions and leave the further activity on the pupil.

- *teaching pupils the “signals” for routine work.*



4. Use a kind of communication that supports friendly environment for pupils' independent cooperation without anxiety and too much pressure and stress. It refers to differentiation; appropriate feedback and evaluation of their work, praise of their improvement; respecting their opinions; place for their comments etc.

5. Clear demands and expectations of their behaviour.

### **Group work**

Cangelosi (1994:85, 155-158) together with Petty (2004:174-187) focus on this type of organisation form, where pupils work together within one group to reach the goal. This form usually makes the activity that students might not like less uncomfortable or unpleasant and even if they like the activity, it usually makes it more enjoyable for them. They both see the advantage of using this form in the fact, that the learners within one group learn from each other; they provide feedback, advices to one another; there is much more room for differentiation, independency and responsibility for their work; it provides the possibility to be active for all students at one time. Besides, Dvořák and IBE (2005:30) claim that it could also solve the problem of modest, silent and shy student who would probably feel much more confident to express their opinions and ideas in more intimate environment. In addition to that Petty continues and specifies the role of the teacher that lies in observing their activity; in providing help when pupils meet some problem; in encouraging to the different ways of thinking and discovering the solutions; and supporting the pupils' cooperation.

The same above mentioned authors give some examples of different kinds of activities, tasks and organisations that are possible within the groups:

- 1) Every group works on the same task and then may compare their results or approaches.
- 2) Each group works on separate tasks with different solutions or results; or they might get the same solution or results at the end.
- 3) Each pupil within one group might have a different task or they could work on one task together and discuss the procedure of working it out.

- 4) There is so called “*Pyramid*” group work, where one group debate some given issue and then get together with another group and solve together another problem that refers to the previous one.

### **Problem solving method**

The importance of the presence of a “*problem*” in the learning process was already seen by Hendrich (1988:310) in the title *Didaktika cizích jazyků*. that was published in 1988. He points out that teaching is not understood as just a provision of complete information by a teacher and learning is not based on memorizing the bare facts by pupils. He emphasizes in accordance with Skalková (1971:9) that it should be based on discovering some facts and understanding the relations among them in context. Furthermore, these two authors and many others agree with Cangelosi (1994:141) that: “The existence of a problem is a strong motivational element for evoking the human efforts...” and that it helps students to learn more easily.

Maňák (1998:110-111) describes problem teaching as making pupils solving some problem on the basis of increasing independence on the teacher that can result in a creative piece of work. He points out that pupil’s activity rises up when s/he meets a problem, difficulties, contradictions, a paradox etc. and in the process of finding the solution he has to put in intensive efforts and activity.

Dakin (1973:145) adds that the usage of the problem solving method specifically in language learning is based also on the previous experience, knowledge and on arranging what we have always known. He says:

“*Problems* are aimed primarily at accommodation, at getting the student to formulate new rules or to modify existing ones. The object is to train the learner to see in the language the same patterns and irregularities that we are aware of.”

(Dakin, 1973:145)

Moreover, I suppose, that the problem solving method includes the *discovering method*, too and that the following theory given by Petty (2004:228-230) concerns both methods. He claims that there is a vital importance of the way how the method is

planned and implemented in the teaching process. Regarding that, I think it could be generalized for all methods.

### **Project method**

Projects can be worked out in groups or by individuals as a self-activity. Project is explained by Petty (2004:213-220) as a task or series of tasks that should be accomplished by a pupil or a group of pupils and the great advantage sees in developing wide range of skills when they are fulfilling the goal of the project. Usually, it also provides the possibility for the learners' own decisions of how, where, when and in what sequence they are going to conduct it and therefore this method meets the learner's needs, interests and it is open to many individual differences. Next to that, projects provide the opportunity to apply and practice their knowledge and skills, usually, in real conditions. In contrary to other activities, there is a place for pupils' creativity and it often requires lateral thinking, analysis and synthesis what makes pupils really active (Petty, 2004:213-220, Maňak, 1998:111).

### **Situational method**

According to Hendrich (1988:310) it is essential to try to achieve the natural real life situation in the educational process. A teacher should create situation from the real life of her/his students when teaching something new or just practising. He recommends changing the classroom arrangement to a circle or semicircle to enable the pupils to look at each other when having conversation. The topic might be, for instance, social (family, home, travelling etc.) or standard (shopping, booking or buying tickets etc.).

Furthermore, Čáp (1980:165) explains that this method rises the motivational aspect but points out that it should provide pupils' real experience because it is not always effective if it is just on the verbal basis. He wants to say that this method also demands real emotional experiences.

## **Games**

All authors who are going to be mentioned in this part agree on the Hendrich's (1988:314-315) statement that: "Games present significant motivational and activating factor". Petty (2004:188) adds that games involve pupils very intensively into the learning process and make them so concentrate that it cannot be reached by any other method. Moreover, he argues that the positive relationship of a pupil to the subject can be caused just by the increased interest and motivation that is evoked by a game. To emphasize, game is the means of teaching through which students learn a lot by playing and at that moment, they enjoy learning (Čáp, 1980:280-282).

## **Didactic aids**

The important fact to be aware of as a teacher is, according to Petty (2004:271-296), that there are many ways how people perceive information:

- a) aurally
- b) visually
- c) by other sensors, for example, haptically etc.

Therefore, teachers should use plenty of didactic aids and equipment in a lesson to provide enough materials for the different perception of each learner. There are other reasons for including various aids and equipment into a lesson. Petty emphasizes that it usually gets the learners attention and rises their interests and it makes the subject matter easier for pupils to remember.

Concerning that, Spencer and Jago (1967:52) talk about using pictures in a lesson and say: "Simple illustrative sketches make a lesson much more vivid. Pictures in books can be very helpful, provided that they are sufficiently clear, attractive and simple".

Next to the audio-visual aids used together with an English book, Hendrich (1988:117) sees the importance also in providing authentic materials in English such as, for example, timetables, tickets, magazines etc. In accordance to that, Stern (1974:87)

writes that didactic means should be creating the lifelike situations and link the language with real objects, visual stimuli.

Petty (2004:274-296) lists some useful and effective types of didactic aids, materials and equipment that include:

- copies
- overhead projector
- model objects
- boards
- video
- tape recorder
- computer
- etc.

To summarize, this chapter provides the list of general requirement on the teaching process and recommends particular didactic means how to increase student's activity and involve learners actively in the educational process. "Businesslike classroom" strategy and several effective methods as project, problem solving and situational method are described. Next to that, game is emphasized as one of the most activating factor as well as group work organisation form. Finally, the advantages of using variety of aids in a lesson are provided.

## **2. PRACTICAL PART**

### **2.1. AIM OF THE RESEARCH**

The aim of the practical part is to identify what makes lower secondary pupils become “un-students” and how to activate them and, subsequently, to find out how teachers of English usually activate pupils at the age between thirteen and fifteen and how they maintain the activeness of their pupils in English lessons in general.

In the research I focused on the students and the teachers’ behaviour that includes not only verbal but also non-verbal expressions. Regarding the students, I tried to identify the ways of displaying the activeness or passiveness and their positive or negative reactions on teacher’s stimuli.

### **2.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH SAMPLE**

The sample of the research consists of thirty-three students of the age between fourteen and fifteen, and their two female teachers at the aged of thirty-six and fifty-one respectively. One of the teachers with university education has been teaching for thirteen years and the second teacher with secondary school education for twenty-one years. There were 19 students in 9.A class and 14 students in class 9.B who were included in my research.

The process of getting materials for the practical part of my study took place in a small basic school of about 400 students. This school is situated a small town with about 15 000 inhabitants. I was employed there as a teacher for two years in the school year 2003/2004 and 2004/2005, and I had the opportunity to do my one year teaching training there in 2006/2007. Therefore I know the students and teachers quite well and they know me. I have not met any large problems of distrust during my data collecting even though I was really worried about that before. There were some signs of the initial doubts, however, that will be the subject of discussion further in the practical part.

The research focuses on students in the ninth grade of elementary school. The reasons for choosing this particular age group as the sample of my study are listed. I

consider these students as the most difficult to activate in the educational process and it has been a challenge for me to try to find the answers concerning the question of their motivation and the activating process.

Firstly, they are going to leave school soon and therefore, I have the impression that, very often, they are not motivated just by getting good school results any more and it is much more difficult for teachers to activate them in English lessons.

Secondly, as it has already been mentioned in the theoretical part by collective of authors (1996:104), the wide range of sources of information, entertainment, experiences and the influence media contributes to the problem of motivation, too (see chapter 1.3.2.).

Next to that, thirdly, pubescence is the period when teenagers begin to mature biologically, psychologically, socially and cognitively and there might appear big individual differences in that among the students in the ninth class. Regarding that, Vašutová's (2005:58) definition of pubescence is used again, to emphasize the instability of this period as it is a turning point between childhood and adulthood, dependency and independency, carelessness and responsibility (see chapter 1.2.1.).

Referring to that, teachers in schools usually meet many problems related to pupils' behaviour, communication and attitude to learning.

### **2.3. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH METHODS**

The character of the research is explorative and its methods are used for clarifying the problem of “un-students” in English lessons and obtaining more detailed information on the issue of activating pupils in the ninth grade of basic schools.

Methods used for this research combine the qualitative with the quantitative approach to reach higher quality of the overall results. However, it is essential to emphasize that the findings of my research cannot be generalized to the whole educational system and every educational situation as the sample consists only of 33 students and 2 teachers and there were taken only 6 observations, which does not provide enough material and the needed level of validity and reliability for generalization.

Data to the study were acquired on the basis of:

- **Questionnaires for students** (see appendix 1)
- **Participant observations of English lessons** (see appendix 2.A)
- **Interviews with students** (see appendix 3.A)
- **Interviews with teachers** (see appendix 4.A)

All above mentioned instruments were finally given in Czech to reach higher certainty that everybody understands the questions and to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding of the questions or answers because of the different language. However, except the questionnaire translation that follows in chapter 2.4.1., the translation of each instrument into English could be find in see appendix 2.B, 3.B, 4.B.

Initially, the 33 questionnaires were distributed first to the students to have the opportunity to read the answers and to ask for the clarifications of possible obscurities in their answers later during the following interviews.

After that, the interviews with the two teachers followed. Next to the questions concerning the issue of my thesis, they were asked for their suggestions of possible “un-students” in their classes who I could focus on during the observations or interviews. Regarding that, there are considered to be the source of valuable insight into the problem of “un-students” and their activating.

Consequently, 6 observations were carried out over a week period. I sat at the back of the classroom because I considered it as the best position to see the whole class and not to disturb the lesson as well as its atmosphere by being too visible at the front of the classroom.

Finally, I interviewed 7 selected students to get the answers to the questions of my research and questions that arose during the whole process. The teachers’ point of view to the given problem of passivity and possible active engagement in English lessons is considered to be very valuable and it is provided further in this practical section.

### **2.3.1. Pilot study**

*The pilot study* took place in a basic school of a town with 90 000 inhabitants. All research instruments were tested in one class of the ninth graders. Eleven questionnaires



were distributed and analysed. One teacher and four pupils were interviewed. The class was observed two times.

It will be elaborated in details in the following parts together with the description of several changes that were made to make the research instruments functional.

### **2.3.2. Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is considered to be the most suitable method for receiving the opinions on the set problem from larger number of students. There was clearly offered the opportunity to the students to fill in the questionnaire anonymously by writing some kind of mark or if they felt comfortable, they might write their first name. There are 6 closed questions and 1 open-ended question with the possibility to add any comments to 5 of them. The aim of the questionnaire is answering these questions:

- 1. What are the possible reasons for pupils' non-engagement and passiveness during the lessons of English?*
- 2. What motivates them for their active engagement in learning English in the teaching process?*
- 3. How do the students express their activeness?*
- 4. What are their opinions to the way English is taught and what are they suggestion for making the lesson more interesting for them?*

The questionnaires were distributed to 33 students in the lesson of English without the presence of their teacher, to make the pupils feel more comfortable. The full number of distributed questionnaires was received back. The advantage of writing a mark instead of the first name was taken by 6 students who used some nickname or a name of their favourite music group.

At the beginning of the questionnaire, the reason and the issue of the research were briefly introduced and the pupils were assured that the provided information were not going to be misused and that it will not influence their position at school.

The questionnaire was *piloted* to prove the clarity of the questions formulation. Although the fourth question was answered by all students in the pilot class, 8 pupils

did not respond in the final research. I got the opportunity to ask four of them for the reasons and all of them said that there was no option that they would choose even there was a possibility of giving their own suggestions?!

The other obscurity was revealed in the first question, where students were required to write why they are not sometimes interested in an activity or an exercise. In the questionnaire, the respondent is supposed to choose one or more answers on the principle of multiple-choice exercises. One option includes gap filling by an example of the topic that is not interesting for them. Three of four pupils who chose this possibility wrote a topic connected to another school subject. They did not know that all questions in the questionnaire concern just English lessons. Therefore, I included this information clearly in the question at the beginning. As a result, it was proved to be successfully corrected as nobody in the final research misunderstood.

### **2.3.3. Observation**

The reason for using participant observation as a method of research is the possibility of reviewing the students and the teachers' behaviour simultaneously, and the opportunity to perceive the whole class atmosphere during the English lesson, what helped me to understand the issue in context. The interest of my observations was given in the number of "un-students", their behaviour and the identification of the possible reasons for their non-engagement and passivity. Besides, I also paid attention to the incentives for pupils' active engagement, and what the opportunities were for them to participate actively. I observed classes 9.A and 9.B six times - three times each.

The aim of the observation is finding answer to these questions:

- 1. How does the teacher and the way of teaching influence students behaviour and activeness (in relation to methods, aids, organisation forms, variety of activities, teacher's behaviour and approach to teaching ...) ?*
- 2. What reduces and increases students' activeness?*
- 3. What is the atmosphere in the classroom like and what are its influences on students' activeness and behaviour?*

4. *How many opportunities do the students have for active participation in the English lessons?*

The observation sheet consists of fifteen open-ended and closed-ended questions. It includes also my comments to anything that seemed important to mention concerning the subject of my study. The information about the date, name of the observer and the class was required there. The example of the observation sheet is provided in appendix 2.A, 2.B.

The functionality of the observation sheet was tested in the *pilot study*. Questions 6, 7, 8, 9 and 14 were added with the purpose to focus more on the specific factors that might influence the activeness or passiveness of the learners and their attitude to learning English. Regarding question 11, where the observer was supposed to graphically depict the activity and participation of each element of the educational process – teacher and student, one more option of the lesson part, when no educational process goes on, was given. Finally, the instrument was found functional.

#### **2.3.4. Interviews**

The open-ended together with closed questions in the interviews are used to provide more detailed information to the problem area. It gives also the opportunity to analyse the behaviour of both teachers and students during the conversation. Every interview took place in a teacher's cabinet, where were no disturbing elements. Any other person was allowed to attend the dialogue. The interviews were recorded and all pupils and teachers had agreed with it without any problems as the reason for the recordings was explained to them. The information was transcribed and used as data to analyse. It seemed to me that most of the students felt quite comfortable and that they understood the purpose of my presence there. In contrast to that, one of the teachers seemed nervous even I have known her for a long time and I think she trusts me.

There were 7 structured interviews with the students and 2 structured interviews with the teachers that were recorded to keep the authentic version of responses and to avoid disruptive moments when writing the data down. There were 16 questions included in the interviews with students and 12 questions for teachers. The students were chosen

according to the previous observations, the answers in the questionnaires and the consultations with the English teachers who did not attend the interviews with students.

The aim of these interviews is to gain answers and information to these questions:

#### INTERVIEW WITH STUDENTS:

1. *What makes the students passive and why are they non-engaged?*
2. *What makes the students active and what gets their attention?*
3. *What are their needs and worries and what would help them to learn more easily?*
4. *What do they appreciate on their teacher and the way s/he teaches?*
5. *What do they not like about their teacher and teacher's way of teaching?*
6. *and again: What are their opinions to the way English is taught and what are their suggestions for making the English lesson more interesting for them?*

#### INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS:

1. *Whether the teachers are aware of the basic age factors of the learners in the ninth grade?*
2. *How do the teachers perceive activeness and passiveness of their students?*
3. *Whether do the teachers know their students' needs, interests and personality?*
4. *How do the teachers activate the "un-students" and the other students of English in general?*

On the basis of the *piloting phase* of the research there were several changes required:

#### INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS

The language of the interview sheet was changed from English into Czech. It seemed unnatural for the teacher in the pilot school to discuss the topic in English that was not

her native tongue. She did not want to speak English to me. Even I asked her to speak English at the beginning of our dialogue, she started to talk to me in Czech again after a while, when she was explaining her point of view. In my opinion, she did not feel comfortable discussing the topic in English because it might have been difficult for her to find terms equipollent to Czech expression and to keep smooth flow of thoughts in English.

Furthermore, question 8 and 10 were added. Question 8 refers to the issue of setting rules that is mentioned in the theoretical part by Cangelosi (1994: 66-91, see chapter 1.4.). Item 10 concerns the individual differences among learners, what is, according to most of the authors, a crucial topic regarding the pupils' activeness of passiveness.

Finally, the 5<sup>th</sup> question was reformulated and the demand for suggestion of the possible "un-students" and their first name was added to compare the teachers' opinions about their students with the students' attitude. I also wanted to have the opportunity to focus on these students' behaviour during the observations.

#### INTERVIEW WITH STUDENTS

In regard to the basic physiological needs, question 3 and 4 were added.

The formulations of items 8, 14 were rewritten to get more descriptive answer and in the purpose not to influence the students negatively. Question 8 asked the students in Czech about *what annoys them about their teacher and the way she teaches*. Even I had not meant it I considered this question to be pushing the students into the opposition and an assaultive position against their teacher. Therefore, I reformulated the question as follows: *What do you perceive as a negative impact on you regarding your teacher and the way of her/his teaching (What do you dislike?)?*

In addition to that, the range of the possible answers was widened in questions 11 and 17 to get more specific answer and to meet the students' need, recognized in the pilot phase, to have more possibilities of closed questions. Instead of just two options YES or NO in item 11, I included ALWAYS yes, USUALLY yes, USUALLY no, NO – NEVER. When asking the students for their favourite organisation form I offered also FRONTAL teaching as it might be suitable for some of them.

## 2.4. RESEARCH EVALUATION

In this part of the research, the collected data are analysed, interpreted and following recommendations are presented. The similarities, regularities, differences are identified within each source separately and, subsequently, also within all data that have been recorded by different research instruments. There are also mentioned the similarities and variance in the data obtained from the two different classes taught by different teachers.

### 2.4.1. Questionnaires

The questionnaire is evaluated mainly on the basis of data clearly summarized in the following chart including my translation of the questions and the optional answers from Czech into English. Question 7 that provides students' comments is discussed further in this chapter.

QUESTIONS AND OPTIONAL ANSWERS	Number of students in 9.A	Number of students in 9.B
<b>1. Sometimes I am not interested in and do not enjoy the educational process, particular activities or exercises in English lessons because:</b>		
<i>a) I do not see any sense and asset in it; it means I do not see what it is good for it.</i>	9	1
<i>b) the given subject matter is too difficult for me and I do not understand it.</i>	6	5
<i>c) the given subject matter is too easy for me, I am bored.</i>	0	4
<i>d) the way of explaining or practising (e.g. some exercise) is not appropriate for my age, it is more for "little children" or contrariwise for "adults".</i>	2	2
<i>e) I am not interested in the topic..... (give example of a given subject matter)</i>	3	1

<i>f) I do not have opportunity for real participation, I am watching most of the time and I am not active.</i>	1	4
<i>g) the course of them is too slow and long-winded, so I gradually lose interest.</i>	5	4
<i>h) ) the course of them is too fast, I cannot keep up and finally I give up.</i>	2	0
<i>i) it is recognizable that the teacher is not prepared, there comes confusion, the instructions are not formulated clearly and are changed quite often.</i>	1	0
<i>j) we often play games, even that I would prefer real work and proper practice.</i>	1	0
<i>k) we do the same all the time, we learn and practice always by the same way.</i>	5	7
<b>2. I enjoy learning and I am active in English lessons because:</b>	<b>Number of students in 9.A</b>	<b>Number of students in 9.B</b>
<i>a) things I am learning are useful for me (not just in the present time but also for my future).</i>	15	10
<i>b) I usually have good results during a lesson and this success makes my self-confidence higher.</i>	5	4
<i>c) things I am learning are interesting and evoke my curiosity and interest.</i>	6	3
<i>d) I consider the lesson entertaining.</i>	1	1
<i>e) I like my teacher and s/he is inspiration for me (ideal) in many cases.</i>	7	1
<i>f) I know that my teacher really cares about me and I do not want to disappoint him/her.</i>	4	4
<i>g) I want to learn something, I want to improve in my English and I is not important for me whether my teacher likes me or not.</i>	8	9
<i>i) I can participate on what we will do.</i>	3	1
<i>j) the teacher shows me clearly that I am responsible for myself and my own learning and because s/he helps me to see what I have already managed to learn and what I should improve in</i>	4	3
<i>k) I like the subject (English language) in general and I am interested in it.</i>	6	5

<b>3. What I appreciate the most on English lesson of my teacher of English language:</b>	<b>Number of students in 9.A</b>	<b>Number of students in 9.B</b>
<i>a) that I can work in my own tempo.</i>	2	3
<i>b) that I can consult anything with others.</i>	14	6
<i>c) that the teacher creates friendly atmosphere.</i>	6	7
<i>d) that the teacher outlines/explains the subject matter to my real life.</i>	7	4
<i>e) that I have the opportunity to choose from several activities or exercises according to what suits me the best.</i>	1	0
<i>f) that my teacher talks to me mostly in English.</i>	2	1
<i>g) that my teacher is interested in what I think.</i>	2	4
<i>h) that my teacher recognizes when we are tired and involves some relaxation activity.</i>	9	7
<i>i) that my teacher knows where are my weaknesses in English and helps me to improve in the particular area.</i>	7	4
<b>4. I am not active and do not express myself in English lessons because:</b>	<b>Number of students in 9.A</b>	<b>Number of students in 9.B</b>
<i>a) I am afraid of critique or the evaluation of my teacher.</i>	2	1
<i>b) I am afraid of being embarrassed in front of my teacher and my classmates.</i>	5	6
<i>c) I do not have nearly any opportunity and space as mostly the teacher is active.</i>	0	0
<i>d) I do not have nearly any opportunity and space as my teacher calls out always other students.</i>	0	0
<i>e) my effort is not going to be appreciated and praised anyway.</i>	2	0
<i>f) I am sure that I would do some activity or answer some question wrongly as usually.</i>	8	1
<i>g) I feel that my teacher does not like me.</i>	0	1
<i>h) I do not care about English, as I will never use it anyway.</i>	0	0



<b>5. During the year, the teacher of English has tried to find by the means of questionnaire or discussion our interests; what we like to do and what kind of teaching is the most suitable for us.</b>	<b>9.A</b>	<b>9.B</b>	
	<i>Number of students who chose YES</i>	6	2
	<i>Number of students who chose NO</i>	13	11
	<i>Number of students who chose I DO NOT KNOW</i>	0	1

<b>6. My active involvement/activeness (it means that I feel inside of me that I am learning, that I am thinking and that I care accomplishing the task) is displayed in my outer activity by:</b>												
<b>CLASS – NINTH:</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
- rising my hand.	RATHER YES	2	5	YES	10	5	RATHER NOT	6	2	NO	1	2
- shouting out.	RATHER YES	2	1	YES	3	2	RATHER NOT	8	6	NO	6	5
- not rising my hand but watching and listening.	RATHER YES	7	5	YES	6	3	RATHER NOT	5	4	NO	1	1
- not paying attention to what is happening in the class or how the other students work but still thinking about a task.	RATHER YES	4	2	YES	1	1	RATHER NOT	11	7	NO	3	4
- that I want to discuss the task with my classmate.	RATHER YES	6	4	YES	8	4	RATHER NOT	3	1	NO	2	5

I. First of all, as it has been mentioned, there are some **similarities** discovered in the pupils' responses of each ninth class in relation to the negative and positive factors in a lesson.

## NEGATIVE FACTORS IN A LESSON

In regard to the negative influences on learners' activeness and their attitude to learning English, approximately the same number of students in both classes agrees that ***they do not “enjoy” learning*** (see question 2 and the optional answers **b**), **g**), **k**) in the above chart on page 46-47):

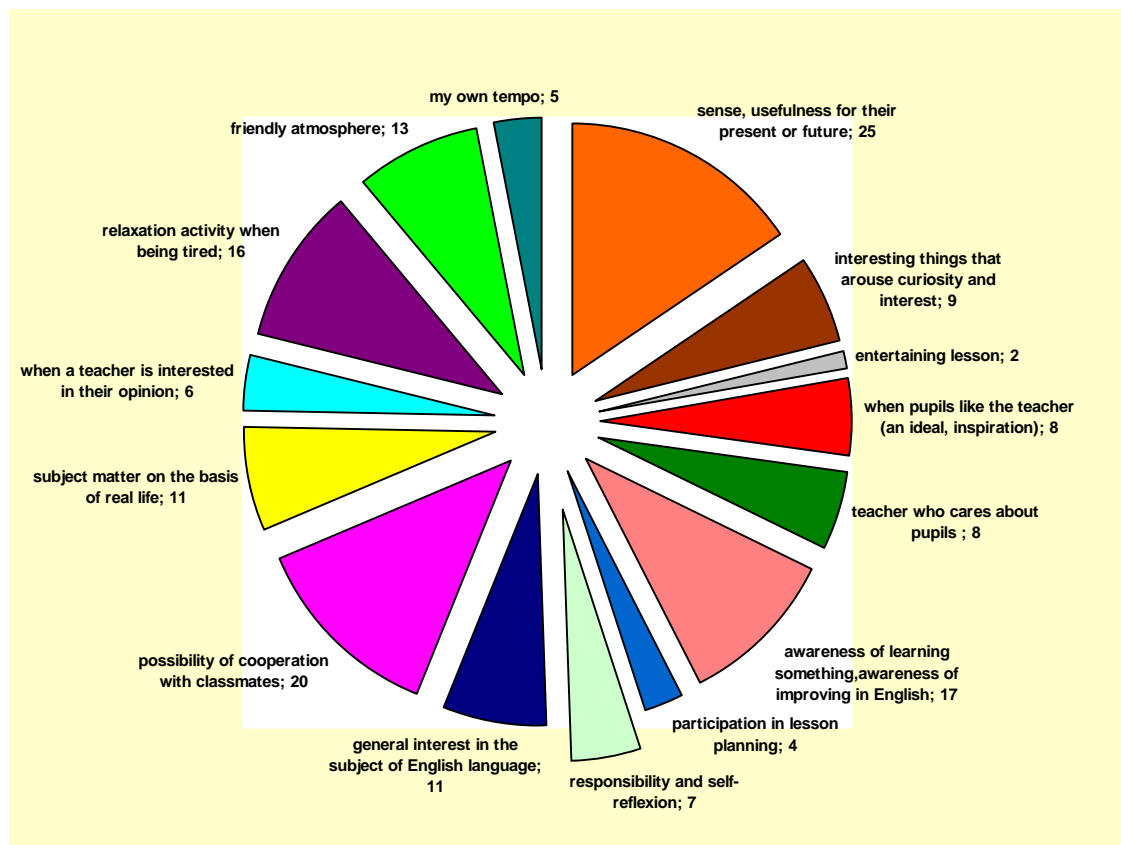
- when the subject matter is ***too difficult*** for them, so they do not understand it (six students of 9.A and five students of 9.B);
- and when the course of an ***activity is long-winded*** that they, consequently, lose their interest in it (five students of 9.A and four students of 9.B).
- when they ***do the same*** exercises or activities and use the same way of practising every lesson (five students of 9.A and seven students of 9.B);

Next to that, together eleven students admit in question 4 that they are not active in an English lesson if they are ***afraid of being embarrassed*** in front of their teacher and their classmates. This reason for being rather passive in a lesson was mentioned also by the teachers and the particular students in the interviews and it agrees with the facts given in the theoretical part concerning also their identity and the importance of their teacher and other peers' acceptance and respect (see chapter 1.1.2.).

## POSITIVE FACTORS IN A LESSON

There is a graph provided that illustrates clearly what are the most important and enjoyable factors for the learners and what make them active in a lesson of English. It has been worked out according to the numbers of the students who chose the particular answers to questions 2 and 3 in the questionnaire (see the chart provided on page 46-47)

:



Concerning the given graph, the learners are positively motivated to the active engagement and to learning English, provided that the *things they learn are*, first of all, *useful* for them at their present time or for their future. Next to that, it is helpful when the *things they learn are interesting* for them; arouse their interest and curiosity; and when they are aware of learning and improving themselves. In relation to that, students confirmed that *good results and the success* increase their self-confidence and contribute to their motivation for activeness.

However, eleven students confirmed that their positive attitude to English has no particular reason as they like the subject of English language and are interested in it in general. That might be caused also by the influences out of the school as for example, family, their favourite music style etc. or the impact of the modern world around them that was recognizable in many students' responses in the interviews and which popularizes and emphasizes the necessity of foreign languages in the twenty-first century.

Concerning *the role of a teacher in this issue*, the same number of four respondents of each class acknowledged that they perceive positively, if they know that their *teacher cares* about them and that they do not want to disappoint her. To add, this fact appeared also in the responses of students chosen for the interview.

Moreover, seven students appreciate when their teacher shows them clearly that they are *responsible* for themselves and their own learning and when s/he helps them to see what they have already managed to learn and what they should improve in.

Surprisingly for me, the highest number of seventeen students chose the answer that they enjoy learning English and they are active because they *want to learn something, want to become better in English* and *it is not important for them whether their teacher likes them or not*.

To the question of what they appreciate on their teacher and the way s/he teaches, thirteen students consider helpful when there is a *friendly atmosphere* during a lessons and sixteen of them like that their teacher includes some *relaxation activities* if s/he sees they are tired. Furthermore, eleven students appreciate when their *teacher knows* what *their weaknesses* in English are and helps them become better in the particular area; and when the subject matter is illustrated on the basis of the real life examples.

Concerning the complex issue of *activity and the display of activeness* or passiveness, which was introduced in the theoretical part, twenty-two students admitted that they show their inner activity and interested mostly by *raising their hands* or by the *willingness to discuss* the task with their classmates. A controversial fact was discovered, when nearly the same number, twenty-one students, claimed in the following question that they do NOT raise their hands but *just watch and listen* when being active. According to the controversy of their answers, the way how the students show their activeness depends on many factors as they also replied that eight of them mostly *do* and twenty-five of them *do not pay attention* to what is happening in the class round them at all because they *concentrate on thinking* about the given task. Moreover, twenty-five learners refused that they mostly shout out when they want to express their activeness and chose the option of that they *DO NOT or RATHER DO NOT* behave in this way.

II. Secondly, the focus is put on the *divergence* between the two classes and the learners' opinions that appears in the received data by questionnaires. In my point of view, next to many factors, which influenced students' decision to choose the particular answers, it also reflects the different personalities of each learner and their teachers, the teachers' approach to the profession and the way of teaching.

To begin with, the most unexpected difference appeared in the first question. Nine pupils from class 9.A are not active and interested in some activity or exercise, if they do not see *any sense and asset of learning* it but only one student from 9.B chose the same answer. I suppose that they might not have understood the formulation of the first question. The option of *having sense and asset of learning* was probably too abstract for them, as ten of the students of 9.B answered in the following question that they are active when the subject matter is useful for them, which has the same meaning just the formulation of the question is different, more concrete.

Furthermore, no 9.A learner perceives the subject matter in English *lessons so easy* that s/he is bored with it, what was mentioned by four students from 9.B. According to the observation, it reflects the different demands of the teachers that were clearly lower in 9.B and focused more on the weaker students. These facts also approve the problem of differentiation in the teaching process that was mentioned by several authors in the theoretical part (see chapter 1.2.2).

What has come out negatively from the questionnaires of class 9.A, in comparison to the number of one 9.B student is that eight students do not participate actively in a lesson because they think *and believe that they would work* the task out or answer the question *wrongly* as usually.

Moreover, fourteen 9.A students replied that they appreciate when they have the *opportunity to consult any issue with other classmates*, what was confirmed just by 6 students from 9.B. Even that the numbers of students from each class are different, the numbers of students who chose this answer are quite high in both classes in comparison to the other items. It shows that the learners are aware of the advantages of group work organisation form, since it was explained by the students in the interviews.

The received information from the questionnaire, where twenty-four students do not approved revealing their ideas, interests, needs etc. to the teacher by the means of

questionnaire or other instruments, will be compared and clarified against the interviews with the teachers.

Finally, there was an option of writing any **COMMENTS** to 5 items in the questionnaire concerning what they like or dislike about English lessons and what are their suggestion how to make them more active, engaged and interested in learning English. Many students took this opportunity and sometimes wrote very interesting ideas. Those that appeared for several times and those that are considered to be important in regard to the research are stated. However, it is essential to mention that following quotations are translated from Czech into English with the aim to keep the original version of their comments as much as possible.

**JANA, 9.B:** She suggested “...*more visual or illustrative examples or aids, for instance, some English magazines*”

**LM PUNK, 9.B:** He suggested “...*to talk about hobbies etc. in English.*”

**KATKA, 9.A and MARTIN, 9.B:** “*Speak more!*”

**MARTIN, 9.B:**

*“I would adapt the lesson to our age, for example, I would not involve reading the boring comics that we have in our textbooks, but I would talk in English more about music or about the events in UK etc.”*

**TEREZA Š., 9.B:** “*The teacher should involve all pupils in the activity, not just those who are good at English.*”

**BÁRA, 9.B:** “*It would be good if the teacher speaks more in English*”.

**VERONIKA** agrees with **ANETA**’s argument (both from 9.A): “*I would use English more in practice, for example, we might go out and talk to someone in English etc.*”.

**KATEŘINA, 9.A:** She would like to do such activities, in which “...*we would not just sit and read from the textbook*”.

**ROBIN, 9.A:** He suggested “...*to adapt the lesson more to the real life (slang, differences between British and American English)*”. In addition to that he said that he appreciates that the teacher gives tests during the lesson in the morning as they have two more lessons in the afternoon during a week when they are tired (6<sup>th</sup> lesson). The complaint about the timetable appeared also in two more questionnaires.

**ROMAN, 9.B:** “*For me, English is a relaxation lesson. The teacher asks me more often just when the task is more difficult, so...ehm.... I do not want to seem big-headed... but I am sometimes bored.*”

In addition to that, two students argued that their teacher can speak English very well, what they appreciate, but very often they do not understand. Seven students wrote that they would like to work more on computers or to watch video. And four learners mentioned that they are satisfied with their teacher and the way she teaches and that they would not change anything.

It appears clearly in the above statements that most of the students would like to really use English and hear themselves to speak, which is definitely enjoyable for them. I suggest that it might give them the sense in learning, if they see that they are able to speak and use English, especially in some real situation. It was obvious that it would be attractive for the learners to meet such situations or materials that are very much connected to the real life in England, as, for example, the mentioned authentic materials. The situational method recommended by Hendrich (1988:310) would be appropriate in this case (see chapter 1.4.5).

Regarding that, computers, video and other modern technology could be used. It would give the learners the opportunity to meet the authentic materials and to be in real situations when using the language. Consequently, it was approved in the interviews with the students that these kinds of didactic aids, equipment, programmes etc. arouse the activeness, if they are involved in the LEARNERS’ own activity, for example, using the interactive board by students not only by teachers.

To finish with, there were some answers that were not chosen by any student or just by a very small number of them (see chart on page 46-47). It concerns:

- question **1** and the optional answer

**c)** *the given subject matter is too easy for me, I am bored*, which is clarified against the observations further in the following chapter 2.4.2.;

**h)** *the course of them is too fast, I cannot keep up and finally I give up*, which is also clarified against the observations further in the following chapter 2.4.2.

- question **1** and the optional answers:

**i)** *it is recognizable that the teacher is not prepared, there comes confusion, the instructions are not formulated clearly and are changed quite often*

**j)** *we often play games, even that I would prefer real work and proper practice*

- question **3** and the optional answer:

**e)** *that I have the opportunity to choose from several activities or exercises according to what suits me the best*

- question **4** and the optional answers:

**c)** *I do not have nearly any opportunity and space as mostly the teacher is active;*

**d)** *I do not have nearly any opportunity and space as my teacher calls out always other students;*

**e)** *my effort is not going to be appreciated and praised anyway;*

**g)** *I feel that my teacher does not like me.* The small number corresponds with considering the relationships and the atmosphere in the classes positive during the observations;

**h)** *I do not care about English, as I will never use it anyway.*

I suggest that the students did not choose these items because these answers simply did not correspond with their opinion; or they did not understand the formulation of the optional answer properly; or that they did not consider the factor or situation in the



educational process very activating in relation to themselves even that it might have large positive influences on them but they were not aware of it or certain about it.

### **2.4.2. Observations**

The data from the observation sheets that were recorded during six lessons of English in both classes 9.A and 9.B are described, compared and explained. During each lesson, I observed the verbal as well as non-verbal form of communication, behaviour of teachers and students and I tried to identify the factors that have the impact on learners' activeness. I focused also on the environment in the class and the relationship between the teachers and their students. It is important to mention, that I took in consideration that their relationships cannot be identified during two or three observations, however, I tried to perceive carefully any indications of the possible relationship between them. In addition to that, it is essential to mention again that the number of observation and the research sample is not large enough to conclude any principles or facts that would be generalizable to the educational process in general.

#### **IDENTIFYING THE “UN-STUDENTS”**

To start with, there were two to three “un-students” identified in each lesson. Sometimes, there appeared the same “un-student” in more than one observation. It should be stated that I determined these students according to my own “impressions” during the observations and knowledge in regard to the definition of “un-students” and other information provided in the theoretical part chapter 1.2.1.3. In addition to that, I could only analyse the learners' outer expressions and behaviour that were observable. I met **two types of “un-students”**:

- 1) The first type usually did not co-operate because it seemed to me that s/he was not interested in English and the possible goals; and did not pay attention to what the teacher said and required. Very often, s/he was aggravating, arrogant and seemed to be annoyed when s/he should have co-operated during the lesson. On the other hand, these are also the characteristic features of

behaviour in pubescence so it was sometimes hard to identify whether the pupils is really an “un-student”.

Moreover, I had the impression that s/he did not want to be asked by the teacher and involved in reaching the goal of a lesson. There appeared some comments to that as, for example: “*Why me, you have already asked me ones in the lesson!*”. This “un-student” talked to other students quite often and did not concentrate on an activity or exercise properly. One of them also did not have her/his homework.

Under this type of “un-student” I would also include an observed student who, in my opinion, was a bit “outsider” in the class. Nobody sat next to and also around him. He nearly did not communicate with anybody, was not watching the class but I think he was listening to what was happening there. He did not lift his head very often and still looked in his textbook. However, he did not give correct answers when he was asked and his English was worse in comparison to others. This student might have being behaving in this way also because of my presence in the classroom, which made the situation even more complicated for him.

- 2) The second type of an “un-student” seemed that s/he is interested in English language in general because s/he knew the answers to what the teacher asked about, worked on the exercises and could speak English better than the others. However, I got the impression that s/he did not put much effort in what s/he did and that s/he was bored. S/he often held up his head with one hand or nearly slept on his/her desk. Next to that, in some cases, s/he made bored expressions in his face and shuffled to the front when he was asked to write a sentence on the blackboard.

### MONITORING THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

The classification of the observed **positive and negative aspects** that might influence learners’ activeness and that could be the possible reasons for becoming an active student or an “un-student” follows:

## 1) Negative aspects

The negative factors are described first. According to the observations in accordance with the students' answers in interviews, the *frontal teaching* predominated in both teaching styles of the teachers, even that, most of the students also replied in questionnaires as well as in interviews that it is helpful for them if they can consult a task with the other classmates and that they enjoy working in groups. Next to that, according to Dvořák and IBE (2005:30), this form of organisation involves the “silent” students who do not like participating in the educational process in front of the whole class, too (see chapter 1.4.2.).

*The goal* of a lesson or an activity was mostly stated formally as a description of what grammar they were going to practice in what kind of a task. It was confirmed by the students later in the interviews. However, there was rarely explained where, why and when they might use it in their lives.

Moreover, mostly at the beginning of a lesson the teachers often spent quite a long time with the *administration* including writing into the class book, giving marks, collecting homework, or also, in one case, solving problems of another school subject. During this administrative work, the students usually did not have anything to do and were talking to each other, playing with their mobile phones or observing the situation.

As well as that, solving *discipline problems* took a long part of a lesson, too. One of the teachers was arguing for a long time with two boys who had not brought their homework and the other students were watching this situation. I find out, when sitting there and watching it among the students, that it took the teacher approximately 10 minutes to solve the problem and get back to other students and make them working again. Concerning that, on the basis of my own experience, I understand that it might be sometimes difficult for a teacher to organize these things and to cope with learners who do not want to accept the consequences of not doing their work.

Regarding the *teachers' evaluation and feedback*, they often praise the learners with the same comments, for instance: “*well done, výborně, excellent*” but they rarely commented on the specific knowledge or improvement. Besides, I did not record any positive evaluation of little improvements of the weak students. I considered this kind of evaluation as one of the biggest incentives for motivation for learning.

Furthermore, I did not register any extra work for the *stronger learners* who seemed bored when they had finished; or when a teacher was explaining the given task or grammar to the *weaker learners* for many times. Concerning that, it seemed to me that there were big differences in learners' level of attainment in both classes.

Moreover, there were *not many didactic aids and equipment* used in the lessons. The teachers' lessons always included tape recorder, copies, blackboard, textbooks and ones the video was used. Consequently, it was reflected in the types and variety of *activities in the lessons* that were usually connected to filling in copies, working with the textbooks and listening.

Some negative aspects did not appear in both classes. There were some differences observed. The teacher of 9.B *spoke very often Czech*. Referring that, it was stated in the questionnaires that some students wished their teacher to speak more English. In contrary to that, the other teacher spoke most of the time English but the *English was of much higher level than the students' English* so that many pupils probably did not understand. It was confirmed by the students in the questionnaires and interviews. Moreover, when the teachers gave instructions in English they did not require any feedback from the students, to discover whether the students understood properly the given task.

Next to that, it was noticed that the teacher of 9.B did a lot of work that could have been done by her students. For example, she translated all the vocabulary they needed for reading and understanding an article even that it might have been done by the students.

Furthermore, as it was already stated, some discipline problems were perceived in 9.B class. Concerning that, I did not record many *rules* that would have been set and kept by many students in this class in comparison to class 9.A. The importance of consistence in keeping the set rules stated by Dvořák and IBE (2005:79), Lee (1967:49-50) and also Zelenková (1997:73) in the theoretical part (see chapter 1.2.2), has been reflected here, since the productive and supportive environment was negatively influenced by the fact that the rules were not kept consistently. Consequently, it caused little confusion and passiveness of the learners. On the other hand, the teachers coped excellently with discipline problems connected to the specific features of this age as

vociferous comments and behaviour. Calm and direct responses to the particular students were proved to be effective.

## 2) Positive aspects

In contrary to that, there were also many factors that influenced the learners' activity in a positive way and motivated them to the active engagement. First of all, the *atmosphere* in both classes was perceived friendly without much stress and anxiety. Especially the teacher of 9.B cared about her students a lot. She obviously wanted to make sure that everybody understood the particular English grammar. It was reflected in the answers of students in interviews, too. She used *individual approach* and evidently recognized that the particular pupil needed her "extra" help.

In addition to that, in my opinion, both *teachers respected the pupils' age and needs connected to this age period*. They communicated with the learners as with "adults" who should be responsible for their work and behaviour and their *teaching style* was not too authoritative, in the sense of superiority. In short, the teachers had positive approach to their students.

I observed *three activities* that, from my point of view, obviously *raised pupils' activeness* and got their interest. Firstly, the active engagement and their visible concentration on the activity were reached by a *song* and an exercise where they had to fill in the missing words of the song according to the listening. The song was sung in a "humorous" way, so it was very entertaining for the learners. The tempo of the song and the difficulty of the text were appropriate for them as it was observable that most of them finished the exercise successfully. The other activity that got their attention was a short *video* about the life in England. And thirdly, the students liked asking one another among the whole class. Every student was involved in this activity and had to pay attention to the question of his/her classmate. *The pupil to pupil interaction pattern* was considered as a positive factor in a lesson.

## COMPARISON OF THE TWO CLASSES

To compare the *working environment* of the two classes, I found out that the lessons of class 9.A seemed a bit more organized and planned, with faster course of a lesson and also more encouraging demands. It clarifies the answers c) and h) to question 1 in the questionnaire, where none of the 9.A learners said that the subject matter is so easy for them that they are bore, in comparison to four students of class 9.B. Consequently, two students of 9.B and none of 9.A answered that the course of the lesson or activities is too slow and long-winded, so that they gradually lose interest. However, I perceived the atmosphere in 9.A a bit less friendly, in the sense of relationships between the teacher and her students than in class 9.B. Nevertheless, I was probably wrong in this suggestion because according to the answers in the questionnaires, seven pupils from this class see their teacher as an ideal and inspiration for them, what gives me the feeling that they probably like and respect their teacher very much and the relationship between them is positive. In my opinion, accepting the set rules by the students and observable order in the class evokes probably the positive relationship between them.

On contrary to that, the teacher of 9.B was evidently very kind and open to her students but she, obviously, let her pupils damage her lesson plans and divert her attention to them, especially to the problems of a particular learner.

*The opportunities for learners to participate actively in a lesson* were also observed. It has become explicit in the graph in the observation sheets that the students from 9.A were put in more situations requiring their active involvement during a lesson than the students from the other class. It was based mainly on the short transitions between activities, given rules and their consistent abidance, less active teacher than her students and other reasons that have already been mentioned.

The findings mentioned above also explain the difficulty for me to answer question 12 in my observation sheet, where I should define the teachers' approaches and teaching styles as learner-oriented or teacher-oriented. One of the reasons for finding this question very difficult for me was the short time the sample was observed for. In other words, the number of observations was too small to work out general conclusion. Regarding that, only limited suggestions or comments are given. For instance, I noticed that the teacher of 9.B seemed to be closer to her students and to be listening to their comments and "voice". That is typical for the learner-oriented approach but

unfortunately, in my opinion, she did not apply the “pupils’ voice” into her teaching process. She concentrated on the momentary needs or requests of a particular student or a group of students and the overall learners’ needs in the class were not met, so I suppose that this teacher overestimated the individual approach against the other students.

### **2.4.3. Interviews with teachers of English**

The interviews with teachers took place in an English cabinet. I know both teachers very well as I worked with them for three years in the past. My relationship with one of them is positive and friendly as well as with the other one but not very personal. The other teacher was a very good colleague to me and I know her also personally outside the school. I explained the aim of the interviews that I was there not to judge their teaching style but to observe and find out some information and solution to the issue of my research. However, I had the impression that the teacher of 9.B, I know well, seemed a bit nervous of me asking her these questions stated in the interview sheet. Therefore we started to talk about some general things as her family that I also know etc. to make her more comfortable and confident. It became better but still I had the feeling that she perceived over conversation as a test more than a research method.

Concerning the awareness of *the characteristic features of learners in pubescence*, they both listed some main factors as, for example, emotional lability, low activity, hostility to the adults’ authority, critical attitude to many things but not to themselves, boycotting, not feeling comfortable when talking about themselves.

The teachers’ definitions of an active student and “unstudent” were explained. The quotations are provided:

#### **TEACHER OF 9.B CLASS:**

*“An active student works in a lesson, brings homework and is able to do also some extra work. It is a learner who is interested in the subject.”*

*“A passive pupil is the one who does not want to work in a lesson ..... it is also related to the age ..... there is a strong antipathy to education, learning..... they generally do no want to learn...”*

**TEACHER OF 9.A CLASS:**

*“An active student is diligent, assiduous, and communicative. S/he participates actively in the educational process and lead work in a group.”*

*“A passive pupil is the opposite. S/he is not interested in learning and the subject matter. He does not prepare for the lesson.”*

After that, I explained the conception of “un-student” in this thesis that is provided in the theoretical part (see chapter 1.2.1.3.) because it was not mentioned in their definitions that an “un-student” is a learner who does not see any sense in what he is supposed to learn and who puts no efforts in reaching the set goal. The clarification of the term was important for the interview because then the interviewer and the interviewee have a common conception of what kind of student is the subject of this research.

Concerning that, the teachers suggested that **the reasons for becoming an “un-student”** could be as follows:

- S/he does not feel good in the collective; s/he might feel embarrassed in front of his/her classmates.
- A boring lesson because he is not interested in the presented topic.
- Too much of subject matter within one lesson.
- No variety of activities.
- Disturbing environment.
- A teacher forgets about his/her needs. The teacher of 9.B is quoted:

*“The reason might be that I want to get as much of grammar into their heads as possible that I sometimes forget to stop for ten or fifteen minutes, to give them a rest for a while.”*

Moreover, according to the teacher of 9.B who approved the theory of Müllerová, S. (2002:27), it is characteristic for learners in this age that they do not like talking about themselves (see chapter 1.1.2).

Furthermore, the teachers were asked whether they try to find **students’ needs, interests, problems etc.** and how. The teacher of 9.A class confessed that she had not



used any questionnaire or other instruments but she has been their class teacher and has taught them English for six years, so she knows her students very well. On the other hand, the teacher of 9.B said that she had used anonymous questionnaires but it was not confirmed by the students in the questionnaire. Nevertheless, she also mentioned that she uses observation, discussion and gives space for the learners' expression and that she has taught them for four years, so she also knows her students well, too. As far as that concerned, it is taken in consideration that the students do not have to be always aware of the teacher's analysis of their needs, interest, personality, as s/he might be observing them or finding out the needed information through the everyday conversation and contact with them.

Finally, the teachers gave suggestions on how to activate students in English, especially the "un-students". Many strategies and other ideas were provided that will be compared to the responses of students in questionnaires, interviews and observations and possible solutions to this issue will be concluded in the end of this work. They recommended:

- problem solving
- clarify English grammar or phrases on the basis of Czech
- variety of activities to give an opportunity to every student to find what s/he likes
- topics related to their lives and communicative activities from their real lives
- movies about teenagers in Britain
- working on computers
- calling out the "un-students" more often and asking them to do several things in a lesson
- let the pupils to present something of their interest and something that brings them success as they are good at it
- evaluation = praise

The gender differences in this issue were not mentioned by the teachers during the interview.

To finish with, one of the teachers would agree with involving her students in lesson planning to raise their responsibility for their learning, the other teacher would disagree as she thought that they would just like doing nothing. She added that she would agree with that if the students were older, for example in the secondary schools.

#### **2.4.4. Interviews with students**

As it has already been clarified, seven particular students were chosen for the interview on the basis of discussion with the teachers, the observations and the data provided in the questionnaire. Three students from 9.A and four pupils from class 9.B were chosen. Four of them were perceived as “un-students” and three of them as active learners, again, according to the previous research methods. The purpose for that was the aim to gain information to the issue of “un-student” and the passiveness of a learner in comparison to the answers and reactions of the students from the other pole – active pupils. Finally, I hoped to get also the overall answer to how to activate learners in the ninth grade.

Before starting the interview, some information about a particular student was given by their class teacher and their English teacher to know what to be aware of during the interview and how to communicate with each student. Next to that, the aim of the research was explained to each learner and some common topics to talk about were set first before opening the issue of the research, to make the students feel comfortable, confident, get rid of possible stage fright and build the conversation on human basis. In my opinions, it really helped.

To begin with, the pupils’ *main reason for learning English* is the ability to use it in their present and future lives as, for example: future job, travelling.

Concerning the *students’ own perception of themselves*, whether they consider themselves *to be passive or active* in English lessons, three of them see themselves as active. These learners also like learning English and are interested in the language. One pupil could not decide and argued that it depends on a lesson. On the other hand, three learners identify themselves with the passive student. Two of these “passive” students said that they like English language in general but they are often *bored* because they are better than the other students. Contrariwise, one students, who consider themselves as

passive, stated that s/he do not like English and are not active because they ***are not good at it***. In addition to that, four students admitted that sometimes they are passive because they are tired. They mentioned that their ***tiredness*** usually comes from a long-winded activity as, for instance, reading a long article, or from activities out of the school as sport activities. Besides, they also complained about the time of the English lesson in the timetable – the sixth lesson. Regarding the negative influence when the ***basic biological needs are not met*** (see chapter 1.2.2.), all students said that they are allowed to drink when they are thirsty and there is no problem with them going to the toilet.

Referring the self-reflexion of the learners, they said they are aware of their weaknesses and strengths. The teachers' feedback – verbal, nonverbal evaluation or school marks, practising and correcting their own work or tests provide the fundamental information to the learners' progress.

Furthermore, they expressed their opinion on ***what makes them active, engaged, interested and what usually gets there attention***. Most of them claimed that they start working when the subject matter is explained properly by the teacher and consequently, when they feel that they understand the given subject matter well and are good at it. Regarding that, they stated that they want to be positively rewarded by school marks or just by the teacher's positive comment on their work. They obviously listed some general requirements on an activity, which makes students active, described in chapter 1.4.

Moreover, other students' comments on what increases their activeness follow. They like when:

- there is some kind of novelty in the subject matter or activities they do in a lesson;
- they can discover the rules by themselves;
- there is something more difficult or interesting to learn;
- they enjoy the lesson because it is entertaining;
- there is a place for humour and amusing stories;
- the teacher tells them some stories from her life or life in England;
- the teacher explains the subject matter on real examples;
- the teacher treats all of them equally, when s/he is fair;

- they play games or competitions, work on some projects, use computers;
- they like working in groups or in pairs the most, although they like working on projects on their own, as they can express their own opinion and do it in their own way with the most appropriate tempo for them;
- the teacher speaks English to them;
- the authentic English materials, dictionaries, video, interactive board are involved in a lesson.

On the basis of the theory, using games, project or problem solving method that were suggested, would be appropriate to fulfill most of the students "requirements" stated above (see chapter 1.4.3., 1.4.4., 1.4.6.).

Next to that, it is essential to mention that it also very much depends on the suitability of a game for the particular learners according to their age and to their overall development. It was interesting to find out that games the pupils like to play are mostly connected to creating and thinking up some words, phrases, dialogues, stories etc. Since their cognitive processes have started to develop, they obviously enjoy practicing them. It is also reflected in the answer of one interviewee who claimed that he would enjoy a lesson if he was, sometimes, supposed to discover the rules of any subject matter on his own.

On the contrary to that, the students were asked to comment also on *the negative influences on their activeness during a lesson.* They do not enjoy learning and sometimes become passive when:

- they are not rewarded or no feedback on their work and activity is provided;
- they are asked to answer something to what they do not know the correct answer. It reflects to the theory of Zelinková (1997:78) who explains that they do not like going through the experience of any failure, especially not in front of the class, which might provide embarrassing situation (see chapter 1.2.2).
- they are not successful in what they do;
- they work too often in the workbook;

- they are in a bad and negative mood cause by some problems at home or on the basis of the previous subjects;
- they do the same activity or the teacher uses the same way of teaching too often.

In addition to that, one student would not like to be involved in lesson planning as he is not interested in that and believes that everything in a lesson has its own meaning and pluses. Five students would like to take a part in that as they see the advantage in making the lessons more interesting for them, in doing what they are good at and in planning a lesson in their own way. They would also appreciate it simply for the feeling of participating in it. It is the evidence for me that they would like to feel more important, responsible and heard in the educational process.

According to the collected data, it was confirmed by the students and it reflects the theory of Helus (1982:152-153) that the perspective orientation in learners' motivation develops in this age and begins to be the drive of their learning. In contrary to that, there still remains the short-time orientation of students' efforts and the importance of the positive evaluation, although, it is connected to the extrinsic motivation. Nevertheless, I agree with Helus that it might be sometimes quite adequate and useful form of controlling and directing children's motivation and it helps them to meet the feeling of success, satisfaction and to build their self-confidence confidence (see chapter 1.3.2).

It shows up that self-confidence confidence is a fundamental factor in this age as they usually tend to stop working easily if they cannot accomplish some task. In relation to that, the problem of negative thoughts mentioned by Dvořák and IBE (2005:59) appeared as well and it supports the theory that they often give up without putting large effort in it, if they do not believe in being able to manage it themselves (see chapter 1.2.2).

To add, they are sometimes afraid of active participation because they put themselves into the risk of being wrong in front of the class what also concerns the atmosphere during a lesson. It might have been caused also by the students' uncertainty developed by regular failure that was mentioned by some students in questionnaires and interviews. However, it would require longer time research to discover the core of the problem of passive participation.

Regarding the atmosphere and the attitude of teachers to their students, I did not record any degrading of students' position in the relationship of teachers and students. The positive relationship among them confirms the necessity of such a communication with this age group that shows no extreme supremacy and authority to them that was explained by Müllerová, S. (2002:28) in chapter 1.1.2. As the outcome of the collected data related to the teachers and their teaching style, the learners require a teacher that is not a dictator but who stands especially in the role of tutor, supporter and observer of their development and who provides a suitable environment for the educational process. On the other hand, it was reflected mainly in the observations that they also appreciate a teacher who is able to make an order and set the rules that can be accepted by them, too. It increases their activeness in a lesson and they respect the demands of the teacher more.

Although it was not approved in the questionnaire (see chapter 2.4.1., chart on page 46-47, question 4, optional answer c), I also got the impression based on the observation that they would be more interested in learning English if the teacher decreased her activity and provides more opportunities for the activity of her students, especially in class 9.B.

**Referring the reasons for becoming an “un-student”** and the general requirements on the activity stated in the theoretical part (see chapter 1.2.2), the main negative factors that influence students' activeness the most in these classes according the collected data, are:

- lack of differentiation in a teacher's teaching style, mainly of the level of attainment;
- boredom and having nothing to do;
- no variety of activities or the way of teaching;
- the fact that they do not understand the subject matter properly;
- lack of experience of success or positive feedback;
- regular failure;
- tiredness.

However, I considered the classes, especially 9.B, very heterogeneous in their attainment of English. Regarding that, it makes very high demands on the teacher to

prepare such activities that would be interesting and attractive for most of the learners, with the consideration that it is impossible to meet needs and interests of all the students in the class in a short time period.

Furthermore, as I observed the students and got their responses, I discover that it is not a very easy task for the teachers to always find out the interests and needs of her students as sometimes they seemed to be without any interest and unable to explain their critical point of view. Very often the students could say clearly what they like or do not like in English lessons but they had sometimes difficulties with explaining why and giving the reasons for they opinions, which is consistent with their age (see chapter 1.1.2).

Some gender differences mentioned in the theoretical part (see chapter 1.2.1.) were observed, too. Girls were considered to be more matured than boys not only physically but also mentally. They were less vociferous and more concentrated on the activities. Moreover, the interviews showed that they were able to reason their opinions a little bit better than the boys. However, the gender differences were not recognized to be so vital for this issue as it takes in consideration the uniqueness of each students personality, also regarding the gender factor.

To conclude, because the research was limited by the small sample that was observed for a short time, further research and deeper concentration on this issue would be appropriate and essential for higher validity and possible generalization.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Concluding part of my thesis should be framed by the meeting of the intended aims of this work. I have focused on identifying what makes lower secondary pupils become “un-students” in the process of learning English and how to activate them. Subsequently, the second question that has been stated is how teachers of English usually activate students of the age between thirteen and fifteen and how they maintain the activeness of their learners during English lessons.

To be able to answer that, it is explained how the term “un-student” is being applied in the research. The word is used for a student who sees little importance and sense in learning it and in reaching set goals. Such a student puts no efforts in it for many possible reasons. Accordingly, Christine A. Johnson (1998) uses this term to stand for uninterested, unmotivated, unengaged and unreachable students. The unique personality of each learner and the way of displaying his/her activeness should be respected and not underestimated when identifying such a learner.

Several hypothetical assumptions about what could be the reasons for becoming an “un-student” for learners in the period of pubescence and what could be effective for activating such a student have been made throughout this work. My research reveals the main reasons for the “un-student’s” passive attitude to learning and suggests possible effective strategies and didactic means how to overcome them.

It can be concluded from my research, that the main reasons for becoming “un-student” for the students in the ninth grade of basic schools are: lack of differentiation in a teacher’s teaching style; setting inappropriate goals, boredom and not having enough to do; the fact that students do not understand the subject matter properly; lack of students’ experience of success or positive feedback; negative thoughts and others. Also the importance of meeting the basic biological needs before requiring the active involvement of the students appeared to be vital. Further exploration of the negative influences on the students’ activeness reveals the following causes: teachers spend too long time on the administrative work and do not prepare enough activity for students; teachers do not adequately evaluate students’ particular activities; lack of opportunity to speak English; or that the goal is not explained in relation to the usefulness for students’ lives. Moreover, it was proved that if teachers do not adjust their teaching style to their



students, especially to the different level of students' attainment, students often give up on active working as they might experience regular failure or because their needs and interests are not met. Additionally, as it is implied from the research, learners of this age are curious about interesting, new and entertaining things or ways of doing something. Therefore, lack of variance of activities or teaching methods as well as inappropriate or always the same didactic aids and equipment in every lesson of English increase learners' passiveness, too.

As well, the impact of wide range of the sources and the influence of media make the motivation of students at this age more difficult. On the other hand, it can be used by the teacher to support the attractiveness of the teaching process and the subject matter.

By analysing all of the obtained data in the research on the background of the previous theoretical elaboration of the issue and by verifying the assumptions, it has been disclosed which criteria should be kept to result in the active engagement of the students in English lessons. Several positive factors and effective teaching strategies were distinguished.

It is essential to emphasize that the effective strategies and other didactic means that stimulate students to active thinking, working, co-operating and inner involvement appeared to work more in a productive environment recommended in the theoretical part. Friendly atmosphere and relationships among the teachers and their pupils without the teacher's extreme dominancy and authority was shown to be appropriate and essential. It also includes the specific way of communication with these pubescent students who would resist teacher's superiority by the already mentioned passiveness. On the other hand, too democratic teaching style is not the solution either. The students evidently need space for the development of their personality and building their identity but they also need some stable and acceptable rules that would be consistently respected by all students as well as the teacher.

Referring to the comfortable and positive working environment, it has come out explicitly that the teachers must eliminate situations in which the learners are exposed to being ridiculed or embarrassed. The frontal teaching is the most open organisation form to these situations as it usually requires a particular learner to talk or work in front of the whole class. The teacher could avoid it by organising the students into pairs or small groups. The recommended organisation forms usually make the activity that the

students might not like less uncomfortable also for learners that are normally shy and quite. Other advantages of these forms consist of different interaction patterns than teacher to a student, participation of more than one student in an activity in the same time, co-operation with other etc.

Moreover, the theoretical part has provided a fundamental base that has been crucial for understanding the issue of activating learners in pubescence properly. For example, it has helped me to understand the perspective orientation in motivation of the students, which develops in this age. Therefore I consider the sense of learning to be one of the most essential factors and the dominant task for the teachers. In addition to that, explaining the subject matter on the basis of the real life situations and examples makes it more understandable and attractive for them. Regarding that, the recommended situational method by Hendrich (1988:165) would be effective in this case.

Another method that was confirmed by the students to be enjoyable and effective is a project. Project method is considered to be also one of the possible solutions to the negative influence of heterogeneity in the classes. It gives more space to differentiation. Besides, it provides the students with the opportunity to accomplish the given task in their own way and tempo and makes them feel fully responsible for their work. The students also mentioned that they like projects as they have the opportunity to express their own idea and work on a topic they are interested in.

Responsibility for what they do is found to be another activating factor. As it is clear from the theory and approved in the practical part, most of the activating elements are in relation to each other and create one complex issue. For instance, a student feels responsible for his work, providing that it has sense for him and it becomes his inner need to reach the final goal.

Furthermore, my research supports the appeal to listen to “learners’ voice” and to give space for the students to express themselves to reveal the inner dispositions. As long as their needs, interests and expectations are met, the active process of learning and the student involvement in a lesson is possible. I was given the opportunity to observe and listen to both elements of the educational process, teachers and students, and I found out that either of them is aware of what are the negative and positive factors in an English lesson. However, the core of the problem seems to be that they do not discuss it and do not produce any results.

On the other hand, it also has to be remarked that it is not possible to expect that activities based on the previous investigation of students' needs etc. would always work the same every time in every group. Before using any activity in practice, the teacher has to consider many factors: biological, psychological, social and cognitive differences of each student, the whole atmosphere and momentary mood in the class and the students' personal lives and background. Finally, it is the teacher who decides the suitability of the activity and predicts the possible success within the class. It should be noted that instant active reaction and students' enthusiasm to do or participate in a particular activities cannot be predicted till it is put in practice. It is vital to be aware of the fact that it is difficult to motivate students of this age as every student is unique and the needs and incentives that activate him/her change together with their overall development that is dramatic in the period of pubescence and is different for each learner.

Although the research provides sufficient and satisfactory results for my thesis , it is not possible to discover all students' reasons for being "un-students" and verify all the factors that are effective for activating learners in English language teaching, so each teacher's judgement and their own class survey is required. As well, even that I met my set goal of the thesis, it is not possible to generalize the findings to the whole educational system and every educational situation as number of the sample was small and it would require longer time of observation to reach the appropriate validity and reliability of the research.

## 4. RESUMÉ

Tématem této diplomové práce je problematika aktivizace žáku ve výuce anglického jazyka. Zaměřuje se na studenty devátých tříd základní školy a problém tak zvaných „un-studentů“ ve vyučovacím procesu. Na základě prostudování teoretických podkladů a výzkumných výsledků se pokouší vymezit a formulovat kritéria, jejichž dodržování vede k aktivnímu zapojení těchto studentů v hodinách anglického jazyka. Jsou zde popsány důvody vedoucí k pasivnímu postoji studenta k učení a zapojení se do procesu vyučování. Následně jsou navrženy možné didaktické prostředky, jak zintenzivnit jeho aktivitu a docílit tak naopak aktivního přístupu studenta k výuce.

Práce se skládá z částí teoretické a praktické. Teoretická část se ve svém úvodu zabývá specifickými znaky věkové skupiny zkoumaných studentů a poukazuje na jejich důležitost. Představuje změny a problémy související s tímto věkovým obdobím a uvádí základní informace o fyzickém, duševním, sociálním a kognitivním vývoji v pubescenci. Dále popisuje verbální a nonverbální vyjadřování charakterizující tuto věkovou skupinu a vytyčuje zásady komunikace s těmito dospívajícími.

Pozornost teoretické části se v další kapitole zaměřuje na problematiku „un-studenta“, která prostupuje celou práci. Nejprve je rozpracována teorie osobnosti žáka, která zahrnuje individuální, typologické a obecné aspekty, jež mají vliv na odlišnosti v projevech aktivity ve vyučování. Jelikož se aktivnost projevuje v aktivitě, bylo nutné, aby i pojem „aktivita“ byl začleněn a vysvětlen v souvislosti s vyučovacím procesem. Tato část má pomoci osvětlit identifikaci aktivních studentů a „un-studentů“, jejich pasivity či aktivity s ohledem na vnitřní a vnější aktivitu. Vnitřní aktivita studenta je považována za hlavní projev aktivního studenta a stává hlavním prostředkem k dosažení cíle ve vyučovacím procesu. Termín „un-student“ není rozpracován v další literatuře. Práce vychází z krátké definice Christine A. Johnson (1998), která uvádí, že jde o studenta, který nemá zájem, není motivovaný a je těžké ho zaujmout. Charakteristické znaky tohoto studenta jsou dále vyvozeny v porovnání s pojetím aktivního, „dobrého“ či motivovaného studenta různými autory a na základě jejich definice studenta pasivního. Dále je vytvořena ucelená koncepce pro tuto práci a

vysvětluje „un-studenta“ jako studenta, který nepřikládá velkou důležitost ke splnění stanoveného cíle v hodině a neprojevuje úsilí k jeho dosažení. Snadno ztrácí zájem a často se může stát, jak popisuje jeden z citovaných autorů Gatenby (1967:2), „pasivním příjemcem toho, co prezentuje učitel“.

Možné důvody charakterizující „un-studenta“ pro výše zmiňovaný pasivní přístup k výuce a učení anglického jazyka jsou diskutovány v následující kapitole. Je nutné zmínit, že tato diplomová práce zabývá pouze důvody či příčinami, které vyplývají s vyučovacího procesu, a jsou učitelem ovlivnitelné. Z této diskuse vyplývá, že možné negativní faktory ovlivňující přístup studentů jsou: nedostatečná diferenciacie; nevhodné hodnocení; nedostatek situací, které umožňují studentům zažít úspěch; opakovaný nezdar; chybějící smysl toho, co se učí; nevhodně stanovený cíl; nerespektování potřeb studenta; nedostatečný prostor pro aktivní zapojení; a také i celkově nepodnětné a neproduktivní prostředí. Tyto hypotetické důvody předpokládané na základě teorie jsou dále konfrontovány s výsledky výzkumu v praktické části.

Další kapitoly poukazují na různé přístupy učitele ve vyučovacím procesu, které mohou zapříčinit studentovu pasivitu či naopak povzbudit studenta k aktivitě a zodpovědnosti za své vlastní učení. Autor se přiklání k názoru, který zdůrazňuje nutnost naslouchání „hlasu studenta“, jež představuje jeho potřeby, zájmy a celou jeho osobnost. Způsob vyučování, který nebere v úvahu na tyto aspekty a jeho hlavním cílem je probrat předem stanovené množství učiva, je identifikován jako jeden z negativních faktorů ovlivňující studentovu aktivitu, neboť v tomto přístupu nemá student dostatečné podněty a prostor pro aktivní zapojení. Tento způsob je označen jako vyučování orientované na učitele, který zahrnuje i upřednostňování vyučovací látky nad potřebami a dispozicemi studentů. Naproti tomu je zde pozitivně chápán takový proces vyučování, který jde „ruku v ruce“ se studentovým učením, což znamená, že výuka je směřována na studenta, a cílem je usnadnit mu učení poskytnutím vhodných podmínek a materiálů, které by byly středem jeho zájmu. Takový přístup vyžaduje hlubší analýzu žákovy osobnosti, jeho potřeb, zájmů, problémů a názorů, aby mohly být vybrány takové didaktické prostředky a zvolen takový přístup učitele, který by studenta motivoval a dal smysl jeho času strávenému v hodině.

Motivace je předmětem jedné samostatné kapitoly, neboť zastává pozici hlavního faktoru vedoucího k aktivní činnosti a spolupráci studenta ve vyučovacím procesu a její

absence je základním problémem „un-studenta“. V průběhu práce jsou vysvětleny i další termíny vztahující se k tomu tématu. Dále jsou uvedeny hlavní změny v motivačních strukturách, jedná se o změnu postoje studenta ke škole, který se konkretizuje a ve významu vnitřní motivace zesiluje. Mezi další diskutované faktory, které mají vliv na motivaci studentů, je vzrůstající počet zdrojů informací, kde učitel už není jediným nositelem informací.

Závěrem teoretické části jsou z předchozích sekcí vydedukovány takové podmínky, které vedou k aktivnímu zapojení studentů a navrhují řešení k pasivnímu přístupu „un-studenta“. Tato kapitola shrnuje obecné požadavky na vyučovací proces, který přispívá k vyšší aktivitě studentů a dále navrhuje strategie, metody a další prostředky, které eliminují většinu negativních faktorů, zmíněných v předchozích kapitolách. Základní principy podporující aktivní účast a uspokojivý pocit z učení spočívají v diferenciovaném přístupu učitele ke studentům a v navození pozitivní atmosféry a pracovního prostředí, v němž stres a strach studentů je redukován na minimum a prostor pro aktivní účast studentů je maximalizován. Další faktory přispívající k motivaci studentů a k pozitivnímu vztahu k předmětu jsou uspokojivé pocity při hodině, dané pozitivním prožitkem z úspěchu a příjemnou kooperativní atmosférou mezi samotnými studenty; přiblížení učiva životu studentů a reálnému životu v anglicky mluvících zemích a vysvětlení smyslu učení se danému jazyku a konkrétní probírané látce. Vedle toho jasné instrukce a vysvětlení, vhodné požadavky odpovídající možnostem dětí, vytvoření jasných pravidel a jejich dodržování jsou neodlučitelnou součástí efektivní výuky, která vyúsťuje v aktivní spolupráci a začlenění studentů do vyučovacího procesu. Výhody použití strategie „businesslike classroom“, problémové, projektové a situační metody, skupinové organizační formy, hry a různé druhy didaktických pomůcek jsou podrobně uvedeny v závěru jako vhodná řešení mnoha negativních faktorů ovlivňujících přístup a aktivní účast žáka v hodinách anglického jazyka.

Druhou část tvoří praktický výzkum, který na základě analýz dat získaných dotazníkem, observacemi a rozhovorem se studenty a učiteli devátých tříd základní školy objasňuje danou problematiku. Výzkumný vzorek se skládá z 33 studentů a 2 učitelů. Pozorování proběhlo v 6 hodinách a rozhovor byl veden se 7 studenty a s učitelkami obou tříd 9.A a 9.B.

V této praktické části a v závěru celé práce se autor snažil zodpovědět základní otázku, jak učitele na základních školách v devátých třídách zvyšují a udržují aktivitu studentů. Cílem práce bylo také zjistit možné důvody a příčiny „un-studentů“ k pasivnímu přístupu k výuce a nalézt řešení k jejich aktivizaci.

Na základě shrnutí praktických analýz a teoretických dílčích závěrů z první části práce důležitým aktivizačním prostředkem je příjemná atmosféra a pozitivní vztah mezi učitelem a studentem, který se také většinou odráží v pozitivním vztahu studentů k samotnému předmětu. Efektivní strategií se ukázalo být vytvoření pracovního prostředí, které je dáno vhodnou organizací hodiny; maximalizováním aktivity studentů zkrácením přechodů mezi aktivitami či zvolením jiné organizační formy než je frontální vyučování; rychlejším spádem vyučovací hodiny a vytyčením akceptovatelných pravidel pro učitele i studenty, která jsou důsledně dodržovaná.

Jak vyplývá z práce, samotní studenti často navrhovali projektovou metodu jako účinný aktivizační element, který jim umožňuje pracovat vlastním tempem a způsobem. Dovoluje jim pracovat na tématech, která je zajímají a mohou k němu vyjádřit vlastní názor. I když ve většině jiných aktivit by upřednostnili převážně práci ve skupinách, na projektech by raději většinou pracovali samostatně.

Hlavními důvody pasivity či nezájmu „un-studentů“ o učivo v hodinách anglického jazyka jsou nejčastěji dlouhodobé neporozumění látce a opakované neúspěchy spojené s nediferenciovaným přístupem učitele; zdouhavý a nudný vyučovací proces hlavně pro zdatnější studenty; stále stejné aktivity, které pro ně nemají smysl či neodpovídají jejich zájmům; stále stejný styl vyučování a využívání učebních pomůcek, které postrádají autentické materiály a nevyužití anglického jazyka v reálných praktických situacích. Jako další z důvodu slabé iniciativy studentů v hodinách se ukázala být také únava, nejčastěji na základě nevhodného školního rozvrhu hodin.

Závěrem je nutné zmínit, že pro tento výzkum byl vzorek a počet observací dostačující, avšak pro přesnější výsledky, které by umožňovaly hlubší analýzu toho jevu by bylo nutné provést širší výzkum.

V diplomové práci jsem se zaměřila na možnosti zlepšení kvality výuky anglického jazyka, což platí obecně i pro jiné předměty. Význam výuky anglického jazyka respektuje pozici angličtiny ve světě jako preferovaného jazyka v oblasti obchodu, techniky a komunikace mezi lidmi. Domnívám se, že cíl diplomové práce byl splněn.

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## **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX 1. – questionnaire in Czech

APPENDIX 2.A – observation sheet in English

APPENDIX 2.B – observation sheet in Czech

APPENDIX 3.A – interview with students in English

APPENDIX 3.B – interview with students in Czech

APPENDIX 4.A – interview with teachers in English

APPENDIX 4.B – interview with teachers in Czech

## APPENDIX 1

### DOTAZNÍK PRO STUDENTY

Často se stává, že způsob výuky anglického jazyka, který je používán na školách, žákům z mnoha důvodů nevyhovuje. Tento dotazník by měl na konci poskytnout informace, jak výuku přizpůsobit vám „žákům“ tak, aby vás více bavila, ale zároveň jste se také v hodinách angličtiny více naučili. Máte tedy možnost říci, co vám v učení anglického jazyka nejvíce pomáhá, co vás baví a naopak, dále pak jak byste zefektivnili výuku a udělali krok ke společnému řešení problému vyučování, kdybyste se mohli podílet na plánování vyučování s jasným cílem se co nejvíce naučit.

*Informace, které zde poskytnete budou předmětem pouze tohoto výzkumu a nebudou jmenovitě poskytnuty žádnému z vašich nynějších učitelů či jiným osobám!!! Budou sloužit pouze k odhalení a navrhnutí řešení daného problému „aktivizace žáků ve vyučování anglického jazyka“!!!*

KŘESTNÍ JMÉNO \*: .....  
( \*či jiné označení)

VĚK: .....

DATUM: .....

**!!!Označ (např. zakroužkuj) jednu či více možností a pokud můžeš, kdekoliv dodej komentář!!!**

**1. Někdy mě vyučování, určité aktivity či cvičení v hodinách angličtiny nebaví a nezajímají nejčastěji proto, že:**

- a) v nich nevidím žádný smysl a přínos, tzn. nevím, k čemu mi to je dobré.
- b) je pro mne daná látka příliš těžká a nerozumím ji.
- c) je pro mne daná látka příliš lehká, nudím se.
- d) způsob vysvětlování či procvičování (např. určité cvičení) neodpovídá mému věku, je spíše pro „malé děti“ nebo naopak příliš pro dospělé“.

- e) je daná látka spojená s tématem.....(doplň příklad\*), které mně nezajímá  
(\*například: *Středověk.*)
- f) nemám možnost se opravdu zapojit, většinou jen přihlížím a dlouho nejsem aktivní.
- g) je jejich průběh velmi pomalý a zdouhavý, až postupně ztrácím zájem.
- h) je jejich průběh příliš rychlý, nestíhám a často to nakonec vzdám.
- i) je vidět, že učitel není připraven, vzniká zmatek, instrukce nejsou jasně formulované a stále se mění.
- j) neustále hrajeme hry, přestože bych dal/a přednost spíše opravdové práci a řádnému procvičení.
- k) děláme stále to samé, učíme se a procvičujeme stále stejným způsobem.
- l) jiné  
důvody:.....

**2. V hodinách anglického jazyka se rád učím a jsem aktivní proto, že:**

- a) věci, které se učím, se mi hodí (nejen nyní, ale i v mé budoucnosti).
- b) při učení mívám obvykle dobré výsledky a tento úspěch mi zvyšuje sebevědomí.
- c) věci, které se učím, jsou zajímavé a vzbuzují moji zvědavost a zájem.
- d) zjišťuji, že vyučování je zábavné.
- e) mám rád svého učitele, je pro mne v mnoha případech inspirací (vzorem).
- f) vím, že mému učiteli na mě záleží a nechci ho zklamat.
- g) se chci něco naučit, chci se zdokonalit v angličtině a to, jestli mě učitel má nebo nemá rád, pro mě není tak důležité.
- i) mohu se podílet na tom, co budeme dělat.
- k) mi učitel dává jasně najevo, že jsem zodpovědný sám za sebe a své učení a pomáhá mi vidět, co jsem již zvládnul, a v čem se musím ještě zlepšit.
- l) daný předmět (angličtina) mě všeobecně baví a mám o něj zájem
- m) jiné  
důvody:.....

**3. Co nejvíce oceňuji na výuce mého učitele AJ:**

- a) že mohu pracovat vlastním tempem
- b) že se mohu poradit s ostatními
- c) učitel navozuje příjemnou atmosféru
- d) učitel přibližuje učivo mému reálnému životu
- e) mám možnost vybrat si z několika aktivit či cvičení podle toho, co mi nejvíce vyhovuje.
- f) že na mě učitel mluví převážně anglicky
- g) že učitele zajímá, co si myslím
- h) že učitel pozná, když jsme unavení a vloží nějakou relaxační aktivitu
- i) že učitel ví, co mi v učení AJ dělá obtíže a pomáhá mi je překonat  
jiné.....

**4. V hodinách anglického jazyka nejsem aktivní a neprojevuji se proto, že:**

- a) se bojím kritiky či hodnocení svého učitele.
- b) bojím se, že se ztrapním před učitelem a svými spolužáky.
- c) nemám možnost a prostor, neboť je stále aktivní hlavně učitel.
- d) nemám možnost a prostor, neboť učitel stále vyvolává jiné žáky.
- e) stejně nebude moje snaha oceněna, pochválena.
- f) by jsem daný úkol udělal či řekl stejně zase špatně.
- g) protože cítím, že mne učitel nemá rád.
- h) mi na angličtině nezáleží, stejně ji nikdy nepoužiji.
- i) jiné  
důvody:.....

**5. Učitel anglického jazyka během roku zjišťoval dotazníkem či diskusí, jaké jsou naše zájmy, co rádi děláme a jaký způsob vyučování nám nejvíce vyhovuje.**

ANO = jak často.....

NE

<b>6. To, že jsem aktivní (tzn. že uvnitř sám sebe cítím, že se učím, že přemýšlím, pracuji, a že mi na daném úkolu záleží), se navenek projevuje tak, že:</b>				
se hlásím.	SPÍŠE ANO	ANO	SPÍŠE NE	NE
vykřikuji	SPÍŠE ANO	ANO	SPÍŠE NE	NE
nehlásím se, ale se zájmem přihlížím a poslouchám.	SPÍŠE ANO	ANO	SPÍŠE NE	NE
nedávám často vůbec pozor, co se ve třídě děje nebo jak pracují ostatní, ale stále nad úkolem přemýšlím.	SPÍŠE ANO	ANO	SPÍŠE NE	NE
chci o úkolu diskutovat se svým spolužákem	SPÍŠE ANO	ANO	SPÍŠE NE	NE
jiné:				

**7. Co bys změnil na výuce anglického jazyka, aby žáky výuka více bavila a více se naučili.**

**Navrhni řešení:.....**

***DĚKUJI ZA SPOLUPRÁCI !!! ☺***

**APPENDIX 2.A**

**OBSERVATION SHEET**

*NAME OF OBSERVER*:.....

*DATE*:.....

*CLASS*:.....

**1. Have you noticed any indication of student’s behaviour during the lesson that would correspond with the description of an “un-student”?**

YES = number .....

NE

**2. Describe the behaviour and indications of the possible “un-students”:**

.....

**3. Have you noticed any evident situations or any other negative stimuli that, in your opinion, cause such a behaviour of “un-student” or deactivate also students who have seemed active before.**

UN-STUDENTS: .....

OTHER STUDENTS:.....

**4. Have you noticed any evident situations, strategies, techniques, methods or other stimuli that, according to your opinion, activate the “un-student/s” or the other students and get their interest or attention?**

UN-STUDENT:.....

OTHER STUDENTS.....

**5. What organisation forms have been used in a lesson?**

a) frontal teaching

b) group work

c) pair work

d) individual work

**6. What didactic aids has the teacher used in an English lesson?**

.....

<b>7. Has the teacher set the goal/s of:</b>	a) the lesson	YES	NO
	b) particular activities	YES	NO



8. Has the teacher varied the activities? YES NO

.....

9. Has the teacher used differentiation to cope with some possible individual differences (e.g. level of attainment)?.....

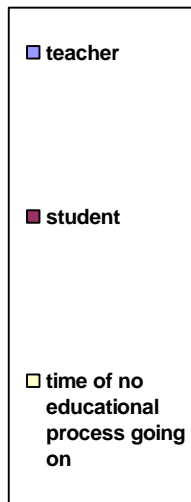
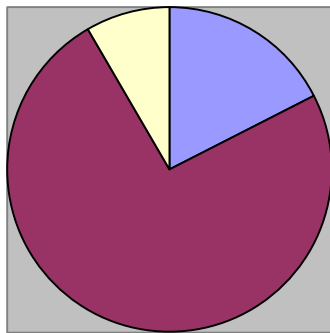
10. Has the teacher evaluated her/his students during the lesson? Positively or negatively? How and how often? (Mark how many times and possibly give examples of the verbal evaluation. E.g. /// well done etc..)

POSITIVELY.....

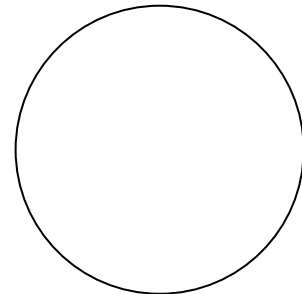
NEGATIVELY.....

11. The circle illustrates one lesson. Draw the opportunity for students to be active and what part of the lesson was active the teacher. Draw also a part when there was not educational process going on.

EXAMPLE:



THE PARTICULAR LESSON:



12. Would you identify the teaching process as:

a) learner-oriented

b) teacher-oriented

= why?: .....

13. What was the atmosphere like?

.....

**14. Have you noticed any clearly set rules of behaviour during the lesson of English?**

**15. Comments:**

## APPENDIX 2.B

### POZOROVÁNÍ

JMÉNO POZOROVATELE:..... DATUM:.....

TŘÍDA:

---

**1. Zaregistroval/a jste během vyučovací hodiny anglického jazyka chování a projevy některého z žáků, které by odpovídali projevům „un-studenta“?**

ANO = počet .....

NE

**2. Popište dané projevy a chování:**

.....

**3. Zaregistroval/a jste během hodiny nějaké zřetelné situace či jiné podněty, které, podle vašeho názoru, zapříčinily toto chování „un-studenta/ů“ či deaktivovaly i jinak aktivní žáky?**

UN-STUDENTS: .....

OSTATNÍ ŽÁCI:.....

**4. Zaregistroval/a jste během hodiny nějaké zřetelné situace, strategie, techniky, metody či jiné podněty, které, podle vašeho názoru, zaktivizovaly dané(ho), „un-studenta/y“ či další studenty a získaly jejich zájem či pozornost?**

UN-STUDENTS: .....

OSTATNÍ ŽÁCI:.....

**5. Jaké organizační formy byly v hodině využity?**

a) frontální vyučování

b) skupinová práce

c) práce v párech

d) individuální práce

**6. Jaké didaktické pomůcky učitel/ka v hodině anglického jazyka použila?**

.....

**7. Uvedl/a učitel/ka cíl:** a) dané vyučovací hodiny

ANO

NE

b) jednotlivých činností?

ANO

NE

**8. Střídá učitel/ka v hodině různé aktivity?**

ANO

NE

.....  
**9. Použil učitel diferenciaci k řešení různých individuálních rozdílů (úroveň znalostí apod.) Jakým způsobem?.....**

**10. Hodnotil/a vyučující žáky během hodiny? Kladně či záporně? Jakým způsobem a jak často? (Označte v průběhu hodiny kolikrát a pokud možno uveďte příklady slovního hodnocení. Např.: ////, well done apod.)**

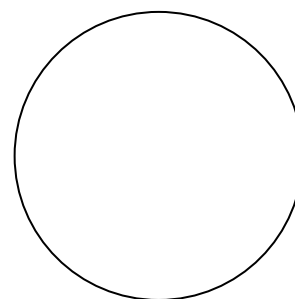
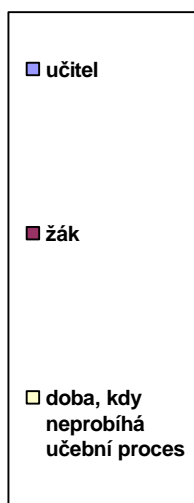
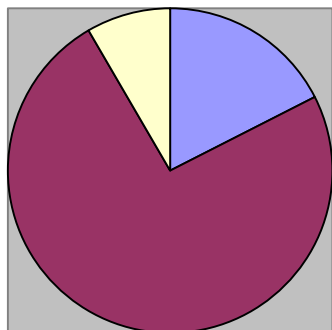
KLADNĚ .....

ZÁPORNĚ .....

**11. Kruh představuje jednu vyučovací hodinu. Zakresli, jak velkou měl možnost být v hodině anglického jazyka aktivní žák a jakou část hodiny byl aktivní spíše učitel. A zakresli také dobu, kdy neprobíhal učební proces.**

**PŘÍKLAD:  
HODINA:**

**KONKRÉTNÍ**



**12. Označil/a byste způsob vyučování jako orientované na:**

žáka

b) učitele + učivo

= z jakých důvodů: .....

**13. Jaká byla atmosféra ve třídě?**

.....

**14.Zaregistroval/a jste v průběhu hodiny nějaká jasně daná pravidla chování při hodině AJ?**

.....

**15.Další komentáře:**

**APPENDIX 3.A**

**INTERVIEW WITH STUDENTS**

To discover what makes students in 9th class become “un-students” and what reaches their attention and makes them active in the process of learning English.

**SUBGOALS:**

To find out:

- what makes students passive and why are they unengaged.
- what makes students active and what gets their attention.
- what are their needs and worries and what would help them to learn more easily.
- what do they appreciate on their teacher and the way s/he teaches.
- what do they not like about their teacher and teacher’s way of teaching.
- what are their opinions to the way English is taught and what are their suggestions for making the English lesson more interesting for them?

---

**AGE:** .....

**SCHOOL RESULTS:** .....

**CHARACTER AND BEHAVIOUR REFERENCES FROM HIS/HER**

- English teacher: .....
- class-teacher: .....

**HOBBIE**.....

**OTHER COMMENTS:** .....

**1) Would you like to learn English?**

- why:.....

**2) Are you rather active or passive during the English lessons?: ACTIVE  
PASSIVE**

- why:.....

**3) Are you sometimes tired? What are the reasons?**

.....

**4) If you are thirsty during the English lesson, are you allowed to have a drink?**

YES NO

**5) Do you like your English lessons? Are they enjoyable?:**

YES NO

- why:.....

**6) What activities do you like the most and why?:**

GAMES :.....

VARIOUS TYPES OF EXERCISES (for example: gap-filling, work with a book or a text, etc.).....

PROJECTS.....

WORK WITH A COMPUTER .....

Others:.....

**7) What do you appreciate the most about your teacher and the way he/she teaches?**

.....

**8) What dislike about your teacher and the way he/she teaches? What affects you negatively the most?.....**

**9) Do you trust your teacher? Do you find him/her fair to you? YES**

NO

Why YES or NO?.....

**10) What about the teacher and the way of teaching makes you active and engaged?**

.....

**and what distracts you from being active and engaged?:**

.....

**11) Does your teacher convey at the beginning of a lesson what are you going to do and what are you supposed to learn in an English lesson?**

ALWAYS                      MOSTLY                      RARELY                      NEVER

.....

**12) Would you ever like to participate on what will you do the next lesson and how?**

YES                      NO

- why?:.....

- What would you change?:.....

**13) Are you afraid of saying or doing something during a lesson, although it is connected with the subject matter or the topic?**

YES      NO

- further comments: .....

**14) Do you know at what you are good or are not good concerning English? What should you improve and how? How do you find out what helps you? On the basis of what do you realize it?**

.....

**15) Does your teacher use many teaching aids or technical equipment during his/her English lessons?**

YES = what:.....

NO

**16) What teaching aids do you like the most?**

.....

**17) Do you prefer working:**

INDIVIDUALLY

IN A GROUP

IN A PAIR

I like **FRONTAL TEACHING** (*I will explain*)

WHY.....



**18) What organisation forms (*I will explain*) are used in the English lessons most of the time?**

.....

OTHER COMMENTS:

.....

## APPENDIX 3.B

### ROZHOVOR SE STUDENTY

#### **HALVNÍ CÍL:**

Zjistit, proč se studenti devátých tříd stávají „un-studenty“, jak získat jejich pozornost a co je dělá aktivními v procesu učení angličtiny

#### **VEDLEJŠÍ CÍLE:**

Zjistit:

- proč jsou studenti pasivní a nezapojují se.
  - proč jsou studenti aktivní a co získává jejich pozornost.
  - jaké jsou jejich potřeby a obavy a co by jim pomohlo se snadněji učit.
  - co oceňují na svém učiteli a způsobu, kterým vyučuje.
  - co se jim líbí na jejich učiteli a jeho způsobu vyučování.
  - jaké jsou jejich názory na způsob vyučování a jaké jsou jejich návrhy a nápady, aby byla pro ně hodina angličtiny více zajímavá.
- 

**VĚK:** .....

**ŠKOLNÍ VÝSLEDKY:** .....

#### **CHARAKTER A CHOVÁNÍ NA ZÁKLADĚ VÝPOVĚDI:**

- učitele angličtiny: .....

- třídního učitele: .....

**ZÁJMY :** .....

**DALŠÍ KOMENTÁŘE:** .....

#### **1) Chtěl by ses naučit anglicky?**

- z jakého důvodu:.....

#### **2) Jsi v hodinách anglického jazyka spíše aktivní nebo pasivní:   **AKTIVNÍ****

**PASIVNÍ**

- z jakého důvodu:.....

#### **3) Pociťuješ někdy únavu? Z jakého důvodu jsi unavený/á?**

.....

#### **4) Když máš v hodině anglického jazyka žízeň, můžeš se napít?**

ANO

NE

**5) Máš rád hodiny angličtiny, jsou pro tebe zábavné:**

ANO                      NE

- z jakého důvodu:.....

**6) Jaké aktivity tě nejvíce baví a proč:**

HRY :.....

RŮZNÉ TYPY CVIČENÍ (např.doplňování, práce s knihou, textem  
apod.).....

PROJEKTY.....

PRÁCE S POČÍTEČEM .....

Jiné:.....

**7) Co nejvíce oceňuješ na svém/své učiteli/učitelce a způsobu, kterým vyučuje?**

.....

**8) Co tě na tvém učiteli/učitelce a jeho způsobu vyučování naopak nejvíc negativně  
ovlivňuje (co se ti nelíbí)?**

.....

**9) Důvěřuješ svému učiteli, myslíš si, že je k tobě fair?                      ANO                      NE**

Proč ANO či

NE?.....

**10) Čím tě dokáže učitel povzbudit k aktivnímu zapojení do činnosti:**

.....

**a čím naopak odvrátit od aktivní spolupráce:**

.....

**11) Sdělí ti tvůj/tvá učitel/ka na začátku hodiny, co budete probírat a co by ses měl  
v té dané hodině naučit?**

vždy ANO

většinou ANO

většinou NE

NE, nikdy

.....

**12) Chtěl by ses někdy podílet na tom, co a jakým způsobem budete další hodinu dělat?**

ANO                      NE

- z jakého důvodu:.....

- co bys změnil:.....

**13) Máš někdy v hodinách angličtiny strach něco říci nebo udělat, i když to souvisí s daným tématem či probíranou látkou? ANO                      NE**

- komentář: .....

**14) Víš co ti v anglickém jazyce jde či naopak nejde, v čem by ses měl zlepšit a jak? Jakým způsobem to u sebe zjišťuješ, co ti v tom pomáhá, na základě čeho si to uvědomuješ?**

.....

**15) Používá tvůj učitel/ka při vyučování hodně didaktických pomůcek či různá technická vybavení:**

ANO = jaké/á:..... NE

**16) Jaké pomůcky či technická vybavení máš při vyučování anglického jazyka nejraději:**

.....

**17) Pracuješ raději:      SÁM                      VE SKUPINĚ                      V PÁRU                      FRONTÁLNÍ  
VÝUKA (vysvětlím)**

- z jakého důvodu:.....

**18) Jaké z těchto forem práce (vysvětlím) jsou v hodině anglického jazyka nejčastěji používány?**

.....

Další komentář:

**APPENDIX 4.A**

**INTERVIEW WITH TEACHERS OF ENGLISH**

**Goal:**

- to discover how teachers in English language teaching at basic schools activate students in the 9<sup>th</sup> grader and how they maintain their activeness.

**Subgoals:**

To find out:

- whether the teachers are aware of the changes in pubescence, mainly of students' behaviour.
- how the teachers perceive activeness and passiveness of their students.
- whether the teachers are aware of the students' needs, interests and personality in general.
- how the teachers activate "un-students" and the other students in lessons of English.

---

**DATE:**..... **AGE:**.....

**1. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING FOR:**.....

**2. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING THIS CLASS FOR:**.....

**3. Do you know any specific age factors of the 9<sup>th</sup> graders? What are they?**

.....

**4. How would you define an "active student"? What are the characteristic features:**

.....

**5. What do you imagine under the term "un-student", describe his characteristic behaviour etc.:**

.....

*(After that, I explain my conception of the term.)*

**6. What, do you think, are the reasons for such a learner to become the "un-student"?**

.....

**7. Do you have any “un-students” in your English class of the 9<sup>th</sup> graders? Describe two of them.**

How many: .....

- first name:.....

- evidences: .....

- first name:.....

- evidences: .....

**8. Have you somehow searched for the reasons why they become “un-students”, what they need and are interested?**

YES

NO

How?.....

**9. How do you activate pupils in your class and how do you make them engaged also innerly?**

.....

**10. How do you cope with the problems of individual differences of each pupil?**

.....

**11. Do you vary your lessons and activities in them?**

YES

NO

How and why?

.....

**12. Have you set any rules of behaviour in a lesson (together with your pupils)?**

.....

**13. Do you have any ideas how to activate the “un-students” and get their attention, interest**

etc.....

**14. Would you mind involving your pupils in lesson planning?**

YES

NO

Why?.....

**Other comments:**

.....

## APPENDIX 4.B

### ROZHOVOR S UČITELEM

#### **HLAVNÍ CÍL:**

Zjistit, jak učitelé ve vyučování anglického jazyka na základních školách aktivizují žáky devátých ročníků a dále jak jejich aktivitu udržují.

#### **VEDLEJŠÍ CÍLE:**

Zjistit:

- zdali jsou si učitelé vědomi změn v pubescenci, hlavně v chování studentů.
- jak učitelé vnímají aktivnost a pasivnost svých žáků.
- zdali učitelé znají potřeby, zájmy a osobnost svých žáků.
- jak učitele aktivizují tzv. „unstudent“ a všeobecně studenty v hodinách anglického jazyka.

---

**DATUM:**..... **VĚK:**.....

**JAK DLOUHO VYKONÁVÁTE UČITELSKOU PRAXI:** .....

**JAK DLOUHO VYUČUJETE TUTO TŘÍDU:** .....

**1. Uved'te několik příkladů specifických znaků této věkové skupiny dětí v deváté třídě.**

.....

**2. Jak byste definovala označení „aktivní student“? Jaké jsou jeho hlavní charakteristiky?**

.....

**3. Co si představujete pod termínem „un-student“, popište chování takového studenta:**

.....

(\*VYSVĚTLÍM MÉ POJETÍ V TÉTO PRÁCI.)

**4. Jaké jsou podle Vašeho názoru důvody takového studenta, aby se stal „un-studentem“?**

.....



**5. Máte nějaké takové „un-studenty“ ve Vaší třídě anglického jazyka? Popište dva z nich.**

Počet un-studentů: .....

-křestní jméno:.....

- dané projevy: .....

-křestní jméno:.....

- dané projevy: .....

**6. Zkoušela jste nějakým způsobem zjistit příčiny a důvody, proč se žáci stávají „un-studenty“, jaké jsou jejich zájmy a potřeby?**

YES

NO

How?.....

**7. Jak aktivizujete žáky ve Vaší třídě a jak dosahujete toho, že se zapojí také „vnitřně“?**

.....

**8. Jak řešíte problémy individuálních rozdílů žáků?**

.....

**9. Snažíte se obměňovat hodiny a aktivity v nich?**

YES

NO

Jak a z jakého důvodu?:.....

**10. Jsou v hodinách anglického jazyka vámi stanovená nějaká pravidla mezi učitelem a žáky?**

.....

**11. Máte nějaké nápady z vlastních zkušeností, jak aktivizovat „un-studenty“ a jak získat jejich pozornost, zájem atd.?**

.....

**12. Souhlasila byste s tím, že by se žáci měli podílet na plánování hodin?**

YES            NO

Z jakého důvodu:.....

**Další komentáře:**

.....